

International co-design practices for the social inclusion of vulnerable people. A catalogue by the ATELIER project

Original

International co-design practices for the social inclusion of vulnerable people. A catalogue by the ATELIER project / Campagnaro, C., Ceraolo, S., D'Urzo, M., Brileanu, P.I., Ciampolini, T., Dima, G., Fantasia, A., Koimisoglou, M., Lombardi, V., Oliveira, M., Pitkākangas, L., Somers, M., Tornariti, E., Tsanakas, T.. - ELETTRONICO. - (2026), pp. 1-310.

Availability:

This version is available at: 11583/3013306 since: 2026-07-22T07:30:10Z

Publisher:

Politecnico di Torino

Published

DOI:

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ATELIER

innovATive Education for Social Inclusion via Co-dEsign pRactices

International co-design practices for the social inclusion of vulnerable people

A catalogue by the ATELIER project

Part 2

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1. Introduction

The catalogue “International co-design practices for the social inclusion of vulnerable people” is conceived within the ATELIER project and it is one of the main components of the **ATELIER Learning Program**.

ATELIER - innovATIVE Education for social Inclusion via codEsign pRactices is an Erasmus+ project co-funded by the European Union in 2023 under the “Cooperation partnerships in higher education” call. The project focuses on fostering **collaboration between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and civil society organisations (CSOs)**. It aims **to develop innovative learning and teaching practices based on co-design principles to address the challenge of social inclusion**.

ATELIER stems from the belief that such challenging objectives could be achieved only by **merging the competence and expertise of professionals in both the worlds of education and practice of social inclusion** – a collaborative stance which is itself the foundation of social inclusion that works. This catalogue is, indeed, the result of the joint work of an **international partnership bringing together eight organisations**, including Higher Education Institutions and Civil Society Organisations, convinced that design can be a powerful driver of effective social change: Politecnico di Torino (from Italy, in the role of coordinator), S-nodi (Italy), Observatório Lusófono de Atividades Económicas OLAE - Lusofona University (Portugal), National University of Science and Technology Politehnica of Bucharest (Romania), Caritas Europa (Belgium), KC Kompetencenter (Sweden), Akadimos (Greece), and Synthesis Center for Research and Education (Cyprus).

By adopting a **trans-disciplinary** take on social inclusion practices, **the ATELIER Learning Programme combines the analytical and critical perspective of Social Sciences with the transformative approach of Design**. It tries to redefine learning for future practitioners in the field of social inclusion and design for impact, towards participatory and reflective processes that engage people and communities as active agents of impactful initiatives fulfilling their needs and desires. Moreover, it is intended for an international target audience, including **university students** (in Design, but also in other fields, such as Educational Sciences) as well as **early-career professionals** – interested in or already engaged in practices and projects for social inclusion – offering them introductory grounding.

One of the specific objectives of the ATELIER project is to develop innovative and **evidence-based** models (and related implementing tools) by setting up a trans-disciplinary and continuous collaboration between HEIs and CSOs and **analysing existing innovative practices and case studies** of design for social inclusion (community-based and capability approach-inspired) **all over Europe** to outline actors involved, available competencies, contexts, mindsets, strategies, models and enabling conditions as well as learning materials already available on the topic. To achieve this objective, ATELIER established the International Transdisciplinary Study Group, with at least one member from each project partner. Since the project’s inception, the International Transdisciplinary Study Group has employed various tools **to map representative cases internationally**. This catalogue collects those cases which encompass **projects, practices, and experiences that intentionally or unintentionally leverage co-design elements to support social inclusion initiatives**.

2. Methodology

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The case study research in ATELIER aims to **develop a theoretical framework and methodological approaches based on evidence collected on co-design practices across Europe**. These frameworks and methodologies are intended to assist researchers and practitioners and will be integrated into practice through a cyclical process of learning and action-research projects.

The research methodology follows Eisenhardt’s (1989) process design model for case study research. Eisenhardt’s (1989) model for case study research outlines a systematic, iterative process for building theory from qualitative data. It begins with defining straightforward research questions and selecting cases through theoretical sampling to ensure the relevance and richness of data.

The model emphasises the use of multiple data collection methods, such as interviews, observations, and document analysis, to enable triangulation. Data collection and analysis occur concurrently, allowing emerging insights to shape ongoing data gathering. Detailed within-case and cross-case analyses are conducted to identify patterns and themes, followed by iterative hypothesis-shaping and comparison with existing literature. The process concludes when theoretical saturation is reached, resulting in a theory closely tied to the empirical data. This approach balances methodological rigour with flexibility, making it particularly effective for developing new theoretical insights.

2.2 Tools

The vast diversity characterising the ATELIER working team necessitated the development of various tools to ensure that all partners were aligned with the project's themes and that objectives were pursued with coherent perspectives. This was essential to create a **shared understanding** of what could be considered co-design within the project, identify which case characteristics were of interest for mapping purposes, and determine how the research knowledge should be represented in the catalogue. Consequently, the group developed several tools to guide the research activities:

- A participatory workshop among the project partners on the meaning of co-design relevant to the project, with the collection of one case study each, to set the tone among the partners;
- A set of keywords to guide the research, eliminate ambiguities, and define shared parameters for the concepts covered by the project;
- A webinar about the theoretical framework and the definition of the Research Questions to support the International Transdisciplinary Study Group members throughout the research;
- A checklist for assessing the coherence of each case with the project;
- A shared template for the collection of case information;
- A consent form.

The number and variety of tools developed to support the case study research activity enabled the merging of diverse visions and opinions and the fine-tuning of the varying levels of experience and expertise among the partners. These tools also reflect the outcome of many thoughtful and insightful discussions about the nature of co-design and the challenges in arriving at a definitive answer.

2.3 Keywords

Based on the outcomes of the participatory workshops, the project partners developed a set of five keywords, each accompanied by a series of attributes and explanatory notes. Together, these provided a shared conceptual foundation and enabled the project to take its first steps with a common understanding. The keywords are **co-design**, **practices**, **inclusion**, **vulnerable people**, and **transformation**.

CO-DESIGN

Engaging:

users (both end users and production/management stakeholders) and designers are involved in the design process of a product, a service or a system.

"Extended Togetherness":

collaboration at multiple stages of the project design phase + implementation.

Co-design also as:

Co-Creation:

"Co-creation refers to any act of collective creativity, i.e. creativity shared by two or more people".

Co-Crafting:

"Transformative manual work that is done in groups, in a collaborative setting, and that brings people to give shape to matter, whatever it may be. Co-crafting happens based on an agreed project and in a dimension of constant exchange of skills, care and dialogue among the participants."

Co-Production:

"Collective and participatory process, during which both the design and subsequent delivery is made possible through an equitable and reciprocal relationship between professionals, technicians, policymakers, people who use them, and the community involved."

PRACTICES

Transformative And Tangible:

bringing meaningful, concrete, practical, and appropriate changes.

"A transformative project approach refers to a design that aims to generate significant and positive changes in the structures, processes, or outcomes of an organisation, sector, or community. This type of approach goes beyond the simple management or implementation of a project and seeks to profoundly influence the context in which it takes place". Kotter J.P. (1996).

Participative:

open, inclusive and cooperative; experiences and skills from individuals and organisations participating are given value.

Contextual:

attentive to or/and influenced by the circumstances or settings in which the practice takes place; the context adds meaning to the case/practice.

Systemic:

based on active interaction between the components of the system; enabling the system/context where the practice takes place; carried out with a win-win approach where everyone involved is a beneficiary of the project/practice.

INCLUSION

Democracy:

offering conditions for people's active participation, freedom of expression, and decision-making.

New Order:

creating contexts inspired by a different "order" of things and functionings and more just/equal power dynamics; thanks to the case, people in society who are susceptible to hardships or oppression can live up to their full potential and capabilities.

Positive Feelings:

eliminating barriers and providing opportunities to experience positive feelings associated with being part of a group or community, such as contentment, fulfilment, well-being, a sense of belonging, self-esteem, appreciation, acknowledgement/recognition, ease, and trust.

VULNERABLE PEOPLE

Access To Rights / Needs:

individuals or groups that experience discomfort or hardship due to their being excluded from expressing one or more rights or fulfilling their needs.

Disadvantaged By The Power Structures:

individuals or groups that are oppressed or more susceptible to harm.

TRANSFORMATION

Innovative:

the project is a transformative action which leads to a tangible improvement.

Preferable:

the project leads up to preferable conditions from the ones at the beginning / the context is positively impacted after the project.

Empowering:

the agency of the people (community) of/ around the project has increased after the project.

Social Justice:

the project challenged and, in some ways, redefined the structures/mechanisms related to the expression of rights or the fulfilment of the needs of the community involved.

2.4 Research Questions

Through an internal webinar involving all the project partners, research questions have been formulated and agreed on. Research questions try to highlight the project's focus on competencies and practices and were drafted as follows.

FOCUSING ON COMPETENCIES:

- What knowledge and skills are perceived as fundamental by professionals for practical co-design projects?
- What competencies are predominantly present in working groups involved in co-design processes?
- Is there a perceived gap in competencies that professionals would like to address?
- How are the competencies of working groups articulated in terms of responsibilities and roles?
- How are working groups shaped concerning applied practices?
- Do working groups change according to the context's needs? If so, how and why?

FOCUSING ON PRACTICES:

- What recurring elements, approaches, or implementation structures can be observed?
- How are co-design practices innovative and transformative compared to traditional approaches in addressing vulnerabilities?

Before selecting or proposing a case study, each partner verified that the case meets all preliminary requirements. The checklist is presented below:

“DOES THIS CASE FIT OUR RESEARCH?”

Here are four entry criteria to be taken into account:

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY:

The case involves people experiencing vulnerability, which is primarily understood as a systemic social condition (often caused by unjust power structures) that prevents them from fully participating in society, exercising their rights, and meeting their needs. As a result of the attention paid to the condition of vulnerability experienced by people, the practice promotes an experience of inclusion.

EMPOWERING / BUILDING CAPABILITIES:

The practice promotes the creation of new capabilities/relationships/resources for the project's beneficiaries. Cases where the intervention is limited to assistance or service delivery and doesn't lead to the empowerment/growth of potential, skills, or opportunities should not be considered valid for our research.

EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY:

The case involves collaboration among at least two stakeholders (beneficiaries, operators, community, policymakers, etc.) across at least two “moments” of the practice/project (i.e., ideation-design and implementation). Cases where the beneficiary's participation is limited to the concept phase of the project (consultation) or the implementation (collaborative work) should not be considered valid for our research. Multi-stakeholder projects and collective projects can be a hint.

MULTI-EXPERTISE/DISCIPLINES:

The cases should report experiences involving at least two areas of expertise/disciplines. Multi-competences and multidisciplinary working teams are expected. “Multi” is not limited to formal education careers but also to expertise from fieldwork and personal sensitivity.

Although not all criteria had to be met to the same degree, the selected cases were evaluated for their overall coherence across all specified criteria. This thorough vetting process ensured that each case aligned appropriately with the project's aims and could contribute meaningfully to its goals.

2.5 Template For Information Collection

Finally, the International Transdisciplinary Study Group developed a template to facilitate the collection of information on the cases and to ensure the production of homogeneous and comparable data sheets. The proposed template was created by adapting several examples of sheets developed for similar purposes, such as ProSa by Dors Regione Piemonte—Centro di Documentazione per la Promozione della Salute.

To complete the template, partners from the International Transdisciplinary Study Group were given two options: either request that the contact person fill in the template using the pre-filled example provided as a reference, or have the partner and the contact person could complete it together during a longer call or meeting. This second collaborative approach allowed the contact person to provide guided responses throughout the document. The template used to collect the data is the one displayed in the catalogue.

Ethical considerations were taken into account in the ATELIER case study research. The informed consent form ensured that participants were fully aware of the research's purpose and how their data would be used. Confidentiality and data protection protocols were strictly adhered to throughout the research process.

3. How to use the catalogue

The catalogue is conceived to **help students, professionals and researchers** engaged with ATELIER's topics and field of practice and observations to compare their knowledge and experience with international case studies and lessons learned.

In the following pages, **case studies are presented with a uniform structure along the lines of the template used in the data collection** and research phase. Each case study is therefore narrated through specific in-depth sections, the same through which the data collected were divided into macro-areas of analysis. A section devoted to general information: description of the project and context, presentation of the main objectives to be achieved and what results were obtained, the type of beneficiaries and the number of beneficiaries and workers involved. This section is followed by a focus on: the vulnerabilities addressed, the capacities generated, the degree of participation of the beneficiaries involved and finally on the multidisciplinary nature of the case study.

For ease of reading, each section is colour coded and marked with a reference symbol.



GENERAL INFORMATION



ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



EMPOWERING/BUILDING CAPABILITIES



EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY



MULTI-EXPERTISE/DISCIPLINES

The case studies are organised into **thematic clusters to facilitate the exploration of recurring topics and approaches**. In addition to this thematic organisation, at the end of the catalogue readers will find a **list of labels** associated with each case study. These keywords are intended to support readers in identifying relevant content across the catalogue.

For a critical reading and a comparative and aggregated analysis of the collected case studies please refer to the **Trans-disciplinary Analytical Report on the Catalogue of 50 Design for Inclusion Practices** available on the project website atelier-project.eu and on the platform S-nodi Education.

Finally, **this catalogue is also an integral part of the MOOC entitled "ATELIER – Co-design for Social Impact and Inclusion"**, which is freely available as an **open-access course** on the UNITE! platform. The MOOC is available in seven languages (English, French, Swedish, Romanian, Greek, Italian, and Portuguese) and upon successful completion of the course, participants can receive an Open Badge.

PARTNERS OF THE PROJECT



Politecnico di Torino



caritas europa



S-NODI



SYNTHESIS
CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION



olae

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BUILDING BRIDGES FOR Marginalised PEOPLE

This is the section associated with all those projects that aim to overcome barriers for people in marginalised conditions through paths of autonomy and integration and the rewriting of the narrative often associated with them.

➤ Caritas Hellas Social Spots

2017 – Ongoing

Caritas Greece

Athens & Lesvos, Greece



Useful Links



Building bridges for marginalised people

Refugees / Job training / Barriers

Texts by Marc Somers, Caritas Europa, in collaboration with Anastasia Spiliopoulou, Caritas Greece

Description of the project

Caritas Hellas Social Spots are community HUBs that offer a wide range of services such as psychosocial support, job counselling, financial guidance, education, and empowerment activities. They adopt a holistic and flexible approach, tailoring services to address the unique needs of the served population, considering both geographic location and strategic context. The concept of designing the model of Social Spot emerged from the need to develop at a local level hubs that would act as a **point of reference and encounter for asylum seekers and refugees.**

A versatile model in service provision has been designed in order to respond to changing needs of the refugees and asylum seekers as identified by stage of asylum procedure, situation, and location. Moreover, following a “Do No Harm” approach, all services have been also available and have taken into consideration the needs of the local disadvantaged population.

In the context of Greece, the project has been innovative and unique. Through the provision of localised support and through the interconnectivity of the operating spaces, the project follows individuals throughout their journey from first entry to their settlement and meets their needs from primary support to pre-integration and integration. Moreover, **Caritas Hellas Social Spots have been one of the few spaces that since the beginning of their operation, services have been accessible to all vulnerable populations, evolving in this way as spaces of intercultural communication and dialogue.** Main pillars of the operation of the Social Spots are: prevention through psychosocial support, recreational activities, educational programmes, vocational training,

communication campaigns and opportunities for volunteering. Needs Response and Personal Development, treating individuals as whole persons with needs that can be covered in an interconnected way. Community engagement is a crucial aspect, emphasising active involvement and collaboration with the community. Placing the community at the forefront, the model prioritises understanding local needs, fostering inclusive decision-making, and co-creating initiatives aligned with the community's objectives.

Community Engagement serves as the driving force for participatory development, ensuring that social impact initiatives are not only relevant but also resilient, addressing the dynamic needs of the community in a holistic manner. At the same time, integrating community engagement into the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) process that has been implemented, has been utilised to respond effectively and efficiently in a continuous assessment mode via participatory design and inclusion principles.

Existing feedback mechanisms and monitoring tools, such as Weekly Monitoring Forms, Attendance lists, Referral Forms, Personal History Sheet, Case management Form, Monthly monitoring reports, Ospoweb platform, Coordination Meetings, have been crucial for effective and sustainable development initiatives.

It's essential to highlight that **Social Spots incorporate cultural mediation and simultaneous interpretation in multiple languages**, adapting to the current needs of diverse audiences (currently Greek, English, French, Arabic, Farsi, Russian, and Ukrainian). The approach is tailored to the respective cultures of the audience, ensuring inclusivity.

Additionally, child-friendly spaces have been introduced to facilitate parents in benefiting from services, while dedicated educators take care of the children, engaging them in both recreational and educational activities.

Main objectives

- Innovation in Localised Services: innovative by introducing a localised Social Spot model that responds to the diverse needs of each locality in the country, taking into account its geographical position and strategic context.
- Holistic Approach to Individuals: ensuring well-rounded support to promote resilience and empowerment within the community.
- Cultural Mediation and Inclusivity: incorporate cultural mediation and simultaneous interpretation in multiple languages to adapt to the diverse cultural backgrounds of the targets, ensuring inclusivity.
- Community Engagement: foster community development by actively engaging and collaborating with the community, understanding local needs, and co-creating initiatives aligned with community objectives.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

Asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable members of the local community.

The context

In 2016 amidst the refugee crisis and Greece's economic downturn, the concept of establishing hubs for the provision of multidimensional interventions.

These dual crises underscored the urgent need for innovative, community-centred support systems capable of addressing the multifaceted needs of both local and newly arrived population. Launched in Athens in 2017, the Social Spot initiative represented a strategic pivot towards localised, holistic services, tailored to the unique contexts of each area, with a focus on inclusivity and resilience-building amidst adversity.

In Athens, the Social Spot emerged as a beacon of support, offering a broad spectrum of services from psychosocial assistance to empowerment activities, aimed at vulnerable locals, refugees, and asylum seekers alike. Lesbos, positioned at the forefront of the refugee route into Europe, presented a distinct set of challenges and opportunities for humanitarian assistance. The establishment of a Social Spot on the island was a direct response to the immediate needs of the refugee population, coupled with a strategic vision to include the local community in the support ecosystem, fostering mutual understanding and support.

Number of people working on the project

Currently there are 19 people working: 4 in Lesbos and 15 in Athens (including 4 full time volunteers).

Number of primary target beneficiaries involved

18.882 people have been served

Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

Caritas International network: the funding organisations of the Social Spots have not only provided financial assistance but also offered valuable guidance, accompaniment, and expertise throughout its years of operation. The partners through caritas international network (including Caritas Germany, Caritas Italiana, Caritas Spain, CRS, Caritas Austria) have played a crucial role in enabling the project to fulfil its mission of serving vulnerable populations and promoting integration and empowerment.

Local Caritas network: the diocesan Caritas on the respective locations have been involved in the project. The Social Spot in Athens has been strongly linked to the Armenian Caritas in Athens has provided the building for the Social Spot at a significantly reduced rent, demonstrating their commitment to supporting the project's objectives. In Lesbos the Social Spot is linked with the work of the parish Caritas, offering complementary services to one another. Also, volunteers of the local parish are involved in the operation of the Social Spot.

Institutional Support: the model and initial operation of the Social Spot has been initiated with the funding and support of German Ministry of Foreign Affairs

International and Local stakeholders: Social Spots frequently collaborate with local NGOs and other stakeholders for the implementation of small scale projects and targeted activities. Within the past 6 years such partnership examples include: UNICEF, UNHCR, NGOs such as IRC Hellas, Global Girls Media, and others to implement joint programmes and initiatives. These partnerships enhance the impact of the project and enable it to address a broader range of needs within the community.

Main achievements and goals obtained

The flexibility and adaptability of the Social Spots project have been key factors in their success. By continually assessing and responding to the evolving needs of the served population, the Spots have been able to remain relevant and effective in achieving initial objectives over time. This dynamic approach allows for the implementation of innovative solutions, the introduction of new programmes and services, and the establishment of partnerships that address emerging challenges and opportunities.

Some of the main achievements and goals obtained include: Actively working towards the prevention of Social Marginalisation. Actively working towards preventing social exclusion of refugees and vulnerable locals by providing complementary services and opportunities for cultural exchange, educational workshops, common interreligious and intercultural activities the project aims to empower individuals and foster a sense of belonging and mutual acceptance.

Tailor-made localised service: Implement a localised Social Spot model that caters to the unique needs of each community, factoring in the geographical and strategic nuances of different localities to provide precise and relevant support.

Individualised Support: Ensure the provision of all-encompassing support services that address the multifaceted aspects of individual beneficiaries, aiming to foster resilience and empowerment within the community.

Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusivity: Integrate cultural mediation and provide services in multiple languages to accommodate the diverse cultural backgrounds of beneficiaries, ensuring that all individuals feel understood and supported. Active Community Engagement: Engage with local communities to understand their

specific needs and aspirations, working together to co-create initiatives that resonate with and fulfill community objectives.

Efficient Hybrid Model of Service Delivery:

Utilise a hybrid model that combines in-person and digital services, allowing for a wider geographical reach and the ability to serve more beneficiaries effectively.

Streamlined Referral Psychosocial Support Mechanisms:

Develop and implement a referral system among different Social Spots, ensuring quick and efficient access to services, thereby enhancing the overall support system's responsiveness and efficacy.

Monitoring and evaluation

Caritas Hellas has implemented a comprehensive and formal monitoring and evaluation system for its project in Athens and Lesbos, ensuring effective oversight and continual improvement of its services. This system encompasses a range of methodologies, including weekly and monthly monitoring reports, coordination meetings, and the use of the Caritas Services Database (OSPOWEB) for the registration of the people served in Social Spots and analysis. Evaluation procedures are meticulously designed, with service-specific assessments and **broader feedback mechanisms via online platforms, QR codes, and direct beneficiary engagement through focus group discussions and questionnaires.** Additionally, staff evaluations play a crucial role in identifying challenges and adaptation of the project objectives. Regular communication channels, such as weekly meetings and detailed reports to the management and executive committee, facilitate transparency and informed decision-making. This structured approach to monitoring and evaluation fosters an environment of continuous learning and adaptation to the dynamic needs of the served population.

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



Aiming to tackle vulnerability, the model of Social Spots has been addressing several challenges related to inequalities.

The Social Spots provide job counselling and development of soft skills for people to have **greater chances in the labour market**.

The project aims to address disparities by promoting **social inclusion**, equal rights, and access to services for all members of society.

Education is a crucial factor in breaking the cycle of vulnerability. However, marginalised groups often face barriers to accessing quality education. The project works towards ensuring equitable access to education for all, with a **special focus on Greek languages** so that integration in the Greek society can be facilitated.

Health challenges cause vulnerability, as vulnerable communities often lack access to healthcare services and suffer from higher rates of disease and mortality. The **social workers accompany the beneficiaries in the processes for access to the healthcare system** promoting health education and preventive measures to address these disparities.

Target of the project

Despite the implementation of various interventions in response to the refugee situation in Greece, asylum seekers and refugees, continue to struggle to settle and become self-autonomous: Language difficulties, bureaucratic obstacles, the rapid digitalisation of administrative procedures in post Covid-19 period, and the limitations in accessing available welfare services and resources, undermine their ability to improve resilience, enrich personal capacities and to access the job market¹. The closing down of national accommodation programmes, such as Estia project further intensified this situation and many vulnerable asylum seekers reached a stage of limited accessibility to appropriate accommodation and financial resources². For recognised refugees, Helios project forms an important available scheme however not all people can finalise the process.

Single-headed families of asylum seekers and refugees, experience the above challenges with greater intensity, since they have to overcome obstacles related to childcare options. According to UNHCR's Interagency Protection Monitoring of Refugees in Greece, asylum seekers and refugees in the country identify access to jobs as a priority need (70%), followed by access to accommodation (42%), financial assistance (36%) and support with documentation (32%); Women responders also identified greater obstacles in accessing employability opportunities (lack of knowledge of Greek lack of day care for children)³.

¹ RSa report: "Beneficiaries of international protection in Greece Access to documents and socio-economic rights", March 2023. <https://rsaegrean.org/en/report-bip-2023/>

² <https://www.dw.com/en/greece-asylum-seekers-moved-back-into-refugee-camps/a-64630101>

³ Conducted by UNHCR and partners: <https://bit.ly/3ZQi6qk>



EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

Served population gained a diverse range of skills that empower them to navigate life's challenges with resilience and confidence. One of the main elements of the Social Spots is that they "follow the route", meaning that they are located in strategic areas (Athens & Lesvos) starting from pre-integration aiming to integration. Therefore, the model of Social Spots has been instrumental in providing invaluable support to **newcomer refugees** who often find themselves navigating in the unfamiliar territory of Greece. Many of these individuals arrive with limited knowledge of the Greek context and face challenges in performing even simple day-to-day functions.

Through the project's initiatives, they **have gained access to vital guidance and assistance that has eased their transition and empowered them to integrate into their new environment more effectively.** This includes learning the Greek language, which is crucial for communication and integration into the society. Additionally, through vocational training and group sessions beneficiaries learn **practical skills** and gain essential life skills that contribute to their overall well-being. Another significant set of skills gained by recipients is access to vital resources and infrastructures that were previously

inaccessible. Whether it's access to education, healthcare services, financial assistance, or technology, the project has provided recipients with the resources necessary for personal and professional development. These resources serve as catalysts for empowerment and enable recipients **to overcome barriers and achieve their aspirations.**

In summary, beneficiaries of the holistic and inclusive approach at the Social Spots gain a wide array of skills that empower them to lead fulfilling and self-reliant lives. From **practical and vocational skills to essential life skills and psychosocial competencies**, the programmes equip individuals with the tools they need to thrive and contribute positively to their communities.

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

The practice at the Social Spots aligns closely with local policies, fostering innovation, coherence, and collaboration in addressing societal needs in Greece. By adopting a holistic and inclusive approach, the project departs from traditional one-sided support models, prioritising empowerment, resilience, and community engagement. This innovative approach has earned positive feedback from local authorities and state institutions, who recognise its potential to fill gaps in existing service provision and promote sustainable social development.



EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

Beneficiary-led initiatives:

- encouraging beneficiaries become actors of change and lead initiatives based on their personal interests and charisma. Examples include:
- Empowerment workshops such as dedicated sessions for women, fostering personal development, confidence, and leadership skills by initiating an open dialogue and creating a platform for common sharing of experiences.
- Art and environmental workshops such as crochet workshops, providing participants with a platform to convey their emotions, stories, and cultural richness, fostering community cohesion.

Local community engagement:

- Needs assessment on local community level, surveys such as a youth survey implemented in the wider area of Neos Kosmos to gather information about the interests the young population has.
- Networking events hosted in Social Spots in order to promote services and receive feedback from other professionals and experts on the field.
- Focus groups discussion of participants for regular evaluation and feedback ensuring continuous improvement of the services provided.

Example of output delivered by the project

Caritas Hellas' Social Spots projects generate a variety of pivotal outputs, each strategically designed to enhance the ongoing growth and interconnectedness of its services. outputs are utilised for designing new activities, as well as in improving and better connecting services. This strategic use of outputs ensures the holistic support and empowerment of the community served by the Social Spots, fostering an ecosystem of integrated services that respond to the diverse needs of beneficiaries. Highlighted outputs include:

Physical and Recreational Activities:

Project participants took part in physical or recreational activities # people have participated at least once in group activities. The activities have been particularly well-received by women, contributing not only to their physical well-being but also to their social integration and community inclusion. Initially Pilates was launched and because of high participation number in the output dance classes were also included in the project activities.

Personalised Administrative Support Sessions:

Project participants had one-to-one session with the accountant in order to be supported and guided with of accounting and admin issues. # project participants supported with admin procedures and tax declaration submission. Beneficiaries receive tailor-made guidance on administrative and financial matters, including support with tax declarations and navigating the complexities of Greek administrative protocols. Caritas Hellas has been at the forefront in identifying and fulfilling this crucial need, continually refining this service to foster beneficiary self-sufficiency in managing their administrative affairs. Because of the high demand for accounting and administrative support service and continuously exceeding the numerical set goals this service is

included in every new launched project.

Childcare Support: children have participated in education and recreational activities available in CFS. Safe space available through NKSS operational hours allowing caregivers to access available services.

In response to the discerned needs of single-headed households and others in need of childcare solutions, a pilot Child-Friendly Space (CFS) initiative was launched. This way caregivers are enabled to engage in Social Spot activities, assured that their children are participating in safe, educational, and recreational activities. This service has particularly resonated with single-parent families, significantly enhancing their engagement in activities of services provided. Due to the feedback and the high participation especially during the summer period it is considered to continue providing this type of complementary service.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

In the development phase of Caritas Hellas Social Spots projects, the target group's involvement is integral, facilitated through **focus group discussions, needs assessments, ongoing evaluations, and the analysis of demographic data.** This participatory approach ensures that the services are finely attuned to the community's specific needs and challenges. Focus groups and needs assessments provide direct insights into the vulnerabilities and aspirations of the beneficiaries, enabling tailored service provision. Continuous evaluation allows for dynamic adjustments to the project, ensuring it remains responsive to changing needs. The analysis of demographic characteristics ensures inclusivity, addressing the diverse needs within the community and fostering an environment of empowerment and active participation, making the project both community-driven and sustainable.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

During the implementation phase of the Social Spots project by Caritas Hellas, the target group's active participation is prominently featured, particularly through volunteering, peer-to-peer (P2P) groups, and networking collaborations.

Volunteerism is highly prioritized and participants have the opportunity to run activities led by them based on their interests and priorities.. This involvement not only allows beneficiaries to contribute their skills and knowledge but also enhances the project's reach and impact within the community. Additionally, the project facilitates **P2P groups in partnership with other NGOs , focusing on raising awareness issues, further emphasising the importance of community-led initiatives.**

Networking with community and grassroots organisations is also prioritised the project's collaborative scope, bringing in diverse experiences and know-how. These activities, coupled with storytelling sessions for awareness, underline the project's commitment to involve the target group in its implementation phase, fostering a sense of belonging, empowerment and active participation among beneficiaries.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

In the management and delivery phases of the Social Spots project by Caritas Hellas, the target group's involvement is deeply embedded. **Focus Group Discussions** (FGD) run for the design of the activities as well as during the implementation phase of the activity (twice annually per service). FGDs serve **as a platform for the beneficiaries to evaluate services, offer feedback, and share their experiences and suggestions for improvement.** This participatory approach ensures that the project remains responsive to the evolving needs of the community it serves. The feedback received through the different evaluation procedures is strongly incorporated in all design stages of the activities. Their participation in various activities and utilisation of services also provides valuable insights into the project's impact and areas for enhancement. By incorporating the voices and experiences of the target group into the evaluation phase, Caritas Hellas ensures that the project's results are reflective of the community's needs and aspirations, thereby fostering a sense of collaboration between the organisation and the served population.



MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

Coordination Team of Caritas Hellas

Role: The Coordination Team sets strategic priorities for all programmes, aligning them with the organisation's Strategic Planning. They provide guidelines and frameworks for each programme. **Involvement:** The Coordination Team plays a pivotal role in the project's strategic direction and ensures alignment with the broader organisational goals. They meet weekly to assess progress and adjust strategies.

Project Manager of Social Spots

Role: The Project Manager designs, supervises the programme implementation, guides the team, manages alliances, creates reports, and maintains communication with donors and potential partners. **Involvement:** Actively involved throughout the project life cycle, oversees day-to-day operations, ensuring effective communication and managing external relationships to support programme goals.

Local Coordinator (s) of Social Spots

Role: Each Social Spot has a Local Coordinator responsible for day-to-day operations, team matters, local alliances, and addressing issues related to the project's work. **Involvement:** Local Coordinators are continuously engaged in the community, managing on-the-ground activities, and ensuring the programme meets the specific needs of the local context.

Financial Manager of Social Spots

Role: Manages the budget of the programme. **Involvement:** The Financial Manager is consistently involved in budgetary decisions, financial reporting, and ensuring that financial resources are allocated appropriately to meet programme objectives.

Professionals/Experts in the Field

(Social Worker, Job Counsellor, Accountant, Psychologist, Teacher/Educator) **Role:** Contributing their expertise in providing specialised services to the community. **Involvement:** These professionals are actively engaged in delivering specific services, ensuring the quality and effectiveness of the programme in meeting the diverse needs of the community.

Cultural Mediators/Interpreters

Role: Cultural Mediators/Interpreters facilitate accessibility for diverse communities, ensuring inclusivity by providing language support in Arabic, Farsi, French, Russian, and Ukrainian. **Involvement:** They are consistently present to bridge language and cultural gaps, facilitating effective communication and understanding between the project and the diverse communities.

Volunteers

Role: Volunteers support service provision and community engagement, contributing to the overall effectiveness of the programme. **Involvement:** Volunteers play a vital role in implementing activities, engaging with community members, and enhancing the reach and impact of the Social Spots.

Areas of expertise and disciplines involved in the project

Initial Assessment by Social Worker and personalised guidance: upon reaching out to the Social Spots, individuals are welcomed by a social worker who conducts an initial assessment. This assessment involves gathering information about the individual's personal history, background, needs, and requests. Based on the assessment, the social worker provides personalised guidance and orientation to the individual, directing them to the services and resources that best address their specific needs and preferences.

Referral to Expertise Services:

If individuals require specialised services such as job counselling, psychological support, or financial assistance, the social worker refers them to the respective professionals/experts in those fields. In case the person requires a field of expertise that is not available at the Social Spots (such as legal counselling), then the social worker makes external referrals to organisations that are part of the network.

Educational Courses:

Individuals interested in language learning, vocational training, or educational programmes are directed to the available courses offered at the Social Spots. This may include Greek language courses or courses in other relevant languages to facilitate capacity building and skill development.

Well-being Activities:

For those seeking opportunities to improve their physical and mental well-being, the social worker recommends participation in well-being activities such as pilates sessions, traditional dances, or crochet classes. These activities promote relaxation, socialisation, and skill-building in a supportive environment.

