

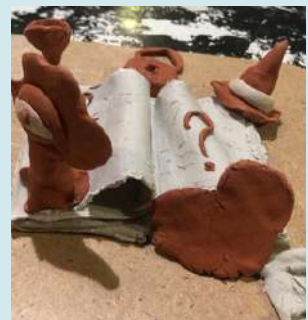


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FINAL REPORT

Art & Inclusion Project



2020-1-PT01-KA204-078809 ART INCLUSION



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ABOUT THE PROJECT AND THE CONSORTIUM

The Project "ART&INCLUSION" Non-formal education through art as a tool to social inclusion of people with disabilities and with mental illness (2020-1-PT01-KA204-078809) is co-funded by the ERASMUS+ programme of the European Union (KA2 - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices, KA204 - Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education).

The main objectives of the project are as follows:

- Promote the social inclusion of adults with disabilities and mental illness, through the capacity building of professionals and organizations working in this field.
- Promote the production of knowledge in the context of the use of artistic methodologies in non-formal education as an adjunct to the construction of the individual life project of people with disabilities and mental disorders.
- Promote the exchange of good practices among professionals, aiming its transnational replication.
- Contribute to the development of innovative practices in adult education, namely non-formal education throughout art.

The Consortium is composed of the following organizations:

- ARCA Cooperativa Sociale (Italy)
- Centro Social de Soutelo (Portugal) - Coordinator
- Galileo Progetti Nonprofit Kft. (Hungary)
- Koinonia Ison Eukairion - Equal Society (Greece)
- Zdruzenie Institut Za Razvoj Na Zaednicata - CDI (North Macedonia)

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INTRODUCTION

Considering all the project goals, the several teaching and learning activities, and the production of three intellectual outputs that were produced throughout the project, the Art & Inclusion's consortium produce the Final Report, which main purpose is to summarize, compile and describe the appropriation of the exchanges and the impact of the learning process in each partner's organization and participants.

This final report intends to reflect the process of learning and facilitate their dissemination and, therefore, its chapter structure is the follow:

- Executive summary of Research of Good Practices and The Pedagogical Kit;
- The national context resume of each country of the consortium: Portugal, Italy, Hungary, Greece and North Macedonia, with a state point of the persons with disability and mental health's inclusion;
- The description of the five Learning, Teaching and Training Activities (LTTA) including the description of the activities, the conclusions and lessons for the future;
- The testimonies of the main products - "Research of Good Practices - Art is a way of inclusion" and the Pedagogical Kit for Practitioners, as well participants'opinions about the LTTA they have participated;
- Recommendations for the future;
- Conclusion.

The final report is digital publication. This product has the potential for transferability at European and worldwide level since it is a free and digital publication, written in English, although it will also be all translated in portuguese (available here: https://www.centrosocialsoutelo.org/6-intervencao_comunitaria/1/315-art_inclusion) and the conclusions in all partner's national languages, and will be accessible, free of charge, on the partners' website.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF RESEARCH OF GOOD PRACTICES AND PEDAGOGICAL KIT FOR PRACTITIONERS

In order to give connection and structure to the other intellectual outputs of the project, in this section two executive summaries of the two previous products will be presented: *Research of Good Practices* and *Pedagogical Kit for Practitioners*.

Executive Summary of Research of Good Practices

Over the last decades, combating social exclusion and discrimination has been a key issue in the political agenda of the EU and its Member States and the role of education and training in providing viable and sustainable solutions for these issues has been identified in several key documents. The **Europe 2020** strategy clearly sets out lifelong learning and adult education as a key priority, taking into account their positive impact on increasing employment, productivity and social cohesion. This applies in particular for the most vulnerable groups, such as the persons with disabilities and the persons with mental health problems.

However, despite the wide acknowledgment of the role of adult education in the promotion of social inclusion, as well as of the positive trends in adult education over recent years, the participation of adults in formal, non formal and informal education is still limited, especially of the two above mentioned target groups. Thus further efforts are needed, which will aim at both facilitating and promoting the access of persons with mental health problems and of persons with disabilities in adult education and training activities, but also on developing a broad set of basic skills (moving beyond the traditional skills of literacy and numeracy).

In this respect, artistic activities, as a tool in non-formal education, have been proved in practice a particularly effective method of intervention for both the persons with disabilities and the persons with mental health problems. As evidence suggests, artistic activities can contribute significantly in the development of skills which are essential for a successful transition into formal education or into the labor market. In particular, arts provide an environment and practice where the learner is actively engaged in creative experiences, processes, and development. Research indicates that introducing learners to artistic processes cultivates in each individual a sense of creativity and initiative, a fertile imagination, emotional intelligence and a moral “compass”, a capacity for critical reflection, a sense of autonomy, and freedom of thought and action. Education in and through the arts also stimulates cognitive development and can make how and what learners learn more relevant to the needs of the modern societies in which they live.

Yet, thus far, such activities are offered by a wide range of actors in a rather fragmented way, which limits the overall impact of such activities. This applies in particular for the partners' countries. According to the research conducted by the consortium partners, in Portugal, Greece, Hungary, Italy and North Macedonia, artistic activities are being implemented, in the context of non-formal education, mainly by civil society organizations on the basis of own initiatives and not as part of a wider national policy. Although national strategies and/or policies aiming at the social inclusion of persons with disabilities and persons with mental health problems are in place, these do not include artistic activities in their action plans.

As a result, further efforts are needed which will give emphasis on the use of arts as an educational tool for the promotion of the social inclusion of the abovementioned target groups.

Key Words: Disability; Mental Health; Good practices; Social Inclusion; Strategies of inclusion: Health; Education and inclusion through arts.

Executive Summary of Pedagogical Kit for Practitioners

Pedagogical Kit for Practitioners consists of a toolbox whose main objective is to help professionals to develop practical skills, through the provision of structured and innovative strategies and activities, seeking to help their skills gaps in intervention through art, as a non-formal education strategy. This document also invests on the methodology of building "life projects"¹ facilitating the transfer of skills developed by people with disabilities and people with mental illness in order to facilitate their social inclusion and in learning activities.

The Pedagogical Kit for Practitioners is divided into three modules: Activities and tools to raise the awareness of professionals and people with decision-making power on the use of art as an instrument of non-formal education for people with disabilities and people with mental illness; Activities and tools for practical application with the target groups; and Examples of Life Learning Activities Through Art, that described some examples of artistic activities for the construction and definition of the life project of participants of the referred target groups, promoting their insertion in training or employment. These tools and activities come from all partner countries, thus creating a toolbox with a European dimension, containing influence from various social and cultural contexts.

Key Words: Inclusion; ToolKit; Raising Awareness Campaigns; Artistic Activities and Life Learning Activities Through Art.

¹. Life Project refers to a personal or professional development plan. The concept addresses the social, emotional and professional dimensions and works on the individual's self-knowledge and autonomy.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF NATIONAL CONTEXTS

The section aims to resume the information present in the first product of the project “Research of good practices: Art is a way of inclusion”, concerning the national context of the partner countries: Portugal, Greece, Hungary, Italy and North of Macedonia. This output integrated a brief analysis of the persons with disabilities and mental health problems’ integration in the partner countries, concerning: some examples of cultural beliefs and the stigma; national strategies and policies that are being implemented with the aim to promote the social inclusion of persons with disabilities and mental health problems; national strategies and policies in the area of adult education and training; and whether art is being used as an instrument of non-formal education for the promotion of social inclusion of persons with disabilities and mental health problems.

Short description of Italian context

Disability

In Italy, the integration of people with disabilities has been characterized by a slow progression. Especially since the social and cultural movements of 1968, radical transformations have taken place in the social Dynamics. **At the end of the 1970s, the constitution produced a series of initiatives aimed at social inclusion policies**, triggering some advances, summed up in the following words: assistance, inclusion, integration and social inclusion - recognition of the value of diversity.