Group Empowerment Workshops:

Individuals looking to enhance their personal development, coping skills, and job readiness may be encouraged to participate in group empowerment workshops. These workshops cover topics such as stress management, interview preparation, and the development of soft skills essential for success in various aspects of life.

Involvement of Interpreters / Cultural Mediators:

Throughout this process, the interpreters/cultural mediators play a crucial role in ensuring that all services are accessible to people who do not speak Greek. They facilitate effective communication and understanding between individuals and service providers, ensuring inclusivity and equal access to resources and activities. Currently, the languages available for all our services are Arabic, French, Farsi, Russian, Ukrainian and of course Greek and English.

By following this structured process, individuals accessing the Social Spots receive personalised holistic support and guidance tailored to their unique needs and circumstances. This approach ensures that they have access to a wide range of services, resources, and activities that empower them to rebuild their lives, integrate into their communities, and achieve their goals.

Collaborations and alliances with external community

Collaborations are established at all stages of the activities implementation. A bundle of collaborations has been developed throughout the Social Spots operation period, including state and regional actors – municipalities and other local authorities-, international organisations – including UNHCR and UNICEF-, local NGOs and grassroots organisations with expertise in complementary fields of operation as well as service providers and experts.

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

The two Social Spots work closely together by sharing expertise. With some experts based in Athens, they provide remote support not only to the Lesvos community but also to asylum seekers residing in the refugee camp (Closed Controlled Access Centre). For instance, the accountant from the Athens Social Spot offers remote services to individuals in Lesvos and asylum seekers in the CCAC. Thanks to this hybrid approach, the Social Spots can reach a wider geographical area across Greece. Consequently, even the Diocesan Caritas occasionally partner with the Social Spots to enhance their support services. Within Caritas Hellas, all programmes complement each other. Given that most services target specific areas or populations, the Social Spots serve as a central reference point for the organisation. This collaborative effort ensures a cohesive approach to assisting communities in need throughout Greece. Currently the Social Spots work closely with both ADAMA and Helios projects running by Caritas Hellas.





Co-LIZA 2.0

2023 (one year project)

Atelier Ad Hoc

Timișoara, Romania



Useful Links



Building bridges for marginalised people

Mobile / Innovation / Barriers / Community activation



Description of the project

“co-LIZA 2.0” is a pioneering initiative conceived by architects George Marinescu and Maria Daria Oancea from Atelier Ad Hoc. This **project** addresses the pressing need for community activation and inclusivity, particularly focusing on marginalised groups such as immigrants and refugees. It introduces a **versatile mobile equipment designed to facilitate various communal activities, from workshops to social gatherings**. Integrating elements of practicality and symbolism, the project incorporates the concept of the “Liza”, a standard element used for transporting goods, as a foundational structure within the piece of furniture. **This innovative approach not only ensures mobility but also serves as a metaphorical bridge, connecting diverse communities and fostering collaboration**. With its adaptable design and inclusive ethos, co-LIZA 2.0 aims to empower communities to reclaim and reimagine their public spaces, promoting social cohesion and cultural exchange in urban environments.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

Beneficiary: The Jakab Toffler House Association, Minitremu. The primary target users/beneficiaries of the “co-LIZA 2.0” project are the **civic groups and organisations active in the Fabric neighbourhood of Timișoara**, particularly focusing on marginalised groups such as immigrants and refugees.

The context

The context of “co-LIZA 2.0” unfolds within the **dynamic urban landscape of Timișoara, Romania**, against the backdrop of the city’s designation as the European Capital of Culture in 2023. Nested within the Fabric neighbourhood, a **melting pot of cultures**

and communities, the project emerges as a response to the diverse needs and aspirations of its residents. Timișoara’s cultural vibrancy and historical significance provide a fertile ground for experimentation and innovation, while its commitment to inclusivity and community engagement sets the stage for transformative interventions. **Against the backdrop of global migration trends and socio-economic disparities, “co-LIZA 2.0” seeks to harness the power of design and collaboration to create spaces of belonging and empowerment. It leverages the rich cultural tapestry of the city to foster connections and dialogue**, offering a beacon of hope and solidarity in an increasingly fragmented world.

Credits

The project belongs to architects George Marinescu and Maria Daria Oancea, within the architecture studio Atelier Ad Hoc. Detailed design and production: Andrei Savonea The initiative takes place within the Social Fabric research and creation residency, as part of the National Cultural Programme “Timișoara - European Capital of Culture in 2023”, funded by the Grow Timișoara 2023 programme. Photography credits: Atelier Ad Hoc, Casa Jakab Toffler

Awards and Acknowledgements

The award for the “Interior Architecture / Object Design” section at Bucharest Architecture Biennial, 2023 edition.

Main objectives

- Facilitate community activation and engagement in the Fabric neighbourhood of Timișoara;
- Provide a versatile mobile equipment for hosting diverse communal activities;
- Foster inclusivity and participation, particularly among marginalised groups such as immigrants and refugees;
- Promote social cohesion and cultural exchange within urban environments;
- Empower communities to reclaim and reimagine their public spaces;
- Bridge divides and foster collaboration among diverse communities;
- Amplify the voices and aspirations of residents through participatory design processes;
- Contribute to the revitalisation and enrichment of Timișoara’s cultural landscape as the European Capital of Culture in 2023.

Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

Atelier Ad Hoc, MNȚRplusC, Muzeul Țăranului Român, Asociația Activ Random, Viața în Mov, Administrația Fondului Cultural Național, Asociația Casa Jakab Toffler, Minitremu.

Number of people working on the project

Six main individuals (architects George Marinescu and Maria Daria Oancea; Andrei Savonea; Adelina Luft; Iliana Schileru; Rashiqa Omar), however, given the complexity of the project and its various components, there are likely additional individuals involved in its conception, development, and implementation, such as craftsmen, artists, volunteers, and community members. Therefore, the total number of people working on the project overall cannot be definitively determined with the information available.

Number of primary target beneficiaries involved

The primary target beneficiaries or users of the “co-LIZA 2.0” project are the organisers and participants of various community activities, particularly those involving immigrants and refugees (Asociația Casa Jakab Toffler, Minitremu as primary beneficiary). It is challenging to provide an exact number without specific data on the community’s size and participation rates. However, it could potentially involve several individuals over the course of the project’s implementation.

Main achievements and goals obtained

Empowering immigrant communities by providing them with a platform for expression and engagement through creative processes and communal activities;

Fostering social integration and cohesion by creating spaces and opportunities for interaction and collaboration between diverse communities within Timișoara and Bucharest;

Raising awareness and promoting dialogue about the challenges and experiences of immigrant and refugee populations, contributing to greater understanding and empathy within society;

Establishing a model for future projects and initiatives that prioritize inclusivity, community participation, and cultural exchange in urban development and design;

Demonstrating the value and impact of architectural interventions in addressing social issues and promoting positive change within communities.

Monitoring and evaluation

The “co-LIZA 2.0” project likely utilises informal mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, including regular check-ins, feedback from stakeholders, documentation of activities, and periodic reviews. While there may not be a formal system in place, these methods ensure ongoing observation and assessment to gauge progress and effectiveness during the project implementation.



ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



Social Inequality: “co-LIZA 2.0” fosters social cohesion and integration among diverse communities through collective activities, reducing disparities and promoting a sense of belonging;

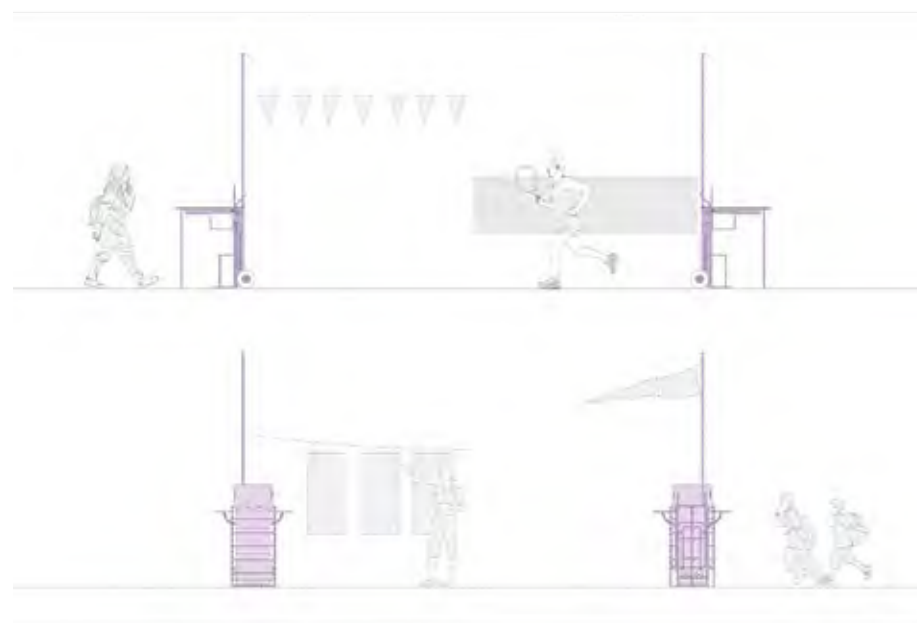
Economic Inequality: the project empowers marginalised groups by providing access to communal resources and reducing financial barriers through creative activities, thus promoting economic inclusion;

Spatial Inequality: by deploying its mobile equipment in underserved areas, “co-LIZA 2.0” democratises access to communal resources and reclaims public spaces, addressing spatial disparities;

Cultural Inequality: through culturally inclusive design elements, such as symbolic color schemes and explanatory drawings, the project promotes cultural appreciation and understanding, reducing cultural marginalisation and discrimination.

Target of the project

The target of the “co-LIZA 2.0” project comprises **marginalised groups, such as immigrants and refugees, residing in urban areas.** These communities face **challenges** including **social exclusion, economic disadvantage, and cultural discrimination, affecting their integration and well-being.** Specific parameters include diverse cultural backgrounds, limited economic resources, and legal barriers to integration. **The project aims to address these needs by providing a platform for community engagement and social inclusion,** empowering individuals and fostering resilience within these communities.



EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

Recipients of the “co-LIZA 2.0” project gain **new capabilities, relationships, and resources**, empowering them to **engage actively in their community**, build social networks, access communal resources, boost confidence, and develop skills while fostering cultural exchange and understanding.

Relationship between the practice and the local policies’ scenario

The “co-LIZA 2.0” project embodies both **innovation and coherence with local policies**, presenting a disruptive potential within urban development and community engagement spheres. Its innovative approach, leveraging mobile equipment for **communal activities**, aligns with local priorities of creativity and inclusivity. Thus, its disruptive nature lies in challenging traditional urban planning norms by introducing adaptable solutions that foster social equity and cultural enrichment, while harmonising with local policies, “co-LIZA 2.0” also presents a transformative force, redefining the **dynamics of community interaction and urban space use**.

EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

Community Workshops:

organising workshops where community members actively participate in co-designing and fabricating elements of the mobile equipment, fostering a sense of ownership and collaboration.

Artistic Collaborations: facilitating collaborations between local artists and residents.

Skill-building Workshops:

offering skill-building workshops in areas such as carpentry, painting.

Community Gatherings:

arranging regular community gatherings or picnics around the mobile equipment, providing opportunities for residents to socialise, share experiences, and strengthen social bonds.

Public Discussions and Forums: organising public discussions or forums on topics of community interest, such as urban development, social issues, or cultural heritage, where residents can voice their opinions and contribute ideas for improvement.

Example of output delivered by the project

The main output of the project, the mobile equipment, serves as a versatile platform for various communal activities such as workshops, exhibitions, and gatherings. After release, the equipment continues to be used by the community for similar events, providing a flexible and accessible space for continued engagement and interaction.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

Throughout the development of “co-LIZA 2.0”, **beneficiaries are deeply engaged in a participatory process. Initially, they contribute to contextual analyses, providing insights into local dynamics. During co-design and co-creation stages, they collaborate with designers, ensuring the final product aligns with their needs and cultural values.** Beneficiaries also partake in decision-making processes, influencing project direction. They also continue to provide feedback in monitoring and evaluation activities, ensuring ongoing relevance and effectiveness. This participatory approach empowers beneficiaries, fosters ownership, and ensures the project remains responsive to community needs and aspirations.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

During the project implementation phase of “co-LIZA 2.0”, **beneficiaries play active roles in various aspects of project execution. They mobilise community support, participate in hands-on tasks like equipment setup, and engage in capacity-building workshops.** Beneficiaries also lead community engagement activities, provide feedback for adaptation, and contribute to monitoring and reporting efforts. Their involvement ensures projects are tailored to community needs and preferences, fostering ownership and empowerment within the community.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

In the project management and delivery phase, as well as during the evaluation phase of “co-LIZA 2.0”, beneficiaries are deeply involved in various aspects: they actively participate in project oversight, decision-making, and coordination tasks, ensuring that project activities align with community needs and preferences; beneficiaries contribute to monitoring and evaluation efforts, providing valuable feedback on project outcomes and impact (their insights help assess the effectiveness of project activities and identify areas for improvement); **beneficiaries play a key role in documenting project experiences and achievements, enriching project reports and documentation with their perspectives and insights.**

MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

Detailed design and production: Andrei Savonea;
Project Coordinators: Adelina Luft (independent curator) and MNȚRplusC (Ilina Schileru);
Community Coordinator: Rashiqa Omar;
Partners: Romanian Peasant Museum, Activ Random Association, and Life in Mov;
Project co-financed by the National Cultural Fund Administration;
Photo credit: Atelier Ad Hoc.

Disciplines involved in the project

Architecture and Design:
George Marinescu & Maria Daria Oancea;

Community Development:
Rashiqa Omar

Project Management:
Adelina Luft and Ilina Schileru.

List of main sectors involved in the project

Architecture and Design Sector:
Atelier Ad Hoc;

Cultural Sector:
The Romanian Peasant Museum, Activ Random Association, and Life in Mov;

Project Management Sector:
MNȚRplusC;

Public Sector:
National Cultural Fund Administration;

Non-profit and Civil Society Sector:
Casa Jakab Toffler Association, Minitremu.

Collaborations and alliances with external community

Some examples of collaborations may include partnerships with local community centres, cultural institutions, grassroots organisations, non-profit groups, and government agencies. These external partners contribute resources, expertise, and networks to support project activities, facilitate community participation, and promote sustainability.

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

In "co-LIZA 2.0", internal collaborations within an organisation or institution may involve co-ordination between departments responsible for programme management, community engagement, cultural programming, communications, and administration.





Costruire Bellezza

2014 - Ongoing

Politecnico di Torino Università degli
Studi di Torino, City of Turin,
Cooperativa Animazione Valdocco

Turin, Italy



Useful Links



Texts by Cristian Campagnaro, Sara Ceraolo, Marco D'Urzo, Politecnico di Torino



Building bridges for marginalised people

City / Craftmanship / Innovation / Barriers / Empowerment

GENERAL INFORMATION

Description of the project

Crafting Beauty (CB) is a **social inclusion and co-crafting lab**. It is Design Anthropology-led and consists of **hands-on workshops** held twice a week. The project involves homeless people, designers, professional educators, students, social service assistants, researchers, and professionals in creative and participatory actions. **The project takes place inside a building hosting a public shelter owned by the city.** Over the years, CB has been acknowledged as a didactic venue for university teaching and as a public service for the recovery of homeless people.

Design and hands-on activity are at the heart of CB. Each workshop is led by a senior designer who accompanies design activities, oversees the quality aspects of outputs, timing and processing cycles, oversees processes, and safeguards a dialogic and inclusive approach. **The collective, practical activities on materials and objects encourage a positive and horizontal relationship among participants, who learn to collaborate.** In this way, the co-produced objects become a medium of relationship. Working on material transformation is also a way to propose, produce and visualise how some transformations are possible in homeless life. In CB, the dialogue is among peers: everyone is invited to be involved in the workshops to participate in the collective experiences and be an active member of a community of practice where the participants learn and teach mutually.

Over time, CB became a context where young designers, social workers, educators and staff from the city's social services were trained. Here, they have been able to experience new ways of doing their jobs, more horizontal and attentive to the specificities of each person in difficulty.

Main objectives

- Foster collaborations between the University, City Social Services and NGOs managing the services;
- Promote the social inclusion of homeless people by providing a context where they can develop social and practical skills;
- Promote a new educational relationship between social workers and homeless people;
- Promote the engaged role of the university and design education in particular;
- Train the skills of dialogue, empathy, collaboration in university students;
- Offering a context that encourages to design and experiment with material, techniques and creativity.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

Homeless people

University students

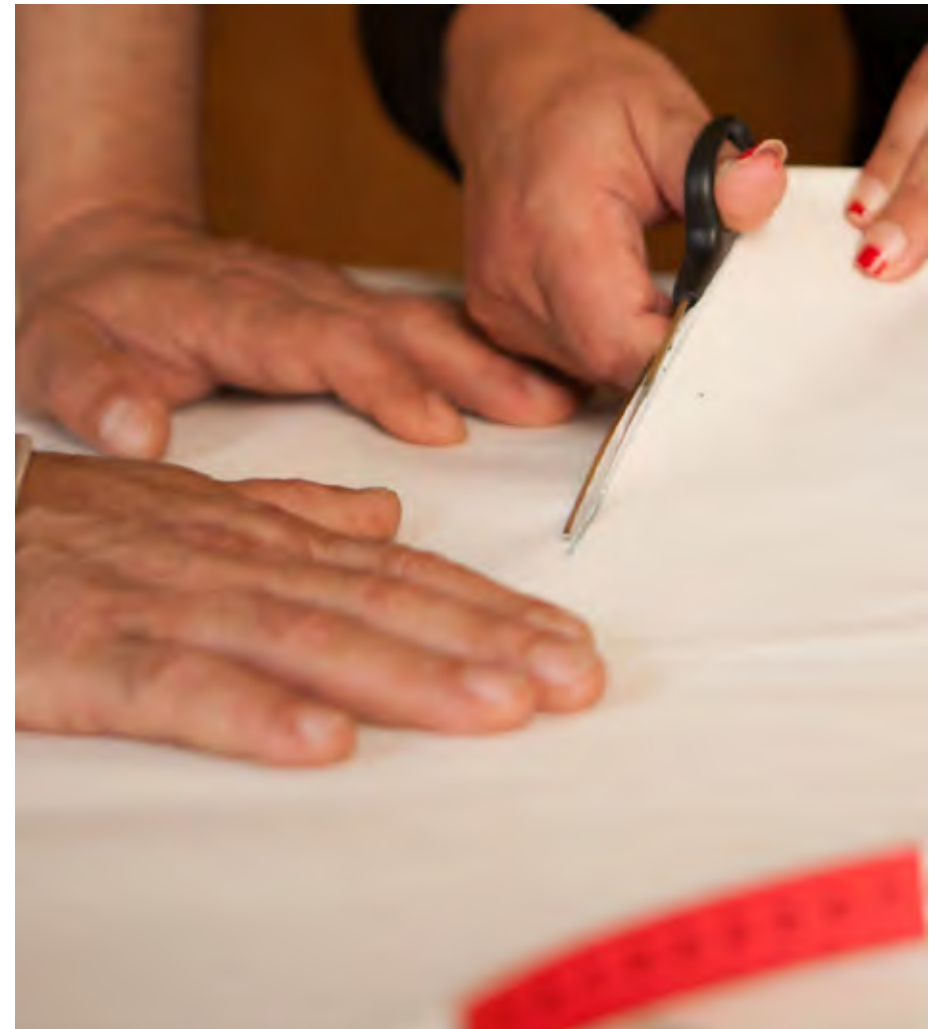
Credits

Politecnico di Torino, Dep. of Architecture and Design

Università degli Studi di Torino, Dep. of Philosophy and Educations

City of Turin, Social Services

Cooperativa Animazione Valdocco



Awards and Acknowledgements

ADI Design Index 2015 - Design per il sociale, by Italian Association for Industrial Design.

Special Mention for Applied Results 2018 by SIAA, Italian Society for Applied Anthropology

The context

CB is framed under **secondary prevention** and **social inclusion actions** aimed at reducing the risk that homelessness will become chronic during the period of stay in the system. More specifically, ensuring that this extended stay, an average of two years, does not compromise the exercise of self-determination and personal capabilities of service users.

The experience of each CB participant lasts, on average, several months, formalised through a **university internship** project, in the case of university students, and a **paid socialising internship** for homeless people.

CB benefits from a solid and consistent **co-production approach** matured through the stable involvement of all the participating organisations. This **co-ownership model** makes the project resilient and allows its operation to be adjusted periodically according to needs and stakeholders.



Main achievements and goals obtained

- The project, started as an experiment, has become a **public service** of the City of Turin.
- A **de-institutionalised analysis** of the demand for social intervention.
- The City of Turin is interested in CB as a project exploring **innovative approaches** and asks for consultancy to Politecnico di Torino upon matters of **social inclusion and social innovation**.
- **Costruire Bellezza inspired the development of several other social labs** in the City of Turin and in Italy, providing more opportunity for inclusion for homeless people via co-design.
- Many university **students** (especially designers) have been able to **develop technical and social skills**, gaining assets for their career.
- **A robust academic body of academic literature have been published to disseminate the experience** in the university environment (papers, books, dissertations,...).

Monitoring and evaluation

Designers from Politecnico, social workers from the cooperative, and the municipality monitor the homeless people's experiences via interviews and self-assessment radar charts to gather data about their recovery and well-being. The collaborative evaluation is performed three times throughout each participant's experience in CB (at the beginning, in the middle and at the end).

Number of people working on the project:

Per year, on average:
2 social workers
8 senior designers/researchers/management group
1 policymaker

11 people x 10 years =
110 people working in total

Number of primary target beneficiaries involved

Per year, on average:
15 homeless people
10 university students in internship (both design and social sciences)

25 people x 10 years =
250 beneficiaries in total

Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

Leading (4)

Politecnico di Torino - public university
City of Turin, Social Services - public administration
Cooperativa Animazione Valdocco - NGO
Università degli Studi di Torino - public university
(2014-2016)

Partners (3)

S-Nodi - Caritas Italiana (2014-2016)
Caritas Diocesana (2014-2017)
Forum Interregionale Permanente Del Volontariato Piemonte V. Aosta (2014-2016)

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



The homeless people receive a (small) monetary compensation for their engagement in CB. More in general, the CB is committed to raising attention to the condition of homeless people and the need to develop homelessness prevention strategies that include opportunities for their economic security.



CB co-design workshops are environments where many skills are taught and learnt. The exchange of knowledge is dynamic and enriched by the age and cultural differences present among the participants. Also, many relevant concepts are discussed and promoted, such as sustainability, upcycling, and reuse, proper waste collection, water-saving, and food waste.



The aim of the CB is social inclusion for the people experiencing homelessness.



Food poverty, malnutrition and food-related health issues are often present in the life of homeless people. By the “permanent” cooking workshop in CB (titled “Chef for one day”), the project solicits homeless people’s skills related to home economics, cooking, nutrition, health, and the autobiographical dimension of food, strengthening the abilities needed to provide for one’s food, safely and appropriately.



CB activities are gender-inclusive. Women and girls are encouraged to engage in the most crafty and practical actions, such as wood carpentry, woodworking, milling, and drilling. This produces a strong sense of empowerment among the female-identifying participants (students and homeless people), who gain self-confidence and a sense of self-determination due to the limitless project they can engage in.



CB relies on a public/private partnership, which is essential to the success of the project. The alliance of a public university, public administration and a private body is both a challenge and a proof of success that can inspire and foster other innovation processes.

Targets of the project

Target 1 - Homeless people

The homeless people taking part in CB are supported/monitored by the Public Social Services. While engaged in the project, they usually live in public shelters or temporary housing projects, waiting to be eligible for public housing. **Most are adults (45-60) and Italian, equally men and women.** The non-Italian participants usually come from Africa (especially North Africa - such as Morocco and Egypt- and Senegal). Most have a **low education degree**; almost all men have previous employment experience. In the case of the women, some have been stay-at-home mums or housewives or have been performing undeclared care work. Of course, **the spectrum of needs of the homeless people involved in CB is broad.** The main ones CB addresses are connected to “taking a break” from the shelter life and “being active”: having a place where they can feel safe, respected, appreciated and welcomed and where they can feel useful, to be engaged in activities. In CB, **homeless people are appreciated for contributing to the co-design of artefacts within the workshop and for their skills, talents, and creativity.** Also, they can experiment with pieces of “everyday life”, such as cooking a meal or the group or taking care of the gardens, which might be less frequent to live when missing a home.

Target 2 - University students

Most university students engaged in CB are pursuing a first-level degree, and their age is, on average, between 20 and 23. For the design students, the primary needs addressed are to work in an innovative, challenging, socially sensitive environment, where to **apply the competencies learnt at university while making a positive impact in society**, to have a place where to gain practical skills, and to go beyond the “traditional” idea of design and to experiment with new working environments where design blends with the perspectives offered by the social sciences. For the Social Science, Anthropology and Professional Education students, the need is to **experiment** with a different approach to adopt into their future career, learning how to be more attentive to the needs and the biography of the person and less institutionalised.

EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/
resources gained by the recipients
of the project

Capabilities:

Social and relational skills: patience, dialogue, capacity to listen, compromise, providing feedback, respect for others' opinions (especially if there is a significant age or cultural difference).

Self-management skills: showing up on time, dressing and addressing other people appropriately, taking care of personal hygiene, following the safety rules if using dangerous tools, and being aware of others and their safety.

Practical skills: crafting skills, such as basic carpentry, sewing with a sewing machine, decorating a wall, buying groceries according to a budget and preparing a healthy meal for other people, cleaning tools after using them.

Relationships:

CB is characterised by a substantial heterogeneity in the collaborative teams. The group welcomes different ages, life stories, experiences, and abilities. This produces meaningful relational experiences that enrich the people who take part in the project. Also, the CB promoted a robust relational environment that **engages all the main stakeholders in the project's co-production processes, fostering a sense of co-ownership.**

Resources:

In CB, people gain (or regain) self-esteem, a feeling of empowerment, self-confidence for the new practical skills developed, trust in other people, and new human relationships.

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

CB contributed to **innovating Turin's policies about homelessness and homelessness prevention**. CB provided **new insights** on homelessness prevention strategies (for instance, about the "paid social internship", where the CB's experience **highlighted the need to engage people in activities that match and strengthen their abilities in relationally stimulating contexts**). As a result of many years of collaboration on CB and dialogue between Politecnico di Torino and the policymakers, the City started a review process of the public social services, advised by Politecnico, to innovate and provide better solutions.

Regarding "organisational policies", CB also positively influenced the modus operandi of the cooperative's social workers, which acknowledge the benefits of a more horizontal and **de-institutionalised relationship** between user and operators to gain better insight into the recovery of the person. CB was disseminated in the framework of the Italian Network of Housing First and the Italian Federation for the Homeless People (FioPSD) and inspired other actions on this topic.



EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

Creative workshops on several topics: cooking, carpentry, wall painting, jewellery, tailoring, weaving, puppet making, gardening, building furniture for other places, pyrography, visual storytelling, lighting design.

Example of output delivered by the project

In CB, craftsmanship is central. The heart of the project is the workshops that involve people in projects aimed at creating two- or three-dimensional artefacts. All of CB's workshops are based on adopting simple craft techniques that are within the reach of inexperienced people. **Low-tech, mostly manual equipment is used. Projects are always inspired by a logic of upcycling, DIY, enhancement of imperfections and uniqueness.** The products made inside the workshops are split between two purposes: they can be for CB itself, to improve the venue or its activities (to furnish the rooms, improve the aesthetics, improve the functioning of pieces of furniture), or they can be commissioned by external stakeholders, which will collect the output once it is finished. In this second case, it is essential to highlight that the "external" stakeholder is also required to participate in the co-design process and co-craft the output with the group.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

The concept of CB was developed from a previous workshop experience by Politecnico di Torino, where homeless people and design students co-designed the spaces or a shelter in Verona (IT). The insights from the participants (especially the homeless people) provided

the idea of a project focused on manual, collaborative work open to the requests/needs of the public. The **dialogic relationship** between the beneficiaries and the coordination team (composed of designers and social workers) makes it possible to identify the surfacing of new needs that can be addressed by reorienting the project development at any time.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

Every participant of CB is responsible for the activities performed inside the workshop. The groups work together, helping each other, and those who are more experienced are invited to teach to the others. Every object, meal, or coloured wall is the result of the direct participation of the homeless people and the students in the activities.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

The beneficiaries are involved in simple but crucial management activities for taking care of the venue of the project, organising and tidying up the workshops rooms, setting up the table for lunch, doing the dishes, collecting the garbage. Designers, social workers from the cooperative and the municipality monitor the experience of the people involved. Similarly, the project participants are invited to conduct **periodic evaluation moments** of the project itself and their experience in it. In this way, it is possible, on the one hand, to have constant control of the functioning of CB in terms of its impact on the beneficiaries - monitoring takes place at least six times a year - and, on the other hand, to gather new insight about the people involved. **The evaluation process was co-designed by designers, social workers and municipal social services.** It is organised in three stages and integrates qualitative research methods, focus groups and semi-structured interviews, and data collection and visualisation tools using radar charts.



MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

Politecnico di Torino

Scientific coordinator: coordinates the project from the scientific point of view and manages the institutional relationships; coordinates the didactic dimension of the social lab and is legally responsible for the involvement of the design students.

Vice-coordinator: manages both CBs' long-term projects and daily life, coordinates the senior designers, and organises the activity of the workshops.

Senior designers: coordinate the workshops as tutors; oversee the quality of the co-design processes, the outputs and the relationships among the participants.

Cooperativa Animazione Valdocco

Social cooperative project manager: coordinates the educational activities and works as a connection with the municipal social services. Senior social worker(s): participates in some of the workshop activities, monitoring the well-being and the progress of the homeless people by participant observation; conducts interviews and evaluations to gather data on the homeless people for social services.

City of Turin's Social Services for Homeless People

Manager of Social Services for Homeless People: coordinates the institutional level of the alliance for the project.

City of Turin's contact person for the homeless people internships: coordinates the placement of the homeless people in CB via the mechanism of the social paid internship; makes sure that the type of engagement offered by CB is appropriate with the skill set and the personality of the homeless person.

City of Turin's social caseworkers: (specific to each homeless person) are in charge of the "file" of the homeless person and have to assess the success of the social recovery path. Politecnico di Torino and Cooperativa Animazione Valdocco are active simultaneously daily in the project. The City of Turin's Social Services for Homeless People contact persons are involved in the project according to cycles, depending on homeless people's arrivals and departures. They are more active during the self-assessment processes.

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

Design (social design, industrial design, interior design, upcycling and modelling, graphic design, strategic design, systemic design, sustainable design...)

Anthropology and ethnography

Professional Education

Sociology

Social Services and Public policy

Design + Anthropology + Professional education are at the core of the project, and they are engaged in its daily functioning. The three disciplines work together, promoting an interdisciplinary approach that combines doing - planning + listening - observing + supporting - accompanying.

Sociology

comes into play for evaluating the project and the beneficiaries' experience (6 times per year).

Social Services and Public policy

come into play more indirectly than the other disciplines. They are rarely "a presence" in the project spaces. Still, they monitor the progress of the beneficiaries and translate them into new opportunities (professional training, jobs, housing solutions, connection with other public services...). The competencies of the public policy sector are crucial to pursuing the aim of innovation expressed by Costruire Bellezza and supporting the project's continuity.

Collaborations and alliances with external community

On several occasions, CB has developed collaboration with other organisations since the involvement of "external" stakeholders is considered of great value for the workshop's activities. Some of them are: social cooperatives working in the field of homelessness, local supermarkets, NGOs engaged in food waste collection, social cooperatives working on the topic of school dropouts, volunteer and philanthropic organisations, other universities, regional and international artists and fashion designers.

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

This is not applicable since CB is not an organisation itself. However, there have been collaborations within other departments/ services of two of the main project promoters, Politecnico di Torino and Cooperativa Animazione Valdocco.

For Politecnico di Torino, CB collaborated with:

a research group engaged in the reuse of plastic textiles, hosting a workshop; research group on food design and design against food waste, hosting workshops and research experiments; building artefacts for a design art show about bicycles.

For Cooperativa Animazione Valdocco, CB:

animated several workshops to the benefit of a neighbouring social housing for kids and families; prepared meals for the hosts of the shelters managed by Cooperativa Animazione Valdocco.

➤ FRUSKA

2021 - Ongoing

MOME innovation centre, Láthatatlan
Tanoda, Deák Diák Primary School,
Zsendülő Tanoda, Gólya Community Centre

Hungary, Budapest



Useful Links



Texts by Cristian Campagnaro, Sara Ceraolo, Marco D'Urzo, Politecnico di Torino



Building bridges for marginalised people

Young people / Women / Craftmanship / Peer-to-peer

Description of the project

Understanding needs and barriers (educational, psychological, social) of the target groups: **integrating creative tools with psychological tools to empower the target group through making, strengthening their decision-making process.** Peer-to-peer element: girls can join in successive workshops as mentors. Beneficiaries build little wooden objects (frames, stools...), sometimes based on "template" objects to simplify the process, raise success rate and to work on personalisation.

The context

There are NGOs schools to compensate for segregation of the working class neighbourhood.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

Girls from disadvantaged socio-economic and culturally excluded backgrounds (aged 10–18)

NGOs that work with the target

Main objectives

- Empowerment (own perception and potentialities)
- Developing critical awareness about gender roles
- Overcoming social/psychological barriers
- Activating peer-to-peer, mentorship processes
- Creating role models for peers

Main achievements and goals obtained

Positive impact on beneficiaries from surveys

Elevating young girls exclusion condition in discourses

Number of people working on the project

1 to 5 (1 main + interns, volunteers, photographers...)

Number of primary target beneficiaries involved

50-70 people

Number and type of organisations / institutions involved

1 university, 1 NGOs, 1 primary school, 2 community centres

Monitoring and evaluation

- Survey before/after the activity based on an impact assessment framework
- Verbal self-reflection session after every session
- Visual self-reflection session after every session
- Closing circle self-evaluation after each workshop
- Participatory project, with researchers directly involved in the project

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.



Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

- Self-knowledge and self-expression
- Agency
- Technical skills (hand tools, basic design, visual skills)
- Decision-making
- Social and relational skills
- Mentoring and leadership

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

FRUSKA addresses target groups that are not addressed by the local NGO in an integrative way.



EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

- Self-reflection activities
- Participatory development of the project (ethnographic research, aims and needs of the project)
- Participatory evaluation

Example of output delivered by the project

- Object made by beneficiaries, used by them (they take them home, they own the objects)
- FRUSKA method book
- Short film projects
- Articles
- Possibility to manage workshops in a possible university course (not active now)

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

Understanding needs and desires: desires, both in functional and psychological terms (objects) and psychological (empowerment)

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

- Making
- Promotion
- Feedback through self-evaluation activities

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

- Evaluation through the tools described above
- NGOs involvement in evaluation
- Mentoring process of previously involved people

MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

1 social designer

1 education expert, focus on women (sociologist)

1 psychologist

Experts from NGO

Rotation of 1 month period for experts
Social designer always present

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

Social design, product design, woodworking

Psychology

Sociology

Pedagogy, social care (NGOs)

Collaborations and alliances with external community

NGOs, Schools, Temporary collaboration with festivals, Single collaboration with MBA of social entrepreneurship.

➤ Heartwarming Food

2021 - Ongoing

Caritas Denmark

Copenhagen, Denmark



Useful Links



Building bridges for marginalised people

Older people / Barriers / Empowerment

Description of the project

The project aims first and foremost at **addressing the problem of loneliness and isolation for elderly people with minority ethnic backgrounds**. There are not many services that directly target ethnic older people and that take language and culture into account; which is a big barrier to participation. Caritas' efforts for minority elderly people are designed around the following concepts:

1. Gathering older people around their common culture and/or language. In this way, the groups can nurture their culture and longing of their home country and speak confidentially in the language they speak best, which creates a sense of security in the group. Users prevent isolation by encouraging each other to join even on days when the body hurts and the mood is low. They remind each other of what it does for them to join the group.

2. Ensure that there is bridge-building between the different groups, as they meet for unifying activities and events. Ensure knowledge and bridge building to Danish society, so that they are strengthened in becoming self-reliant.

3. The importance of helping others rather than being passive recipients of help is meaningful; Especially in old age, where many experience losing their roles as mother, father, employee, etc. Helping others gives renewed energy and a sense of self-worth. This is done through or in collaboration with younger generations.

Caritas approach ensures easier access to the target group, ensures that correct information is shared and it increases the motivation for participants to participate, as language and culture do not hinder access to the community.

Main objectives

- **Help** the participants to **leave** their homes
- **Reduce loneliness, isolation** and improve the life quality
- **Creating social lifelines and network** amongst the participants
- **Empowering the elderly** through information and bridge building to support structures in Caritas and in society
- Empowering the elderly by having them **help others in need**

The context

Groups meet once a week. The different groups all have an element of sharing a meal included. Some cook together, others have a couple of people cooking and then they all share the meal together. Every year a specific focus helps shape some of the activities that Caritas carries out throughout the year. **In 2024 the focus is to break down barriers to public help.** This means working on **cultural barriers** to receiving help as an ethnic minority elderly, going to visit nursing homes, having the municipality explain (in respective languages) what rights you have to aid, talking about the fact that it is okay to receive public help in order to relieve your family etc.

Also in order to heighten the quality of life the groups **go on excursions to places or events where they are normally not going due to accessibility, economy or culture.**

Finally, **the groups have a social element.** Some cook for a crisis centre, some help new coming to Denmark.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

Ethnic minority elders

Awards and Acknowledgements

Laureate at Caritas Europa Innovation Festival 2022

Number of people working on the project:

1 employee and 4 user-volunteers (who are also part of the group). 1 teacher in charge of organising the students

Number of primary target beneficiaries involved

Approximately 80

Type of organisations/ institutions involved

Caritas Denmark in charge of organisation

Group of high school students who delivers food to a crisis centre for women and children

Crisis centre who receives food

Main achievements and goals obtained

Caritas have created **safe groups** for the elderly, where they are motivated to come on a **weekly basis**. Moreover, they are in contact when not together and they **motivate each other to get out of the house** – also on days where it is hard – and they **support each other in need**. Several have explained how it has **helped them deal with depression and isolation**.

Caritas have started a yearly focus for the groups to **empower** them in different ways: this year bringing closer to the **public aid accessible** to them (however not used due to lack of knowledge and/or difficulties applying as well as cultural barriers)

Twice a year Caritas unite the groups of elderly, the students and the women and children from the crisis centre for dinner, so everyone involved in the project can meet.

Monitoring and evaluation

Quarterly meetings with the users in charge in order to plan content as well as evaluate the project

Monthly listing of the numbers of participants as well as special activities

Qualitative evaluation with a few people from every group in order to get an understanding of the personal impact of the project.

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



This group – compared to Danish ethnic elders – do not access social community activities, social services and other means of support to the same extent. Moreover, they are at higher risk of loneliness and isolation and therefore more specific activities and support are necessary – especially because the number of ethnic minority elders are growing substantially and Caritas need to be able to reach out to them and aid them as they do with other elderly. However, many institutions struggle with being able to reach this particular group.

Target of the project

As a group **ethnic minority, elders** are in a particularly vulnerable life situation. They suffer from significantly **poorer physical health**, as well as a worse **mental state in the form of depression and loneliness** than Danish ethnic elderly. Language, culture, and care for the elderly are significantly different from what many have grown up with and **many suffer a deprivation of family, friends, and culture in the homeland they have left.**

They are caught in a **gap between their original culture and the Danish culture.** In the culture of their origin, old age means living with your family who take care of you. However, most have lived in Denmark for many years and their children have integrated into a Danish life and culture, which means work, independent living and a big focus on their own children and daily life. **This means that old age becomes very different than expected.** Most of the elderly live on their own and children do not have as much time for them as would have been the case in their country of origin. Moreover, at a society level, there is still the perception that ethnic minority groups take care of their elders and therefore do not need much support from society. Due to this, **there are not many activities and support aimed at helping and creating network for elderly with other ethnic background than Danish.**

Up to 30% of older migrants in the 65-74 age group are described as economically poor, whereas among Danes it is only 1%.

Ethnic minority elders are perceived as 'elderly' ten years earlier than ethnic Danish people – defined by their physical and mental state of being.

EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

Many in the groups have formed a very **strong relationship with each other.** One of the participants expressed through our early qualitative evaluation expressed: "I had many problems and later I developed depression, eventually being diagnosed with the second stage of depression. This was because I was alone for a very long time. I got very scared to get to the kitchen or even the bathroom alone and was constantly afraid that something would happen to me (...) Then one day, my friend gave me an idea that there is a Pakistani women's group that I could join. I thank my friend and these women, who have helped a lonely person to find a new perspective on life again. We have sufferings in our bodies which we do not feel when I am here and think that I am feeling good and am a healthy person. I feel like I have started a new life." This yearly focus on **breaking down barriers to accepting public aid and support has as well relieved many of worries.** After hearing – and seeing – nursing homes the fear of potentially going there has decreased.

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

There are no similar local practices involving the people in a similar way. The municipality is involved in part of the activities.

EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

- **In every group there is one or two leaders, responsible for being the link between the group and the Caritas Programme Coordinator.** These are always people who are a part of the user group in order to ensure that needs and activities are carried out according to the group and as a way to make individuals and the group grow and develop from within.
- **The yearly focus is created with participants from the group.**

Example of output delivered by the project

- **Support in between different groups of elderly people.**
- **A network of spontaneous mutual support.**

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

Meeting with several of the future participants help in defining wishes and needs and in structuring activities.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

As mentioned, **the people responsible of the group are a part of the target group themselves. They give input to what activities are implemented as well as responsible for all the communication with the rest of the group,** making sure they sign up for special activities, encourages them to show up, communicate with the groups in their mother tongue (or the language that they prefer) etc.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

- Regular quarterly meetings with the people responsible of the groups.
- Qualitative evaluations in order to always get an in depth understanding of how the project impacts the life of the individual.

MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

Caritas Programme Coordinator is responsible for the overall programme, development, finance and evaluation. In the steering group the members' most important role is to **ensure that the needs of the participants are implemented in the programme activities and that there is a cultural and linguistic understanding.** Moreover they are responsible for being the personal link to the group.

The people responsible are continuously in contact with the Programme Coordinator in order to ensure reliable communication with the group

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

- Understanding of elderly needs
- Cultural understanding
- Volunteer management
- Activity coordination
- Monitoring and evaluation

Collaborations and alliances with external community

- A nearby highschool where students help deliver the food made by one of our groups to a crisis centre
- Crisis centre
- Church and congregation
- Municipality in order to connect the elderly with them and vice versa

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

The organisation try to connect the elderly groups with the social services that Caritas Denmark offers. This being mainly Caritas Legal aid, Caritas Health Clinic.



Inclusive Editorial Team

2020 - Ongoing

Caritas Upper Austria

City of Linz, Austria



Useful Links



Building bridges for marginalised people

People with disabilities / Barriers / Empowerment



Texts by Marc Somers, Caritas Europa, in collaboration with Barbara Schinner, Caritas Oberösterreich

GENERAL INFORMATION

Description of the project

The Inclusive Editorial Team of Caritas Upper Austria **publishes articles in the media on relevant topics**. In addition to editorial work, the team participates in press conferences and workshops on specialised topics. The idea is to **encourage and empower people to express their opinions on different issues and in turn make them public**. The visibility of people with impairments is thus also increased in this context.

Main objectives

- Even more connections with other teams (it is already happening)
- Valid employment contract for one of our team members

Primary target users/beneficiaries

People with disabilities / Caritas employees / Society

The context

Since 2019, the **participation of people with disabilities** in various committees (departmental conferences, closed meetings) has increased in the department of support and participation. There are often reports about people with impairments in various media. The people concerned can **rarely speak out in a journalistic way**. Through the **inclusive editorial team, content, history and opinions can be conveyed towards an equal society**.

Number of people working on the project:

14 people are members of the team

Type of organisations/ institutions involved

Caritas Upper Austria

Awards and Acknowledgements

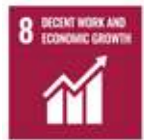
Caritas Europa Innovation Festival /
Lighthouse Project 2023

Achievements and goals obtained

- Award Lighthouse Project 2023 of the Caritas Europa Innovation Festival
- Deep Dive innovation in Valencia (September 2023)
- Project management for the editorial team
- A website
- Connections with other editorial teams



ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



There are often reports about people with impairments in various media. The people concerned can rarely speak out in a journalistic way. Through the inclusive editorial team, content, history and opinions can be conveyed towards an equal society. In addition to editorial work, the team participates in press conferences and workshops on specialised topics. **The visibility of people with impairments is thus also increased in this context.** A creative process such as the Inclusive Editorial Team offers the opportunity

to live inclusion. Besides the pure news value, journalism offers a platform to bring different perspectives to the world. **Topics such as discrimination in everyday life due to an impairment are discussed and dealt with.** Current issues that concern and interest the members are also part of a diverse journalistic approach. The project is therefore based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and contributes to the following areas: Good health and well-being, decent work, reduced inequalities, peace, justice and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Target of the project

The target group consists of **people who like to work as journalists and who want to make their opinions and concerns known in the public sphere.** The participation of Caritas staff is very important, as inclusive settings are desired at all levels. The inclusive editorial team therefore also acts as a role model for others. The Inclusive Editorial Team of Caritas Upper Austria consists of 9 stakeholders from the Department of Accompaniment and Participation of Caritas Upper Austria, 4 staff members and an external communication expert. The editorial team meets and consults with each other at eye level.



EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/
resources gained by the recipients
of the project

Mutual learning and support is practiced.
The Inclusive Editorial Team decides together
which journalistic formats to work with.

Relationship between the practice and
the local policies' scenario

The team is becoming better known as it regularly contributes to internal media on various topics, interviews and news. In addition, the members take part in press conferences, are present and write about the lived conferences. This presence has an effect on the whole of Caritas Upper Austria and external political or other actors have already been interviewed. The editors have also been interviewed on important topics such as "personal assistance" by the Austrian radio station Ö1 or were part of a press conference in Vienna on the topic of "inclusion in the labour market of people with disabilities". **The editors are also increasingly taking on the role of presenters at events and reporting on the experience afterwards.** They are trying to assist in different kinds of events in the region of Upper Austria. Cultural events as well as political discussions are part of the target group. They are also initiating participation in already existing events. For example the international day for women on the 8th of march where the Inclusive Editorial Team reclaimed the rights for women with disabilities. Therefore one of the team members is performing a text about self-determination.

EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities
carried out within the project

- Publishing articles in media and news
- Interview on radio station Ö1
- Being part of a press conference in Vienna on the topic of "inclusion in the labour market of people with disabilities"
- Taking on the role of presenters at events and reporting on the experience afterwards.
- Conducting interviews with film directors and actors
- Organising of a big party at the LENTOS Art Museum in Linz (for the international day for people with disabilities on the 3rd of december)

Example of output delivered by
the project

- Articles on newspapers
- Articles Caritas website
- Articles published on other websites
- Radio interviews
- Short movies

All articles are published on the Caritas website
and are therefore permanently available for use.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the
project development phase

The team was developed and launched together with people with disabilities. All clients were informed that it was possible to become a team member. The said people showed interest and it was started very soon.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the
project implementation phase

A first face-to-face meeting with all members took place in 2020. **All information is written in plain language.** There are editorial meetings where everyone gets together.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the
project management / delivery /
evaluation phase

The editorial team meets and consults with each other at eye level. **Mutual learning and support is practiced.**

MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

The inclusive editorial team of Caritas Upper Austria consists of **members from the specialist area of accompaniment and participation for people with disabilities**. The members build a stable and permanent team, but are open for new members. They always work in tandems on different issues. The Tandems always consist of a Caritas employee / external journalist and a person with disabilities. The editorial team meets and consults with each other at eye level.

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

A colourful mix of people with different competences and from different fields. For example, Sue Sametinger accompanies the project as an external person. That means she is a **journalist and independent communication consultant**. Two people are from the **public relations team** of Caritas Upper Austria. Barbara Schinnerl is the head of **Pedagogical Controlling**, Sabine Nemmer is a **peer counsellor and advocate**. Stefan Eberhard is responsible for **AAC and Simple/easy Language in Pedagogical Controlling**. The rest of the team consists of stakeholders for different areas such as work and housing.

Collaborations and alliances with external community

The Inclusive Editorial Team is mainly active in the province of Upper Austria. In terms of networking with other Caritas organisations, nationally and internationally, (Erasmus+ Cologne, Easy/Simple Language Workshop Balkans, Caritas Europa).

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

Collaborations between the communication department and the department of pedagogic controlling and the self advocacy members of the Caritas Upper Austria



➤ Mobile Library BookTruck

2021 - Ongoing

Asociația Culturală Cărțile pe Față

Cluj County, Romania



Useful Links



Building bridges for marginalised people

Young people / Mobile / Rural areas / Informal education / Empowerment

Description of the project

The “BookTruck” project is an initiative led by Victor Miron and the Asociația Culturală Cărțile pe Față, aimed at bringing books directly to children in rural areas. Through mobile libraries housed in trucks, the **project delivers a diverse selection of books to underserved communities, providing access to educational resources and promoting literacy.**

The primary goal is to **bridge the gap in access to books and educational materials for children living in remote villages.** Each BookTruck carries around 1500 books, donated by individuals and publishing houses, as well as titles specifically purchased for children.

The trucks visit rural schools and communities, allowing children to borrow books for free. The project operates on a **rotating basis, ensuring that children have access to fresh reading material regularly.** Moreover, the BookTruck initiative goes beyond book distribution. It organises various activities to engage children, such as reading clubs, puppet shows, and cultural events. Additionally, professionals from different fields are invited to inspire children and broaden their horizons regarding future career options.

Since its inception, the project has expanded to include multiple BookTrucks, each serving a different region. The ultimate vision is to **establish a network of mobile libraries covering all rural communities in the Cluj County**, serving approximately 100 children per school weekly.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

- Primary target users/beneficiaries for the “BookTruck” project include children in rural areas, schools, parents and families, local communities, volunteers and contributors, and educational and cultural institutions.
- Children in rural areas are the primary beneficiaries, gaining access to diverse reading materials and educational resources they might not otherwise have. This initiative promotes literacy and encourages a love for reading among children who have limited access to books.
- Schools in rural communities benefit from the BookTruck by receiving a wider range of books for their students, enhancing the learning experience and promoting reading habits. Teachers can use these resources to enrich their teaching methods and foster a culture of reading in the school environment.
- Parents and families indirectly benefit from the project as it encourages reading at home and promotes literacy within households. The BookTruck provides families with access to books they might not be able to afford or access otherwise.
- Local communities where the BookTruck operates benefit from increased access to educational resources and cultural activities. The project fosters community engagement and promotes a culture of learning and curiosity.

- Volunteers and contributors play a crucial role in the project, contributing their time, resources, and expertise to make the initiative successful. Volunteers gain satisfaction from supporting a meaningful cause and making a positive impact on children’s lives.
- Educational and cultural institutions benefit from the promotion of literacy and cultural activities in rural areas. The project helps these institutions reach underserved communities and expand their impact on education and culture.

Main objectives

- Provide access to books for children in rural areas;
- Promote literacy and a love for reading among children;
- Bridge the gap in educational resources between rural and urban areas;
- Offer diverse reading materials covering various subjects and genres;
- Engage children in educational and cultural activities;
- Inspire children to explore new interests and career paths;
- Foster community involvement and support for literacy initiatives;
- Establish a sustainable network of mobile libraries covering all rural communities in Cluj County side;
- Serve approximately 100 children per school weekly, reaching a total of 75 rural communities.

The context

The “BookTruck” project operates in rural areas of Cluj County, Romania, where access to books and educational resources is limited. **Many villages lack proper libraries, and families often cannot afford to buy books.** Moreover, the **digital divide is prominent**, with limited internet access and technology in these areas. The project started during the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated existing challenges. Lockdowns and school closures isolated children further, depriving them of educational resources and social interaction.

Victor Miron, founder of the Asociația Culturală Cărțile pe Față, recognised the need to address these issues. He initiated the “BookTruck” project in 2021, with the first mobile library visiting rural communities. The success of the initial venture prompted the launch of additional BookTrucks. The context of rural Romania poses unique challenges. Many families rely on agriculture, and educational opportunities are limited. Children often lack exposure to diverse experiences, impacting their personal and intellectual development.

Despite these challenges, there is a **strong sense of community in rural areas.** Schools play a central role, serving as hubs for socialisation and learning. However, resource constraints hinder their ability to provide a rich educational experience.

The BookTruck project aims to fill this gap by bringing books and cultural activities directly to children. By engaging with schools, communities, and volunteers, the project seeks to promote literacy, inspire creativity, and broaden horizons for children growing up in rural Romania.

Number of people working on the project:

The number of people working on the project overall includes:

Victor Miron (Project Founder and Coordinator);

Volunteers (number may vary over time);

Contributors and donors;

Collaborators (such as professionals invited to engage with children).

Number of primary target beneficiaries involved

Children in rural areas - this would depend on the population of children in the targeted rural communities. It is estimated that around 100 children per school, and if the project aims to serve approximately 75 rural communities, it could involve around 7,500 children overall.

Teachers and school staff - each school where the BookTruck operates will have teachers and other staff members involved. Assuming an average of 10 staff members per school, then it would involve around 750 staff members overall.

Families and parents of the children - considering an average of 4 family members per child, involving parents, siblings, and other family members, it could encompass around 30,000 individuals overall.

Community members - this involves residents of the rural communities where the BookTruck operates, including local leaders, volunteers, and supporters. It is estimated that an average of 50 community members per community, leading to around 3,750 individuals overall.

Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

The "BookTruck" project involves a multitude of organisations and institutions collaborating to bring books and educational opportunities to rural communities. While the exact number of institutions involved may vary, here are the key types of organisations typically engaged in such initiatives:

Asociația Culturală Cărțile pe Față - This is the main organisation leading the project, responsible for its coordination and management;

Schools - Rural schools partner with the BookTruck, providing locations for book distribution and engaging students in reading activities;

Local Government Bodies - Municipalities and county councils support the project, offering logistical assistance and resources;

Publishing Houses - These organisations donate books or offer discounts to support the project's goals;

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) - NGOs focused on literacy and education collaborate with the BookTruck, contributing resources and expertise;

Community Centres - These centres provide spaces for project activities and events.

Corporate Sponsors - Companies provide financial support and donations to help sustain the project;

Libraries - Local libraries collaborate with the BookTruck, offering additional resources and support; Cultural Institutions - Museums, theatres, and cultural centres participate in cultural activities organised by the BookTruck;

Volunteer Organisations - Volunteer groups provide manpower and support for various project activities;

Educational Institutions - Universities and educational organisations offer expertise and resources to enhance the project's impact;

Media Outlets - Newspapers, radio stations, and online platforms provide coverage and promotion of the project.

Main achievements and goals obtained

- Increased Access to Books;
- Promotion of Literacy;
- Educational Enrichment;
- Community Engagement;
- Cultural Enrichment;
- Inspiration and Empowerment;
- Increased Book Distribution;
- Establishment of Mobile Libraries;
- Regular Book Borrowing;
- Positive Impact on Education;
- Community Support;
- Cultural and Social Development.

Monitoring and evaluation

The "BookTruck" project employs a structured system for monitoring and evaluation, ensuring its effectiveness and impact.

Regular data collection is conducted to track book distribution, participation in activities, and other relevant metrics. Additionally, there is a feedback mechanism in place where **participants, including children, teachers, and volunteers, provide input on the project's activities and outcomes.** Project Coordinators conduct **monitoring visits to observe** the implementation of activities and assess their effectiveness. Formal evaluation tools, such as **surveys or questionnaires**, are used to assess the project's impact on literacy, educational outcomes, and community engagement.

Apart from the formal monitoring and evaluation system, the project is observed through direct observation and informal

feedback mechanisms. Project Coordinators and volunteers directly observe the implementation of activities and interactions with participants. Informal feedback from participants, such as verbal feedback during activities or through informal conversations, provides insights into the project's effectiveness. The project relies on active engagement with the community, allowing Project Coordinators to gauge community perceptions and support. Furthermore, active engagement with participants, such as children and teachers, allows Project Coordinators to observe their level of participation and interest in project activities. While there may not be a formal system for monitoring and evaluation, these approaches ensure that the project's progress and impact are continually assessed and adapted to meet the needs of the community.

Credits

1) Initiator and Founder
Victor Miron.

2) Project Management
Victor Miron.

3) Organisation

Asociația Culturală Cărțile pe Față.

4) Contributors
Donors (individuals and publishing houses);
Volunteers.

5) Supporters
Various professionals and experts invited to engage with local communities and schools.



ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



The project tackles inequalities by providing access to quality education, specifically in rural areas where access to educational resources is limited. By bringing books directly to these communities, the project ensures that children, regardless of their geographic location, have access to educational materials and opportunities for learning;

Specifically the project aims to improve literacy rates and learning outcomes among children in rural areas. By promoting reading and providing diverse reading materials, it contributes to enhancing literacy skills, critical thinking, and overall academic performance, thereby reducing disparities in educational achievements;

Furthermore the "BookTruck" project promotes inclusive education by reaching out to marginalised and underserved communities. It ensures that children from all backgrounds, including those living in remote areas or facing socio-economic challenges, have equal access to educational resources and opportunities;



Also the project addresses gender inequalities by providing equal access to books and educational opportunities for girls and boys. It encourages girls' education and literacy, contributing to closing the gender gap in education and empowering girls to pursue their aspirations;



By focusing on rural communities with limited access to resources, the project helps reduce inequalities within and among countries. It provides children in rural areas with the same educational opportunities as those in urban areas, thereby mitigating disparities and fostering social inclusion;



Finally the project empowers communities by involving them in decision-making processes and actively engaging with local stakeholders. By collaborating with schools, families, local authorities, and volunteers, the project strengthens community resilience and promotes sustainable development.

Target of the project

This project targets children living in rural areas, addressing their needs for improved access to educational resources. These children face various challenges due to their geographical location and socio-economic status. Limited access to books and education is a significant issue, as rural communities often lack libraries and educational facilities. Socio-economic challenges, such as poverty and unemployment, further hinder children's access to books and learning materials. Geographical isolation exacerbates these issues, making it difficult for children to access educational opportunities available in urban areas. Additionally, the digital divide is prominent, with limited internet access and technology in rural areas, leading children to rely solely on traditional resources like books for learning.

The condition of vulnerability affects their lives in several ways. Educational disadvantages are common, with limited access to resources impacting academic performance and future prospects. Limited career opportunities perpetuate cycles of poverty and inequality. Social exclusion is also prevalent, as children may feel marginalised due to their lack of access to educational resources. Furthermore, cultural disconnection is an issue, as children may feel disconnected from broader cultural and intellectual experiences.

Specific socio-demographic parameters in the target population include low-income families struggling to afford educational resources, rural communities lacking access to educational facilities, minority or indigenous groups facing cultural and linguistic barriers, and girls who may encounter gender-specific challenges. The "BookTruck" project aims to address these needs and challenges by providing children in rural areas with access to books and educational opportunities, promoting literacy, and empowering them to reach their full potential.

EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

Children develop improved reading, writing, and comprehension skills through regular access to books and reading activities;

Access to diverse reading materials broadens children's knowledge and understanding of various subjects and topics, fostering intellectual growth;

Reading stimulates critical thinking skills, enabling children to analyse information, solve problems, and make informed decisions;

Exposure to different narratives and storytelling encourages creativity and imagination among children, inspiring them to think outside the box;

The project empowers children by providing them with the tools and resources they need to succeed academically and pursue their aspirations;

Through participation in project activities, children develop relationships with peers, teachers, volunteers, and other members of the community, fostering a sense of belonging and social connection;

Interaction with professionals and experts from various fields introduces children to new role models and career opportunities, inspiring them to explore different paths;

Exposure to cultural activities and diverse reading materials enriches children's understanding of their own culture and the world around them, promoting cultural awareness and tolerance;

As children improve their literacy skills and engage in educational activities, they gain confidence in their abilities, enhancing their self-esteem and self-efficacy; Participation in project activities opens up networking opportunities for children, allowing them to connect with individuals and organisations that can support their educational and career goals;

Recipients gain access to a wide range of resources, including books, educational materials, and learning opportunities, which they can utilise to support their learning and personal development.

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

Innovation: the "BookTruck" project introduces an innovative approach to addressing literacy and education challenges in rural areas. It leverages mobile libraries to bring books directly to communities, circumventing traditional barriers to access. This innovative approach aligns with the need for creative solutions to improve education, particularly in underserved areas.

Coherence: the project demonstrates coherence with local policies aimed at promoting education and literacy. By providing access to books and educational resources, it supports the objectives of local education policies focused on improving literacy rates and educational outcomes. The project's goals align with broader efforts to enhance educational opportunities for all children, regardless of their location or socio-economic status.

Disruptiveness: the "BookTruck" project can be seen as disruptive in its departure from traditional approaches to education delivery. It challenges the status quo by providing an alternative model for delivering educational resources, particularly in areas where traditional infrastructure is lacking. This disruption is positive, as it addresses gaps in access and promotes innovative solutions to long-standing challenges.



EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

- Reading Clubs - organising reading clubs where children gather to read and discuss books together, promoting interaction and critical thinking;
- Storytelling Sessions - hosting storytelling sessions where children listen to stories read aloud or share their own stories, fostering creativity and imagination;
- Book Selection Workshops - involving children in the process of selecting books for the BookTruck, empowering them to choose materials that interest them and reflect their preferences;
- Community Read-Aloud Events - hosting community read-aloud events where children, parents, and volunteers take turns reading aloud from books, promoting family engagement in literacy;
- Book Discussion Groups - facilitating book discussion groups where children can express their opinions and thoughts about the books they have read, encouraging critical thinking and communication skills.

Example of output delivered by the project

Mobile Libraries: the BookTrucks are equipped with shelves stocked with a variety of books. After the project ends, these mobile libraries continue to serve as a vital resource for rural communities, providing ongoing access to

books for children and families. They travel to different locations on a regular schedule, ensuring continuous access to reading materials;

Educational Materials: the project distributes educational materials such as workbooks, activity sheets, and learning aids to supplement reading materials. These materials are used by children to reinforce their learning and develop various skills, such as literacy, numeracy, and critical thinking, even after the project's activities have concluded.

Reading Records: each child's borrowing and reading history is recorded during the project. After the project ends, this data can be used to track reading habits, identify reading preferences, and assess the impact of the project on literacy rates and reading behaviour in rural communities. It helps inform future literacy initiatives and tailor book selections to better meet the needs of the community.

Community Engagement Events: the project hosts various community engagement events, such as book fairs or cultural performances. After the project ends, these events contribute to building community cohesion and promoting a culture of reading and learning in the community. They may inspire ongoing community-led initiatives to promote literacy and education.

Partnership Networks: the project establishes partnerships with local schools, libraries, NGOs, and other organisations. After the project ends, these partnerships continue to facilitate collaboration on literacy initiatives, resource sharing, and community development projects. They serve as a foundation for ongoing efforts to support education and literacy in rural areas.

Educational Workshops and Training Materials: the project conducts workshops and provides training materials for teachers,

volunteers, and community members on literacy promotion and educational strategies. After the project ends, these materials can be used for capacity building and training programmes, ensuring sustainability and continuity in literacy efforts.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

Beneficiaries are integral to the development of the “BookTruck” project, actively participating in various phases, particularly in the context analysis and identification of factors influencing project implementation. Through surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, beneficiaries, including children, parents, teachers, and community members, **express their needs, challenges, and priorities regarding education and literacy**. They provide feedback on proposed project activities, contribute ideas and improvements, and collaborate in brainstorming sessions to identify factors influencing literacy in their communities. Additionally, beneficiaries engage in **participatory mapping exercises** to identify existing resources and areas lacking access to educational materials.

They collaborate with Project Coordinators in problem-solving, **designing solutions tailored to their community's needs**. Beneficiaries also participate in **design workshops to co-create project activities and materials**, ensuring cultural relevance and responsiveness to local needs.

Prototypes of project activities are tested and refined with input from beneficiaries before full implementation. Throughout the project development phase, beneficiaries are engaged in continuous feedback loops, allowing them to provide input on proposed activities and adjustments based on their feedback. Their active involvement ensures that the “BookTruck” project activities are relevant, inclusive, and effective in addressing the specific needs and context of rural communities, promoting ownership, success, and sustainability.



Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

Beneficiaries are actively involved in the implementation of the “BookTruck” project, contributing to various aspects of its execution. **Children, parents, teachers, and community members** participate in project activities such as borrowing books from the BookTruck, attending reading clubs, and engaging in educational workshops.

Community members volunteer to support project activities, assisting in organising events, supervising reading sessions, and helping with book selection and distribution. Children and community members are also involved in selecting books for the BookTruck, ensuring a diverse and appealing collection. Their feedback on project activities, materials, and events is crucial for assessing effectiveness and making necessary adjustments. Beneficiaries become advocates for the project within their communities, promoting the importance of reading and education.

They support each other in reading and learning, fostering a supportive environment. Additionally, beneficiaries actively participate in celebrating project milestones and achievements, reinforcing their sense of ownership and pride. Community members also contribute to discussions about project sustainability, brainstorming ideas for maintaining impact after the initial phase. Overall, their active involvement ensures that project activities are meaningful, relevant, and impactful, contributing to the project's success and sustainability.

MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

Education Specialists: education specialists are involved in designing literacy programmes, selecting appropriate reading materials, and creating educational workshops tailored to the needs of the target audience. They ensure that project activities align with educational objectives and pedagogical principles;

Community Development Specialists: community development specialists work to engage with local communities, build partnerships, and facilitate community involvement in project activities. They ensure that the project is culturally sensitive and responsive to community needs;

Librarians: librarians are responsible for managing the BookTrucks, selecting books, organising library materials, and coordinating borrowing activities. They ensure that the BookTrucks are stocked with diverse and age-appropriate reading materials;

Child Development Specialists: child development specialists provide expertise in child psychology and development, ensuring that project activities are age-appropriate and support children's cognitive and socio-emotional growth;

Event Coordinators: event coordinators are responsible for planning and organising project events, such as reading clubs, workshops, and community engagement activities. They ensure that events run smoothly and effectively engage participants.

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

Education Sector: educational institutions and professionals play a significant role in designing and implementing literacy programmes, selecting reading materials, and providing educational support to children;

Community Organisations: community organisations collaborate with the project to engage local communities, mobilise volunteers, and facilitate community participation in project activities;

Publishing Industry: publishing companies donate books and provide expertise in selecting and sourcing reading materials for the BookTrucks;

Local Government: local government agencies support the project by providing logistical support, access to community spaces for project activities, and sometimes financial assistance;

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs): NGOs contribute expertise in community development, education, and project management, assisting in programme design, implementation, and monitoring.

Collaborations and alliances with external community

Collaborations with external community organisations are vital for the “BookTruck” project’s success. **Partnerships with local schools, libraries, and community centres provide resources and space for activities.** **Businesses** offer financial support, while **NGOs** bring expertise in education and community development. **Government agencies** provide logistical support, and volunteers assist in organising events. These collaborations enhance the project’s reach and impact in promoting literacy in rural areas.

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

Collaborations and alliances between several services within the same organisation/institution are essential for the effective implementation of the “BookTruck” project. The education department collaborates with the outreach team to design literacy programmes and educational workshops tailored to rural communities, ensuring effective delivery. Library services work closely with the book acquisition team to curate the BookTrucks’ collection, sourcing appropriate reading materials. The logistics department supports the event planning team in coordinating logistics for project activities, ensuring smooth operations. The community engagement team collaborates with the communications department to promote project activities and engage with the local community. The monitoring and evaluation team works closely with the programme development team to assess the project’s impact and inform programme improvement. **These collaborations ensure a well-coordinated approach and responsiveness to community needs.**

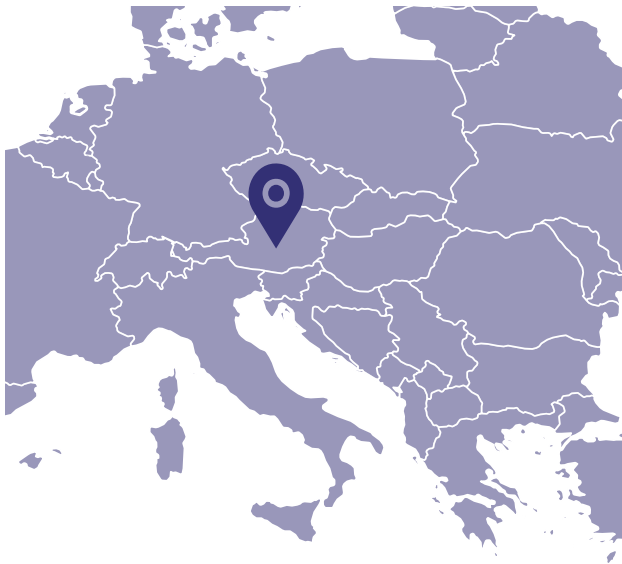


Mutfluencer*innen

2021 – 2023

Teach for Austria, abz* Austria,
young Caritas Vienna, Ashoka

Vienna, Austria



Useful Links



Building bridges for marginalised people

Young people / Peer-to-peer / Empowerment / Innovation

Description of the project

The “**Mutfluencer**” (Engl. courage influencer) programme aims to **strengthen the creative, innovative and social impulses of young people with a special focus on disadvantaged youth**, and to support them in coping better with crisis-related stress. The selected Mutfluencers (16 - 29 years old) **design and carry out their own projects and act as multipliers within their communities according to the peer-to-peer approach**. On the one hand, they are strengthened in their skills and attitudes by the programme itself; on the other hand, their peer projects sow courage within their generation. The peer projects should have a **social impact on the respective communities** of the Mutfluencers and can be related to art and culture, sports, encounters, neighbourhood transformation, film and media, IT, sustainability, safe spaces for marginalised groups, workshops, book projects and much more - there are no limits to creativity.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

Young adults (**age 16 - 29**), who are affected by the Covid19 crises, and their peers. **The focus is on young people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds**, in particular with experience of flight or migration, women/girls, LGBTIQ+.

Credits

Teach for Austria
abz*Austria
young Caritas Vienna
Ashoka

Awards and Acknowledgements

European Citizens' Prize of the European Parliament 2023

CEIF Lighthouse Innovation Award 2024

Main objectives

Impact direct beneficiaries (Mutfluencers):

- Acquisition and improvement of important soft and hard skills
- Community and networks for future perspectives and support
- strengthen mental health and learn self-care and mental hygiene
- strengthen self-efficacy/resilience/self-confidence and develop potentials
- strengthen educational and vocational pathways, thereby protecting against (social) poverty and isolation

Impact indirect beneficiaries (Peers):

- find offers for network building, perspective broadening and social participation
- be inspired to become active/socially engaged as Mutfluencers themselves
- thereby be protected preventively against poverty and isolation

Impact for society:

- lived social, political and economic participation of the young generation
- Empowerment of women/girls and LGBTIQ+ persons and gender equity
- strengthening mental health and resilience within the younger generation reducing child and youth poverty and social inequalities

The context

Children and young people belong to a group that is particularly at risk of poverty and exclusion. The multiple crises (corona, war, climate, inflation) have exacerbated this situation, particularly in the area of (social) poverty and isolation. **Economic disadvantage and poverty lead to loneliness, increased emotional stress and can ultimately have a serious impact on physical and mental health.** Physical and/or psychological problems in turn exacerbate the risk of poverty, creating a vicious circle from which it can be very difficult to escape. This makes it all the more important to strengthen young people in their self-efficacy and participation so that they do not get into this situation in the first place.

In addition to the stresses mentioned above, the young generation feels increasingly ill-prepared for their professional future and life.

Only a quarter of the young people surveyed stated that they felt prepared for the future at school.

Furthermore, young people feel that their interests, concerns and ideas are not heard enough in society and are not taken seriously, which often leads to resignation and withdrawal. Young people want more opportunities to implement their own ideas, be independent and learn social and economic skills.

The **Mutfluencer** programme addresses precisely these problems by offering young people a **framework to develop their own ideas and implement them together**. They learn the skills they need, are allowed to try out their independence and are given a platform to discuss and express their concerns, ideas and wishes.

Number of people working on the project:

15 – 20 people within 2 years.

Number of primary target beneficiaries involved

88 Mutfluencers reached 9.000 Peers via 63 implemented projects.

Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

4 departments of NGO's (Caritas Vienna, young Caritas, Teach for Austria, abz* Austria)

Main achievements and goals obtained

The aim of this programme was to **encourage** young people to implement their own ideas and to **discover** their **strengths and potential**. Additionally, the aim was to increase the Mutfluencers' self-confidence and stamina.

But it was also meant to **inspire the peers**, the environment and the visitors/consumers of the Mutfluencers' projects to become active. The results show that not only the Mutfluencers but also the environment and the peers were encouraged and **have taken courage**.

General project goals

With the Mutfluencers' increased social commitment, feelings of isolation, fear of the future and psychological stress are countered and **positive values and attitudes are developed**. **Participants get to know and try out alternative and innovative approaches and test them independently to address social challenges**. The young participants ultimately create a constantly growing multiplier effect, which has a positive impact. The lasting impact of this project is significant, as it empowers peers to share the knowledge they gained and pass on the topics developed after the end of the project. Moreover, this project provides a valuable opportunity for young people and marginalised young people

free of charge. Meaningful leisure activities not only provide enjoyment but also contribute to the social inclusion of young people and their networking.

Specific project goals

Ability to work in a team, non-violent communication, personality development, positive values and attitudes, self-confidence.

Hard skills

Project management, organisation, time management, financial knowledge, public relations, branding.

Network

New contacts, new friendships, cooperations, prospects for the future, opportunities to participate and being seen.

(Mental) Health

Self care, resilience, de-stigmatising mental health issues, development, courage.

Monitoring and evaluation

The project team did an impact assessment after the IOOI-model. In the first year, 41 Mutfluencers manually completed a questionnaire and the team drafted a final report for the impact assessment. In the second year of the programme, an anonymous quantitative Google Forms survey was conducted and 34 out of 88 Mutfluencers participated. Additionally, evaluations after the training sessions were completed, and a final report was drafted. In order to better understand the sustainability of their projects, 4 qualitative interviews were conducted with Mutfluencers. The focus was also on the Peers and the Mutfluencers' environment. For this purpose 6 qualitative interviews were conducted with Peers and 3 qualitative interviews with the Mutfluencers' family. Additionally the project's progress was monitored by the project lead, via regular team meetings and steering group meetings with the partner organisations.

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



The "Covid generation" is the target group of the Mutfluencer programme as it is focusing on young people who are particularly affected by the crisis: young people at risk of poverty and young people with or without a refugee or migration background. As the programme provides participants with a network, new skills, self-confidence and a community, it strongly prevents them from poverty and **offers them professional and educational opportunities for the future**.



Due to the pandemic the "Covid generation" is suffering from mental health problems. The elimination of taboos, **raising awareness of mental health problems and learning methods of self-care are crucial steps in addressing the problem**.



Gender equality and diversity is also an important focus of the programme, women, girls and members of the LGBTIQ+ community are particularly supported.

Target of the project

The Mutfluencers programme has a lasting impact on the Mutfluencers themselves, their Peers and society in general. Many of their implemented projects will continue, since the programme aimed to empower the participants sustainably. It is clear that the community, the network, the skills learned and the motivation have a positive influence. The risk of poverty is reduced, since they have better education and career opportunities.

EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

Adolescents and young adults experience **improved self-efficacy, mental health and self-confidence**. They have the necessary soft and hard skills as well as a support network which empowers them to inspire other young adults as multipliers. By creatively overcoming the challenges faced by their generation, they prevent youths and young adults from (social) poverty and isolation. Young people need inspiration within their own generation to take courage and become active themselves. The American author and activist for children's and youth rights, Marian Wright Edelman, sums it up well: "You can't be what you can't see". This is why it is so important to see and experience positive examples of social engagement by young adults from their own lives and communities, and that is also why this programme not exclusively focusses on vulnerable youth, but also on other youth who have good ideas with a social impact, so they can learn from each other and build new networks for their future. **The programme also intended to interlink the Mutfluencers with other youth empowerment initiatives**, such as the Generation Changemaker project from Ashoka or the Growing Youth Potential project, an Erasmus+ funded project of the Social Impact Awards and YEP Austria (Youth Empowerment Participation) network. **This will give them further opportunities to develop their potential and networking.**

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

The project was not linked to local policies, but it hopes that it will have positive effects for marginalised and disadvantaged youth

EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of output delivered by the project

Some Mutfluencer projects have now grown into social businesses or projects with extensive funding. One project group is even planning to found their own association. They will reach even more young adults and will motivate them. The skills they learned for resilience and self-care, as well as openly dealing with psychological stress during the programme will help them in countering the increased stress caused by the pandemic. The new friendships can prevent isolation and strengthen mental health. Some Peers have joined sports clubs and will thus benefit on a general health level in the long term. The main focus of numerous projects was the promotion of women, girls and queer people. More than half of 88 Mutfluencers consider themselves female or queer. **The fact that so many young adults now have a platform for their ideas and wishes has strengthened them as a generation and motivated them to continue being socially involved.**

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

Potential Mutfluencers are reached through social media campaigns, partners in youth work, youth centres, etc. Regarding the selection process of the Mutfluencers certain attention has to be paid to diversity and maximum long-term impact. The programme aims to empower project participants to the extent that they can act as multipliers in their respective environments (school, work, family, community) against the consequences of the Covid crisis. The programme focuses especially on young people from disadvantaged groups, e.g. young women and girls or people who have a background in flight and migration, and is actively looking for new ideas, potentials and talents. These are encouraged and the participant's empowerment is strengthened by enabling them to be more confident about their future.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

Each selected mutfluencer receives a personal coach and is assigned to a peer group that will support him or her until the end of the project in order to ensure the development of personal relationships. **Each mutfluencer receives a tablet as a technical work tool, which they are allowed to keep afterwards. From the very beginning, the mutfluencers receive support for their ideas and undergo a 4-day training course on crisis management, project management, teamwork, communications and public relations.** They write their own financial and project plans and are supported throughout the entire 9-month project duration through individual, group and peer group coaching sessions. Additionally, **coaching sessions** are supplemented by webinars and action days, providing Mutfluencers a platform for peer-to-peer collaboration. Each peer project is allocated a project budget of € 2300.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

The Mutfluencers carry out their own projects and act as multipliers using a **peer-to-peer approach**. The programme focuses on the young multipliers' experiences, worlds, needs and ideas. According to the peer-to-peer approach, they are strengthened in their self-efficacy and empowered to offer affected people new perspectives, offers and opportunities for action against the social consequences of poverty and exclusion. For this purpose, workshops, coaching and project days, offer important know-how and support. The projects are presented at the end of the project period with a final presentation and celebration. Furthermore, there is an opportunity to participate in project days that offer additional workshops and networking opportunities. Together with their trainers, **Mutfluencers design their own evaluation methods for their projects and participate in the ongoing feedback and final evaluation.**

MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

Each partner organisation had:

- 1 project manager
- 1 financial expert
- 1 communication/public relations expert
- several trainers for peers (1-5 per partner)

They all worked together depending on the role. There were regular steering group meetings of the management and financial team, and team meetings within the 4 teams but also across teams with all the trainers.

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

Political Science, Social Work, Social and Cultural Anthropology, International Relations, Communication, Pedagogy, Business Administration, Economics.

Collaborations and alliances with external community

Collaboration with 2 external organisations: Teach for Austria and abz* Austria.

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

Collaboration between Caritas Vienna and young Caritas.



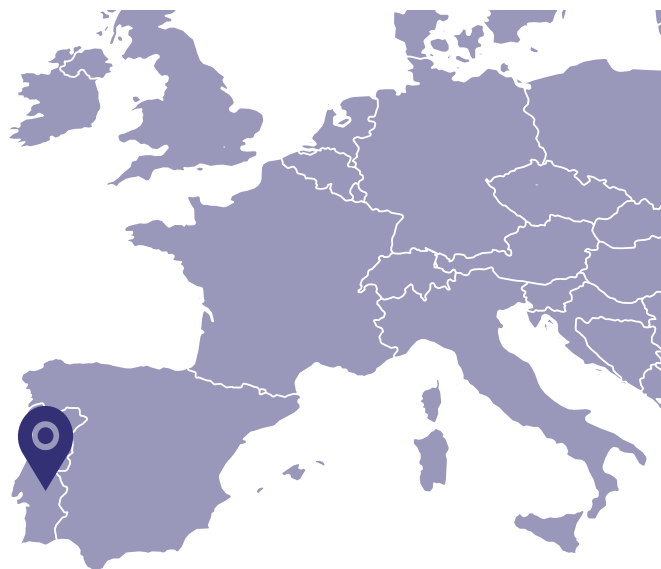


Pharaon - Pilots for Healthy and Active Ageing

2019 - Ongoing

Caritas Coimbra

5 districts of the
central region of portugal



Useful Links



Building bridges for marginalised people

Older people / Access to technology

Description of the project

Pharaon project aims to develop and implement **citizen-focused solutions and design an integrated care system** (planning, integrated infrastructures and processes, knowledge sharing).

The overall objective of this project is to **provide support for Europe's ageing population by integrating digital services, devices, and tools** while maintaining the dignity of older adults and enhancing their independence, safety, and capabilities, in 5 EU Countries.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

The direct beneficiaries of the Pharaon project are **older adults and their associated community**, including formal and informal caregivers and volunteers.

Main objectives

- **Engage with the Community:** enable the entire community to participate in activities and interact with each other. This objective includes two services: proximity volunteering and City Audit Tours & Together City and Nature.
- **Build Capacity:** promote learning opportunities for the entire community.
- **Safe and Comfortable Environment:** promote a safe environment, as well as the possibility of obtaining quality services.

Awards and Acknowledgements

Lighthouse Project 2024 by Caritas Europa (Innovation Festival 2024)

The context

Pharaon project was designed to address these social problems:

- **Promote Social Cohesion:** vital to inclusion, involves multilevel governance and local capacity for coherent policies.
- **Reduce Isolation and Loneliness:** loneliness and social isolation heighten health risks, making social participation crucial for healthy ageing. This project seeks to boost autonomy, well-being, and resilience among older adults through digital tools and interaction.
- **Promote Accessibility and Proximity Services:** integrated care is indispensable as many health and social care services lack integration. IT platforms can enhance access and service provision, particularly in low-density areas.
- **Promote Capacity Building and Awareness:** Smart Cities aim to connect people and services, fostering green economy, citizenship, and cultural traditions. Citizenship involves active community participation, environment, and tools. Cultural traditions contribute to active citizenship and a sense of cultural heritage.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Pharaon Project Pilots for Healthy and Active Ageing, financed by the European Union, and related to the programme Horizon 2020 and respond to this programme periodic monitoring/ evaluation.

Number of people working on the project:
6 (Cáritas Coimbra)

Primary target beneficiaries involved

In total, to date, Cáritas Coimbra pilot have engaged 451 people, distributed as follows: Older Adult (Experimental) - 142 | Older Adult (Control) - 133 | Professionals (Formal Caregivers) - 62 | Others (Informal Caregivers) - 66 | Others (Volunteers) - 48.

Number and type of organisations/ institutions involved

The Pharaon consortium is a partnership of large, medium, and small enterprises, research organisations, universities, authorities in the field of health, public and private health service providers, social organisations, health institutes and standardisation bodies. The consortium was constructed to ensure representation and participation both internationally and across sectors. Altogether 12 countries are represented by 40 partners. These partners will join to develop and deploy the Pharaon platforms in 5 countries. In Portugal, the consortium has 7 partners (CDC, UCMare, SCMA, UBI, Glintt, OWL, EXMETRICA).

Main achievements and goals obtained

Pharaon is an ongoing project. Cáritas Coimbra is monitoring various aspects in both older adults and caregivers, such as quality of life and loneliness. Based on the **data collected**, it can now confirm that after approximately 6 months of intervention, there has been a reduction in loneliness and an improvement in the caregivers' quality of life. In terms of performance results, over **120 training sessions** have been conducted for all participants. To assess the entire intervention across all groups, approximately **1,500 questionnaires** have already been completed. Approximately **45 volunteer actions** and around **30 services** for older adults are planned to be provided by April 2024.

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



The Portuguese pilot of the Pharaon project is based on the concept of **Healthy Cities**. Cáritas Coimbra pilot seeks to invest in people, promote inclusion, encourage community participation, and consider the health of the planet. The goal is to build a network of supporters to bring the community together, especially around those who need it most.

Target of the project

The project aims to address the **needs and realities of older adults**, recognising the challenges and opportunities associated with ageing. The initiative seeks to **enhance their quality of life, well-being, and autonomy by creating smart, age-friendly environments**. These older adults are likely to have diverse needs related to health, mobility, social inclusion, and access to services, and the project aims to engage with them and involve them in the **design and development** of these environments to better meet their requirements. The project also aims to promote **community cohesion and collaboration** to support the frailest individuals among the older population, addressing localised environmental problems and unhealthy living conditions.

EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

Cáritas Coimbra, with Pharaon project, had included in its services, three types of technology:

SENTAB, a secure social network that allows people to **share information, communicate through messages or video calls, and be part of different communities**. It is also possible to create events where participants are informed about activities. All individuals, older adults, formal and informal caregivers, and volunteers are involved in this online community and can access with their mobile, tablet or internet browser.

Citizen app, where users can **georeference photos taken by them and receive notifications about the location of green and blue areas in their city**. Through the map, they can obtain information about the temperature of these spaces. Users can also view natural areas of interest, biodiversity, and see what has been reported to improve in these natural areas. The user can add new biodiversity areas and report places of interest to other citizens. In the news/feed option, users will be informed about

what is happening in the Citizen community. **Zensi**, a **mattress sensor with an app, alerts caregivers when the older adult stays out of bed longer than usual**. In this way, the caregiver feels more relieved because they know that the person under their care is well, and the older adult also feels more accompanied. They have access to weekly reports with sleep patterns that can improve the care they provide.

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

This project aims to **leverage the most effective active ageing practices and simultaneously exert influence on both local and national policymakers** to promote active and healthy ageing in smart, healthy, and age-friendly environments.

EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

- **Individualised training sessions** on digital literacy.
- **Training sessions** to all target groups.
- **Activities promoted by the volunteers**, mostly to older adults, such as manicure sessions, oil painting on canvas, painting Christmas balls, storytelling, individual conversations, presentations on topics from actuality, information sessions on the importance of sleep, board games, assistance in writing letters to family, and many other activities.
- **Services on Demand** involve activities that assess the needs of older adults to provide more opportunities and new experiences (for example workshops for painting, gardening, music, aromatic candles, cognitive stimulation games or functional writing, physical exercise)
- **Visits** to natural spaces in the city of Coimbra. On-site, participants took part in Science Citizen events, learned more about plants, trees, and animals near them.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

In the Pharaon project, the participant engagement with the target group involved in the project development phase (Older adults and formal caregivers) started in co-creation and Pre-validation phase.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

The project started with information sessions about the project. Afterwards, each member who agreed to participate was provided with all information regarding their involvement through informed consent. After providing the technology, digital literacy sessions were held for each participant for them to fully integrate the activities developed by the project. Whenever necessary, the project team was present to ensure continued support and necessary adaptations.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

The target group is directly involved in the evaluation phase of project results. This data will be collected at the end of the pilot phase and will be essential for evaluating the project and its impact.

MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

Diverse professionals from **multidisciplinary backgrounds participated** in the pilot project developed and executed by Cáritas Coimbra, including psychologists, social workers, jurists, social cultural developers, communication and financial managers, and designers, with the aim of ensuring the highest level of contribution in each phase of the project.

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

The Pharaon consortium is a partnership of large, medium, and small enterprises, research organisations, universities, authorities in the field of health, public and private health service providers, social organisations, health institutes and standardisation bodies. The consortium was constructed to ensure representation and participation both internationally and across sectors.

Collaborations and alliances with external community

Some collaborations and alliances with external community bodies/ organisations were created in Pharaon Project.

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

Cáritas Coimbra involved several departments and social responses throughout the project.

➤ Social entrepreneurship as a tool for fighting social exclusion and poverty

2018 - 2021

Caritas Šabac

Municipality of Bogatić, Serbia



Useful Links



Building bridges for marginalised people

People with disabilities / Job training / Empowerment

Texts by Marc Somers, Caritas Europa, in collaboration with Mirojub Nikolic, Caritas Serbia

Description of the project

Caritas Šabac in Serbia successfully managed to establish two enterprises to facilitate the professional **rehabilitation and employment of individuals with disabilities**, resulting in the employment of 12 people with disabilities. Additionally, 10 vocational training sessions, based on 10 curricula, were conducted to benefit 60 individuals with disabilities, with each participant receiving a personalised plan.

A significant effort was made to raise awareness among the general public and stakeholders about the challenges faced by people with disabilities and to highlight the opportunities within the social economy. Caritas Šabac played a crucial role in contributing to the **drafting of legislation on social entrepreneurship**.

Regarding awareness activities related to social economy opportunities, three informational sessions were held involving 92 stakeholders, and two study visits showcasing best practices in **social economy** within Serbia were organised, with a total of 16 participants. Furthermore, two conferences took place in Bogatić: one focusing on the funding of two social enterprises and another serving as a closing ceremony. Despite an initial prediction of 120 participants, 276 individuals attended the two conferences.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

People with mental disability

Awards and Acknowledgements

Award within Finance4SocialChange project

Main objectives



Enhance access to rights and meet the needs of vulnerable people, fostering social economy and social awareness at a broader level.

The context

Since 2000, Caritas Šabac has tried to promote in Serbia an innovative approach, based on **the Italian model of community-based care for people with mental disability, for fostering employability and creating new employment opportunities for people with physical and mental disabilities**. Through activities of social entrepreneurship, Caritas Šabac has managed to combine social welfare services with the creation of business opportunities for people from vulnerable groups. The long-term vision supporting these activities aims at **developing beneficiaries' skills and making them autonomous and capable of entering the job market**. Caritas Šabac has already accomplished significant results in this field, like the set-up of an agriculture farm in Bogatić, and the provision of significant social welfare services, like a day-care centre and home care activities, for which it obtained two licenses or like the establishment of ten laboratories, and ten training sessions which were organised for 60 beneficiaries. The laboratories include gardening, laundry services, primary food production (fruits and vegetables), secondary food production (jams and preserved food), trade, pottery, cleaning services, and kitchen. Moreover, there is a significant history of collaboration at EU level with organisations such as Caritas Italiana and COSM (Consortium of Social Enterprises from Italy), as well as obtaining grants from EU projects in this field have contributed to make CŠ a pivotal actor in the development of **new community-based services for mental-health care in Serbia and in the promotion of social entrepreneurship**.

Number of people working on the project:

12 People

Primary target beneficiaries involved

60 Beneficiaries

Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

Ministries – 2
Chamber of social protection – 1
Institute for social protection – 1
Local self-governments – 4
Social protection systems – 4
Health care systems – 2
Educational systems – 2
NGOs – 2
International organisation – 1

Main achievements and goals obtained

- 2 social enterprises for professional rehabilitation and employment of people with disability established;
- 10 training curricula developed;
- 60 unemployed people with disability trained;
- 12 people with disabilities employed;
- 3 informational sessions with 92 stakeholders organised;
- 2 study visits organised;
- 2 conferences with 276 participants organised.

Monitoring and evaluation

An external evaluation and audit were arranged to assess the project's progress. The evaluation comprised quantitative assessment through indicator tracking and qualitative assessment that beneficiary interviews. Both methods indicated a high level of achievement in meeting the project goals.

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



In line with the UN Agenda 2030, particularly Goal 3, which aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages, and includes the target to reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being by 2030, the project develops and implements a community-based mental health service that offers individualised care plans to prevent hospitalisation and support reintegration into society.



Additionally, aligning with Goal 10, which seeks to reduce inequality within and among countries, and its target to empower and promote the social, economic, and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status, the project greatly reduces the stigma and promotes the inclusion of individuals with mental health issues through job training and placement services. Furthermore, adhering to Goal 4, which focuses on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, and its target to ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote

sustainable development, including education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development, underscores the importance of the project in aiming to train social workers and mental health professionals through comprehensive educational programmes that enhance their capacity to support individuals with mental health issues in community settings.

By focusing on these comprehensive strategies, **Serbia is aiming to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for individuals with mental health issues, reducing the reliance on hospitalisation and promoting overall well-being**, thus aligning with the goals and targets set forth in the UN Agenda 2030. According to a research done by Caritas Italiana (Caritas Italiana, 2015), **60% of the people with mental diseases in Serbia are unemployed, while 20% of them are occupied on an occasional basis**. Even if Serbia has tried to approve laws which could improve and affirm rights for such vulnerable people, prejudice and stigma represent still a huge obstacle for their active inclusion in the society, as well as the absence of programmes for helping them to develop labor-valuable skills. The development of this kind of services is also fully in line with Europe 2020's objectives, as well as with the goals and priorities set by the EU in both the Standards for Pre-Accession Process and the Indicative Strategy Paper for Serbia 2014-2020. At a local level, the cooperation with institutions and Italian associations have allowed Caritas Šabac to establish, develop and improve services in this field, like the establishment of the Day-Care Centre "Sveta Sofija" and receiving a license for these activities from the Ministry. This project is conceived as an additional piece to the commitment of Caritas Šabac in this field.

Target of the project

The project envisages the involvement of different target groups; for what concerns Caritas Šabac, the staff involved were:

- 1) 2 people which will deal with the entrepreneurship's management (administration, organisation and finance);
- 2) 8 persons would be employed, trained and involved for realising and organising the structure of the activities in the laboratories such as gardening, laundry services, cleaning services and primary/secondary food production.
- 3) 2 professionals (social service expert and coordinator)
- 4) 2 members of Caritas Šabac were trained for dealing with the follow-up activities and assisted the beneficiaries in searching for jobs and entering the labour market.
- 5) About 60 beneficiaries who worked and were trained in the laboratories, as well as motivated about their future perspectives. This is not a fixed number, since the aim is to help their entrance in the labour market. Furthermore, since, among the activities, there is also the involvement of other local and/or potential entrepreneurs who were informed about the possibilities and opportunities deriving from boosting social economy, it was expected that the total number of members involved, in the first period of the project, would be about 100.

For what concerns the selection criteria, Caritas Šabac has already a well-structured cooperation with the local Centre for Social Work and with the hospital, which means that often such structures recognise Caritas Šabac experience and require its intervention

in caring about people with mental-health problems, based on individual plans. For such reasons, this collaborative scheme with the local medical and social institutions will be kept to be able to receive the highest number of people in need and maintain a close contact with the territory.

For what concerns the final beneficiaries, it is foreseen to reach about 800 beneficiaries:

- 1) about 200 adults with mental health diseases who suffer from social exclusion;
- 2) the members of their respective families (about 500), who benefited also from the users' increased autonomy, both from a social and economic point of view;
- 3) about 50 local and/or potential entrepreneurship, who were informed on social economy opportunities and benefits;
- 4) about 20 representatives from other NGOs and from the public sector to boost transversal cooperation in this field.



EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

This project, by establishing a new kind of enterprise, met all the needs above mentioned: providing information to stakeholders and public institutions, training the staff in the development of a more human, patient-centred and future-oriented approach, while spreading good practices also with other **entrepreneurs**, who **needs to overcome prejudices and appreciate the benefits of social economy**. For what concerns the beneficiaries, they were inserted in a place different from the typical hospital and will continue to live close to their families and social context; at the same time, they will be supported in dealing with their disease, while being motivated in developing skills and life-goals, which can help them to find and **grab new opportunities, in a virtuous cycle between medical assistance, boosting of social economy and increasing of employment**.

Firstly, the project aimed at ensuring the capacity-building of Caritas Šabac staff through the launch of the new entrepreneurship and laboratories. Vocational training involved also professional staff coming from public health and social welfare institutions, **Final beneficiaries' wishes and attitudes were taken into consideration in redacting the individual plan and while supporting them in job-seeking activities**, while their families will have access to counselling services and better access to information.

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

The project presents innovative and transversal patterns which try to **tackle social exclusion and financial deprivation of such people by actively involving them in the building of their future**, while spreading best practices, inherited also from the Italian approach, throughout an environment which, until now, has proved to not be very receptive. **The most important contribution is the attempt to foster employment opportunities through social economic activities and to create growth opportunities for the whole community**. Furthermore, the project represents a major step toward a better-articulated cooperation between the civil society sector and public one. The project is also environment-friendly, since many activities will be artisanal and/or will take place in rural premises.

EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

- **Establishment of enterprise for employment**, support and rehabilitation of people with mental health diseases
- **Establishment of laboratories for skills-development activities**, such as: primary food production, secondary food production (jams, preserved food); catering, laundry services
- Support in **job-seeking activities**
- **Training and motivational activities**

Example of output delivered by the project

- Two enterprises for professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities established within the Action;
- 10 training curricula for work inclusion of people with disabilities created;
- 24 persons employed, 12 of them people with disabilities; 60 individual plans created.
- 10 vocational trainings realised and 60 people with disabilities trained in 10 different work areas.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

People with mental disabilities are involved in the identification of the project through a comprehensive **person-centred approach designed to address their specific needs and constraints**. This approach focuses on ensuring that they remain integrated within their communities and families, rather than being isolated or institutionalised. The project emphasises transforming these individuals into an added value for the local economy and social context, rather than seeing them as burdens.

To achieve this, the project provides individuals with mental disabilities with **essential information about available social support systems and job opportunities**, ensuring they are well-informed about the resources at their disposal. Additionally, **the project includes tailored assistance in developing new skills that are aligned with the local market demands**, thereby enhancing their employability and ability to contribute economically.

The involvement of people with mental disabilities is further supported by a dedicated staff-to-patient ratio, which ensures that everyone receives personalised attention and support. This ratio allows for the creation of individualised care plans that cater to the specific needs and abilities of each person, facilitating their successful integration into the workforce and broader society. Furthermore, **the project aims to sensitize and educate social workers, medical professionals, and local entrepreneurs about the potential and capabilities of individuals with mental disabilities**. By highlighting the importance of not limiting interventions to medical care alone and instead adopting a **holistic perspective** that includes **social and economic integration**, the project seeks to foster a more inclusive and supportive environment.

CŠ through the project maintains a close collaboration with local medical and social institutions, such as the Centre for Social Work and hospitals, which recognise the expertise of the project team and frequently seek their intervention in caring for people with mental health problems. This collaborative scheme ensures a steady referral system and close contact with the community, maximising the project's reach and impact.

Through these multifaceted efforts, **the project aims to benefit approximately 800 individuals, including 200 adults with mental health issues who face social exclusion, their 500 family members who will benefit from their increased autonomy, 50 local and potential entrepreneurs informed about social economy opportunities, and 20 representatives from other NGOs and public sector entities to promote transversal cooperation in the field of mental health**. This comprehensive involvement of people with mental disabilities ensures that their voices and needs are central to the project's design and implementation, promoting their social and economic inclusion

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

In the project's implementation phase, both target groups, comprising staff members and individuals with disabilities, are actively involved, each contributing unique roles and perspectives to ensure the project's success. The staff, including those responsible for entrepreneurship management, social services, coordination, and follow-up activities, play essential roles in executing various aspects of the project. They manage administrative tasks, organise resources, provide necessary support services, and coordinate activities to ensure smooth operations. Their expertise and dedication are instrumental in driving the project forward and achieving its objectives. Simultaneously, individuals with disabilities

actively participate in the implementation phase by **engaging in laboratory activities** and contributing to the project's goals. Through their involvement, they not only gain valuable skills and experience but also play an active role in shaping their future prospects. Their input and feedback help tailor services and activities to better meet their needs and aspirations.

Moreover, the project's participatory approach ensures that **beneficiaries have a voice in decision-making processes**. They are involved in co-creating individualised plans, setting goals, and providing feedback, thereby ensuring that services remain responsive to their evolving needs. This collaborative approach fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment among beneficiaries, promoting their active participation and engagement in the project. Overall, the involvement of both staff members and individuals with disabilities in the implementation phase is essential for realising the project's objectives and creating meaningful impact. **By leveraging the expertise and experiences of all stakeholders, the project can effectively address the diverse needs of individuals with disabilities and empower them to lead fulfilling lives within their communities.**

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

During the project management and delivery phases, individuals with disabilities actively participate in various project activities and tasks. They contribute to the execution of laboratory work, attend training sessions, and engage in skill-building exercises. Their involvement not only ensures the smooth delivery of project services but also allows them to directly benefit from the opportunities provided by the project. Through hands-on participation, individuals with disabilities gain practical experience, develop new skills, and build confidence in their abilities.

Furthermore, in the evaluation phase of the project results, individuals with disabilities continue to play a critical role. By filling in evaluation questionnaires, they **provide feedback on their experiences with the project, including the benefits received, challenges faced, and suggestions for improvement.** This feedback is essential for assessing the project's impact from the perspective of those directly affected. It helps project organisers understand the strengths and weaknesses of project activities, identify areas for refinement, and make informed decisions for future project planning and implementation.

Overall, the involvement of individuals with disabilities in the project management, delivery, and evaluation phases is integral to the project's success and effectiveness. **By actively engaging with the target group throughout the project life cycle, project organisers ensure that interventions remain responsive to the needs and preferences of individuals with disabilities.**



MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

The project steering group comprises key stakeholders who play essential roles in guiding and supporting the project's implementation. These members include the **Municipality of Bogatić, Consorzio Operativo Salute Mentale Italy, and Caritas Šabac**. The relationship and collaboration between the beneficiaries are characterized by a **high level of synergy**, stemming from their previous experience in implementing EU-funded projects and their longstanding partnership. At the onset of the project, all partners signed a Memorandum of Understanding, reaffirming their commitment to collective action. Throughout the project, the Municipality of Bogatić provides invaluable institutional support and actively assists Caritas Šabac in organising and implementing various activities, such as **roundtables, information sessions, and conferences**. Similarly, Consorzio Operativo Salute Mentale Italy brings expertise in social and work inclusion for people with disabilities, particularly mental disabilities, drawing from Italy's successful examples in **deinstitutionalisation**. Their involvement motivates professionals and institutions from both Italy and the international community to participate in the project. Together, these members collaborate closely with Caritas Šabac to ensure that the project achieves its objectives and strives to apply best practices in social and work inclusion within the Serbian context.