It is on this basis that **Law n° 104 was born in 1992: "Framework Law for assistance, social integration and the Rights of Disabled People"** and it's a guide for all. **Law 517/1977** was also an important advance, allowing the reaffirmation of the principle of the right to education as an essential element of social growth, noting, in 1994, the creation of the **Dynamic Functional Profile and the Individualized Educational Project**, which aimed at putting this into right effect. With regard to national policies for the education and training of adults with disabilities in Italy, according to Article 3 of the Constitution, it is up to the State to eliminate differences and promote the social growth of the individual. In 2016, a new **Law 112/2016 was also created, which aims to align the needs of caregivers/families with the autonomy needs of people with disabilities**. The legislation provides for the possibility of achieving three different levels of intervention. The most complex level of intervention refers to the area that deals with activities aimed at implementing targeted paths.

The other two interventions aimed, in short, to boost what is achieved in the **residential intervention phase with activities that also involve the Social Centers and activities that take place in the centers themselves, among which stand out activities of an “artistic” nature.**

With regard to the use of the arts as a non-formal education tool in this area, **no national policy is identified. The work of the last decades in Italy results from the involvement of non-governmental institutions** (e.g. social cooperatives, voluntary associations, protection associations), with greater cooperation between these organizations and institutions at local and regional, municipal and district level. Artistic and cultural activities are integrated to promote the social inclusion of people with disabilities, but two situations must be distinguished: 1. The policies for the enjoyment of artistic and cultural goods for people with disabilities ensured community awareness of the need to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities. Policies are local and not nationally negotiated; 2. Interventions aimed at ensuring that the person with a disability is not just a passive user of art and culture. For many years in Italy, the artistic, manual or intellectual skills of people with disabilities served only as tools of knowledge and communication instruments, without much appreciation of the product.

In general, the last fifty years there has been slow progress with regard to the integration and inclusion of people with disabilities. There is still a lot of work to be done in this area.

Mental Health

Italy is considered by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the country that has the **legislation most respectful of the rights of people with mental disorders and also the first country in the world to abolish the psychiatric hospital.** The process of **change began** in the second half of the **1950s. In 1978, Law 180 -Basaglia Law- was approved,** which began the process of transition from a hospital care system to a model of community care in mental health. According to the Law, patients with mental disorders have the right to be treated in the same way as patients with other illnesses. Law 180 delegated the implementation of this modernization to the Regions, whereby each Region has legislated for itself, producing quite different realities in the types of structures and services. A key element of the mental health system in Italy is the so-called **"health budget"- responsibility between the public system (services) and the private system (person and family)-** that aims to promote effective individual pathways in the four areas of possible shortage: learning/expressiveness, training/work, home/social habitat, affectivity/sociality, which are also the main social determinants of health and relate to constitutionally guaranteed citizenship rights.

The socio-professional inclusion practices developed in the field of mental health over the last fifteen years seem to all be placed in a perspective of participation in local development (work grants, internships), witnessing a heterogeneity given that the forms of inclusion are configured in the multiformity of territories. Despite this diversity, there is a principle that has been widely disseminated in psychiatric rehabilitation: **"prepare and then place"**. To this end, in each territorial area, a coordinated and coherent set of structures at different levels of care intensity is required, each of which is capable of adequately responding to the needs of each individual. The patient must transit through this productive chain of services, ideally tending to leave it to **have access to an "independent life"**.

The education and training of adults with mental illness aims to contribute to the insertion and support to the construction of forms of active income for people-users of working age. The **Law of March 12, 1999, n° 68**, aims to «**promote the integration of people with disabilities into the world of work**». This objective is pursued not only through recruitment obligations imposed on companies, but also through targeted placement. The **"Job Training Grant"** is a rehabilitation tool that is part of the **Health Budget** and that the Department of Mental Health can use for the benefit of users, integrating it into the individual rehabilitation project of each patient and the development of territorial professional training pacts for disadvantaged people. In the 1970s, Italy saw the first artist movements and experiences applied in psychiatric institutions. Since then, artistic activities have gained greater importance. Despite this awareness, there are no policies or measures that provide for the use of artistic activities as a way to promote social inclusion. **Activities are usually the result of the sensitivity of individuals, associations, territories, especially at the local level, which are discontinued due to lack of resources.**

Despite the legislation and measures adopted so far, as well as the recognition of advances in this area (**2019, at the National Conference on Mental Health**), there is still the need for mental health among the priorities of the political agenda (e.g. measures to combat practices that violate patients' rights; formalize spaces and modalities that guarantee the participation and full involvement of citizens and social forces in decision-making forums at all levels); and also working with the community to deconstruct the stigma, stereotypes and fears associated with people with mental disorders, which persist.

Short description of the Portuguese context

Disability

Over recent decades, several developments have taken place in Portugal which brought positive results to the socioeconomic situation of persons with disabilities. Indeed, the issue of socioeconomic inclusion of persons with disabilities has received more attention not only by the **government but also by the civil society**. As a result, more projects are being implemented in this direction, while some of these focus in particular on the promotion of arts as a tool of inclusion. Yet, several challenges remain unaddressed. We can consider that the wider public is not yet aware and sensitized about the issues of disability and still remains, in general, quite distant from these issues. The difficulty of insertion of this target group into the labor market, while in public education segregation is still apparent. Regarding the latter, one main difficulty that can be underlined is the limited number of teachers and special education experts.

Considering the **national strategies and policies for the social inclusion of persons with disabilities** we must emphasize that the **XXI Constitutional Government developed and implemented public policy instruments that contributed to further strengthen social inclusion and greater civic participation in all aspects of community life by all people**, especially people with disabilities. According to the Observatory on Disability and Human Rights' report titled "People with disabilities in Portugal - Human Rights Indicators 2019", in the area of social protection, the introduction of new benefits and social responses, in line with the human rights perspective, such as the **Social Benefit for Inclusion, the Legal Regime for Inclusive Education, the creation of the "Modelo de Apoio à Vida Independente"/Support Model for Independent Living (MAVI)** Programme, the approval of the new Legal Regime for Accompanied Minority, the Promotion of Employability of Disabled People and the Promotion of Physical and Digital Accessibility, should be acknowledged as positive steps. Regarding the **national strategies and policies in the field of adult education and training the Qualifica Centres design a reference framework of key competences** for adult education and training. Besides **recognising the skills previously acquired by adults** in formal, informal and non-formal learning, these centers also provide guidance and referral to other qualification solutions and training courses. Moreover, in 2018, the National legislation on compulsory schooling was amended through **Decree-Law No. 54/2018, which approved the Legal Regime of Inclusive Education**.

This regime aims to implement a model of pedagogical intervention adjusted to the needs of the student, by recognizing that everyone has the potential to develop learning with the necessary support for that purpose.

In addition, on May 2009, the **Methodological Guide for the Access of People with Disabilities** and Impairments to the Process of Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences (RVCC). In 2010 **the National Disability Strategy 2011-2013** was approved, through the publication of the Resolution of the Council of Ministers no. 97/2010.

Finally, in view of public policies regarding the implementation of **artistic and cultural activities for the promotion of social inclusion of persons with disabilities it should be mentioned that The Directorate General for the Arts - DGARTES** is a body of the Ministry of Culture of the Portuguese Republic whose mission is to coordinate and implement policies to support the arts in Portugal, with the priority of promoting and qualifying artistic creation, as well as ensuring the universality of its enjoyment. **The Art without Limits Programme - Accessibility to Artistic Offering (2020)** has as main objectives to ensure access to people with disabilities to the artistic offer in different presentation spaces, promoting the inclusion of accessibility services in the creations developed by Portuguese artistic structures and the partnership with **Acesso Cultura**, a non-profit association that, since 2013, has been carrying out pivotal work in promoting improved conditions of access, namely physical, social and intellectual, to cultural participation in Portugal are the mainly examples of good strategies of the promotion of arts for persons with disability.

Mental Health

In the **1980s, in Portugal, mental health became an issue of higher political concern which resulted in the establishment of the National Commission for mental health.** Since then, the social perception of mental illness has changed, while the provision of mental health care has undergone substantial revisions, putting at its center the psychosocial rehabilitation of the individual, their integration into society and the fight against the discrimination they are experiencing. The main developments are as follows: reduction of beds in the public sector; generalized increase in the number of external consultations and day hospital sessions, prioritizing local mental health services with a focus on community responses; increased access in the area of child psychiatry; creation of the National Network for Continued Care in the area of mental health.

However, despite the improvements achieved thus far and the fact that Portugal is among the European countries with the highest percentages of persons with mental health problems, which has a substantial social and economic impact, it seems that there is a stagnation over recent years, without major improvements in what concerns inclusion in the labor market, housing, daily-life support and education.

Another major issue of concern is that the persons with mental health problems, belatedly seek care services, resulting from the combination of different factors, namely: the stigma and lack of knowledge about the disease; the shortage of human and structural resources; the low priority in terms of political options; the poor organization of psychiatric services, in particular when there is a high concentration of services in centralized institutions and insufficient coordination with primary health care services. There were **five relevant stages for the restructuring and the modernization of mental health services: *First Stage (1963-1980)*, psychiatric services started to be decentralized and transferred from psychiatric hospitals to mental health centers; *Second Stage (1980s)*, the creation of the National Health Service in 1984 was a giant step towards the development of community psychiatry; *Third Stage (1990-2006)*, the whole restructuring process was interrupted by political changes. All Mental Health Centers were integrated into general hospitals; *Fourth Stage (2006 - 2012)*, a National Commission for Mental Health was approved by the Portuguese Government (2006), and a National Mental Health Plan (2007-2016) was created in 2008, which defines the strategies for the mental health area in Portugal; *Fifth Stage (2012-now)* began with the abolishment of the National Coordination for Mental Health (2008) and its replacement by the National Programme for Mental Health (DGS) . In Portugal, despite the fact that one can identify some Health Education plans that aim to contribute to the goals and objectives defined by the Health 2020 European policy, the Europe 2020 Strategy and the United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, there is no coherent plan or sustained integration policy focusing on promoting and supporting the participation of persons with mental health problems in education and training. **INtegra Project's recommendations, the INRecovery Programme was designed and is being implemented under the supervision of the National Mental Health Plan and in partnership with the Boston Psychiatric Rehabilitation Centre and Boston University.** Currently, the project implementation is at the stage of identification and training of Peer Supporters at the level of public and private Mental Health services. As we described in the disregarding the implementation of strategies, policies and measures which foresees the implementation of artistic and cultural activities for the promotion of social inclusion of persons with mental health problems ability the MAVI pilot projects are being implemented.**

Regarding the implementation of artistic and cultural activities strategies for the promotion of social inclusion of persons with mental health problems, Portugal follows the **"Guidelines for political decision-makers and cultural institutions"**, by the 2017-2019 working group of EU Member State experts. Several programmes and projects have been designed and implemented with the aim to promote the participation of persons with mental health problems in artistic and cultural activities. In particular, **"Art and Mental Health"** is a public funding line. This line of support results from the Partnership Agreement signed between DGARTES and **P28 - Association for Creative and Artistic Development**.

Moreover, the **"Cultura para Todos (Culture for All)"** programme provides funding for projects under the Operational Programmes of Portugal 2020 (European Funds). The projects submitted by **public entities, both central and local government, private and non-profit organizations acknowledged in the Pacts for Development and Territorial Cohesion, promoted by the Inte**Additionally, the **"Plano Nacional das Artes (National Plan for the Arts)" (PNA)**, developed by the governmental areas of Culture and Education, aims to make the arts more accessible to citizens, in particular children and young people, through the educational community, promoting participation, enjoyment, and cultural creation, in a logic of inclusion and lifelong learning, Municipal Communities (IMC) and the Porto and Lisbon Metropolitan Areas.

Finally, it should be noted that there are programmes and projects which are promoted by private organizations. For example, the **PARTIS PROGRAM - Artistic Practices for Social Inclusion** is an initiative of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and Fundação La Caixa.

Short description of the Hungarian context

Disability

The main policy measures for the promotion of social inclusion of persons with disabilities are included in the **National Disability Program 2015-2025**, which is the key strategic document of disability policy in Hungary and in this respect a wide range of related authorities and organizations were involved in defining the strategic guidelines and proposals. It is important to stress that the societal partners' contributions were very important and had a decisive role for the all Program. The National Disability Program 2015-2025 gives particular emphasis on education and training for people with disabilities. It is necessary to guarantee that vocational training is accessible to disabled people, where more prepared pedagogical experts are needed, and taking into consideration also better accessibilities of the special technical schools. Another relevant issue to be mentioned is to increase the involvement of Business associations in supporting the practical training of children with special educational needs and offer employment to young people who finished technical (special) schools.

In Hungary, there are no strategies or policies which foresee the implementation of artistic and cultural activities for the social promotion of people with disabilities. However, practice in the field is often well ahead of policy and coordination at national or international level and can provide evidence and recommendations that need to be taken into consideration at the policy level.

The NGOs are so far the ones who have seen the importance of arts as an instrument of non-formal education for the promotion of social inclusion of people with disabilities. Although the integration of artistic and cultural activities in national strategies and policies remains a challenge, the positive role of arts in the development of skills of persons with disabilities has been acknowledged over the last decades. It's relevant to mention that there are several projects with good practices that work therapeutically with persons with disabilities and promote their social inclusion, contributing to their personal and social empowerment.

Mental Health

At the systemic and policy level, until 1989, officially there were no persons with mental disorders in the country and the persons with mental health problems were systematically excluded and “hidden” in closed institutions. An actual change occurred in 2004, after Hungary joined the EU, when efforts started to better understand and overcome the negative and disruptive perceptions towards persons with mental health.

However, the persons with mental disorders are one of the most socially disadvantaged and marginalized groups in the country, often seen as “strange”, unpredictable, violent and dangerous.

In 2002, it was adopted the **“National Public Health Programme”** addressing also the prevention of mental disorders; in 2004, was published **“The Effective Occupational Rehabilitation for people with psychiatric and psychosocial problems”** by the National Public Employment Foundation, and, in this context, only NGOs provided the trainings. Lastly, in 2009, was adopted the **“National Programme for Mental Health”**, but its financing remained a question.

Despite the positive impact of arts in the promotion of social inclusion, especially due to NGOs and local public authorities’ efforts, that support projects or initiatives, there is no strategy and policy that foresee the implementation of artistic and cultural activities for the promotion of social inclusion.

Short description of the Greek context

Disability

During the previous decades in Greece, disability was approached and dealt with through the Medical model, which in practice was identifying disability as a disease, hindering the participation of the persons with disabilities in social activities. Nowadays, disability is no longer seen as a disease, but as a condition that requires society to take appropriate measures for facilitating the process of social inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Although additional positive steps have been taken in education, in the labor market, in architecture, in accessibilities, people with disabilities still face significant inequalities, presenting a high poverty rate and facing persistent negative stereotypes and prejudices.

Another challenge persons with disabilities continue to face is integration. They continue to be seen as unable to work and to participate meaningfully in social life, which maybe it will change when society provides them conditions in order to participate in educational activities, have an independent living, allowing them to access a proper job according to their abilities.

In 2019, the Greek government, after several years of discussions and advocate for the adoption of a National Strategy which will focus on persons with disabilities, developed the National Action Plan for the rights of this target group. The **National Action Plan** becomes a “roadmap” that provides a framework for action, mainly, but not exclusively, for the period 2020-2023. Specific references are being made with regard to the accessibility of persons with disabilities and the protection of their rights. This Plan foresees the de-institutionalization of persons with disabilities and the adoption of the approach of independent living. Finally, it includes a specific chapter regarding the participation of persons with disabilities in cultural activities and sports. Apart from the National Action Plan, several programmes have been implemented with the aim to promote social inclusion of persons with disabilities, such as Daycares’ structures, improvement and enhancement of lifelong learning, etc.