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

In the implementation of projects aimed at addressing social and economic inclusion for individuals with disabilities, various disciplines and sectors come together to provide a holistic approach to skills development and empowerment.

The project involves professionals from diverse disciplinary backgrounds, each contributing unique expertise to the endeavor. In the **realm of agriculture and horticulture**, specialists oversee gardening, primary food production, and floriculture laboratories. They impart knowledge on sustainable cultivation practices, equipping beneficiaries with skills in planting, harvesting, and floral arrangement. Additionally, **experts in hospitality and culinary arts** manage laundry services, kitchen operations, and catering, providing beneficiaries with training in essential hospitality skills. This includes laundry management, food preparation, and event catering, preparing them for employment opportunities in the hospitality industry.

Furthermore, **the project includes a food processing and preservation specialist** who supervises a laboratory focused on secondary food production. Here, beneficiaries learn food preservation techniques such as jam-making, adding value to agricultural produce and promoting food sustainability. **A business and trade expert oversees the trade laboratory**, offering guidance on market analysis, pricing strategies, and sales techniques. They empower beneficiaries with entrepreneurial skills, enabling them to explore opportunities in trade and entrepreneurship. In the **realm of arts and crafts**, a professional manages the pottery laboratory, fostering creativity and artistic expression among beneficiaries. This sector provides opportunities for skill development and potential income generation through artistic endeavours. Lastly, an **expert in cleaning and sanitation services** supervises

a laboratory focused on cleaning services, providing beneficiaries with training in sanitation protocols and cleaning techniques.

This sector promotes hygiene and cleanliness, preparing beneficiaries for employment in cleaning-related occupations.

The project engages various sectors, with agriculture and horticulture providing the foundation for activities through three laboratories. These sectors offer opportunities for hands-on learning and sustainable agriculture practices. Additionally, the hospitality and culinary arts sectors, with three laboratories, equip beneficiaries with practical skills for employment in the hospitality industry. The food processing and preservation, business and trade, arts and crafts, and cleaning and sanitation services sectors each contribute to the project's objectives through specialised training and skill development.

The involvement of diverse disciplinary areas and sectors in the project demonstrates a comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. By leveraging expertise from various fields, the project aims to empower beneficiaries with the skills and knowledge needed for social and economic inclusion. Through hands-on training and practical learning experiences, beneficiaries are equipped to pursue employment opportunities and contribute positively to their communities.

Collaborations and alliances with external community

Municipality of Bogatić: As a co-applicant and reference self-government, the Municipality of Bogatić has demonstrated an excellent relationship and a willingness to embrace new approaches and services. Their positive attitude towards the Action has facilitated strong collaboration with social and health institutions such as the Social Welfare Centre and Health Centre. The inaugural activity of the Action, a roundtable, took place at the city hall of the Municipality of Bogatić. The Municipality has actively supported the organisation of informational sessions and conferences and has been involved, through relevant local bodies, in working with people with disabilities. Their commitment to improving living conditions for vulnerable groups is evident.

Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs: The Ministry has maintained a very good relationship and expressed openness to new approaches and services. During the registration process for enterprises dedicated to the professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities, representatives from the Ministry, particularly from the Sector for Employment, displayed a cooperative attitude. A crucial meeting regarding the registration of enterprises was organised on March 2nd, 2020, with the participation of Mirko Janic, State Secretary at the Ministry, demonstrating interest in the Action and the inclusion of people with disabilities.

A notable example of successful collaboration between NGOs and state authorities in Serbia is evidenced by two roundtables and conferences where representatives from state institutions and various non-governmental stakeholders participated, expressing a desire to contribute to the creation of beneficial legislation on social entrepreneurship. Key participants included a representative of the Prime Minister, the director of the Serbian Social Protection Chamber (who

assisted in organising the roundtables and conferences), representatives from the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, and local authorities. Caritas Šabac has cultivated excellent collaborations with local partners, stakeholders, and associates, as evidenced by the strong attendance at roundtables, informational sessions, and conferences. Numerous meetings have been held with various stakeholders, particularly entrepreneurs. Notably, Caritas Šabac has recognised the positive intentions of the Association of Enterprises for Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of People with Disabilities to assist in the **establishment of new enterprises and the efforts of the Coalition for the Development of Solidarity Economy to enhance the legislative framework surrounding social entrepreneurship.**

Caritas Šabac has also fostered exemplary collaboration with subcontractors, who have acknowledged the social dimension of the Action and have demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing social issues through their services.

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

Caritas Šabac integrates its existing social protection services, including day care centres and assisted living facilities, with the newly established laboratories and training programmes.



Talking Hands

2016 - Ongoing

XYZ association

Treviso, Italy



Useful Links



Texts by Cristian Campagnaro, Sara Ceraolo, Marco D'Urzo, Politecnico di Torino



Building bridges for marginalised people

Young people / Empowerment

GENERAL INFORMATION

Description of the project

Artistic workshop that uses design and visual communication as a tool to build communities with marketable product lines.

The context

Treviso has been welcoming many migrants since 2016 as a result of the humanitarian crisis (full of Cold War barracks abandoned after the fall of the wall and converted). People stuck in CAS in forced immobility (at least 2 years of waiting), not all of whom are recognised for asylum, a population of homeless young migrants emerges.

Main objectives

- Remove people from the enforced inactivity of CAS;
- Experimenting and co-designing new post-colonial design languages;
- Create forms of micro-income;
- Create a territorial network of solidarity;
- Create paths of professional and social autonomy, capacitation and training;

Primary target users/beneficiaries

Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. Other **excluded categories** (pensioners, second generation)

Awards and Acknowledgements

Design index iap (pre-selection compasso d'oro social design category);

Shanghai Public Art Institute 1st prize

Number of people working on the project:

3 - 4 persons

Primary target beneficiaries involved

10-15 in the first phase of "shelter space", after 4-5

Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

ASGI Network of Lawyers on Migration Issues

Caf ADL Cobas

Some academic collaborations with Alice Rawstorn

Main achievements and goals obtained

- Contribution of the project to construct a media counter-narrative of the migration phenomenon
- Obtaining legal status for all people who have passed through the atelier
- Offering legal, educational, livelihood services in addition to the size of the laboratory
- Construction of a circular recovery network from local manufacturing companies

Monitoring and evaluation

There is no formal system. As long as they do not achieve the main goal (exit from the CAS, legal status) it's not over. For now, there is a lack of in-depth reflection on economic sustainability.



ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



- Respond to the absence of basic needs (health service, housing, income, food...)
- Legal Necessity;
- Address Health issues in the group;
- Long-term sustainability;
- Construction of a territorial network to support activities;
- Understanding dreams and perspectives of beneficiaries;

Target of the project

People between 20 and 30 years old facing basic needs denied, absence of legal status and forced inactivity.

EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

- Technical Capabilities;
- Legal, social and material support network;
- Network of opportunities and work experimentation;
- Interpersonal skills;
- Creolisation and development of mediation, integration, confrontation and expression skills;
- Consolidation of confidence in oneself and in one's own culture, thanks to the possibility of enhancing it in design processes;

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

Lega (fascist, racist party)-led region, few supplementary policies. Patronage from the Municipality of Treviso, only at the title level. Individual and external participation





EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

- Design
- Implementation

Example of output delivered by the project

- Clothing for commercial use

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

Identification of capacities, expressive desires and design-cultural elements.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

Design and manufacture, sometimes even physical delivery of products.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

- Partial autonomous management of spaces
- Economic management
- Procurement and accounting management

MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

Everyone does everything: cleaning, management, laboratory reference

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

- Art director
- Designer
- Architect



Xtra MENA

2018 - Ongoing

Caritas International

Brussels, Belgium



Useful Links



Building bridges for marginalised people

Young people / Refugees / Awareness



Description of the project

The Xtra MENA project informs and supports **unaccompanied foreign minors in transit and the professionals they are likely to meet**.

Since 2018, Caritas International has built up expertise in working with and supporting this particularly **vulnerable group** through its Xtra MENA project. Based on this expertise, **Caritas offers specific support and guidance** aimed at building trust, future orientation and reducing the number of worrying disappearances.

The context

Belgium is increasingly confronted with **“unaccompanied foreign minors”** who choose not to apply for international protection or who are highly uncertain about building a future perspective here. These unaccompanied foreign minors (UAMs) ‘in transit’ are one of the most vulnerable groups, precisely because they fall through the cracks of the system.

They are suspicious, shy away from the authorities and are therefore often dependent on people in an alternative, informal network who do not always have the best intentions.

These minors often, and for various reasons, **do not want to be identified and therefore do not claim shelter or other rights**. Society is systematically losing this group of minors because of their distrust of the existing system that requires specific forms of registration. Since 2018, Caritas International has built up expertise in working with and supporting this particularly vulnerable group through its Xtra MENA project.

Main objectives

Main objective:

- supporting UAMs in the definition of their migration project by giving information and accompanying them to the formal system if they so wish

Sub-objectives:

- going to out-reach minors to build trust and make ourselves known in the community;
- refer UAMs in transit to other associations depending on their needs and requests;
- act as a link between the informal and formal networks;
- raise awareness, assist and train anyone who may come into contact with them, to make it easier for them to meet them and adapt their approach;
- formulate recommendations for improving their care and for a pre-reception (reception without formal registration).

Primary target users/beneficiaries

Unaccompanied minors (UAM) ‘in transit’ and stakeholders in contact with these UAMs in transit

Awards and Acknowledgements

CEIF 2024

Number of people working on the project:

4 persons (none of which are full-time on this project)

Primary target beneficiaries involved

379 minors met in 2023

9 organisations received a training in 2023

Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

Guardianship service;
Academics in a European context;
Samusocial;
Employees Caritas Reception centres;
Employees of external reception centres such as NOH, AMRAN, Dubrucq;
Red Cross;
Voluntary legal guardians for UAMs (in cooperation with the Guardianship service);
Minor Ndako;
Fedasil;
Bureau of legal assistance (lawyers working with UAMs);
SOS Jeunes;

Monitoring and evaluation

Caritas have a database with all the youngsters met and the actions undertaken with them in which the following information is saved:

Excell “list”: Name, age, nationality, language, date of first encounter, place of shelter at moment of first encounter, procedure at moment of first encounter, procedure later on.

Excell “actions”: date, name, action (eg

provide information Belgium, registration, signalisation, ...)

Excell “system” (UAMs that have entered in the official system): Date, name, birthday, signalisation, procedure, date of age expressed yes/no, official reception centre (first phase, second phase, ...),

Caritas International does not have on this project formal system of monitoring/evaluating the trainings given.

Main achievements and goals obtained

In 2023, Caritas have met 379 minors, seeing 60% of these young people several times over the course of the year (= follow-ups). **More than half came from Eritrea** (Tigrinya, Tigré, Saho, Bilen ethnicity), **15% from Ethiopia** (Tigrinya, Oromo, Amara ethnicity). For the remaining nationalities, Caritas met people from Morocco, Sudan, Afghanistan, Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Colombia, Congo, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Syria, Turkey and Yemen. **Over 75% of the young people were aged 16 or 17. Of the 379 young people, 97% were boys. Of the young people the organisation met, 80% were not seeking international protection**, i.e. they were not known to the authorities. Of these, 26% had decided to enter the system, either by reporting to the guardianship office or by applying for international protection. 20% were already going through the procedure in Belgium, and turned to us because of the different problems they faced, for example, young people who had been declared of age, following the age test, young people who did not yet have a guardian, and so on. In 2023 Caritas International have given 9 training sessions to stakeholders working with UAMs in transit. In 2024 they have already provided 6 trainings.

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY

In this project Caritas starts from the **principle of 'leave no one behind'**. UAMs in transit are amongst the most vulnerable of all migrants. They often remain largely invisible to public services. They try to go unnoticed and avoid any contact with public administrations such as the Guardianship Service, the Immigration Office, police, etc. and even NGOs or other organisations. They are not reached by existing protection systems and **survive on the margins of society**. They do not enjoy any protection or rights, while all minors, regardless of the nature of their residence, should be entitled to them solely on the basis of their being a child. With this project Caritas tries to provide these UAMs access to the rights they have.

Target of the project

UAMs 'in transit' are a **psychologically particularly vulnerable public** and find themselves in widely varying legal situations. They fled their country months or even years ago. They are 'in transit' and in survival mode.

The barriers encountered by UAMs 'in transit' are the same as for many other migrants, but are greatly magnified by their minority: They often **don't have access to housing or a safe place to stay during their time in Belgium because they do not want to enter 'the official system'**. **Due to a lack of housing, they also often have no access to hygienic facilities** such as showers and toilets. Apart from the access to housing they also have certain material needs (need for a phone, chargers, clothes, shoes, sleeping bags, and medical needs. The medical needs can be quite diverse: scabies, tuberculosis and diphtheria are common risks for these minors. Some suffer from more chronic diseases such as diabetes, asthma, allergies, and are in need of medical follow-up. Psychological follow-up can also be necessary, especially when the minor has lived through traumatic events.

Many minors also indicate the need to be able to contact their families. Sometimes they have not been able to speak with them for many months.

A final need is the need for legal support. Often this is not the first thing they will ask for, but this need arises in a second phase, when all other needs have been met.

EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

UAMs in transit are in 'migratory wandering' and in a survival mode. Some are following a project they set out to do when they left home, while others are thinking things over or no longer know what they want to do. For some, defining or redefining a project can take weeks, months or even years. **To be able to think about their future prospects, they need to get out of this survival mode and have their basic needs met.** A minor sleeping on the streets is in no condition to settle down and think, or to absorb information.

Caritas notice that young people are much more inclined to receive information and ask questions on various subjects once they have been able to rest and feel safe and confident. Some will confirm their initial choice, but they will have done so on the basis of correct information tailored to their project. For others, this will be a time to gather information on different countries, so as to be able to make an informed choice about which country to settle in.

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

Before 2022 open pre-reception spaces did not exist. UAMs 'in transit' were entitled to

reception, but this right was linked to a formal registration in the system (reporting to the guardianship Office). **Many UAMs did not register out of fear of losing their possibility to apply for international protection in another country.** Crucial information about their possibilities in Belgium and in other countries could not be given to them. They often relied on on people in an alternative, informal network who do not always have the best intentions. In 2022 a pilot project of unconditional pre-reception was created based on Caritas' recommendation. Since 2023, 2 pre-reception places exist in Belgium.

EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

- Establishing collective sessions in support of the youth
- Individual follow-up through in-person meetings
- Educational/informative Trainings for the workers who engage with the Youth
- Outreach activities (Visits meeting places in the community where the Youth are introduced)

Example of output delivered by the project

- Report Xtra Mena in Dutch, French, English (see below)
- Powerpoints for trainings
- Video in English, Tigrinya, Amharic and Arabic to inform minors of their rights in Belgium (see below)
- Informational fiches for professionals (eg Dublin III, family reunification to UK, ...)

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

- Based on the individual needs of each youth, there is a different project development phase based on the individual needs of the target group.
- The project development varies with the political context in the country and abroad too.
- Establishing collective sessions in support of the youth
- Individual follow-up through in-person meetings

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

- Input from the target group through observation and feedbacks on the project
- there is a training for the workers that will be in contact with the Youth to provide them with tools to work better with them. This to be able to provide them with full support.
- the staff participates in advocacy activities to the “institutions”

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

- Indirect evaluation

MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

3 of the 4 colleagues are experienced in legal expertise, social work and fieldwork.
1 Colleague is an intercultural mediator.

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

- Legal expertise
- Social work
- Field work
- Intercultural mediation

Collaborations and alliances with external community

In Belgium, there is a strong collaboration with SOS jeunes. Other partners are Fedasil, Croix Rouge, Samusocial, burgerplatform, etc. There are also partners in France (in the north), they are ECPAT, and Croix Rouge. In the UK, they have contact with Safe Passage, Human for rights network and the refugee council.

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

Within Caritas International the Xtra Mena project works closely with the advocacy team. The input and observations in the field serve to substantiate different policy recommendations. There is also a strong link with the team of legal guardians of CAW Brabantia, antenna Caritas International. These two projects nourish each other's expertise.



HEALTHCARE

This is the section associated with projects that focus on the psycho-physical wellbeing of users through innovative solutions and a real response to needs.



Community for socially excluded people and people with mental health conditions

1966 - 2024

RSMH Mittpunkten

Malmö, Sweden



Texts by Lari Pitkääkangas, KC Kompetenscentre Idéburen sektor

Useful Links



Healthcare

City / Barriers / Awareness / Community activation

Description of the project

The project was targeted toward **isolated and lonely people**. The main point was to **increase contacts with this group and involve them collaboratively in the activities of the meeting place**.

"In RSMH Midpoint Malmö, people can feel the community. Members meet and have fun together. Here, everyone can relax, have a coffee and talk away for a while, and help with the association activities.

Founders want to give people the opportunity to grow, deciding together what to do in the association. Peer support increases self-confidence and provides opportunities for participation. Taking responsibility and feeling needed increase one's ability to influence one's situation and contribute to recovery in the long run. Study circles and courses can be started as desired in cooperation with ABF, in wellness, recovery, everyday power, user influence, everyday economy, board work and hobby circles."

Peer support, Community, Co-Determination, Recovery, and above all, cooperation-

RSMH Midpoint is an open activity for vulnerable people with social and/or psychological difficulties. It uses peer support, community, recovery, and social-political struggle.

The context

Recent survey findings have brought attention to the **issue of loneliness**, particularly among various demographic groups in Sweden, including the young, the elderly, individuals living alone, those with disabilities, and individuals on sick leave or unemployed.

Extensive research and population surveys in Sweden have underscored the significant **impact of loneliness on both mental and physical health and its association with suicidal ideation**. Additionally, it has been linked to higher mortality rates in both patient groups and the general population.

However, numerous ongoing initiatives to address loneliness exist, including establishing **meeting places and social activities tailored to the needs of the elderly across the country**. Furthermore, support services, discussion groups, helplines, and knowledge-building efforts are being implemented to assist.

These efforts, primarily led by civil society organisations and supported by municipalities, signify a commendable step forward in addressing this issue.

This project was partly financed by National Board of Health and Welfare in Sweden.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

- Socially and mentally challenged people from Malmö
- People who are elderly, have mental illness, disability, and people with harmful use and dependence and who are not already members.
- Members of the association who need to be activated in new ways.
- Municipality and other actors' activities and the target group's support points.

Main objectives

- Better health for the target group and increased peer support.
- Strengthen the operations in the long term
- Reach out to more people who can help break involuntary loneliness and isolation, which can also increase membership and thus open up new opportunities.
- Get an employee through wage subsidies after this has been investigated.
- Increased visibility and better image of RSMH Midpoint Malmö.
- Better contacts with the region, the municipality, related actors and associations

Credits

The Board:

- Ann-Charlotte Björklund
- Rose-Marie Wilhelmsson
- Stefan Wallerek

Main achievements and goals obtained

Through the project's impact goals, RSMH Mittpunkten Malmö **increased health among the target group**, reached more new members, established a more stable and long-term activity plan, communicated their operations more easily, and had better opportunities for collaboration with other actors. Achieving the goals also means that RSMH Midpoint Malmö and the target groups both benefited from the project being implemented.

Number of people working on the project

5-20 people, including volunteers, 2 project leaders

Number of primary target beneficiaries involved

300 members in the association, with a target group of about 3000 people.

Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

The City of Malmö, the Regional Health Care organisation, and the Municipal Support Centres. Several CSO organisations were part of the overall collaborative work.

Monitoring and evaluation

The National Board of Health and Welfare, a government agency under the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, reviewed the project. It has a wide range of activities and many different duties in social services, health and medical services, patient safety, and epidemiology.

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



The initiative aims to tackle poverty by implementing economic empowerment programmes, improve health outcomes through access to healthcare services, and address societal inequalities by promoting inclusive policies and practices.

Target of the project

One in four who are 60 years and older report loneliness a quarter, 26 percent, of the age group 60 years and older state that they have moderate problems of loneliness, while a smaller proportion, say, 8 Percent, report serious issues. It shows a meta-analysis (7) that has compiled 31 cross-sectional studies. Most come from high-income countries in Europe, and 4 Swedish studies are included. The studies that examined how often one feels alone found that 29 percent responded "sometimes," "often," or "always". Elderly people in northern Europe reported loneliness to a lesser extent than their peers in South and Eastern Europe. Loneliness was measured with validated measuring instruments, such as the UCLA Loneliness Scale and the De Jong Gierveld Scale, or with a single question.

Five risk factors for loneliness among the elderly: A Swedish systematic review (9) has examined the risk factors for loneliness among people over 60 in the general population.

A total of 120 risk factors were identified in 39 longitudinal studies. Of these, 5 factors were judged to have an unambiguous and consistent relationship with loneliness:

- being single/ lost a Partner
- has a limited social network
- have a low level of social activity
- have poor self-perceived health or
- have depression or depressive symptoms.

The studies were from OECD countries, including some from the Nordic countries. Almost half of the studies had a follow-up period between one to five years, while the rest had longer follow-up times.

Different risk factors for loneliness among young people In an overview (8) covering 28 different types of quantitative and qualitative studies, loneliness among young people aged 13-29 years was found to be related to:

- physical and mental ill-health: personal barriers such as personality and ineffective coping strategies.
- adverse life events such as the significant loss of a partner or other close people, bullying or cyberbullying, precarious family relationships
- life transitions such as starting university, becoming an exchange student or doing military service.

The review also included studies covering specific patient populations, such as young people with disabilities or psychiatric conditions. The studies came from Europe, including Sweden, as well as from the United States, Canada, and Australia.

EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

Access to **complimentary breakfast and lunch**, **activities free of charge**, **peer-to-peer support**, and an open-minded meeting place. **Training of soft and hard skills** coping with society. Help with everyday issues. Participating in a community.

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

The municipality at the local level supports several similar associations. Although their operations may need to be more innovative, they emphasise self-governance, peer-to-peer support, and the ability to be open every day of the year. They operate independently from traditional authorities and provide significant economic value to the city. Moreover, they hold a more radical perspective on societal change and its requirements, leaning towards innovative operational approaches.



EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

- Group-dynamic discussion on how to improve the organisation and approach towards the problems. Member and open meetings.
- Decision-making on what kind of activities they should do
- Learning about discrimination as per real examples from what has happened at the meeting place
- Joining in collaborations with other organisations in preparing for different activities
- Meeting with the city and its officials to change conditions and regulations, as well as pre-meetings to prepare what to say.
- Crisis management is associated with sudden events.

Example of output delivered by the project

- Changed the venue making it more exciting and inviting, removing all kinds of unnecessary info.
- Decreasing the number of days you could offer a lunch/meal, not to stress the volunteers and the board but to reduce the stress on people overall.
- Introduced a proposal board, which is still in use.

- Educated people about social media which became more interesting
- Introduced the possibility of collaboration with other organisations with joint target groups.
- Increased the awareness of good values for peer-to-peer dialogues, and following ethical principles.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

The board created the project among themselves and during discussions at member meetings. **Since many members belong to the target group, they also know the target group. They were also part of the planning process for the project outline.**

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

Several **volunteers** were part of the target group and became part of the projects. During the implementation, there were meetings with members, and new people were invited to the meeting place and the activities there.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

The project delivery phase involved the target group because the activities were for them. However, they were not part of the evaluation.



MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

- Project Manager
- Admin manager
- The board, Chair, Treasurer, Secretary
- Volunteers.

There were meetings at least once a week, during which planning was done. The project manager and the volunteers did a lot of detailed work.

The treasurer and the board sometimes regulated economic decisions within the project. The association's members and target group used many valuable skills and competencies in the projects.

Disciplines involved in the project

The leading professionals were a **psychotherapist**, an **artist**, an **organisational expert**, and several earlier staff members from the city who worked as **social workers** but are now retired.

They led the project to improve management, meet with people to create new, inviting routines, re-design the venue, and hold meetings with the city.

Collaborations and alliances with external community

Collaboration with other “excluded groups in society” and organisations that represented them. Also, different other civil society organisations, for instance, helped out regarding homelessness. Also, health care and the city collaborated formally, with more listeners than active collaboration.

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

Networking with several organisations working on different aspects of being a vulnerable group.





Education and psychosocial support

2022 - Ongoing

Caritas Ukraine

Ukraine



Useful Links



Healthcare

Adults / Digital training / Empowerment



GENERAL INFORMATION

Description of the project

The project is about innovation, awareness, and resilience. The overall goal of the project is to **raise awareness of mental health issues among Ukrainians**.

Using interesting **interactive techniques, vivid visual demonstrations, and visual products**, it teaches people to **take care of mental health and seek help** when needed.

The solution offered by the project can be briefly described in three points: development of the methodology, training of teachers, and conducting classes for children.

1. The **methodology** was developed by specialists and experts of Caritas Ukraine. All materials are available to a wide range of stakeholders and have a scientific basis.

2. The **training** offered by Caritas helps teachers to expand their pedagogical skills with knowledge of psychology, which helps to improve the psychological state of children and creates a favorable environment.

3. **Classes** for children and adolescents conducted by trained teachers allow them to receive support and assistance, and raise awareness of mental health issues

Main objectives

- Raise awareness of mental health issues among Ukrainians.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

Beneficiaries: **Children, adolescents and young people aged 6-17 who live, develop and study during the war in Ukraine and need psychosocial support and mental health awareness**. The project's target group also includes teachers, psychologists and Caritas social workers - all those who are close to children, who teach, support and help them.

Awards and Acknowledgements

Laureate of the Caritas Europa Innovation Festival 2024



The context

The problem of mental health protection has become extremely acute since the beginning of Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine. Factors such as living in the frontline zone with constant rocket and artillery attacks, bombardment, and occupation significantly increase the vulnerability of the citizens to **psychosocial stress, and contribute to the spread of mental disorders** such as depression, anxiety, post-stress disorder, etc. **Experts estimate that 40-50% of Ukraine's population will need psychological assistance, including about 4 million children and adolescents. About 3-4 million Ukrainians will have some kind of mental health disorder, moderate or severe.**

The proposed project is aimed at addressing the low level of awareness of Ukrainians about mental health issues and the lack of effective tools for psychological help for themselves and their loved ones.

Main achievements and goals obtained

3,624 children and 1,767 adults participated in the project's classes and raised awareness of mental health and self-help issues.

60 professionals have been successfully trained, they have received educational stands and they are conducting classes and events.

72% of the participants of the events note the benefits of training and improvement of their emotional state.

87% of teachers apply the skills they have learned in their work with children affected by war.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is an important part of this project, which will include regular review of performance, modification (if necessary) of activities, and monitoring of changes in the behaviour of children, parents/guardians, and service providers. The key indicators were developed at the initial stage of the current project - a working group consisting of a

national project manager, a monitoring and evaluation specialist and consultants from partner institutions (with special supervision from the Methodological Centre for Applied Psychology as the state institution responsible for ensuring that all activities related to the SPS are in line with existing state approaches and standards). A monitoring and evaluation plan for the full project period will be created and appropriate tools will be developed: methods for collecting both quantitative (using existing questionnaires) and qualitative data, such as observations, focus groups, etc. To ensure that the evaluation is comprehensive, the Project Coordinators will collect feedback from school staff and parents on the impact of the project activities.

At the local level, the Project Coordinators, together with local monitoring and evaluation specialists, will play an important role in data collection and processing.

Number of people working on the project

A friendly team of Education and Training specialists is working together to implement the project. Each team member has a clearly defined area of responsibility and expertise. The team leader, Zoryana Lukavetska, takes care of the coherence of team processes and identifies funding opportunities for new projects

Number of primary target beneficiaries involved

To date, the project has reached 3624 children who attend classes both at Caritas centres and in target schools, 60 trained facilitators, and 1726 teachers.

Number and type of organisations / institutions involved

42 schools and 36 local Caritas organisations



ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



The project's goal is related to Sustainable Development Goal 4 - **Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**. In particular, it relates to Target 4.a "Establish and improve child-sensitive, disability- and gender-sensitive education facilities and ensure safe, violence-free and socially inclusive learning environments for all." **The ongoing stress and anxiety caused by the war in Ukraine are major obstacles to children's learning and development and to teachers' ability to create a positive learning environment. Parents and caregivers also need help due to the unstable situation.** An additional stressor is the forced displacement of families who need help in adapting to the new environment. The goal is to create a safe environment that provides not only physical security (unlike most private homes, schools are equipped with bomb shelters to protect against shelling), but also a psychosocial environment that provides empowerment and understanding and appropriate adult assistance, which is the focus of the proposed project.

Target of the project

The education system in Ukraine has been severely affected by the escalation of the war since February 24, 2022. According to the 2023 Humanitarian Needs Assessment (HNA), an estimated **5.3 million children and teachers of preschool and secondary school age in Ukraine are negatively affected by the war, of which 4.8 million children are in need of immediate educational support, including 480,000 (10%) children with disabilities and special educational needs.** According to UNICEF estimates, 2.2 million are in need of protection services, and 2.8 million children are internally displaced.

The ongoing armed conflict in Ukraine and its impact on the lives of its residents pose extreme risks to the mental health and well-being of the population. The impact of displacement, violence, and the disruption of essential services, among other things, can lead to acute and **chronic stress, anxiety, sadness, hopelessness, sleep problems, fatigue, irritability, or anger, which are natural reactions to war.** However, the longer the war lasts, the more likely it is that such manifestations become widespread and chronic, especially among the most vulnerable, including children.

According to preliminary estimates by the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, about 15 million Ukrainians will need psychological support because of the war. According to the Fourteenth National Survey "Psychological Markers of War," Ukrainians have demonstrated a decrease in psychological resilience (3.9 out of 5).

As a result of the hostilities, a significant number of participants in the educational process have suffered psychological trauma of varying degrees, which often leads to **post-traumatic stress disorder** and

requires constant psychological support and assistance. **The military events taking place in Ukraine are stressful for all participants in the educational process.** Under such conditions, the role of providing psychosocial and educational support is significantly increasing. It is important to create a psychologically comfortable educational space for students, ensure a quality educational process for students with psychological trauma, and provide timely support to teachers.

Most parents (61%) believe that their children have symptoms of stress, such as poor sleep, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, and problems in communicating with peers and teachers. Children have a high level of anxiety. Students also feel lonely and lack communication with peers and teachers. Teachers have experienced significant stress and deterioration in their psycho-emotional state since the start of the full-scale invasion, especially in communities where active hostilities have been taking place. **80% of communities in Ukraine indicated a need for additional MHPSS support for both children and teachers due to the war, according to a needs assessment survey conducted by the Education Cluster in 2022.** Teachers surveyed by Support the Child in spring 2023 identified that 34% of children do not maintain a stable mood during air raids, and 16% experience fear. Another survey conducted by the Ukrainian NGO GoGlobal showed that 54% of teachers surveyed suffer from professional burnout, and 75% of school-age children show signs of stress. According to the Ministry of Education and Science, teachers face an increased risk of mental health problems.

EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

The Mental Health - Superhero's Way project offers its participants a variety of **opportunities and resources to improve their mental health and overall well-being**. Here are some of them:

Project participants have the opportunity to **receive psychological support and counselling** from professionals in the field of psychotherapy and psychiatry.

The project organises **group sessions where participants share experiences**, mutually support each other, and learn effective strategies for managing stress and emotions.

The project participants **develop self-awareness, including mindfulness and emotional intelligence**, which helps them better understand their own needs and reactions.

The project provides access to a **variety of resources**, such as literature, webinars, online courses, and mental health apps.

Participants have the opportunity to create a **support network** of like-minded people who are also working on their mental health.

These resources and opportunities help project participants to develop their mental health and maintain it at a high level.

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

Local authorities are ready to cooperate and encourage the implementation of psychosocial measures at the community level.

Caritas Ukraine has previous experience in developing, piloting, and implementing non-formal education and psychosocial support programmes for schoolchildren and teachers affected by the conflict, together with NaUKMA partners. The "Programme of Professional Growth and Emotional Support for Teachers", developed and tested by the author's team in response to a request from the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine during the joint Caritas Ukraine project, which was implemented in 2018-2021 in the five-kilometer zone of the demarcation line in eastern Ukraine, continues to be successfully implemented in Caritas projects.

Teachers who participated in the programme reported that after the training sessions and supervision, they feel competent, supported, better informed about mental health, and able to provide help and support to themselves and others. This demonstrates the high level of expertise in Caritas Ukraine, and the experience and network of Caritas centres in the regions allows for greater impact.



EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

Project activities include both individual and group work.

Trained specialists work both with a group of children and individually. The stands can be used together or separately.

Innovative didactic materials and workbooks have been developed and are actively used during classes. Each stand has its own topic, presenter's instructions, handouts (magnets, plastic cards, task applications, resource cards and items needed to complete the tasks) and workbooks for completing the tasks.

Multimedia support: Each stand has a QR code that contains materials (games, videos, comics, cartoons) that help to better absorb the material.

Multimedia platform: Combines video, audio, and visual materials for mental health education and support. The platform can be accessed by using the coupon code that is available at each stand.

Facilitators use game elements, interactive exercises, and problem-based learning when working with the stands.

The stands can be used indoors, outdoors and in a bomb shelter. You can work with one stand or with all 6. Suitable for both individual and group work.

Example of output delivered by the project

"The Superhero Way classes help me talk about my emotions and feelings. I learned to find things to do that help me feel better. I found new friends at Caritas. I feel better now"
Sofia, 6th grade, Donetsk region.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

Participation of beneficiaries in the project's face-to-face events was completely free, voluntary and based on their needs and desire to receive effective mechanisms for preventing distress and improving mental well-being. **72% of participants noted the benefits of the training and the improvement of their emotional state. 87% of teachers apply the skills they have learned in their work with children affected by the war.** The education departments, administrations and teaching staff of the schools involved in the project activities, which gained positive experience of cooperation with Caritas and opportunities to develop the competencies of their teaching staff and improve the mental well-being of the participants in the educational process, have expanded their capacity to provide psychosocial support and care for their psychosocial well-being. Local Caritas organisations have expanded their material and technical base by receiving tools (printed stands, methodological materials within the project) to work with children and families affected by the war in Ukraine. Caritas network staff improved their coaching experience and gained the opportunity to act as experts, mentors, supervisors, and received support in implementing innovative tools, creative methods and ideas.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the implementation phase

At the beginning of the project planning, Caritas Ukraine **assessed the needs of target audiences** through a Google Forms survey and held a series of focus groups with target audiences. Recommendations from the cluster and research by partners in the field were also used. The target group of the Mental Health - Superhero's Way project, which includes children and teachers, is actively involved in the implementation phase of the project.