The Greek Law 3879/210 “**Development of Lifelong Learning and other provisions**”, it also refers specifically to the education of adults with disabilities. The Law established a Council, which aim to assist the Ministry of Education in the design and implementation of educational programs. In the Council’s composition it takes parts a representative of the National Confederation of Persons with Disabilities in order to ensure the access of adults with disabilities to education programs and to increase their participation in these programs.

Although, there are no concrete strategies or policies which foresee the implementation of artistic and cultural activities for the promotion of social inclusion of persons with disabilities, there are several initiatives undertaken by private organizations and NGO's which are funded by the Greek State, which implement artistic and cultural activities targeting persons with disabilities.

Art has been used for the promotion of well-being and social inclusion of persons with disabilities, mainly as psychotherapeutic methods.

Mental Health

The situation of persons with mental health problems has improved in the last three decades. This can be attributed to a large extent to the implementation of psychiatric reform in Greece since 2017. Through this reform, persons with mental health problems were managed to move from psychiatric hospitals to protected apartments with the aim to activate them and promote their social inclusion.

Despite the recent developments, studies show that the general population maintains negative attitudes towards those it recognizes as mentally ill. As a result, persons with mental health problems face several barriers which hinder the efforts to promote their social inclusion. Nevertheless, it should be noted that a change in the perception and attitude towards mental disorders seems to have changed as a result of the financial crisis which started in 2009 and of the recent COVID-19 pandemic.

The National Health System provided the legal framework for the establishment of the **Social Cooperatives of Limited Liability** (KOI.S.PE) which aimed in particular at the socioeconomic integration of people with mental health problems. Actually, there are more than 20 Social Cooperatives of Limited Liability that have been established, offering sustainable jobs to more than 700 persons with mental health problems.

In 2010, with the enactment of law 3879/2010 "Development of lifelong learning and other provisions", the Greek State developed for the first time a national holistic strategy on Lifelong Learning and in this sense the National Network for Lifelong Learning was set up. Among its objectives was the increasing access of individuals and especially of members of vulnerable groups in all training and general adult education actions, not specifying the persons with mental disorders.

In 2020, the Government adopted the Law 4763/2020 "**National System of Vocational Education, Training and Lifelong Learning**" which attempts a holistic reform of VET and Lifelong Learning and aims at upgrading and strengthening the general adult education provided by Second Chance Schools (SDE) and the Lifelong Learning Centers (K.D.V.M.). They don't target persons with mental health problems specifically, but the general population.

It should be noted that no coherent strategy, policy or measure has been in place in Greece for the implementation of artistic and cultural activities for the promotion of social inclusion of vulnerable groups. However, in September 2021, a Memorandum of Cooperation has been signed between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Culture and Sports regarding the “Cultural Prescribing”, that considers the design and adoption of initiatives using arts and culture as a preventive and therapeutic treatment for the promotion of mental health and the well-being of citizens. Nevertheless, it should be highlighted that the majority of the artistic and cultural activities are being implemented mainly by CSOs and private organizations.

Short description of North Macedonian context

Disability

The inclusion of people with disabilities in North Macedonia has become more and more important in recent years.

As a way to protect people with disabilities and vulnerable audiences, the Republic of North Macedonia signed **the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)** in 2007 and **the Optional Protocol to the Convention** in 2009, but only in 2011 both documents came into effect (Official Gazette of the Republic of N. Macedonia No. 172/2001 of December 14, 2011). Other legislative and policy documents that guarantee equal rights and social inclusion are: **the Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2003)**; **Social Protection Law** (Official Gazette of the Republic of N. Macedonia No. 79/09, with subsequent amendments); **Employment Law for Persons with Disabilities** (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 87/2005 (with subsequent amendments)); **Labor Relations Law** (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 106/2008, with subsequent amendments); **National Strategy for Equal Opportunities and Non-Discrimination based on Gender, Age, Ethnicity, Mental and Physical Disability 2012-2015**.

In recent years, significant efforts have been made in the process of inclusion of people with disabilities: educational system, with the change in the functioning of special schools, which have become resource centers to support conventional schools; deinstitutionalization process was initiated, resulting in the integration of people with severe forms of disabilities in small communities; and growing work in this area by non-governmental organizations. Organizations working with this specific population are not evenly distributed across North Macedonia, which is a constraint. These organizations use different methods to promote social inclusion: raising awareness campaigns, advocacy, service provision, training of other actors, etc. Legislation in this area is scarce, and there are no national strategies, policies and measures that foresee the implementation of artistic and cultural activities to promote the social inclusion of people with disabilities. In the field of art, many non-governmental organizations prepared workshops, adapting activities to the needs of people with disabilities. **The Lifelong Learning Strategy 2017-2020** was developed and it was based on principles of equal access, social justice and an active civil society, which provides for the development of learning activities for people of all ages, in all contexts of life, through a variety of modalities: formal, non-formal and informal. So far, there is no evidence of the use of the arts as a non-formal education tool to promote the social inclusion of people with disabilities.

Despite all the efforts and changes achieved, a long path is ahead to ensure that people with disabilities can guarantee their rights: better accessibility conditions (physical barriers), reduce stigma, improve the understanding about the real capabilities of people with disabilities; increase access to education, employment, mainstream health care and other services. More institutional, organizational, conceptual, technological and infrastructural efforts are needed to fulfill these gaps.

Mental Health

The North Macedonian Parliament signed **the National Mental Health Policy** in 2005 (Mental Health Act, 2006) which includes: developing community mental health services; development of a mental health component in primary health care; Human Resources development; involvement of patients and family members; protection of patients' human rights; equity of access to mental health services; quality improvement and monitoring systems; etc. This policy also addresses and regulates the access to mental health care issues of competence, capacity and guardianship for people with mental illness; voluntary and involuntary treatment; etc. Implementation has been very slow.

The National Program for the Treatment of Persons with Mental Disorders (WHO, 2009) offers improvements by decentralizing mental health care to Community Mental Health Centres. Additional mental health legislation includes a major amendment to the Health Protection Act Supplement (2011), which established new institutions: 'Community Mental Health Centers' (CMHCs), which form part of public mental health services. These CMHCs have the role of organizing and implementing treatment for people with various mental disorders, working to promote and prevent mental health, provide psychosocial care and rehabilitation, and reintegrate people with mental illnesses into the community. In the Republic of North Macedonia, the work of rehabilitation and reintegration of people with mental disorders into society is unclear.

At the national level, there are no national strategies or policies in the area of adult education and training for people with mental disorders, as well as policies or measures adopted/implemented to promote social inclusion through artistic activities. Although not contemplated, there are some limited projects that include artistic activities in their work plan, as a complement, to achieve the defined objectives. Despite the legislation, the (slow) progress made and the adoption of strategies at national level (2018, the National Mental Health Strategy 2018-2025; in 2019 the Health Protection Program for People with Mental Disorders; and in 2020 the Strategy of Health of the Republic of Macedonia), difficulties are still identified: lack of investment in infrastructure and human resources; and persistence of the stigma of people with mental illness, with harmful implications (the will to seek and adhere to treatment is compromised). Emerging needs for improvement and paradigm shift are pointed out.

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THE DESCRIPTION OF THE FIVE LEARNING, TEACHING AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES (LTTA)

In this chapter we will briefly describe the LTTA in Portugal, North Macedonia, Italy, Greece and Hungary including the description of the activities, the conclusions and lessons for the future.

LTTA in Porto, Portugal

Description of the main activities – activities – Program Program

The short term joint staff meeting in Porto- Portugal was the first of the project and took place from **11th to 15th of October 2021**. The Centro Social de Soutelo's team prepared a very complete and careful agenda, including the institution's best practices, and the best practices of CSS's ² partners and stakeholders.

TUM TUM TUM Project



The **first day** of the Program took place in the Headquarters of **Centro Social de Soutelo (CSS)** and was focused on welcoming and presenting the organization. In this way, we begin with a dynamic warm-up, followed by a presentation of the group present in the meeting and the CSS's presentation. Then, the Portuguese partner's team prepared a **visit to the organization spaces, guiding and explaining to the participants the different services provided**. CSS is a portuguese non-profit organization, founded in 1976. The organization develops its activity in the Oporto district and works on the areas of early childhood and youth education, elderly and social and community intervention. The Training Program and the information about the week was presented and a "Meet Up" was also prepared with partner institutions to facilitate new partnerships and new projects. We finish the day with a common dinner with traditional food from Porto.

The **second day** of the training focused on the artistic methodology of two projects from CSS. The day started with an experimental **music workshop** and the presentation of the project **TUM TUM TUM's** ³ methodology.

²<https://www.centrosociaisoutelo.org>

³ <https://projatotumtumtum.wordpress.com/>

Throughout the morning the participants could experience the TUM TUM TUM's methodology, using different techniques such as warm-ups, dynamics, group interaction and creation through music. The activity ended with a professional discussion.

In the afternoon, the participants could experience the **Oficina #Projeto's** methodology. The workshop started with a warm-up, presentation and exhibition of some of the artistic work developed from participants during the project, dynamics focused on personal and social skills and personal development and a global discussion through integration on education and employment in the countries of the consortium. The Oficina#Projeto aims to promote the individual and social development of youth with intellectual disabilities, multi-challenges, with multiple disabilities or mental health problems and to promote an active life or the integration in training and employment.

Oficina#Projeto



The **third day** all the partners had a chance to meet some of the CSS's stakeholders. We started the visit in **Centro de Reabilitação da Areosa**⁴ that it's an educational and social service for people with disabilities aged fifteen years and over. This center is a public service, financed by the social security ministry and started its intervention in 1970. This center has three units: Assessment and Guidance Unit (UAO), Functional Rehabilitation Unit for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Local Support Workshops.

⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100077783718891>

The group had a chance to visit the organization's facilities, hear and talk about their methodology and had the opportunity to see some of the artistic workshops, such as Ceramics workshop, Woodwork, Restoration, bookbinding, Handicrafts and the Functional Rehabilitation Unit for the Blind and Visually Impaired. At the end of the visit the group experienced the **(Re)veste workshop** with the project's local participants.

In the afternoon the participants visited **PALCOS - a community art project with Mandrágora - Group of Theater and Puppets Company**. **PALCOS is a community art project, promoted by the Municipality of Gondomar**, with the objective of facilitating social inclusion through innovative and experimental interventions in the cultural and artistic areas. With this project it is expected to empower the community and increase civic and social participation. The group could visit their facilities, the costume room and see a short presentation of the work they are developing up to now with the participants from PALCOS. The visit finished with a discussion about the theme "Art, Disability and Non - Formal Education".



PALCOS

The **fourth day** the group could go deeper into the **methodology of the (Re)veste**⁷ project. (Re)veste is a community intervention project promoted by the CSS, which aims to empower young adults with disability or mental illness and to promote their social inclusion, using a motivational tool of pre-loved clothes' transformation. The project conceived Fashion as a vehicle for personal, social and community transformation. The day finished with a presentation of Portuguese National Context and a professional discussion.

⁵ <https://www.cm-gondomar.pt/conheca-a-operacao-palcos-um-projeto-de-arte-comunitaria/>

⁶ <https://www.marionetasmandragora.com/>

⁷ <https://re-veste.pt/>

The **last day** of the LTTA was dedicated to the **coordination meeting** and the training's evaluation, for which the Portuguese team prepared a group dynamic. At the end of the meeting, the participants were invited by the team, if they had the chance, to attend the Fashion Week - Portugal Fashion Event, that takes place annually and it is a very important national fashion event where the (Re)veste project's participants were invited to be present.

Conclusions

This training brought together for the first time all the project's partners, because the Kick off Meeting had to be held online due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Although it was a very dynamic and practical training, in Portugal there were yet some restrictions related to the pandemic, therefore, some activities were limited by health security measures. Nevertheless, it was a great opportunity to join all the partners and accomplish the purposes of the project.

We consider it was a very enriching week that added value to all who participated in it, establishing bridges over practice, methodologies, learning and exchange of good practices and perspectives for the five countries' partners.

The Agenda was also designed to promote and to establish and strengthen cooperation ties between the partners, different artistic activities (music, theater, Idynamics focus on social skills, fashion) and to organize and prepare more in detail the project's intellectual products.

(re)veste project



Lessons for the Future

The LTTA was, undoubtedly, a facilitator of the learning process's systematization and allowed to recognize the added value of the intervention's projects that use artistic methodologies for CSS and partners from CSS and how they can be enhanced and thought of in a broader way. The experimental part of training reflects the most important learning for all the participants, so it is important to design the training and learning activities more practical and experimental and more focused in the participation of people with disability and people with mental illness.

It was indeed a great opportunity to show the good practices, and establish bridges through the practice and the connection in the registration of the project's intellectual products, so these practices have a bigger dimension and they are no longer only Portuguese, but European.

It is a lesson for the future to consider that the group for training must be open for new learnings and prepared for what are the objectives and the proposal of the project, considering that some persons of the group came with the expectation to have more information on formal education for children, or focus on a very specific problematic in terms of mental health problems or disability.

This learning, teaching and training activity was not limited to the learning and experiences described, but that we can also described as a cultural and fundamental exchange that makes us grow, above all as human beings who will certainly contribute to a fairer, more equitable, and inclusive society.

LTTA in Skopje, North Macedonia

The “Art & Inclusion” North Macedonian Short-Term Joint Staff Training was held from the **22nd to the 26th of November 2021**, in Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia.

Due to the COVID restrictions introduced in Italy, the Italians team from ARCA couldn't come to participate face to face, but they had the possibility to participate online on the same activities.

The **first day** of the training started with an afternoon session, all participants presented themselves and there was a **discussion about the program and other practical activities**. A common dinner closed the first day.

The **second day** of the training took place in a **school for visually impaired students “Dimitar Vlahov”**,⁸ where the school representatives presented their methodology of working, good practice, ongoing projects related to art and inclusion. The day continued with a **practical workshop** of awareness related to the needs and difficulties of visual impaired persons, motor problems and the sign language. We finished this day with feedback from participants on the previous session, sharing best practices, and professional discussion.

The **third day** of the training took place in a **school for deaf students “Partenija Zoografski”**,⁹ where the school representatives presented their methodology of working, good practice, ongoing projects related to art and inclusion. At the end of the day the participants reflected on the previous session, and there was a professional discussion.

School Partenija Zoografski



The **fourth day** took place in a **special school “Zlatan Sremec”**,¹⁰ where the school representatives presented their methodology of working, good practice, ongoing projects related to art and inclusion. During this visit there was an **ART workshop organized by the school's special educators**. At the end of the day, there was a moment of discussion among the participants.

⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100057156893594>

⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/301445343345521/>



The **last day**, the coordination meeting took place, with the presence of all project's coordinators, for discussion and evaluation of the training week, ended with the delivery of the participation's certificates.

Conclusions

The realization of this training was of great importance for all participants, those who were directly involved in the training, and for those representatives of organizations that cooperate with CDI and had the opportunity to participate during this learning, teaching, training activity to present their methodology of work with different categories of persons with disabilities.

By visiting institutions that work with different categories of disabilities (blind and partially sighted persons, deaf persons, persons with intellectual disabilities and autism), the participants of this training course were able to gain knowledge about the formal and non-formal education of people with disabilities in North Macedonia.

The representatives of the institutions that indirectly took part in this training course had the opportunity through participation in the final discussions to exchange experience and good practices with participants from European countries, where inclusion and non-formal learning are at a higher level and are systematically organized.

Lessons for the Future

For CDI, and in general for North Macedonia, the participation in these project activities was extremely important, because through these project activities we can learn many lessons, important for the future.