Children can be **involved** in the project in various forms, such as **group sessions, interactive entertainment, psychological counselling and interaction.** It was important for us to create a friendly and supportive atmosphere so that children feel comfortable and can openly share their thoughts and feelings.

Caregivers and teachers play a key role in supporting children's mental health. Therefore, their involvement in the project included training sessions and workshops on psychological support and strategies for managing group dynamics and students' emotional needs.

Parents are also important actors in supporting children's mental health. The project involves meetings with parents, family sessions, distribution of information materials and recommendations for parents on how to support their children's mental health.

The involvement of the target group - children and teachers - in the implementation phase of the project helped to **ensure its effectiveness and acceptance among participants, and made the project more adapted to the needs and context of the community.**

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

Involvement of the target group in the management, implementation and evaluation of project results is an important component of the success and effectiveness of the Mental Health - Superhero Way project.

Involvement in planning and decision-making: The target group, consisting of children and teachers, can be invited to participate in meetings where project strategies and plans are discussed. Their opinions, wishes and suggestions are taken into account when deciding on priorities and activities.

Participation in executive committees or working groups: Children and educators may be included in executive committees or working groups that are responsible for implementing specific aspects of the project. Their opinions and suggestions are used to improve project strategies and processes.

Collecting feedback: The project may actively collect feedback from the target group through surveys, focus groups, interviews, and roundtables.

Participation in the evaluation process: Children and teachers can be involved in the evaluation process of the project. This included assessing the impact of the project on their mental health, satisfaction with participation, and perceived effectiveness of the various project components.

Involvement of the target group in the management, implementation and evaluation of the project results ensured that the needs and expectations of the participants were met and that the available resources were used effectively.

MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

The members of the project steering group are individuals who have key influence on strategic decision-making and management of project implementation. Below is a list of the steering group members and their roles within the Mental Health - Superhero's Way project:

The **Project Manager** is responsible for the overall management of the project, setting and implementing the schedule, coordinating the activities of the various teams, and ensuring that tasks are completed in a timely manner. He is involved in planning, monitoring and evaluating all aspects of the project.

The **Financial Manager** is responsible for the financial aspect of the project, managing the budget, ensuring that expenditures are in line with the approved budget, and seeking additional financial resources if necessary.

The **mental health expert** provides advice and expertise on issues related to the mental health of project participants and the development of support programmes.

The **monitoring and evaluation specialist** develops a monitoring system that includes key performance indicators and project outcomes. These indicators allow tracking progress towards achieving goals and identifying possible problems or trends.

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

The main expertise/disciplines/professional areas involved in the Mental Health - Superhero's Way project include:

Psychology/Psychiatry: This expertise plays a key role in understanding mental health issues and providing support to project participants. The psychologist is responsible for developing content for the mental health booths specifically tailored to the needs of the participants. Number of specialists: 5 Caritas expert psychologists.

Education: Education professionals, including teachers and educators, play an important role in implementing mental health support programmes in schools. They create a supportive environment for students and provide advice on managing stress and emotions. Number of specialists: 60 specialists who have received specialised training in the use of the psychosocial support tool and are implementing it in their institutions and communities.

Project management: The project manager oversees the planning, implementation and monitoring of the project. They ensure that all activities are carried out in accordance with the schedule and budget, and coordinates the efforts of different teams to achieve the project goals. Number of specialists: 1.

Public Relations/Communications: The public relations and communications expert is responsible for the project's communication strategy. They manage media relations, publications on the organisation's website, and social media management. Number of specialists: 1.

Monitoring and Evaluation: This discipline plays a role in tracking progress and evaluating project results. Number of specialists: 1.

Collaborations and alliances with external community

Cooperation with external government agencies and organisations is an important component of the success of the Mental Health - Superhero's Way project:

Educational Institutions in 46 Communities: Cooperation with schools, kindergartens and other educational institutions helps to implement a programme of psychological support and mental health promotion among children and youth. As part of the project, teachers, psychologists, and social workers received specialised training and free sets of materials to work with children in their institutions.

Cooperation with organisations working in the field of mental health and child protection has been established. For example, cooperation with the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy helped to expand the project's impact and resources, as well as to obtain additional expertise and support.

Cooperation with local authorities provided legal and administrative support for its implementation.

Cooperation with international organisations provided access to additional resources and opportunities.



EDL – Emotional Distance Learning

2021 - 2023

University of Applied Sciences,
Technology, Business and Design

Germany, Spain, Greece, Ireland, Italy



Useful Links



Healthcare

Young people / Innovation / Access to technology



Description of the project

EDL aims to **integrate comprehensive emotional management strategies into online adult education to enhance the educational experience by addressing emotional and social challenges exacerbated by distance learning modalities**. This initiative seeks to equip participants with the tools needed to manage stress, anxiety, and isolation effectively, fostering a more conducive learning environment.

The context

The rapid escalation of e-learning as a dominant educational format has highlighted significant challenges such as isolation and stress among learners and trainers. EDL addresses these issues by implementing targeted emotional management techniques to improve engagement and well-being in digital learning settings.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

Trainers, learners, and facilitators of online adult education, focusing on addressing emotional challenges and enhancing socio-emotional skills in e-learning environments.

Credits

Hochschule Wismar: University of Applied Sciences, Technology, Business and Design (Germany)

Main objectives

Main objectives:

➤ Enhance Awareness: Raise awareness of the mental and emotional impacts of online training on adult learners and facilitators.

➤ Emotional Management: Develop skills in emotional management to handle the stresses and emotional challenges brought on by distance learning.

➤ Understand Training Implications: Deepen understanding of the personal and social implications of online training, particularly focusing on both intra- and interpersonal aspects of emotional intelligence.

➤ Improve Emotional Intelligence: Enhance the application of emotional intelligence in the educational process to improve the learning outcomes and interaction among participants.

➤ Professional and Personal Balance: Address the need for better professional and family life balance amidst the challenges posed by online training environments.

Project Activities:

➤ Work Package Development: The project is divided into Project Results (PR) and Transversal Work Packages, each with specific roles and responsibilities to ensure comprehensive coverage of the project's needs.

➤ Tools and Systems: Develop a self-assessment system for trainers to identify emotional threats (PR1), a training system for emotional management (PR2), and an online toolkit for learners (PR3).

➤ Engagement and Cooperation: Implement a high level of cooperation and engagement through transnational meetings, continuous feedback loops, and shared learning environments to ensure that project outputs are relevant and high-quality.

➤ Promotion and Sharing: Use a range of dissemination activities, including newsletters, a project website, and Multiplier Events, to engage with a broader audience and maximise the impact of the project findings.

Impact and Outcomes:

➤ Tangible Outputs: Tools for self-assessment and training in emotional management, workshops, and an online toolkit for emotional management for learners.

➤ Implementation Outcomes: Establishment of agreements, a detailed project plan, responsibility distribution, and a comprehensive risk register.

➤ Quality and Evaluation: Continuous monitoring and evaluation through designated tools and reports to ensure project effectiveness and adapt strategies as needed.

Main achievements and goals obtained

The project aims to significantly improve emotional resilience and management among online adult learners and trainers, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and accessibility of e-learning programmes.

Monitoring and evaluation

A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework is implemented to assess the effectiveness of the interventions, with regular assessments and feedback mechanisms to ensure continuous improvement.

Number of people working on the project:

On average per year:

1 Project Manager

1 Project Assistant

1 Researcher

For each partner organisation

Number of primary target beneficiaries involved

Facilitators: Adult education trainers who will receive training to better manage their emotional and mental well-being while delivering online education.

Learners: Adult students engaged in online learning who will benefit from tools and strategies to manage the emotional and mental challenges posed by distance education.

Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

Leading:

Hochschule Wismar, University of Applied Sciences, Technology, Business and Design (Germany)

Partners:

Akadimos KDVM (Lifelong Education & Training Centre)

Babel Centro de Idiomas (Training & Language Centre)

Eurospeak Ireland (Educational technology company)

Indepcie (National Institute for Personal Development, Coaching and Emotional Intelligence, organisation dedicated to specialised training and research in the field of human development)

Skill Up Srl (Education & Consulting Company, focusing on financial and workforce needs)

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



By providing equal access to education for both men and women, especially in regions where cultural norms might restrict women's educational opportunities.



By improving adult education, the project enhances employability and supports economic growth, which is vital for reducing poverty.



By making learning accessible regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity, or geographical location, the project directly combats inequalities.

Targets of the project

The project targets adult learners and facilitators in online adult education environments, focusing on their unique needs and vulnerabilities:

Target Group Needs

Facilitators: Require skills in emotional management, digital pedagogy, and techniques to motivate learners in a virtual setting.

Learners: Need access to technology, digital literacy training, and emotional support to manage the isolation and stress of online learning. They also require flexible learning options to balance education with personal commitments.

Conditions of Vulnerability

Economic Constraints: Some adult learners face financial barriers that limit access to necessary technology for online learning.

Geographical and Social Isolation: Learners in remote areas may struggle with poor internet connectivity, and the virtual learning environment can intensify feelings of loneliness.

Cultural Barriers: Diverse backgrounds may lead to challenges in adapting to standard online education platforms, often designed with a Western-centric approach.

EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

Capabilities

Emotional Management Skills: Both facilitators and learners will develop skills to manage the emotional challenges posed by online learning environments, including stress, anxiety, and isolation.

Digital Literacy and Competency: Facilitators will receive training to effectively manage and deliver online courses, enhancing their ability to use digital tools and platforms.

Socio-emotional Learning Skills: The project emphasises the importance of socio-emotional learning skills, which helps individuals handle stressful situations more calmly and enhances critical thinking and decision-making.

Relationships

Enhanced Peer and Professional Networks: The project encourages the development of stronger connections among learners and between learners and facilitators through online interactions and collaborative learning.

Educational Materials and Tools: Learners and facilitators will gain access to new educational materials specifically designed to improve emotional management in online learning settings.

Support Systems: The project outlines the creation of support systems to aid both facilitators and learners in managing the emotional and psychological impacts of distance learning.

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

EDL aligns with local and European educational policies advocating for comprehensive and inclusive educational practices that incorporate emotional well-being.

EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

Multiplier Events: Each partner will host an event designed to promote the project results and engage with target groups. These events serve as platforms for sharing knowledge, receiving feedback, and broadening the impact of project activities.

Workshops: Six workshops will be held during the Multiplier Events, which are interactive sessions where participants can learn about and discuss emotional management tools and strategies in depth.

Self-Assessment Activities: As part of PR1, a self-assessment system for trainers will be developed to identify emotional threats. This allows participants to engage in self-evaluation and reflection on their own emotional management needs.

Training Development Sessions: In PR2, a training system for trainers will be developed based on findings from the self-assessment. These sessions involve participatory activities for trainers to learn, apply, and reflect on emotional management strategies.

Toolkit Creation: PR3 involves the creation of a toolkit for adult students to manage emotions while learning online. This process may include participatory design methods where learners contribute to the development and testing of toolkit components.

Example of output delivered by the project

Self-Assessment System for Trainers

Description: A self-assessment tool designed for trainers to identify and evaluate the emotional challenges they face while conducting online training.

Post-Release Use: Trainers can use this tool regularly to monitor their emotional well-being and identify areas needing support or improvement. It will also serve as a baseline for developing personalized training programmes aimed at enhancing emotional resilience.

Training System for Trainers on Emotional Management

Description: A comprehensive training programme developed based on the findings from the self-assessment tools. This system includes modules on managing stress, fostering emotional intelligence, and implementing effective online pedagogical strategies.

Post-Release Use: Trainers can undergo this training to better manage their emotions and stress levels, which in turn can enhance their teaching effectiveness. Institutions can incorporate these training modules into their professional development programmes to ensure continuous learning and improvement.

Online Toolkit for Students on Self-Emotional Management

Description: A toolkit consisting of 36 tools aimed at helping adult students manage their emotions effectively while engaging in online learning. Post-Release Use: Learners can access this toolkit to find strategies and resources to deal with isolation, anxiety, and other emotional challenges associated with distance learning. This toolkit can be integrated into learning management systems (LMS) used by educational institutions, providing easy access to students.

Workshops in Multiplier Events (E1-E6)

Description: Workshops conducted during Multiplier Events designed to disseminate knowledge and strategies developed through the project to a broader audience.

Post-Release Use: Insights and strategies shared during these workshops can be further disseminated by participants within their own organisations or professional networks, enhancing the overall impact of the project.

Additionally, the content of these workshops can be adapted into ongoing training sessions or webinars to reach a wider audience.

Project Website

Description: A dedicated website hosting all the project's outputs, including training materials, toolkit components, workshop recordings, and research findings.

Post-Release Use: The website serves as a permanent resource hub for current and future educators and learners. It can continually be updated with new research findings, tools, and community feedback, making it a living resource for anyone involved in adult education.

Newsletters and Informative Brochure

Description: Regular newsletters and an informative brochure designed to keep stakeholders informed about the project progress and to disseminate key findings and tools. Post-Release Use: These materials help maintain engagement with the project's audience and provide updates on new developments or additional resources available through the project. They can be used in advocacy and outreach efforts to promote the importance of emotional management in education.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

Beneficiaries are actively involved in co-designing the educational content, participating in pilot testing, providing feedback, and contributing to the iterative refinement of the project's outputs.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

Beneficiaries are involved in participatory activities such as training development sessions and workshops, as outlined in the project's description of creating and using a toolkit and training system for emotional management.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

Engagement through feedback mechanisms during the Multiplier Events and workshops, suggesting beneficiary involvement in the evaluation and ongoing management of the project.

MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

On average per year:

1 Project Manager

1 Project Team Member

1 Specialist

For each partner organisation

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

The project spans multiple disciplines
including:

- Educational Psychology,
- Information Technology
- Management and Project Coordination
- Instructional Design

Collaborations and alliances with external community

The project involves collaborations with various educational bodies, mental health organisations, and community groups to broaden the impact and reach of its initiatives.

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

Inter-departmental collaborations within the partner organisations enhance the project's ability to integrate diverse perspectives and resources effectively.





MinD - Mad in Design

2014 - Ongoing

MinD Association

Turin, Italy



Useful Links



Healthcare

Young people / City / Collaborative dialogue



Texts by Cristian Campagnaro, Sara Ceraolo, Marco D'Urzo, Politecnico di Torino

Description of the project

Since 2014, every year, the **MinD Mad in Design Association** has hosted its main workshop in Turin, gathering around 50 students from across Italy for a week. These students come from diverse fields such as **Architecture, Design, Psychology, Psychiatric Rehabilitation Techniques, Anthropology, and Educational Sciences**. Alongside them are young adults supported by **Mental Health Services**, who have interests and skills in creative endeavours and exhibit a propensity for teamwork, as well as educators and public health professionals. **Thanks to collaborations between universities, the creative sector, and the health sector, the MinD workshop conducts experiments using collaborative and participatory approaches through co-design activities.** These efforts aim to combat prejudice and promote alternative and innovative rehabilitation strategies.

Participants are divided into **multidisciplinary teams and guided by designers** through a series of collaborative activities. The goal is to foster awareness and reflexivity among participants about their context and to develop skills to transform it. **Collaborative design presupposes a redistribution of roles and responsibilities within the groups, which leads to a reduction in role differences and power dynamics among participants.** It also acknowledges mutual competencies and values latent or unexpressed resources.

Main objectives

- Promote **active participation** in creative and cultural activities among young people with direct or indirect experience of mental fragility.
- Contribute to **reducing stigma** surrounding mental health through participatory creative activities involving direct contact with fragility.
- Explore the role that **cultural heritage** can play in contributing to the **mental well-being** of individuals and communities.
- **Assess the validity of inclusive and participatory creative approaches** in promoting mental health and preventing mental illness among young adults.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

Young adults under 30, with experience of mental fragility (including users followed by mental health services but considered high-functioning);

Young university students with diverse backgrounds (Architecture, Design, Psychology, Psychiatric Rehabilitation Techniques, Anthropology);

Health and social care workers.

The context

The **World Health Organisation (WHO)** estimates that approximately **20% of the world's children and adolescents have a mental health condition**, a rate nearly double that of the general population. Mental illness-induced suicide ranks as the fourth leading cause of death among 15 to 29-year-olds. Despite these alarming statistics, **the global median of government health expenditure allocated to mental health is less than 2% (WHO, 2021).**

Over the past two decades, alongside the rise in mental health issues among young people, there has been a growing **recognition of the role of culture and the arts in enhancing the well-being and health of individuals. Creative processes offer numerous benefits to mental well-being**, including promoting expression, self-confidence, a sense of purpose, and enhancing self-esteem, as well as verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

Participatory practices centred around cultural heritage can positively impact individuals' mental health by **combating feelings of isolation, anxiety, and depression, and by promoting social cohesion.** This is due to the intrinsic capacity of cultural heritage to generate meanings, create connections with the past, envision future possibilities, and facilitate active community participation.

Number of people working on the project:

There are 11 individuals in the MinD team, along with a network of approximately 10 experts who are part of the Scientific Committee.

Number of primary target beneficiaries involved

In the 2023 edition of the MinD workshop, there were:

26 university students under 30 from across Italy with backgrounds in design, architecture, psychology, and related fields;

6 young adults under 30 supported by Mental Health Centres;

3 professional Designer Team Leaders;

3 artists to conduct the Team Building activity;

11 people in the MinD Team, along with a network of approximately 10 experts who are part of the Scientific Committee.

Overall, this means:

470 university students under 30;

125 individuals supported by Mental Health Centres;

72 Team Leaders (Designers or Architects).

Each workshop involved an internal MinD team of about 10 people, along with 3 external individuals for the initial Team Building activity.

Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

For the 2023 edition, the project involved:

5 Universities

(Politecnico di Torino - DIST Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning, Politecnico di Torino - DAD Department of Architecture and Design, IAAD - Institute of Applied Arts and Design, NABA - New Academy of Fine Arts Milano, Department of Psychology University of Turin; Politecnico di Milano - Department of Design).

Cultural Associations

(Lavanderia a Vapore, Flashback Habitat)

Non-profit Associations

CCW Cultural Welfare Centre, Il Bandolo Onlus, Mental Health Services (ASL Città di Torino).

Please note that institutions and numbers refer specifically to the 2023 edition.

Every year, the project involves different cultural, social, and healthcare organisations, primarily but not exclusively operating in Piedmont.

Main achievements and goals obtained

The **main goal** of the project has been to **promote the involvement of individuals with mental vulnerabilities in career paths within cultural associations, museums, and architectural firms.** Over the years, the organisation has achieved this goal by activating a job placement programme, which is currently still active. Additionally, they have established similar collaborations with former participants of the workshops, both in an architectural firm and in a photography museum.

Monitoring and evaluation

In recent editions, **the project has included a protocol for observing and evaluating the well-being generated by the experience. This protocol was developed in collaboration with the Department of Psychology at the University of Turin.**

For the 2023 edition, titled "Healing Heritage," these dimensions were evaluated through self-report questionnaires composed of standardised scales aimed at assessing multidimensionality at collective, group, and individual levels. Participants completed the questionnaires online at two points: initially, before the start of the activities, and finally, at the conclusion of the activities. The anonymous questionnaires measured group cohesion during the activity, satisfaction with the project, and the perception of psychological well-being.

Awards and Acknowledgements

The MinD workshop series has been included in the repository of good practices in the report "Youth, Mental Health and Culture", an outcome of the Voices of Culture programme, a dialogue platform bringing together representatives of civil society in the cultural sector of EU member states with the European Commission. (MinD

Mad in Design was among the 53 European organisations selected for the 2022 edition.) The MinD workshop series has also been included in the mapping of the European project [CultureForHealth](#).

Credits

Associazione MinD Mad in Design



ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



The project “Healing Heritage: Heritage in Action for Mental Health” addresses United Nations Sustainable Development **Goal number 3: “Good Health and Well-being.”** By aiming to reduce stigma and promote mental health, the project contributes to this goal, which is essential for people’s well-being.



Furthermore, the project can also be connected to Sustainable Development **Goal number 10: “Reduced Inequalities.”** By promoting the active participation of young people from diverse experiences and backgrounds, the project reduces social barriers and fosters an environment of collaboration and mutual exchange, thus reducing the social isolation of individuals with experiences of fragility.

The various editions of the workshop have focused in various ways on the quality of mental health spaces, with actions aimed at rethinking and co-designing solutions for the quality of places related to mental health (from psychiatric group homes to public spaces, health and social care facilities, and the accessibility of cultural spaces) that can be referred to the SDG11 (Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable).

Target of the project

The main target groups of the project are:

Individuals under 30 with experience of mental fragility, who are high-functioning. They are often **not engaged in continuous work or educational activities**. They frequent psychiatric centres but have limited participation in cultural settings. **The identified need is to feel part of a group, find their role in society by discovering new skills, and increase their social independence.**

University students in disciplines related to design or humanities, who are **sensitive to social issues, curious, and open to group work and multidisciplinary exchange**. They often have past or ongoing experiences of personal fragility related to their limited social circle.

Health and social care workers interested in experimenting with new culture-based rehabilitation practices.

EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

The MinD workshops aim to foster an **increase** in participants' **awareness and reflexivity about their own context and to build the capacity to transform it**. Collaborative design processes can facilitate the development of mutual understanding and transformative insight, which helps to positively envision a possible future. **Some participants, particularly users supported by mental health services, have embarked on paths of social reintegration following the workshops and thanks to the relationships established**. This includes opportunities such as internships at organisations or cultural entities (such as CAMERA - National Centre of Photography) or training programmes at professional design studios.

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

The MinD workshops belong to one of the **various actions related to the idea of cultural welfare, as confirmed by the mapping study "Culture and Health: Towards a New Cultural Welfare" promoted by Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo in 2020**. Despite the continuity and the increasing demand (number of applications received each year), the MinD workshop programme still faces intrinsic fragility (in terms of sustainability) due to fragmented or discontinuous funding, primarily resulting from the absence of true cross-sectoral policies (Culture and Health) that promote scalable and repeatable actions over time.

EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

- Brainstorming sessions (digital and non-digital)
- Collaborative storytelling sessions
- Design sprints
- Design thinking workshops
- Scenario planning exercises
- Team Building activities utilising artistic practices (performing arts) to encourage non-verbal communication.
- Co-mapping exercises (both digital and non-digital)
- Co-creation sessions involving the realisation of prototypes.

Example of output delivered by the project

Product or interior design projects (residential or urban), some of which are prototyped in a second phase and then installed (Piredda Garden, Turin).

Collective narratives (result of co-mapping activities).

Collective Exhibition "Living with Care".

Community-driven public art installations.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

Some participants have been involved in subsequent editions in various ways:

A portion of **students** has been **engaged in the organisational structure of the Association and has subsequently collaborated** as part of the team in designing and developing subsequent editions.

Some users supported by mental health services have been involved as Experts by Experience (ESP) to "train" new users through meetings aimed at illustrating the purpose and methods of the activity.

One user has been consistently involved in the organisational structure of the Association, contributing to the development of subsequent editions as well as to the development and implementation of other projects.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

There has been continuous engagement with participants throughout the implementation process of the project. They were **regularly consulted to provide feedback and input on the execution and organisation of activities**, thus contributing to the ongoing improvement of the project.

Some participants have been involved in subsequent editions in various ways:

a portion of students were engaged in the organisational structure of the Association and subsequently collaborated as part of the team in designing and developing subsequent editions.

Some participants supported by mental health services were involved as Experts by Experience (ESP) to "train" new users through meetings aimed at illustrating the purpose and methods of the activity.

One participant has been consistently involved in the organisational structure of the Association, contributing to the development of subsequent editions as well as to the development and implementation of other projects.



MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

Scientific coordinators;

Designer (product, interior, service according to the diverse themes) or **Urban planners** (to lead the workshop activities) and junior designer as tutors;

Psychologists and **healthcare professionals** (to co-design the activities and to observe and support the group dynamics);

Anthropologists (in some editions)

Researchers in psychology to design and validate the well-being assessment protocol;

Communication expert;

Staff for logistical and technical requirements.

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

Health Sector Psychology: community psychologist with professional expertise in culture-based rehabilitation activities in psychiatric residencies.

Psychologists: with professional expertise in teamwork, engagement of vulnerable communities and individuals.

ESP: Experts by Experience (in mental health fragility)

Cultural Sector: Architecture and Cultural

Heritage disciplines with specific expertise in cultural heritage and community well-being, urban heritage and community engagement, heritage-led practices for community engagement.

Team leaders: designers with background and expertise in co-design, co-creation with a focus on working with vulnerable groups.

Artists: for team building activities, for artistic-based activities using non-verbal communication modes.

Collaborations and alliances with external community

- Universities and research centres
- Cultural organisations: Cultural Foundations, Museums, cultural associations
- Social Organisation: associations, case del quartiere
- Mental Health organisations: mental health public services, mental health associations



My Human Kit

2014 - Ongoing

MHK Association

Rennes, France



Useful Links



Healthcare

People with disabilities / Empowerment / Barriers



Texts by Cristian Campagnaro, Sara Ceraolo, Marco D'Urzo, Politecnico di Torino

GENERAL INFORMATION

Description of the project

Create spaces and implement **activities to collectively make technical aids for disabilities by, with and for people affected by disability**. The main places of activity are: "The Humanlabs"

Main objectives

- Defending and carrying disability as a difference synonymous with **wealth** and **motivation** and not only as a deficiency synonymous with compensation
- Promote the **development of technical aids that are accessible** by their cost and by the absence of intellectual property
- Develop the **empowerment** of people affected by disability in complementarity with the health sector
- Develop **collective places and spaces** where every citizen can integrate into a community and participate in solidarity

Primary target users/beneficiaries

Persons with disabilities

Credits

Co-founder: people with disabilities and makers

Awards and Acknowledgements

Winner of the Innovation Team Best Practices 2019

Social and Solidarity Enterprise Award at the Grand Prix des Bonnes Nouvelles des Territoires 2019 - MMA Foundation

"Funny Hand" project in the top 20 global projects Hackaday challenge 2018

1st ex-aequo CCAH Audience Trophy 2018

Winner of the La France s'Engage 2018 competition

1st prize Handitech Trophy 2017 "robotics"
Finalist of the competition La France S'Engage 2017

2016 Arthritis Foundation Innovation Award
International Trophy of Excellence at the Abilympics 2016

Winner of the Google Impact Challenge 2015

2015 MIT Technology Review Social Innovator Award



The context

- **Technical aids are difficult to access:** many disability aids depend on intellectual property and are integrated into a market system that makes them financially and technically inaccessible
- The **need to empower** people with disabilities
- Society and the medico-social sector today offer different solutions to people affected by disability, these **solutions are too often based on a logic of care and assistance**
- The **need to promote civic engagement** and the exercise of solidarity
- The law obliges solidarity and the State implements services to bring it to life, but **collective places allowing everyone to get involved are too rare**

Main achievements and goals obtained

- 2014: creation of the association
- 2016: first fundraising and first recruitments
- 2017: installation of the first workshop: Humanlab
- 2019: new recruitments
- 2020: political spin-off start in France and abroad 2022: Deployment of new projects: education, open innovation, mobility
- 2024: Move into a new space

Number of people working on the project:

Employees: 8
Volunteers: 30
Private partners: 10

Primary target beneficiaries involved

People with disabilities: 40

Number and type of organisations/ institutions involved

Private companies
Research Centre
School, Colleges, High Schools, University
Department (public authority)

Monitoring and evaluation

The **funding obtained** (private or public) obliges the association to carry out regular **evaluations** through written reports or the collection of **quantified indicators**. The evaluations are led by the director of the association and co-constructed with the teams and partners.



ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



Target of the project

A person with a disability who encounters difficulty on a daily basis and who wants to access a solution. This solution seems unattainable because of its price or non-existence or because of the inconsistency of the solutions offered on the market.



EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/
resources gained by the recipients
of the project

- Empowerment
- Recognition of expertise on one's own situation
- Development of technical and digital skills
- Meet people from diverse backgrounds
- Meeting with partner companies, universities, research centres

Relationship between the practice and
the local policies' scenario

The practice is out of step with local politics. To access technical aids in France: you access lists or catalogues, you buy and you may be reimbursed.

EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

Participation is at the heart of MHK's work. All activities are **collective and are based on the participation** of the person concerned and the volunteers involved.

Example of output delivered by the project

Product examples are available in the project's [website](#).

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

Involvement throughout the project phase.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

Involvement through **weekly meetings**, work meetings, time for discussion. Involvement because **each step is validated by the person concerned**.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

The management of the project is supervised by the **technical coordinator** of the project (employee). The assessment phase is **carried out jointly with the person concerned through an interview**. This is not always possible because people do not always agree or are available.



MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

Coordinator / Fabmanager: Everyone coordinates different projects, so the actions are carried out simultaneously

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

3 Fab Managers/Project Coordinators:

1 person with a background in design,
1 person with a mechanical/electronic
background,
1 person with a background in digital
mediation.

Director:

Training in Social and Solidarity Project
Management

Partnership Manager:

Legal Education

Project leader "Bionicohand/Patient expert:

Maintenance & Technical Training



Project Room

2016 - Ongoing

Dear Onlus

Turin, Italy



Useful Links



Healthcare

Young people / Access to technology / Collaborative dialogue



Texts by Cristian Campagnaro, Sara Ceraolo, Marco D'Urzo, Politecnico di Torino

Description of the project

Project Room (formerly Robo&Bobo) is an **educational workshop programme designed to transform the negative experience of illness into an opportunity to engage oncology and neuropsychiatric patients with creative disciplines**. The approach is built on four pillars:

(a) Focus on the “healthy” part rather than the illness or discomfort: the workshops address the developmental dimension of the young individuals, with a focus on acquiring new skills and facilitating a dialogue with the outside world.

(b) Project-based education as an opportunity to experiment with methodologies and develop skills that draw from different creative areas such as design, art, video, and photography.

(c) The combination of the constructivist approach and socially engaged creative practices: each workshop is the result of collaboration between an artist/designer/cultural organisation and the pedagogical team of Project Room, along with the participants. The workshop format, reflecting the constructivist approach of learning by doing, becomes a platform for the realisation of collaborative creative practices, where participatory elements are even more important than the resulting product.

(d) User-centred methodology, in which qualitative research is adopted to understand the behavioural, cultural, and social dynamics that characterize the project’s context. This approach involves including the individuals and communities involved in the design process (co-design), and monitoring the project’s progress.

The context

The paediatric hospital context of the oncology-hematology and child neuropsychiatry departments is highly specialised and dedicated to the **care of children and adolescents affected by complex diseases**. The oncology-hematology department deals with **blood diseases and tumours in paediatric age**, offering advanced diagnosis and therapies. The medical and nursing staff is highly specialised and sensitive to the needs of young patients and their families. The child neuropsychiatry department, on the other hand, deals with neurological and psychiatric diseases in developmental age. **In addition to diagnosis and therapy, this department also focuses on rehabilitation and the promotion of the child’s psychological and social development**. In both departments, the approach to care is multidisciplinary, involving various professionals, including doctors, nurses, psychologists, occupational therapists, and social workers, to offer a holistic approach to child care.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

Pre-adolescents and adolescents
(11-18 years old)

Awards and Acknowledgements

Special mention in the Sanofi context Make to care 2020 “for bringing new forms of teaching to young patients undergoing oncological treatment”;

Selected with 52 participants from 23 European countries for the Voices of culture brainstorming meeting on “Youth, Mental Health, and Culture”, the third theme for 2021-2023

Main objectives

- Humanising care in the paediatric hospital
- Addressing the training and relational needs of hospitalised adolescents and pre-adolescent
- Contributing to building a more cohesive and inclusive community
- Creating connections between the hospital and the outside world.

Number of people working on the project

Over 40 people have been involved in the project over the past eight years.

Primary target beneficiaries involved

Over 750 pre-adolescents and adolescents to date.

Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

Ospedale Infantile Regina Margherita di Torino (Onco-ematologia Paediatrica e Neuropsichiatria Infantile), Ospedale Maggiore di Novara (Centro Spoke Onco-ematologia infantile), Fondazione Agnelli, Fondazione Merz, Museo Nazionale della Montagna, Casa degli Artisti (Milano), Circolo del design, UGI Torino, CasaOz.

Main achievements and goals obtained

The main goal achieved was the high participation of patients in the project, along with the establishment of a strong collaboration with the department staff, particularly with doctors and educators. The project has also established important **collaborations** with local cultural institutions and events, thus enriching the educational offer of the organisation. Among these, the collaborations with the National Mountain Museum in 2023 and the Merz Foundation in 2024 stand out, in addition to the participation in the Sottodiciotto Film Festival and the selection in the final phase of the national competition. Furthermore, thanks to the methodology that iteratively builds on the achieved results, the organisation has also **co-designed** with the staff of the Child Neuropsychiatry department and raised funds for the establishment of a library and a screening room.

Monitoring and evaluation

As part of the **co-design methodology**, the progress of the workshops is monitored by a team of researchers, partly consisting of the workshop operators. The data collected in this way serves as a starting point for **identifying a series of requirements and guidelines that guide the design activity**. Indeed, the collected data are transformed into new opportunities and solutions to be implemented in the structures and contents of pedagogical activities. This approach ensures that the design is a **continuous work in progress** aimed at improving the service in the field. This activity allows for the optimisation of the workshop format to suit different intervention contexts, adjusting elements such as workshop duration, participant type and number, facilitator profile, and artefact typology.

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations. Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.



By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

Target of the project

The **project, initiated in 2016** in collaboration with OIRM in Turin, **initially aimed to support young patients who were frequently excluded from extracurricular activities due to their immunosuppressed state resulting from their medical condition and chemotherapy treatments.** Since 2021, the project has expanded its workshops to include patients from the Child Neuropsychiatry department, who have been particularly impacted by the isolation brought on by the pandemic. Despite not being immunocompromised, these patients experience heightened isolation due to their distance from family and technological limitations within the department.



EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

As confirmed by the medical staff during periodic assessment meetings, the benefits of the activities for the involved participants have been manifold, including:

- The opportunity to use time constructively and engagingly;
- Development of relational skills, socialisation capabilities with peers, and collaboration on common goals;
- Self-discovery and exploration of personal talents and abilities;
- Acquisition of skills in various disciplines, such as photography, graphic design, video editing, etc.
- The chance to collaborate with professionals from creative disciplines and representatives of local cultural institutions.

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

The Project Room project stands out from other initiatives addressing the same type of context and target for two main elements of innovation. The first one concerns the process and involves the use of co-design. **The project's approach entails significant and continuous involvement of healthcare personnel in defining its interventions.** The second innovative aspect concerns the type of activities proposed, which exclusively target the "healthy" part of the patients, providing them with **opportunities to develop new skills and expressive capabilities.** Therefore, neither the pathological condition nor the psychological state of the patients is addressed.



EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

Initial individual **interviews** with healthcare professionals to gather needs, requirements and ideas;

Periodic **evaluation and co-design sessions** with the team of healthcare professionals involved in the project;

Informal sessions of **quick idea generation and validation with key stakeholders** (mainly doctors and educators);

Final evaluation of the programme and collection of ideas for the next round.

Example of output delivered by the project

Annual educational workshop programmes that offer a wide range of creative and inclusive activities, also through a network of collaborations with various cultural realities in the territory;

Organisation of monthly activities open to both patients and caregivers;

Creation of equipped environments to enhance the activities already proposed in the department (library and film library under construction);

Production of an annual short film aimed at participating in the **Sottodiciotto Film Festival**;

The organisation of annual exhibition events to present the results of the workshop activities (the activities of the 2023-24 period will be presented in the autumn at the Koinotes festival, within the residency organised by the Casa degli Artisti in Milan).

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

Due to the specific field of intervention, the primary target (pre/adolescents who are temporarily hospitalised) are not actively involved in designing the activities. The team observes their behaviours and collects their comments throughout the whole programme, and receives regular feedback from intermediaries (doctors and educators). Instead, the secondary beneficiaries (healthcare professionals and educators) actively participate in the definition of the activities and provide advice on methods, processes and activities.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

Participants are engaged in the implementation phase of the project through their active participation and feedback to the proposed activities. Efforts are also made to capture the diverse interests of the involved youth, by offering a variety of activities tailored to their requests.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

The beneficiaries actively participate in the realisation of the final outcomes of the projects, which are almost exclusively linked to workshop activities. However, their **involvement is always mediated by the collaboration with professional figures** involved based on the characteristics of the projects carried out, in order to obtain high-quality results.

In terms of evaluation, the team measures quantitative data such as number of participants and frequency of participation, and qualitatively assesses the level of interest and learning achieved in the proposed activities.



MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

Creative director: ideates, develops and promotes ideas and partnerships; conducts workshops with beneficiaries;

Pedagogic team (3 members): co-develop ideas and materials and conduct workshops with beneficiaries;

Internal curator: supervises the artistic activities and manages the relationship with external curators and cultural institutions;

Researcher/strategist: ideates and facilitates the co-design sessions, conducts interviews and ethnographic research;

Psychology consultant: supports the team during dedicated monthly meetings.

The working group gathers once a month to discuss the project advancements and to monitor activities. **At least 2 team members work together to design the workshop sessions; at least 2 team members co-conduct each session; 1-2 members document the process and outcomes of each workshop with the beneficiaries.**

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

The project team is composed of internal and external resources depending on the project's goal, phase and requirements.

The involved areas of expertise include:

- artistic practices (>10 collaborators);
- curatorship (1 internal resource, >10 collaborators);
- photography (2 collaborators);
- video editing (1 collaborator);
- sound editing (1 collaborator);
- writing (1 internal resource, 2-3 collaborators);
- graphic design (2-3 collaborators);
- illustration (1 internal resource);
- psychology (1 internal resource);
- pedagogy (1 internal resource);
- ethnography (1 internal resource);
- participatory design (2 internal resources).

The internal and external team members cooperate to define activities, design the workshop materials and to process the workshop outcomes.

Collaborations and alliances with external community

The departments of the Regina Margherita Hospital - OIRM (Paediatric Oncology and Child Neuropsychiatry); - Mediators/facilitators (e.g., UGI and Fondazione Agnelli);

Project partners (e.g., CoLTI - Consorzio Librerie Torinesi Indipendenti);

Cultural and museum entities (e.g., Museo della Montagna, Fondazione Merz, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Circolo del Design).

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

The approach is systemic, aiming to create synergies and network skills and stakeholders within the intervention context. An example of constructive collaboration initiated by the organisation is with the hospital school. By involving teachers in the activities of "Robo & Bobo" initially and "Project Room" subsequently, they have indeed been able to extend the activities from the Oncology and Haematology department to the Neuropsychiatry department.



ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

This is the section associated with projects that use artistic and creative expression as a tool to activate processes of participation and change within the contexts of implementation.



Buffer Fringe Performing Arts Festival

2020 - Ongoing

Home for Cooperation

Nicosia, Cyprus



Useful Links



Artistic expression

Young people / City / Innovation / Collaborative dialogue



Texts by Elena Tornariti, SYNTHESIS Centre for Research and Education

Description of the project

The Buffer Fringe Performing Arts Festival is an **annual cultural initiative held in Nicosia, Cyprus, organised by the Home for Cooperation**. Rooted in the post-conflict context of Cyprus, **the festival aims to foster dialogue, reconciliation, and understanding through the transformative power of the arts**. It serves as a platform for both local and international artists to showcase new and experimental works that challenge social norms, confront divisive narratives, and promote empathy and connection across borders. **Through a diverse programme of performances, exhibitions, workshops, and discussions, the festival creates spaces for reflection, exchange, and collaboration, engaging a wide range of audiences, including local communities, international visitors, artists, peacebuilders, activists, researchers, and youth**. By embedding creativity into social processes and exploring the intersection of arts and peacebuilding, the festival contributes to building sustainable solidarity and promoting alternative subjectivities to dominant ideologies.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

Local Communities: Residents of Nicosia, Cyprus, and surrounding areas are key beneficiaries of the festival. By attending performances, workshops, and other events, they have the opportunity to engage with diverse artistic expressions, participate in dialogue, and connect with their local community.

International Visitors: The festival attracts visitors from around the world who are interested in experiencing new and experimental artistic work and engaging in cross-cultural exchange. These visitors

contribute to the festival's vibrant atmosphere and help foster connections between different cultures and perspectives.

Artists: Local and international artists are primary users of the festival, as it provides them with a platform to showcase their work, collaborate with other artists, and engage with audiences. The festival's emphasis on new and experimental art forms encourages artistic innovation and exploration.

Peacebuilders and Activists: Individuals and organisations involved in peacebuilding and social activism are beneficiaries of the festival's programming, as it offers opportunities to explore the intersection of arts and peacebuilding, exchange ideas, and develop interdisciplinary approaches to addressing social issues.

Researchers and Academics: Scholars and researchers interested in the relationship between arts, culture, and peacebuilding benefit from the festival's emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration and knowledge sharing. The festival provides a rich context for studying the role of art in promoting dialogue, understanding, and reconciliation.

The context

The Buffer Fringe Performing Arts Festival takes place in Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus, a country with a **complex history of conflict and division**. The festival is situated within the buffer zone, a symbolic space separating the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, making it a poignant location for promoting peace and reconciliation. Cyprus has been divided since the 1974 conflict, with ongoing tensions between the

two communities. Against this backdrop, the festival serves as a platform for creative expression and dialogue, challenging divisive narratives and fostering understanding between communities. Its location in the buffer zone underscores its commitment to transcending barriers and building bridges between people of different backgrounds and identities. Through its diverse programme of artistic performances and activities, the festival contributes to the broader context of peacebuilding efforts in Cyprus and beyond, demonstrating the **potential of the arts to inspire social change and promote a culture of peace**.

Awards and Acknowledgements

In the 2017 edition, the Festival invited applications through an international open call in addition to the local one for the first time. The festival's international reputation grew higher under the leadership of Artistic Director Charalambia Theophanous. The Festival hosted durational outdoor performances for the first time at historical landmarks of Nicosia e.g. Selimiye Square and Phanoremeni Square. Buffer Fringe 2017-2018 received international recognition from the European Festivals Association with the "Remarkable Festival" label and run as a laureate for the EFFE (Europe for Festivals, Festivals for Europe) award. The festival received the EFFE label once again for the 2019 and 2020 editions.

Credits

The Buffer Fringe Performing Arts Festival is an initiative that involves various individuals and organisations dedicated to promoting peacebuilding through the arts:

Home for Cooperation, Local and International Artists, Researchers, Academics, Field Practitioners and Volunteers and Staff.

Main objectives

- **Foster dialogue and understanding:** Create spaces for dialogue and exchange between diverse communities, fostering mutual understanding and empathy.
- **Challenge divisive narratives:** Showcase new and experimental artistic works that challenge social norms and confront divisive narratives, promoting alternative perspectives and narratives.
- **Promote reconciliation:** Contribute to reconciliation efforts by engaging with themes of conflict, memory, and identity through artistic expression.
- **Build sustainable solidarity:** Cultivate a sense of solidarity and collaboration among participants, partners, and stakeholders, working towards a shared vision of peace and social justice.
- **Empower artists and communities:** Provide opportunities for artists and community members to collaborate, create, and express themselves, empowering them to contribute to positive social change.
- **Facilitate interdisciplinary exchange:** Encourage interdisciplinary collaboration and exchange between artists, researchers, activists, and peacebuilders, exploring the intersection of arts, culture, and peacebuilding.
- **Engage youth and future generations:** Develop programming specifically tailored to engage youth and students, empowering them to become active participants in peacebuilding and social transformation.

Main achievements and goals obtained

Promoting Dialogue and Understanding: The festival has provided a platform for dialogue and exchange between diverse communities, fostering mutual understanding, empathy, and connection across cultural and social divides.

Challenging Divisive Narratives: Through its programming of new and experimental artistic works, the festival has challenged divisive narratives, confronting social norms and promoting alternative perspectives and narratives.

Fostering Reconciliation: The festival has contributed to reconciliation efforts by engaging with themes of conflict, memory, and identity through artistic expression, creating spaces for healing and reconciliation.

Building Sustainable Solidarity: By cultivating a sense of solidarity and collaboration among participants, partners, and stakeholders, the festival has worked towards building sustainable relationships and networks for peace and social justice.

Empowering Artists and Communities: The festival has provided opportunities for artists and community members to collaborate, create, and express themselves, empowering them to contribute to positive social change and transformation.

Facilitating Interdisciplinary Exchange: The festival has encouraged interdisciplinary collaboration and exchange between artists, researchers, activists, and peacebuilders, exploring the intersection of arts, culture, and peacebuilding.

Community Impact and Engagement: The festival has had a positive impact on local communities, providing opportunities for cultural exchange, economic development, and community engagement, while also contributing to the broader context of peacebuilding efforts in Cyprus and beyond.

Number of people working on the project

While the exact number of people involved in the Buffer Fringe Festival overall may fluctuate from year to year, it can involve dozens to hundreds of individuals collectively working towards the festival's success.

Number of primary target beneficiaries involved

Overall, the total number of people involved as primary target beneficiaries can range from hundreds to thousands, with the exact number depending on factors such as festival attendance, programme offerings, and community engagement efforts.

Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

Cultural Organisations
Peacebuilding Organisations,
Educational Institutions,
Government Agencies,
International Partners,
Community Groups,
Arts Collectives and Network,
Media and Communication Partners,
Research Institutions.

Monitoring and evaluation

Goals and Objectives: The festival organisers establish clear goals and objectives at the outset, outlining what they aim to achieve in terms of artistic impact, community engagement, peacebuilding outcomes, and other relevant criteria.

Indicators and Metrics: Key performance indicators (KPIs) and metrics are identified to measure progress towards the festival's goals. These include attendance numbers, audience feedback, artist satisfaction, media coverage, social media engagement, and other relevant data points.

Data Collection: Data is collected throughout the festival period using various methods, such as surveys, interviews, observation, ticket sales data, social media analytics, and participant feedback forms. This data provides insights into the festival's impact and effectiveness.

Analysis and Reporting: The collected data is analysed to assess the festival's performance against its goals and objectives. A formal evaluation report is prepared, summarising key findings, highlighting successes and challenges, and making recommendations for future iterations of the festival.

Stakeholder Engagement: Festival organisers engage with stakeholders, including artists, participants, partners, sponsors, and community members, to gather feedback and input on the festival's impact and relevance.

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



The festival aims to reduce inequalities by providing a platform for marginalised voices, including artists from diverse backgrounds and communities. By showcasing new and experimental works that challenge dominant narratives and amplify underrepresented perspectives, the festival promotes cultural diversity and social inclusion.



The festival promotes mental health and well-being by providing opportunities for artistic expression, creativity, and social connection. Through engaging performances, interactive workshops, and community-based activities, the festival creates spaces for self-expression, healing, and personal growth.



The festival offers educational programming, workshops, and discussions aimed at fostering critical thinking, creativity, and cross-cultural understanding among participants, including youth and students. By providing access to quality arts education and cultural experiences, the festival contributes to lifelong learning and personal development.



The festival strives to promote gender equality by providing equal opportunities for female, male, and non-binary artists to participate and showcase their work. It also seeks to address gender-based inequalities in the arts sector by supporting and empowering female artists and creators.



Through its focus on peacebuilding and reconciliation, the festival contributes to the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies. By fostering dialogue, understanding, and empathy across divides, the festival helps build strong institutions that uphold human rights, promote social cohesion, and prevent conflict.

Target of the project

Communities in Conflict Zones: The festival seeks to engage individuals and communities living in conflict-affected areas or post-conflict societies, where the legacy of violence, trauma, and division continues to impact daily life. These communities may face barriers to social cohesion, economic opportunity, and cultural exchange due to ongoing tensions and unresolved conflicts.

Marginalised Groups: The festival prioritises the participation and representation of marginalised groups, including refugees, migrants, minorities, and indigenous peoples, who often face discrimination, exclusion, and social stigma. These groups may lack access to resources, opportunities, and platforms for cultural expression and artistic engagement.

Youth and Students: The festival targets youth and students as key stakeholders in peacebuilding and social change. Young people may face unique challenges related to identity formation, social integration, and access to education and employment opportunities. Engaging youth in artistic activities and dialogue can empower them to become agents of positive change in their communities.

Artists and Creatives: The festival provides a platform for emerging and established artists from diverse backgrounds to showcase their work and engage with audiences. Artists may face challenges such as limited funding, lack of recognition, and barriers to artistic freedom, particularly in conflict-affected or repressive contexts.

Local Communities: The festival aims to connect with and serve the needs of local communities in Nicosia and beyond, including residents of the buffer zone and surrounding areas. These communities may experience social and economic disparities, as well as barriers to cross-community dialogue and collaboration.



EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

Artistic Development: Participating artists gain new opportunities to showcase their work, collaborate with other artists, and engage with diverse audiences. They may expand their artistic skills, experiment with new forms of expression, and receive valuable feedback and support from peers and mentors.

Cross-Cultural Understanding: Festival attendees develop a deeper appreciation for cultural diversity and a greater understanding of different perspectives, identities, and experiences. By experiencing performances and engaging in dialogue with artists and fellow participants from diverse backgrounds, they broaden their worldview and challenge stereotypes and prejudices.

Community Engagement: The festival fosters connections and collaboration within local communities, bringing together residents, artists, activists, and organisations to address common challenges and promote social cohesion. Participants become actively involved in community-building efforts, volunteering, and advocacy initiatives.

Networking Opportunities: Participants have the chance to network with peers, professionals, and organisations working in related fields, building valuable relationships and partnerships that can lead to future collaborations, projects, and opportunities for professional development.

Empowerment and Agency: Through their involvement in the festival, recipients gain a

sense of empowerment and agency, realising their potential to effect change and make a difference in their communities. They become active participants in shaping the festival's programming, contributing their ideas, talents, and perspectives to create meaningful and impactful experiences.

Access to Resources and Support: Festival participants may gain access to resources and support services offered by partner organisations, such as educational workshops, mentorship programmes, funding opportunities. These resources help them further develop their skills, pursue their artistic ambitions, and address social and economic challenges.

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

The organisation has "activist approach".

The festival serves as a platform for innovative approaches to addressing social, cultural, and economic challenges within the local context. Through its focus on new and experimental artistic works, interdisciplinary collaboration, and community engagement, the festival introduces innovative ideas and practices that inspire new policy initiatives or approaches to social development. **The festival's emphasis on challenging dominant narratives, promoting alternative perspectives, and confronting social norms may be perceived as disruptive within the local policy landscape.** By questioning established power structures and advocating for social change through artistic expression, the festival may catalyse debates, discussions, and policy reforms in areas such as cultural policy, education, and community development. **The festival's programming and research activities may inform and influence local policies in areas such as arts and culture, education, social inclusion, and peacebuilding.** By raising awareness, and mobilising stakeholders, the festival contributes to shaping policy agendas and promoting policy changes that support its mission and objectives.



EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Participatory activities carried out within the project

- The festival offers a range of **workshops** led by artists, educators, and activists, providing opportunities for participants to learn new skills, explore different art forms, and express themselves creatively. Workshops may focus on areas such as dance, theatre, visual arts, storytelling, and creative writing.
- Some festival performances are designed to actively **involve the audience in the artistic experience, blurring the boundaries between performers and spectators.** Audience members may be invited to participate in improvisational activities, interactive storytelling, or collaborative art-making exercises.
- The festival may organise **community art projects that invite residents to contribute to collective artworks or installations.** These projects often explore themes relevant to the local community and encourage collaboration, creativity, and expression.
- In addition to artistic performances, **the festival hosts panel discussions, roundtables, and forums** on topics related to peace, social justice, and cultural diversity. These events provide opportunities for dialogue, debate, and exchange of ideas among participants, fostering critical thinking and engagement.
- Some festival activities take place in **non-traditional venues** or public

spaces, allowing for site-specific interventions that engage with the local environment and community. These interventions may include site-specific performances, installations, or interactive art experiences that invite audience participation and interaction.

- The festival **facilitates community dialogues and storytelling sessions** that invite participants to share their personal experiences, perspectives, and aspirations. These dialogues create spaces for listening, empathy, and understanding, fostering connections and solidarity within the community.
- The festival may organise **artistic residencies or collaborative projects** that bring together local and international artists to co-create works inspired by the local context.
- The festival includes **programming specifically tailored to engage youth and students, such as youth-led performances, workshops, and discussions.** These activities empower young people to express themselves creatively, explore social issues, and contribute to positive change in their communities.

Example of output delivered by the project

Comprehensive documentation of festival events, including photographs, videos, and written reports, serves as a record of the festival's activities.

Recordings or transcripts of artistic performances presented at the festival can be archived and shared online.

Workshops, seminars, and educational sessions conducted during the festival

often produce educational materials such as handouts, slideshows, and instructional videos.

Collaborative art projects created during the festival, such as murals, sculptures, or installations, may remain on display in public spaces or community venues after the festival concludes.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

Before planning begins, organisers may conduct a **context analysis to understand the socio-cultural, economic, and political context in which the festival operates**. Beneficiaries, including artists, community members, and local organisations, may be consulted to provide insights into the local context, identify key issues, and highlight areas of concern or opportunity.

Beneficiaries are involved in the needs assessment process, where their input is sought to identify the specific needs, challenges, and aspirations of the target audience. This involves **surveys, focus group discussions, interviews, and other participatory methods** to gather feedback and input from diverse stakeholders.

Beneficiaries play a role in shaping the festival's programme design by providing input on the types of performances, workshops, and activities they would like to see included. Organisers may conduct community consultations, brainstorming sessions, or participatory workshops to solicit ideas and co-create the festival programme with input from beneficiaries.

Beneficiaries are involved in the selection of artists and performers for the festival, ensuring that the lineup reflects the diversity and interests of the target audience.

Beneficiaries are consulted on **community engagement strategies to ensure that the festival reaches and resonates with the intended audience**. This may involve marketing campaigns, and communication channels tailored to the preferences and accessibility needs of different community groups.

The project development phase also includes **capacity-building activities aimed at empowering beneficiaries to actively participate in the festival's implementation and evaluation**. This may involve training sessions, skill-building workshops, and leadership development programmes to equip beneficiaries with the knowledge and tools they need to contribute effectively to the project.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

Beneficiaries, including local artists, performers, and community members, actively participate in the festival by showcasing their artistic talents, contributing to performances, and presenting workshops or exhibitions. Their creative contributions enrich the festival programme and reflect the diversity and vibrancy of the local arts scene.

Beneficiaries may **volunteer** their time and skills to support festival logistics, operations, and outreach activities. Volunteers assist with tasks such as event setup, ticketing, ushering, and audience engagement.

As audience members, **beneficiaries actively engage with festival programming**, attending performances, workshops, and community events.

Beneficiaries provide feedback and input on their festival experience, sharing their perspectives, preferences, and suggestions for improvement.

Beneficiaries may partner with festival organisers to **co-host events, promote programming, or provide resources and support**.

Beneficiaries **engage in cultural exchange and collaboration** with artists, performers, and participants from diverse backgrounds. Through intercultural dialogue, artistic collaboration, and shared experiences, beneficiaries forge connections and build relationships that extend beyond the festival's duration.

The **festival may offer capacity-building opportunities for beneficiaries**, such as workshops, training sessions, or mentorship programmes.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

Beneficiaries are **consulted** throughout the project management/delivery phase to provide input on decision-making processes, resource allocation, and logistical planning. Their perspectives help ensure that the festival remains responsive to community needs and interests.

Beneficiaries **may take on leadership roles** in volunteer coordination, helping recruit, train, and supervise volunteers who support festival operations.

They **actively participate in community outreach and promotion efforts**, leveraging their networks and relationships to spread the word about the festival and engage local residents. They may distribute promotional materials, organise outreach events, and share festival updates through social media and other channels.

Beneficiaries **contribute to the evaluation phase by providing feedback** on their festival experience and the impact of festival activities. They may participate in post-event surveys, focus groups, or interviews to share their perspectives, preferences, and suggestions for improvement.

They **engage in reflection and learning activities** to evaluate the festival's achievements, challenges, and lessons learned.

MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

Project Manager: The project manager oversees the overall planning, coordination, and execution of the festival. They are responsible for setting project timelines, managing budgets, liaising with stakeholders, and ensuring that project objectives are met. The project manager plays a central role in decision-making and problem-solving, guiding the working group towards achieving project goals.

Artistic Director: The artistic director is responsible for curating the festival programme, selecting artists and performers, and overseeing artistic production. They work closely with artists to develop concepts, coordinate rehearsals, and ensure the quality and integrity of artistic performances. The artistic director brings creative vision and expertise to the festival, shaping its artistic direction and aesthetic appeal.

Community Engagement Coordinator: The community engagement coordinator facilitates outreach efforts, builds partnerships with local organisations, and engages community members in festival activities. They organise community events, workshops, and forums, ensuring that the festival is accessible and inclusive to diverse audiences. The community engagement coordinator serves as a liaison between the festival and the community, fostering dialogue, collaboration, and participation.

Logistics Coordinator: The logistics coordinator manages the logistical aspects of the festival, including venue management, equipment rentals, transportation, and event staffing. They ensure that festival activities run smoothly and efficiently, coordinating with vendors, contractors, and volunteers to meet logistical needs. The logistics coordinator troubleshoots any logistical challenges that arise during the festival, ensuring a seamless experience for participants and attendees.

Marketing and Communications Manager: The marketing and communications manager oversees the festival's promotional efforts, including advertising, social media, press releases, and branding. They develop marketing strategies to raise awareness of the festival, attract audiences, and engage stakeholders. The marketing and communications manager also handles media relations, public relations, and crisis communications, managing the festival's reputation and image.

Volunteer Coordinator: The volunteer coordinator recruits, trains, and supervises volunteers who support festival operations. They coordinate volunteer schedules, assign tasks, and provide support and guidance to volunteers throughout the festival. The volunteer coordinator ensures that volunteers are equipped with the information and resources they need to fulfill their roles effectively, contributing to the overall success of the festival.

Areas of expertise and disciplines involved in the project

Arts and Culture: This discipline encompasses artists, performers, curators, and arts administrators involved in the creation, production, and curation of artistic performances and exhibitions for the festival.

Event Management: Event managers, coordinators, and logistics professionals are responsible for planning, coordinating, and executing festival logistics, including venue management, equipment rentals, transportation, and staffing.

Community Engagement and Outreach: Professionals with expertise in community engagement, outreach, and partnership development work to connect with local communities, organisations, and stakeholders, ensuring that the festival is inclusive, accessible, and relevant to diverse audiences.

Marketing and Communications: Marketing managers, communications specialists, and media professionals handle the festival's promotional efforts, including advertising, social media, press releases, and branding.

Volunteer Management: Volunteer coordinators oversee the recruitment, training, and supervision of volunteers who support festival operations.

Sectors Involved:
Arts and Culture Organisations: Local arts organisations, cultural institutions, and creative collectives contribute to the festival by providing artistic programming, venue space, and organisational support. Several arts and culture organisations may be involved as partners or collaborators.
Community and Non-profit Organisations: Community-based organisations, non-profit

groups, and grassroots initiatives collaborate with the festival to engage local communities, address social issues, and promote community well-being. There may be multiple community organisations involved in various capacities.

Government and Municipal Agencies: Government agencies, municipal departments, and public authorities may support the festival through permits, and logistical assistance.

Educational Institutions: Universities, schools, and educational institutions may collaborate with the festival to provide educational programming, workshops, and research support. Academic partnerships contribute to the festival's educational objectives and outreach efforts.

Collaborations and alliances with external community

The festival collaborates with local arts and cultural organisations to showcase their artistic programming, provide venue space, and engage with their networks of artists and performers.

Collaborations with community-based non-profit organisations allow the festival to address social issues, promote community well-being, and engage marginalised or underserved populations. Non-profit partners may co-host events, workshops, or exhibitions focused on topics such as social justice, human rights, or environmental sustainability.

The festival partners with grassroots initiatives and activist groups to amplify voices, raise awareness, and mobilise action around pressing social and political issues.

Collaborations with educational institutions, such as universities and schools, allow the festival to engage with students, educators, and researchers on topics related to arts, culture, and social change.

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

The programming team collaborates with the community engagement team to **develop festival programming that reflects the interests, needs, and aspirations of local communities**. Community engagement specialists provide insights, connections, and feedback to inform the selection of artists, themes, and activities that resonate with diverse audiences.

The **evaluation team collaborates with researchers and academics within the organisation to conduct research and assessment activities** that measure the festival's impact, outcomes, and effectiveness.

The **communications team collaborates with media relations specialists** to manage press relations, publicity, and media coverage for the festival.





Cantieri di Dialogo

February 2023 - December 2023

Mediterranea, Università degli Studi Milano

Milan, Italy



Artistic expression

Young people / Peer-to-peer / Suburbs / Collaborative dialogue / Barriers



Texts by Vittoria Lombardi, Tiziana Ciampolini and Antonio Fantasia, Associazione S-NODI GROUP E.T.S.

Description of the project

Cantieri di Dialogo established an **Intergenerational Artistic Committee (IAC) within the IIS Galilei-Luxemburg secondary school community of students, teachers and parents with the aim of co-selecting an artist that could activate a process of co-design and co-production of a work of art to be realised at school**, starting from IAC's ideas and needs of expression.

Cantieri di Dialogo was structured as follows: A series of focus groups led by Università Degli Studi Milano Bicocca involved students from different classes, teachers, professors and parents with the aim of collecting needs, aspirations and different perspectives on the learning environment.

A "preparatory" phase facilitated by Milano Mediterranea and Università Degli Studi Milano Bicocca involved professors and the school's director to agree on how to implement the project taking into account the specificities of the school community and the desired impacts. An open call was launched through school's internal communication channels to select interested students, teachers and families in taking part in the IAC.

From April 2023 to June 2023 the IAC met 6 times in the school building (in the main hall). Each meeting lasted 4 hours and was held in the afternoon: IAC acted as a commission, analysing a series of artistic profiles in the field of site-specific, relational or participatory art, selecting by consent the one to be involved in the process of co-producing an work of art.

From September 2023 to December 2023 the selected artist, Ilaria Turba, facilitated a series of workshops to co-design and co-produce with the IAC participants an art of work. The project designed was the **participatory renovation and**

re-signification of an abandoned room within the school building that was renamed Shelter of Desire and became thereafter a third-place, an open space available for the whole school community **for socialising, spend their spare time, meeting with peers** to answer the **need for beauty** in the school building, spaces for inter-relations, **a neutral place where students could practice care, be protagonist and exercise a sense of belonging.**

Main objectives

- Reduce the exposure to education poverty and early school drop out by promoting intergenerational dialogue within the school and attention to the needs expressed by the students.
- Promote a listening and inclusive environment.
- Promoting students' individual and collective protagonism through actions of "doing things together" as an opportunity for self-narration/self-representation and community building.
- Fostering youngsters' ability to aspire.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

IIC Galilei-Luxemburg community of students, teachers and students' related families paying attention to **students at risk of early school drop-out and with migratory background** coming from fragile socio-economic families as those have been considered at higher risk of marginalisation and educational poverty.

Credits

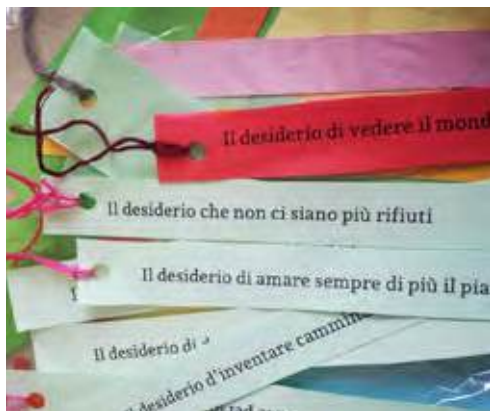
Cantieri di Dialogo was a pillar action - led by Associazione Milano Mediterranea and Università degli Studi Milano Bicocca Department of Pedagogy - within the broader project "FAMI 3857 Reinventare la cittadinanza. Percorsi di capacitazione di reti e gruppi sociali nel quartiere San Siro" - ("Reinventing citizenship. Capacitation paths of networks and social groups in the San Siro district) led by Prefettura di Milano in cooperation with Università Degli Studi Milano Bicocca; Politecnico di Milano; Università Bocconi; Milano Mediterranea; Itinerari Paralleli; Comunità Nuova Cooperativa Sociale.



The context

The project takes place in a secondary professional school of San Siro (Milano western suburbs). Although well connected to the urban mobility network and the main services, San Siro can be considered today an “inner suburb”, by virtue of its **exclusion from the development dynamics of the surrounding city**. It is characterized by the presence of many inhabitants of **foreign origin** (a total of about **50% of the population** which makes the population of the district younger than the rest of the city) and with about **85 nationalities represented and it is one of the largest public housing districts in Milan**.

In relation to those characteristics of marginalisation and socio-economic fragility of a great part of the population, **San Siro younger generations are more exposed to school drop-out and educational poverty than other municipality areas**. As a matter of fact IIC Galilei - Luxembourg is the first school in the region of Lombardy to receive funds to fight early school drop-outs and low school performances as an implicit drop-out of students.



Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

Organisations directly involved in the pillar action Cantieri di Dialogo were 3:

Milano Mediterranea
Università Bicocca
IIC Galilei-Luxemburg

Since Cantieri di Dialogo was part of a broader project with the involvement of other institutions with whom implementation actions and results have been discussed and shared through several meetings all through the process, the overall number of organisations involved could be considered 7 (all the partners of the project + IIC Galilei-Luxemburg).

Number of people working on the project

11 professionals

Number of primary target beneficiaries involved

60 students who joined the IAC;

10 professors who joined the IAC;

10 parents (4 in the IAC, all joined the focus groups);

100 students that have been tracked in using at least once the room Shelter of Desires after inauguration.

Main achievements and goals obtained

Among the main results observed, **a greater cohesion and willingness to dialogue within the school community** was the main achievement.

The Cantieri Di Dialogo project has been highly experimental for the kind of extracurricular activities previously experimented by the school. It allowed for the first time the encounter of students, parents and teachers in a neutral place beyond their roles. Professors testified that the creation of a neutral space and the involvement in concrete activities beyond mandatory ones allowed **students** to express themselves with **greater confidence, manifesting needs and desires and feeling entitled to share** them with their peers but also with adults. It also allowed many students to **share talents** (manual, creative, expressive) and **soft-skills** (relational, communication) that were not sufficiently visible through or valued by other curricular activities and thus to acquire and consolidate their **self-confidence**.

Students joining via open call were fewer. The beginning of the engagement process was quite difficult, however, after the first meetings by word of mouth, many other students subscribed even from classes that the project had not met directly. This was an element that underlined that the process was needed. After breaking some initial mistrusts, something valuable was being offered. The importance of carrying out this project as a non-mandatory activity during school hours was also very significant in order to enable everyone to participate. The idea of renovating and re-signifying an abandoned and under-used room establishing a safe space for students and the school community to meet each other and share time was not planned

as emerged by the IAC proposals. **The school agreed to keep the room open and available after the end of the project**. The project ended in December 2023. In 2024, thanks to a project funded by Fondazione di Comunità di Milano, the involvement of the student community in participatory co-design and co-production activities continues in a workshop for co-producing a Trap Community Opera. Workshops are led by Milano Mediterranea and take place in the space “Shelter of Desires room”.

Monitoring and evaluation

Evaluation and monitoring of the process was the responsibility of Università Bicocca through **focus groups and interviews** at the beginning and at the end of the project. Several researchers from the Department of Pedagogy have been involved for field observation all through the project.