The way in which non-formal learning and education of adults with disabilities and mental illnesses is regulated and implemented in European countries is a significant lesson through which CDI can encourage the systemic functioning of non-formal learning and learning of adults with disabilities and mental illnesses.

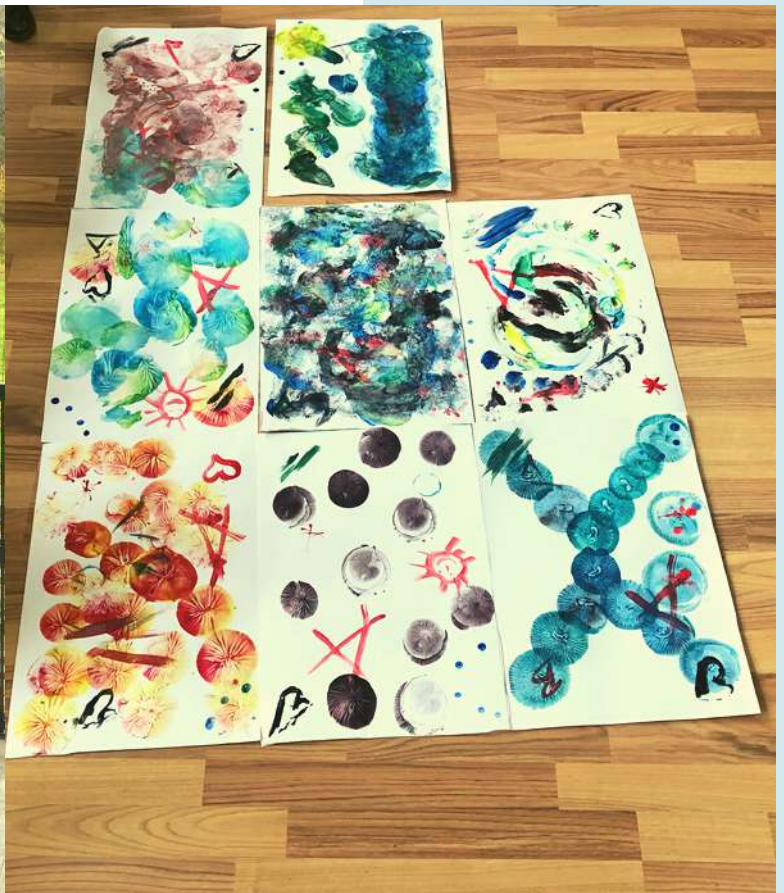
Through the dissemination process, CDI will present all the final products of this project and through a pedagogical tool for practitioners (IO 2), will encourage professionals who work with adults with disabilities and mental illnesses to apply the art activities presented and explained by various organizations participating in this project, in their work and to dispute the impact of applying them.

In the future, through the implementation of such projects, North Macedonia should force more and systemically regulate non-formal learning, as well as adult learning, with a special emphasis on people with disabilities and mental problems.

Workshop at School Dimitar Vlahov



Workshop at School Zlatan Sremec



LTTA in Florence, Italy

Description of the principal activities – Program

The short term joint staff meeting in Florence- Italy took place from **13th- 17th of June 2022**. An info pack was made and sent to the partners with all the detailed information.

In the **first day** was focused on the welcome and presentation of the services of **ARCA cooperative**¹¹ with special reference to artistic activities for the users. During the presentation a general picture of the Italian legislation on disability and mental health services for adults was exposed.

In the **second day** participants visited the **CASA IRIS**. Presentation of the service with reference to the cultural path of birth and development of rehabilitation facilities in Adults Mental Health in Tuscany with reference to the regional and national legislation in force, relationship with the contracting authority - territory and families. Presentation of the rehabilitation activities proposed to patients, and how they are taking charge. Presentation and laboratory experience of the "Gustando Firenze" project: from observing photos of an artistic work, participants received a black and white copy, which had to complete with colors, according to their personal emotions aroused by the image.

Casa Iris



¹¹ <https://www.arcacoop.org/firenze/>



Workshop at Sfumature in Atto

In the afternoon there was a **theater workshop** focused on historical hints of theater applied to Mental Health in Italy. Then the project realized by the **cooperative Arca, in collaboration with Sfumature in Atto**,¹² was presented, referring to motivations, objectives, performances and activities. In the 2nd part the participants directly experimented the techniques.

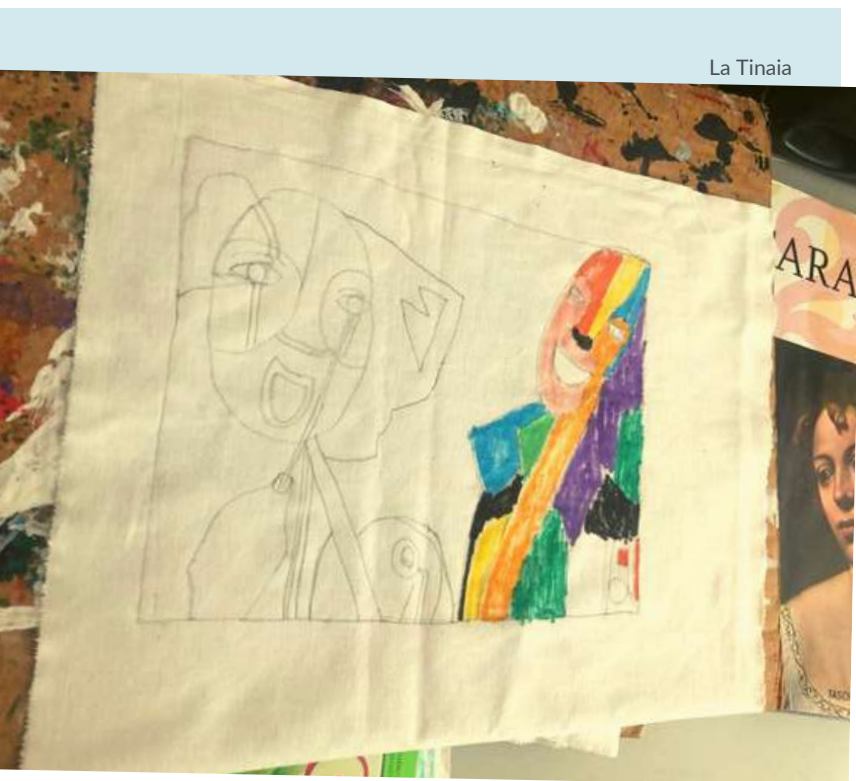
The **third day**, start with the **presentation of the Day Centre for people with disabilities GIAGGIOLO**: organization, management, user' path and relationships with families and territory; and the description of activities, socialization, and maintenance of residual skills. The participants also had the change to see the artistic laboratories: creation of musical instruments with paper and objects with coffee pods.



Giaggiolo

¹² <https://www.sfumatureinatto.org/>

The **fourth day was on the FORMER PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL SAN SALVI - CENTRO ESPRESSIVO LA TINAIA**.¹³ Visit to the area, discovering the historical, socio-cultural processes that led to the overcoming of the mental institution in Italy. Visit to the La Tinaia Expressive Centre, a real artistic atelier, active for over thirty years, aimed at users of the Mental Health Service: explanation of the pictorial and sculptural works, of organization and promotion activities through exhibitions, contacts with national-international art critics and galleries belonging to the art movement Brut.



La Tinaia

To finish the program it was a meeting with participants of the theater and the participants from Art&Inclusion and also a little performance: reading and interpreted poems, in English. Followed by the screening of ONIRICA 20_21, short film born from an audio-video laboratory made during the pandemic, where experiences and thoughts were turned into a dream-like scenery in the script. Group discussion between operators and users.

Conclusions

The training carried out in Italy, offered participants an overview of some good artistic practices applied to the services of disability and mental health. In addition to practical exercises was explained the historical and socio-cultural context in which these practices fit. The participants had the opportunity to meet realities that have been operating in our territory for many years using theater, music, poetry and figurative arts.

After a theoretical explanation, the partners were given the opportunity to directly experiment with the exercises proposed in the laboratories. In addition, the visit to the Center of Expressive Activities La Tinaia was an opportunity to visit the former asylum of San Salvi in Florence where the atelier of the association, frequented by persons in charge of the service of Adult Mental Health of the Health Authority of Florence, is still located and operates. In this context, it was possible to explain the value of Law 180, which in Italy sanctioned the closure of a asylums.

¹³ <https://www.lanuovatinaia.org/lab/>

Another important event of the project was the meeting with patients of the various services visited. Here, in addition to experimenting with the activities that these patients carry out, a human exchange between the project operators and the users has been possible.

In conclusion, the training activities of the experiential type offer the opportunity to experiment directly with the techniques and theories applied, becoming an important moment of active training, where operators, in addition to learning new techniques, have been able to enrich their training practice with new reflections and points of view.

Lessons for the Future

There are many lessons to be learned from these artistic experiences.

Art, in addition to giving the opportunity to express themselves to those who practice it, can take on a formative value. With the various trainings proposed it was possible to experience how art can become a very deep moment of training.

The artistic training proposed in Italy (Florence) has offered European partners the opportunity to learn some of the theatrical exercises tested by over 12 years of theatrical activity in adult mental health services conducted by Sfumature In Atto.

These theatrical exercises, tested by the participants but also explained at a theoretical level, are the same exercises that led to the construction of many shows with people suffering from mental disorders in the workshops promoted by Arca Cooperativa Sociale.

These activities allow people to look inward and form, in the etymological sense of the term, take shape as human beings, regardless of the type of pathology that people may have.

In every context in which artistic activities are practiced, these allow us to create new existential meanings and consequently new neuronal connections and ultimately, allow us to create new solutions to the questions that life puts before us.

Also the visit to the La Tinaia expressive center, inside the area of the former asylum of San Salvi in Florence was an important opportunity to see how art can become an element of transformation of people and places. In fact, where there was a pavilion of the asylum now there is an artistic atelier with over forty years of experience that also organizes exhibitions internationally.

The training in Florence was an opportunity to improve our commitment so that art can become a non-sectoral training, which, in addition to developing transversal skills makes us evolve as people because every new experience that moves from the imagination to reality, transforms our perception of ourselves and the world.

Learning, Teaching and Training Activity in Athens, Greece

Description of the principal activities – Program

In the context of the joint staff short-term meeting that took place in Greece on **10-14 October 2022**, a comprehensive set of activities was planned in view of the project's exchange of best practices. During the program, visiting partners participated in a series of presentations and workshops, which aimed at their familiarization with the Greek NGO ecosystem, especially with selected NGOs that are active in the field of non-formal education, using art as a vehicle towards social inclusion.

The **first day** of the visit, the partners visited the **Soup Kitchen “People’s meals”** which is operated by **Equal Society**¹⁴ with the cooperation of the Municipality of Athens. The participants were welcomed by members of Equal Society's team and shortly introduced to the host organization, its vision, primary beneficiaries and social impact so far. The second presentation, for the day, aimed to provide the visiting organizations with insights pertaining to the national context on the issues of mental health and disabilities in Greece. To wrap up the day, a presentation of Equal Society's **theatrical group of homeless people, “Walkabout”**¹⁵ was held. The group's director described its procedures, key challenges that often arise from working with the specific target group and the significance of dramatherapy as a vehicle towards social inclusion.



Soup Kitchen

¹⁴ <https://www.equalociety.gr/>
¹⁵ <https://www.equalociety.gr/theatrikh-omada>

The **second day** of the visit, partners paid a morning **visit to “Amimoni”**¹⁶, an association that caters for multiple **disabled visually impaired children and adults**. During that time, representatives of the organization presented the organization’s profile, its social footprint and the 4 main programs it runs (Early Intervention, “IRIS” Day Center, “Polichni” Guesthouse, “Lilian Voudouri” Assisted Living Residence). To elucidate, they also played the video documentary “How to train an antihero” on cinematherapy, which won the first prize at the Drama short film festival. In the afternoon, the project’s partners visited **KETHEA Diavasi**.¹⁷ There, they were shortly introduced to the organization’s structure, activities and goals, and the approach of drug-free **rehabilitation** was explained to them. Subsequently, one of the beneficiaries shared their experience from the program. To emphasize the importance of art education in therapy and inclusion, the ceramics instructor of KETHEA Diavasi led the visitors through a **ceramics workshop** offering them the chance to experience part of the process themselves.

Workshop at Kethea



During the **third day** of the scheduled visit at the **NGO Open Door**,¹⁸ the profile, mission and social impact of the organization were explored during the initial presentation. Afterwards, the partners were invited to watch a video presentation with a brief history of the organization and a live dance theater performance carried out by professional actors and dancers, as well as beneficiaries with cerebral palsy.

¹⁶ <https://amimoni.gr/>

¹⁷ <https://www.kethea.gr/en/kethea/therapeutic-programmes/kethea-diavasi/>

¹⁸ <https://www.eps-ath.gr/>



Open Door

For the **last day** of the visit, the project's partners were once again welcomed at the Soup Kitchen "People's Meals". The day's scheduled workshop included an interactive **puppetry activity**. Throughout the activity, the partners were guided through crafting their own puppet from brown paper and string, which they then personified by using various materials such as beads, colored paper, markers, etc. The particular activity has been extensively implemented by the Polish organization Bielskie Stowarzyszenie Artystyczne „Teatr Grodzki” and was adopted, as a best practice, by Equal Society during the best practice exchange of the STEP UP Project (<https://www.stepupart.eu/>). Equal Society has used puppetry, as an art education tool, ever since.

To conclude the program, the partners visited “**Edra Coop**”¹⁹ later the same day. To be more precise, they visited the organization's “Ippokratis I” Unit, where they were familiarized with both the Unit's and organization's structure, vision and main activities.



Puppetry Workshop"

¹⁹ <https://www.edra-coop.gr/el/>

The Unit's supervisor and psychologist were present throughout the visit, to answer pending questions and further engage with the visitors.

Conclusions

Taking the entirety of the program into account, a few useful conclusions can be drawn. First and foremost, it is worth noting that through visits to a wide range of organizations in Athens, the partners were encouraged to gain a more well-rounded view of the Greek NGO ecosystem. Nonetheless, while all organizations were selected on the premise of their similarity in terms of their using non-formal education through art as a tool for rehabilitation and, ultimately, social inclusion, they each implement different types of artistic activities towards that end. As a result, the contributing organizations' activities span from dramatherapy, cinematherapy and dance therapy to ceramics and puppetry. In addition to that, the beneficiaries of these organizations belong to very different target groups. These include homeless people, people with cerebral palsy, former drug addicts, multiply disabled visually impaired children and adults, as well as people with intellectual and mental disabilities.

It is, thus, evident that the program aimed at creating a comprehensive, comparative experience for the visiting partners. Throughout the program, it became apparent that non-formal education through art is a versatile tool that can assume many shapes and forms, while catering to all sorts of beneficiaries. Its versatility matches the broader experience derived from the project implementation, and resonates with the well-established notion that it is of significant social value, as it can contribute greatly to the therapy and personal development of vulnerable individuals, and, by extension, to social cohesion.

Lessons for the Future

In order to nurture viable partnerships, maximize the impact and secure the sustainability of social interventions, it is first essential to capitalize upon the experience of past programs and activities. In that sense, it is necessary to also trace back the strong and weak points of the program, so as to create a map for the future. In this case as well, upon completion of the short-term joint staff meeting, there has been a number of useful takeaways for all stakeholders involved; the host organization, the visiting partners and, finally, the contributing organizations.

Regarding the structure and duration of the program, it is noted that 6 visits were made to 5 different organizations. This ratio seems convenient, as it allows the project's partners to get acquainted with several different organizations, without excessive time pressure that would possibly render the visits counter-productive. By extent, there was enough time for face-to-face engagement and interactive activities, in lieu of sterile presentations.