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



Target of the project

The main group of participants was students **between 15 and 19 years old** (female, male, non-binary) from different classes and courses (IIC has a variety of professional disciplines from mechanics to dentistry to graphics).

Many students came from **migratory backgrounds mainly Northern Africa, China, Philippines, South America**. Almost all of them were resident in San Siro district. **Some of them suffered from linguistic barriers** that the project tried to diminish by multilingual communication and the presence of Arabic-speaking facilitators among the team from Milano Mediterranea. Through focus groups

with students emerged the sense of not being listened to; boredom; general fear and anxiety related to school; low trust in school as institution at the same time lots of interests, passion in music or artistic activities. During the process lots, among general conversations, lots of difficult socio-economic situations emerged as a common background. Professors as another group of beneficiaries expressed their difficulty in building longer relationships and trust with the students due to cyclical change of classes and teachings as most of the teachers are not tenured professors.



◊ EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/ resources gained by the recipients of the project

The project allowed many students to **share talents** (manual, creative, expressive) and **soft-skills** (relational, communication) that were not sufficiently visible through or valued by other curricular activities and thus to acquire and consolidate their **self-confidence**.

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

Cantieri Di Dialogo and the Intergenerational Artistic Committee take inspiration from the **practice of the Neighbourhood Artistic Committee (NAC)** by Milano Mediterranea in the district of Giambellino where, since 2020, an intergenerational and heterogeneous group of local inhabitants take part in a process of co-designing the artistic season promoted by the association. The **NAC is a practice of bottom-up and participatory artistic direction that tries to promote access to cultural participation in peripheral areas where the cultural offer is often decontextualised and generally poor**. The NAC in Giambellino selects each year by consent 2 artists that benefit from a production support to develop a site-specific, participatory project involving the local community and the neighbourhood. Cantieri di Dialogo and the IAC developed with the community from IIC Galilei-Luxemburg was an experiment to replicate the model of NAC in another context and observe the results, promoting innovative practices of community building in public schools.



EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of output delivered by the project

- A renovated room in the building of the IIC Galilei-Luxemburg renamed by the students Shelter of Desire.
- An open, freely accessible space where the school community can organise meeting, spend spare time.
- A room without a specific destination, available to everyone as a neutral space for socialising.
- A series of photo-portraits co-designed by the IAC participants.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

Focus groups were conducted involving students, professors and parents to gather perspectives from all the members of the school community. Professors and the school director were directly involved in the development phase to co-design how to better adapt the proposal of intervention to the school context. **Students, professors and parents who joined the IAC took part in the process of collecting needs and ideas related to possible work of art to be realised altogether.** IAC acted as a collective Steering Committee selecting the artist to be involved in the process of facilitating the co-production process. Criteria of selection have been co-designed by the IAC altogether under the supervision of Milano Mediterranea: experience of the artist; quality of the portfolio; consistency of the artist's work in relation to the school contexts; feasibility; sustainability of the proposed interventions.

The approach of the IAC was similar to that of the "Nuovi Comittenti" / New Commissioners, already known in Europe and applied in Italy in some experiments (see Turin)- which on the one hand recognises citizens as having an active role in decisions concerning the physical, cultural and social changes of their places of life and, on the other hand, responds to a programme aimed at promoting, through financial measures and strategic and integrated interventions, a new urban regeneration policy aimed at deprived cities and neighbourhoods.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

The idea of renovating and re-signifying the room that became Shelter of Desire arrived by the IAC. How to renovate it was co-designed by the IAC and the artists and concretely the IAC participants were involved in listing and collecting necessary materials, painting the walls, realising decorations, designing the different areas of the room in relation to specific functions (chill-out zone, tea-break zone, etc...)

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

IAC was involved in the inauguration of the space. An idea of establishing a "responsible team" composed by students, professors and families from the IAC with the role of taking care of the room after the end of the project was not implemented.



**MULTI-EXPERTISE/
DISCIPLINES**

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

Professionals involved in the process acted simultaneously as a multidisciplinary team work in all phases with different responsibilities depending on the specific action. Milano Mediterranea was mainly responsible for facilitating the IAC meetings, the process of selection of the artist and for co-curating the co-production process with the artist involved.

Milano Mediterranea team was composed by:

- 1 artistic director, curator;
- 1 cultural facilitator/educator
- 1 community manager and project manager
- 1 social media manager for documenting and reporting

Università Bicocca team involved:

1 research coordinator from social pedagogy department
4 researchers from social pedagogy department

IIC Galieli Luxembourg involved

1 professor as internal community manager;
1 freelance artist and 1 assistant

Areas of expertise and disciplines involved in the project

Milano Mediterranean team brought competencies, skills and approaches from **site-specific, relational and participatory art, theatre and performing art** but also from the fields of **cultural welfare management, community management, cultural mediation, facilitation techniques and art-based research**; Università Bicocca brought competencies related to **pedagogy; social**

pedagogy; qualitative research; ethnography; sociology; anthropology. Ilaria Turba and her assistant brought skills and competencies from the field of **relational art, visual art, photography and community art.**

Collaborations and alliances with external community

All the partners from the broader project "FAMI - Reinventare la cittadinanza" have been involved as external eyes on the process during several meetings.

A main alliance was built with Comunità Nuova Cooperativa Sociale that was facilitating a peer-to-peer capacity building between students within the same school with another group of adolescents.

With Comunità Nuova Milano Mediterranea shared thoughts and evidence observed related to the needs and desires of the school community.





Normali Meraviglie

2015 - Ongoing

Fondazione Sacra Famiglia

Milan, Italy



Useful Links



Texts by Cristian Campagnaro, Sara Ceraolo, Marco D'Urzo, Politecnico di Torino



Artistic expression

People with disabilities / Older people / Craftmanship / Empowerment / Collaborative dialogue / Barriers

Description of the project

Normali Meraviglie project has developed within the ARTETICAMENTE **rehabilitation workshops**, in which the guests of the Fondazione Sacra Famiglia work. The workshops are part of the history of Fondazione Sacra Famiglia, born in 1919 by the will of the founding President Don Domenico Pogliani. Today, the workshops continue to serve their purpose through collaboration with the designer and artist Alessandro Guerriero. Starting in 2015, the guests attending the ARTETICAMENTE workshops of Fondazione Sacra Famiglia, assisted by instructors, are involved in the project Normali Meraviglie, artistically coordinated by Alessandro Guerriero, and objects of various types, the fruit of this collaboration and ideation process, begin to take shape.

The project Normali Meraviglie consists of three 'sections'.

"The Hand": starting with the drawing of a hand by Mimmo Paladino, **50 rough ceramic sculptures were created in the Sacra Famiglia workshops, then decorated by 50 designers and auctioned off.**

"I don't know what I am" focused on the **production of a series of objects** (some based on designs by artists and designers, others on designs by the guests themselves) that were **exhibited and sold.**

In **"Tables and Chairs"**, 10 designers were asked to **design tables and chairs**, which were then **produced in the Sacra Famiglia workshops and put up for sale.** For all initiatives, the proceeds were donated to support the workshops of the Fondazione Sacra Famiglia.

Over time, collaborations have been established

with various schools and higher education institutions, including Scuola Cova and NABA. Central to the activities of the creative workshops is the **focus on the individual to enable all those involved to participate based on their abilities and to contribute meaningfully to the artistic process.** Therefore, great attention is paid to the design of supports (prompts) and facilitators created based on needs. These prompts allow the person's gestures to happen in the way that suits them best. In addition, customised interventions are implemented by creating visual algorithms that aim to make the work phases predictable and enable the disabled person to realise the artefact, gradually acquiring autonomy in the various work phases.

Awards and Acknowledgements

2016: Adi Design Index 2016 Selection
2016: ADI Design Index Innovation Award
2016: Exhibition at Triennale Design Museum, Milan
2018: Honourable Mention Compasso D'Oro - ADI
2023: Exhibition at Affiche Gallery, Milan
Participation in various editions of Fuorisalone and Milano Design Week.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

In general, beneficiaries of services provided by Fondazione Sacra Famiglia (both residential services and daycare centres)

More specifically: People with **disabilities** (primary beneficiaries); **autistic people; older adults.**

To a lesser extent: **Young people who are unemployed or at risk of dropping out of school**, people who participate in inclusion programmes even if they are not guests of the Foundation (also on the recommendation of Social Services)

The context

Fondazione Sacra Famiglia welcomes, assists, cares for and accompanies children, adults and older people who may have complex disabilities or severe psycho-physical fragility. For each user, a project is drawn up to improve the quality of life and ensure the best possible well-being. Acquired disabilities, congenital disabilities, autism, psychiatric and behavioural disorders, neurodegenerative diseases and problems related to the elderly: these are the areas of intervention of the Fondazione Sacra Famiglia, which provides a wide range of health/hospital, rehabilitation/rehabilitation services, in residential, semi-residential, outpatient and home care settings. To these are added others aimed at ensuring social inclusion.

The ARTETICAMENTE workshops have always been part of the Fondazione Sacra Famiglia's process of taking care of people.

In the early years (1919), **the workshops were a place of recovery and re-education to teach a profession.** They were also places of employment where objects or garments were made, and the users themselves could use that. With time and with the changing perception of disability, the Foundation's users changed, and the workshops' proposal evolved until it took the form of the **space for creativity, inclusion and experimentation** that can be observed today.

Main objectives

- Providing pathways to **enhance the beneficiaries** of the Foundation's services **through individual creative expression**
- **Producing creative and artistic artefacts** that are the result of adapting techniques to the talents of individuals (and not the other way round)
- Offering processes of recognition **self-esteem and self-affirmation** of people through the enhancement of their abilities
- Involving people in **creative activities** that allow them to spend the day as a group, making something beautiful
- Favoring **opportunities for collaboration** with international designers and artists on the themes of design and creativity for social inclusion.
- Favor **interaction and relations with local students** (e.g. Naba - Cova School) **for social inclusion** and the acquisition of social and behavioural skills

Credits

Fondazione Sacra Famiglia
Alessandro Guerriero

Number of people working on the project:

Between 12 and 16 professionals work on the project every year.

Primary target beneficiaries involved

The project contributes to the territorial services on the subject of inclusion, with variable collaborations depending on the subject addressed.

Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

Each year, the workshops involve around 200 people with disabilities in 9 dedicated environments and 2 greenhouses.

Main achievements and goals obtained

In addition to the satisfaction of the participants, **the project gained national recognition in the field of design - and social design in particular:**

Organisation of exhibitions;

Organisation of raffles and initiatives to sell the objects, the proceeds of which contribute to pay for materials used in the workshops.

Monitoring and evaluation

Before entering the workshop, an **interview is scheduled to acquire elements of the person's functioning and behavioural patterns and to find out strengths and weaknesses.** During the induction process, an occupational skills assessment is administered to participants to identify possible work objectives to focus on. This assessment is periodically administered and updated.

ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



Target of the project

Target 1 - Frail guests of the Foundation:

- People with disabilities
- Autistic people
- Older adults
- Frail citizens sent by the services

Main needs: Enhancement of own abilities; Self-esteem; Spending one's time in an engaged, creative, socialised and team-oriented way.

Target 2 - Designers (young people and professionals*):

- Students of creative disciplines
- University students of design

Main needs: take part in projects of high social value that provide access to a professional creative dimension that makes itself available to the needs of society
To experiment with various creative techniques

EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/
resources gained by the recipients
of the project

Personal skills:

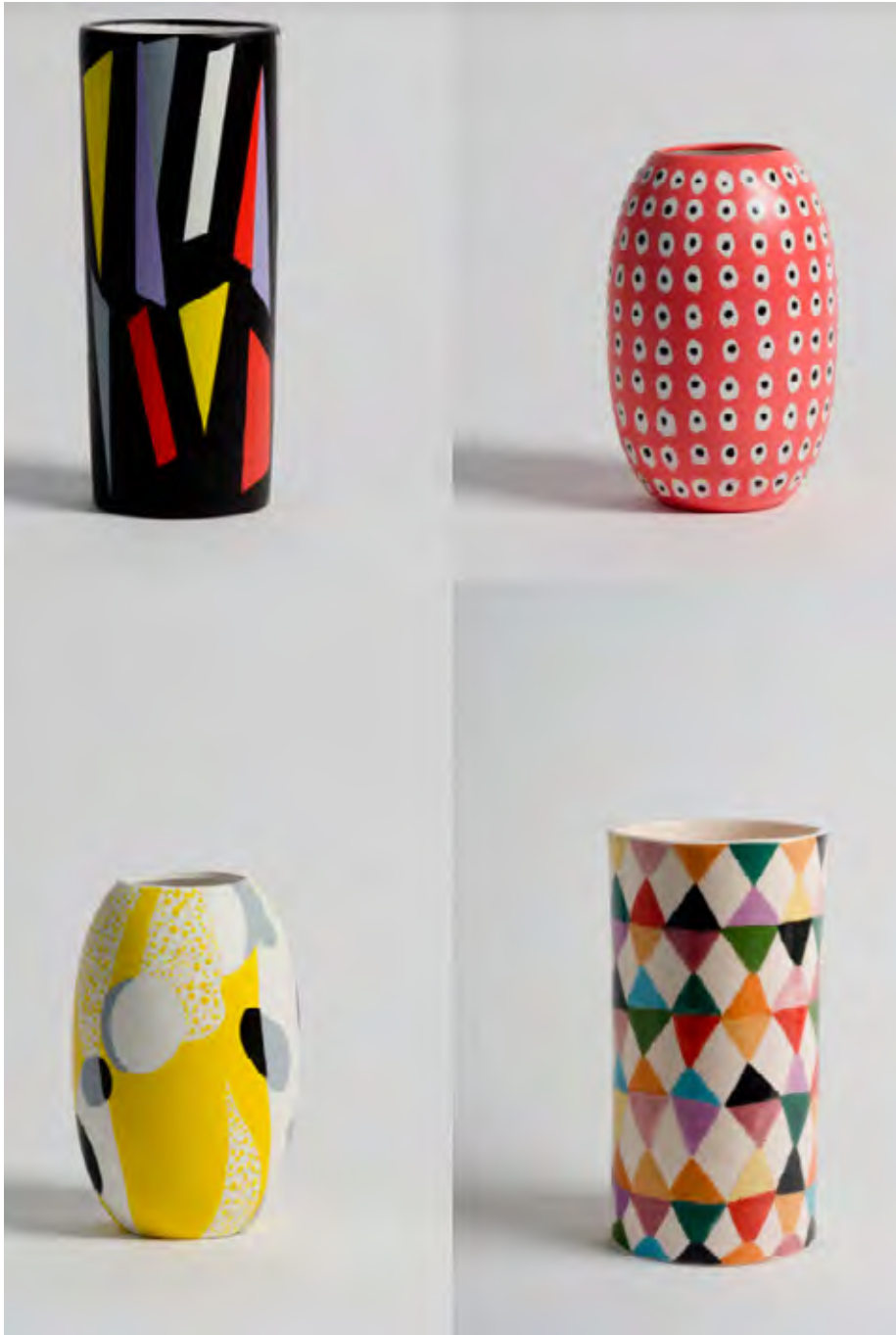
- Self-confidence
- Ability to complete a task appropriate to one's abilities
- Respect for workshop time and methods
- Ability to participate in small group activities

Creative skills:

- Learning different craft techniques (woodwork, columbine pottery, pouring, painting on pottery, cutting out cloth or other types of materials)
- Ability to develop personal creative expression and translate it through different media

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

The territorial context of public services recognises the innovativeness of the Normali Meraviglie proposal. There are currently no processes in place to transform the practice into policy.



EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

Ceramics, carpentry, recycling, painting, making wedding favours and wedding invitations, social farming.

Example of output delivered by the project

Ceramic sculptures, tableware, wooden toys, felt little bags, jewellery, baskets, frames, chairs, tables, art objects, and headgear.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

In some cases, the initial project concept is designed by the creative director Alessandro Guerriero and then brought into discussion to define the main features of the project within the workshops. In other cases, however, the ideas for the objects arise from the groups within the workshops.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

The users involved in the Normali Meraviglie project participate **in creating the objects, some in their entirety, others for parts of the work process**. The instructor's role is solely accompanying the process, devising the most suitable methods to allow participation that enhances individual abilities.

For example, much attention is devoted to the design of supports and tools that enable diverse gestures and prehensibility to work on the project with ease. Collaboration and co-design can also take different forms depending on the project and the designer involved.

In the case of The Hand, Paladino provided the design of the hand to the ceramics workshop through the use of specially made moulds. The users made and fired the hands, while other designers involved in the project took care of the decoration. In the case of the chairs, each project resulted from the collaboration between designers and workshop participants tasked with decorating them.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

On some occasions, workshop participants were invited to act as experts in workshops at trade fairs and events to introduce them to creative techniques. They, therefore, acted as instructors.

MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

Personal and workshop support team:

Responsible for the Foundation's socio-occupational workshops and residential/semi-residential services for autism

(educational sciences and postgraduate course in disability and case management)

Psychologist

Referring educators

Within the workshops:

Instructors: they have received care and relational training (ASA - OSS) on which creative skills are built upon. In some other cases, the instructors come from an artistic background (e.g. art school or specific training).

They got to know the workshops and the project through volunteering experience, became enthusiastic, and became part of the work team when there was a need to supplement staff.

However, the whole team received specific training on autism so that they could acquire intervention methods based on behaviour analysis and have elements to improve the abilities of people with autism and intellectual disabilities.

Designer/creative direction: collaborates in the creative and artistic direction of the workshops, enables collaborations with other designers/artists, contributes to renewing the creative proposal and identifies possible sponsors for the supply of materials.

The educational team and the team of instructors are continually active on the project.

The creative direction may have different intensities and modes of presence depending on the projects, but it is nevertheless incorporated into the project by focusing on the quality of the products and their recognisability in each workshop.

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

Fondazione Sacra Famiglia through its workshops and new projects such as Normali Meraviglie hosts the beneficiaries of various services of the Foundation, as a result, the references and observations made in the workshops are available to the multiple services areas of Fondazione.

Collaborations and alliances with external community

NABA – Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti
Scuola Cova





Rassegna Singolare e Plurale

1993 - Ongoing

Forme in bilico APS

Turin, Italy



Useful Links



Artistic expression

People with disabilities / City / Barriers



Texts by Cristian Campagnaro, Sara Ceraolo, Marco D'Urzo, Politecnico di Torino

Description of the project

Rassegna Singolare e Plurale, the evolution of Arte Plurale (1993-2013) acts on two distinct but intertwined sides: Singular art, **valorisation of outsider and irregular artists** with a solid individual aesthetic identity; Plural art, **exchange of visions and skills** where the artistic languages used are multiple, often integrated and interactive in their use at the disposal of the public: painting, sculpture, photography, comics, video, installations and workshop works.

The exchange aims to realise **shared works to valorise relational and performative visual practices** arising from official and unique sensitivities from all cultural and disciplinary horizons, as a space of encounter, active citizenship and education.

Rassegna Singolare e Plurale since 2017, **curated by Forme in bilico APS**, constitutes a **permanent research workshop**, a space for confrontation **on how contemporary artistic languages can be helpful to reflect and communicate in socio-cultural discomfort**.

A space in which to restore dignity and a future to artists living on the margins through dialogue with professional and emerging artists, students, teachers and experts from various disciplines

Over the years, numerous projects and collaborations have been developed with subjects and institutions, nurturing a rich and varied artistic production, plural or individual, now collected and exhibited in the Art Gallery of the Centro Arte Singolare e Plurale and displayed at PARI Polo delle Arti Relazionali e Irregolari (with new premises at Flashback Habitat) and Irregolare, InGenio Arte Contemporanea, the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, the Kustumeum Bonn and other venues.

From an operational point of view, collaboration takes the form of meetings in the workshop or other venues, with varying frequency, in which the artists in pairs or groups experiment with materials, languages and forms.

Each artist with a disability is supported by the educational and artistic team so that both the practical experience of creating the work and the environment in which the collaboration takes place are developed most appropriately, supporting each individual's talent, autonomy and sensitivity. Individual outsider artists, instead, are brought to the attention of the services and the territories or discovered randomly.

The context

Rassegna Singolare e Plurale is a network project on a local, national and international level in which many people and many human, social and cultural differences are involved: people with disabilities (intellectual, physical, motor and sensory) or with psychological and/or social distress from day centres and communities, associations, cooperatives, schools in active knowledge exchange between outsider and insider artists in collaboration with teachers, educators, art therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, anthropologists, art historians, architects, designers and students.

The main venue is the **Centro Arte Singolare e Plurale (CASP)**, founded in 2019 to promote and disseminate the culture of Irregular Art.

The CASP is home to:

The **archive** of irregular art "Mai Visti" and the collection of "Arte Plurale" with its picture gallery curated by Forme in bilico APS; The **figurative arts and ceramics workshops** and the 'Forma e Materia' jewellery workshop run directly by the municipality.

The activities include the realisation of works, their custody, and the organisation of exhibitions, workshops and cultural events aimed at valorising people and practices that would otherwise be misunderstood or isolated - even if of great value in terms of content, complexity and aesthetic quality of research and communication - and at discovering and highlighting high-profile artistic experiences developed in the social and independent or assisted worlds of fragility in Turin, Italy and abroad, in order to network them with each other and with official culture.

The programmes and activities implemented make it possible to collaborate and nurture communication between public and private, local and international organisations and services to construct artistic events to enhance the value of the authors aimed at improving accessibility and communication to combat social discomfort.

Primary target users/beneficiaries

Primary beneficiaries

People with disabilities (intellectual, sensory, physical or motor), psychological distress and in a situation of social and economic fragility

Secondary beneficiaries:

Artists
Students (e.g. from the Accademia Albertina and art high schools and primary schools)

Credits

CASP Centro Arte Singolare Plurale of the City of Turin -Division of Social and Sociomedical Policies, Minors and Families - Disability and Elderly Service

Forme in bilico APS

Main objectives

Strategic and systemic objectives:

- Raising public awareness of diversity, health and equal opportunities issues
- Enhancement of the dialogue between insider and outsider artists also through support and/or collaboration in initiatives conducted independently by teams of young professionals
- Support and enhancement of small projects, but with significant developments in terms of duration, reflection and local and international return
- In-depth research, experimentation and training on accessibility and health issues in collaboration with the Education Departments of the Museums of Contemporary Art, the University of Turin, the Polytechnic University of Turin, cultural and voluntary associations and social cooperatives;

Objectives for the inclusion of people with disabilities:

- Accompanying the individual artistic research of people with disabilities and mental distress.
- Promotion of the use of art as a means for the expression of the sensitivity of people with disabilities and psychic distress.
- Promotion of collaborative skills between the people involved (disabled people/ artists/students)
- Offering processes of recognition, self-esteem and self-affirmation of people through the enhancement of their abilities
- Training for capacity-building courses as room and workshop assistants for the public, guarding, cultural mediation.

Main achievements and goals obtained

The realisation of relational art projects, coupled with training courses on accessibility and public awareness, has been a **collaborative effort** with esteemed institutions and museums of contemporary art in Turin, Piedmont, Italy, and beyond.

The partnerships extend to leading universities in Turin and Italy (Palermo and Bologna), Academies (Verona), and from 2022, a collaboration with French universities (Brest) started.

They have organised exhibitions at prestigious art venues such as Promotrice di Belle Arti, Castello del Valentino, Borgo Medievale di Torino, Castello di Rivalta, Palazzo Barolo, Castello di Agliè, Castello di Rivara, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Italian Consulate in Cologne, UBO - University of Brest.

These collaborations have fostered an ongoing exchange of skills and resources, strengthening the co-designing and implementation capacities in relational and participatory art projects, and the valorisation of irregular artists.

Monitoring and evaluation

The evaluation of the project takes place within the **framework of the educational observation of the well-being and progress of the persons with disabilities who participate**. During the workshops/projects held at CASP at least one educational figure is always present (directly employed by the City Services, or sometimes in collaboration with some social cooperatives). For activities and projects that take place at other venues, however, the presence of educators or OSS personnel from the participating services is always envisaged. Observations are then transferred to those who are interested (team of Services supporting the person, educators, family members, etc.).

Number of people working on the project:

At present, the workshop dimension promoted by CASP is provided by:

Municipality: 1 manager (educator training) + 3 OSS

The dimension of the valorisation of outsider artists and plural practices takes place at different venues, organised by Forme in bilico:

- 1 project manager expert in outsider art and irregular art, exhibition curator, former educator
- 1 relational artist, photographer and video maker
- 1 artist, curator
- 1 artist, calligrapher, graphic and web designer
- 1 ceramist
- 1 computer scientist
- 1 press officer
- 2 art therapists
- 1 art history student, contact person for educational activities and guided tours of the art gallery
- 2 museum educators, graduates of the Accademia Albertina
- 1 student of Educational Sciences, deaf, for LIS mediation
- 17 volunteers with different ages and professional backgrounds
- various trainees

Primary target beneficiaries involved

Since 1993, hundreds of people have participated.

Looking at the activity carried out in the workshops:

CASP of the City of Turin

Ceramics and Painting Workshop: about 4-5 people are involved at a time.

Goldsmiths' workshop: no more than 2-3, with an almost 1:1 ratio with the operators.

Looking at projects from the Singular and Plural: Forms in the Balance &C

On average, groups of around ten to thirty people are involved per project (including people with disabilities, educators, artists, curators, classes, etc.)

Associations, social cooperatives, Academies

Number and type of organisations/institutions involved

Institutional partners: approx 27

Associations: approx 29

Cooperatives and social enterprises: about 17



ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY



Reduce inequality within and among countries. By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

Target of the project

Primary target audience:

People with intellectual, physical, motor and sensory disabilities,
People with psychological distress,
People with autism,
Generally: average age in their 30s, with a few exceptions (a few younger people and a 17-year-old boy).

Secondary target group

Female artists,
Female students and students from the Academy of Fine Arts,
University students,
Female students and students at the Polytechnic,
Students at art high schools,
Primary school students.

EMPOWERING/ BUILDING CAPABILITIES

New capabilities/relationships/
resources gained by the recipients
of the project

- **Ability to socialise**
- **Aptitude for confrontation**
- Experience of **confrontation** between **peers** (also understood as peers)
- **Experience of normality**/experience of diversity (who is different from whom?), in a peer context
- **Questioning of stereotypes** related to who needs the other, who helps whom (sometimes it is the person with fewer difficulties who needs the support and help of the person with disabilities because they are more gifted, capable, expressive, etc)

Relationship between the practice and the local policies' scenario

Rassegna singolare plurale promoted by CASP are part of the Services provided by the City of Turin to benefit citizens with disabilities and psychic distress, thanks to the fundamental collaboration with Forme in Bilico and other associations. They are, therefore, to all intents and purposes, a city policy, promoted in partnership and co-ownership with a third sector organisation.

Recently, CASP has witnessed a reduction in the economic resources needed to support its activities, staff, and training. This lack of resources requires a great organisational effort on the part of the centre's staff and an increasing need to depend on economic contributions offered by external entities through their participation in calls for tenders.

EXTENSIVELY PARTICIPATORY

Example of participatory activities carried out within the project

The **main techniques** used are painting, drawing, ceramics, goldsmithing, jewellery, photography, etc.

Example of output delivered by the project

Sculptures of different sizes and materials, paintings, drawings, photographs, videos, installations with various elements and materials, artistic yet interactive devices for accessibility.

Many works are now collected in the Arte Plurale Archive.

From 1993 to 2013, at the end of the Arte Plurale kermesse, charity auctions were held, half of the proceeds of which went to support projects in Italy and abroad and half to authors with disabilities or psychological distress for their work.

Since 2001, this part has been fulfilled by the sale of artefacts at InGenio bottega d'arti e antichi mestieri, a permanent showcase and sales space of the City of Turin. Here, 90% goes to the authors, and 10% goes to support projects.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project development phase

The project of the work always starts together, from scratch. Relational art projects involve a phase of research and collective experimentation, which is carried out together.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project implementation phase

The realisation of the work is also entrusted to the couple or group of artists who work together.

Involvement of beneficiaries in the project management / delivery / evaluation phase

Not precisely, however, on some occasions, disabled people, whether authors of the works or not, have acted as guides at some exhibitions (e.g. at Palazzo Barolo, the Promotrice delle Belle Arti and InGenio) or offered themselves as mediators or assistants in workshops for the public (thus supporting the management/animation phase of the project).

MULTI-EXPERTISE/ DISCIPLINES

Roles and responsibilities of the working group

For the CASP of the City of Turin:

- Service Manager
- Workshop operators
- Artist(s)

For Forme in Bilico

- Artist(s)/who lead the activity
- Cultural mediation expert(s)
- Learning students
- People with psychological distress or disabilities as paid helpers or as co-authors
- volunteers

The various roles are simultaneously present in relational and participatory art projects.

Expertises and disciplines involved in the project

For the CASP of the City of Turin:

Professional educators (service manager);
Oss with artistic talents, manual skills and craft skills (in some cases artists with educational sensitivity);
Artists of various kinds.

For Forme in Bilico:

Proven professional artistic, curatorial and art historical skills;
Training in art therapy or education;
Professionalism in the use of documentation tools such as video and photography;
Craft skills and graphic design;

Collaborations and alliances between several services of the same organisation/institution

CASP collaborates regularly with other services of the City of Turin, including the Passepartout Service, InGenio bottega d'arti e antichi mestieri and InGenio Arte Contemporanea ;

Forme in bilico does not manage services but collaborates with the various institutional and non-institutional realities involved in the projects.



KEY WORDS

Target Group	Context	Process	Reason Why
Young people Refugees Adults Women Older people People with disabilities	City Suburbs Rural areas Mobile	Informal education Job training Peer-to-peer Digital training Craftmanship	Empowerment Awareness Community activation Collaborative dialogue Environmental sustainability Innovation Access to technology Barriers

Active	People with disabilities / Barriers
Agueda Living Lab	Young people / Innovation / Access to technology
Area programs for a socially sustainable Malmö	City / Collaborative dialogue / Community activation
Avventure di Latta	Refugees / Young people / Job training
Be Able	Informal education / Barriers / Empowerment
Biovilla	Rural areas / Environmental sustainability / Innovation
Blossom	Women / Digital training / Empowerment
Brindisi Smart Guide	People with disabilities / City / Awareness / Barriers
Buffer Fringe Performing Arts Festival	Young people / City / Innovation / Collaborative dialogue
Cantieri di Dialogo	Young people / Peer-to-peer / Suburbs / Collaborative dialogue / Barriers
Caritas Hellas Social Spots	Refugees / Job training / Barriers
City Council Plan for Migrant Integration in Sintra Municipality	Refugees / City / Barriers / Collaborative dialogue
Co-Liza 2.0	Mobile / Innovation / Barriers / Community activation
Community for socially excluded people	City / Barriers / Awareness / Community activation
Costruiamo Saperi	Refugees / Women / Suburbs / Job training / Empowerment
Costruire Bellezza	City / Craftmanship / Innovation / Barriers / Empowerment
Design Thinking for Social Inclusion	Adults / Digital training / Empowerment
Digital skills for social inclusion	People with disabilities / Digital training / Access to technology
EDL - Emotional Distance Learning	Young people / Innovation / Access to technology
Education and Psychosocial Support	Adults / Digital training / Empowerment
Emergency Room for Associations	Peer-to-peer / Innovation
Energie-Hilfe	City / Informal education / Environmental sustainability / Empowerment
Fashion truck	Mobile / Environmental sustainability / Empowerment
Fruska	Young people / Women / Craftmanship / Peer-to-peer

Gardens of the Future	City / Job training / Community activation / Environmental sustainability
Green on the Morii Canal	Suburbs / Community activation / Environmental sustainability
Heartwarming Food	Older people / Barriers / Empowerment
Inclusive Editorial Team	People with disabilities / Barriers / Empowerment
Les Petites Cantines	City / Community activation / Environmental sustainability / Barriers
Mediterranea	Refugees / City / Job training / Innovation / Empowerment / Environmental sustainability
Mermaids for Inclusion	People with disabilities / Barriers
Mind-Mad in Design	Young people / City / Collaborative dialogue
Mobile Library BookTruck	Young people / Mobile / Rural areas / Informal education / Empowerment
Mutfluencer*innen	Young people / Peer-to-peer / Empowerment / Innovation
My Human Kit	People with disabilities / Empowerment / Barriers
Normali Meraviglie	People with disabilities / Older People / Craftmanship / Empowerment / Collaborative dialogue / Barriers
Our Creek at La Teneruri	Suburbs / Empowerment / Collaborative dialogue
Pharaon - Pilots for healthy and active ageing	Older people / Access to technology
Preventing Violence	Young people / Awareness / Innovation
Project Room	Young people / Access to technology / Collaborative dialogue
Rassegna Singolare e Plurale	People with disabilities / City / Barriers
Salus Space	Suburb / Community activation / Collaborative dialogue
She did it	Women / Job training / Empowerment / Awareness
Social entrepreneurship as a tool for fighting social exclusion and poverty	People with disabilities / Job training / Empowerment
Spirit of Malmö	City / Community activation / Collaborative dialogue
Switch on - Supporting people aged 55+	Older people / Digital training / Access to technology
Talking Heads	Young people / Empowerment
Think Outside the Bus	Young people / Rural / Mobile / Innovation / Barriers
Urban Gardening in Malmö	Young people / Older people / City / Community activation / Collaborative dialogue
Xtra Mena	Young people / Refugees / Awareness

International co-design practices for the social inclusion of vulnerable people

A catalogue by the ATELIER project

Developed within the Erasmus+ project *ATELIER – innovATive Education for social Inclusion via codEsign pRactices*, the catalogue brings together 50 international co-design initiatives promoting the social inclusion of vulnerable people across Europe. Based on a rigorous collaborative research process carried out by the project's eight partners, the selected case studies showcase innovative collaborations among Higher Education Institutions, Civil Society Organisations, and local communities.

As part of a broader Learning Programme designed for students, educators, and early-career professionals, the catalogue highlights transformative and multidisciplinary practices that advance inclusion, capability-building, and social justice through community engagement, training, healthcare, integration, and artistic expression, serving as an entry point to a transdisciplinary understanding of co-design for social inclusion.

Graphic design by Filippo Bindi

Released in July 2026
ISBN 979-12-81583-52-8

atelier-project.eu