Another point for consideration is the selection of contributing organizations. Since the focus of the program is on the exchange of best practices among organizations, concerning art education as a tool for social inclusion, it is crucial to opt for organizations that implement slightly alternate activities and attend to diverse target groups. In this way, visiting organizations can really enrich their knowledge of best practices, which they can potentially use for future programs or projects, with or without adjustments.

Last but not least, recognizing the value of art education in achieving social inclusion is the key takeaway from the program. All visits highlighted the fact that art education can indeed be therapeutic and transformative, as it equips vulnerable individuals with soft skills and other competences, assisting their smooth social integration. Therefore, it is highly recommended that more programs and partnerships utilize non-formal education as a tool for the social inclusion of people with disabilities and mental illness.

LTTA in Budapest, Hungary

Description of the principal activities – Program

The short- term joint staff meeting in Budapest- Hungary took place from **21th to 25th of November 2022**. For this purpose a detailed program has been created:

On the **first day**, the training was opened on the first day by the **“ART&CRAFT”** to develop sharing, cooperation, and **openness workshop** which had a dual purpose: to create unity in the international working group involved in the training, and to transfer a methodology used to work with groups of disabled people, both physically and mentally, to help the expression of experiences and emotions. The workshop was led by a disabled trainer. Finished the day with the common dinner.



workshop at Art&Craft

The **second day** of the training was held in cooperation with the **Pető András Faculty of the Semmelweis University and Budapest Art Gallery**. Participants observed the **“Literature and storytelling”**, a creative and fun methodology to stimulate the motor development of children with cerebral palsy in kindergarten.

Hungarian experts presented the **“Conductive education - Pető Methodology”²⁰** and the **Hungarian context**. The experts of the National Budapest Gallery and Pető András Faculty trained the participants to use the arts and the method of conductive education and support the abilities of children with cerebral palsy or other impairments of the nervous system causing difficulties in motor development/performance or coordination.

The third day was dedicated to discovering the methodology and activity of **Nem Adom Fel Kávészó (Don't give up Café Bar)²¹**: observation and experience of work integration of people with mental disability and presentation of the cultural activities of NEM ADOM FEL foundation: music and choir singing involving people with and without disabilities.

²⁰ <https://semmelweis.hu/pak/>

²¹ <https://nemadomfel.hu>

The **fourth day** - Hosted by the **FISE Gallery - Young Industrial Artists Studio Association**²², participants had the opportunity to follow in streaming the opening of the European Conference by European Commission **EUROPEAN DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**. Thereafter the participants were involved in an **EXPERIENTIAL WORKSHOP**: guided by expert trainers. The aim of this workshop was to experience what it means to have physical disability - blindness, inability to walk, muscle problems - in carrying out daily activities and free time.

The last day of the training activity was dedicate to the theater: **the Mászínház**²³ (Other theater) presentation its program on drama pedagogic involving people with intellectual disabilities and development difficulties in drama games and representation aiming to building people, to shape personality, make contact, maintain contact, and facilitate communication.



workshop at Fise

Conclusions

The training included different types of artistic and cultural expression: theater, figurative art, music and choral singing, storytelling, art&craft.

Different methodologies have been used for the transfer of skills: frontal presentations, workshops, observation, direct discussion with the beneficiaries and professionals, group artistic activity, theater therapy activity, personal experience.

The evaluation of the participants shows that learning through experience is a particularly welcome and effective methodology.

²² <http://www.fise.hu>

²³ <https://mas-zinhaz.hu>

In order to enable the participants to discover the best local best practices, experienced local organizations were involved in the training: among others the Pető András Faculty of the Semmelweis University transferred the know how on the specific profession of conductive education, which supports the development of skills of people affected by neuro-cerebral palsy or other impairments of the nervous system, the NemAdom Fel foundation which supports the inclusion in work and in society of people with mental disabilities, MásSzínház which uses theater pedagogy and manages a company made up of people with and without disabilities, and brings the very young to theater and inclusion. People with disabilities participated in the training as beneficiaries and also as trainers.

NEM ADOM FEL



Lessons for the Future

One of the great advantages, and an added value of arts activities in developing competences is that they can involve different people, with different abilities, at the same time.

Thanks to the training in Hungary some good practices were presented, such as the Nem Adom Fel choir and the MásSzinhez theater company, which achieve inclusion, culture and spread awareness through their inclusive, hybrid disabled and non-disabled cultural activities.

These examples lead to the consideration that it is necessary to go beyond the pure concept of the development of people with disabilities, and their inclusion: we can take the challenge further, in promoting activities in which everyone can participate, contributing according to their possibilities and increasing their skills in a personal way, linked to their reality.

Another fundamental consideration is linked to the importance of supporting the development of competencies and skills - social, material and immaterial - of disabled people, as obviously of all people, from very early childhood, to guarantee success in the education of adults and in inclusion policies. By this we mean that it is important to support inclusive education in pre-primary and primary schools, because the skills of all members of society have to be developed.

Workshop of art in conductive education



TESTEMONIES

Testimony of the First Product “Research of Good Practices - Art is a way of inclusion”



Susana Pereira, social worker from CSS



The Research of Good Practices is a very well structured, enlightening and pertinent document about the theme addressed.

From its reading and analysis, I consider it allows the reader to have a broad knowledge of the normative contexts and their evolution in the areas of disability and mental health in each country of the consortium; to know and reflect on the weaknesses and constraints that these areas present in their respective contexts, and the long way that still has to be covered to achieve greater recognition and appropriation of the projects that use the artistic methodology as a tool for social inclusion of vulnerable publics, whose results and impacts greatly prove their usefulness and effective need.

It presents examples of Good Practices that can be replicated in different contexts and with different target audiences, which enriches the document and allows gathering new approaches for all professionals who develop their work with persons with disabilities and persons with mental health disorders. Finally, the recommendations are an added value of the document, as they derive from the constructive reflection of the technicians who work in the field, leveraging what still needs to be done for social projects, specifically those that use arts as a tool for social inclusion.

In conclusion, the document highlights the relevance of social projects and the Arts in improving the social, educational and professional situation of the most vulnerable groups, especially in the disability and mental health´s scope. There is still a long way to go, but we must undoubtedly insist and persist, and this document serves this purpose.



Testimonies of the Second Product Pedagogical Kit for Practitioners



Madalena David, Special Teacher from Centro de Reabilitação da Areosa- Stakeholder of CSS

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This document is a clear example of activities that can be developed with people with disabilities and/or mental illness.

Experimenting or creating our own approach based on these experiences will undoubtedly be an asset for anyone working with this type of population.

We can see without any doubt that activities with experiential practices are a methodology that increases the success of those who practice them.

The Art and Inclusion´s Pedagogical Kit emerges as a tool with proven evidence of diverse experiences, in equally diverse contexts and as reports of good practices.

A careful reading leaves the challenge for all those who dare to work in these areas to do so on the path to success. Well done and thank you!

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Testimonies of the Second Product Pedagogical Kit for Practitioners



Robert Mascher, professor in
The Institute of Human
Sciences; Semmelweis University
András Pető Faculty

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“For me, who is active in the field of creative work, the most important thing is the applicability of practice and the extraction of ideas. Many of us often run out of momentum, we feel that there is a need for renewal in the work we do with people with disabilities, and we feel that we have already tried everything and don't know where we can get new ideas from? Unfortunately, suitable methods are mostly found for people with full mobility / mental status, but who and where is in a similar situation as us? The writings and the kit of the A&I project can then give inspiration to many professionals. Some ideas are not even from their own area. For example, the handicraft work of the visually impaired can be replaced for a while by a stage task, and a tired, physically disabled theater company can create fine art works during a break from practice, - or even quilling compositions. It should be noted here that no matter which country the description comes from, the joy of working together is decisive in all of them! Based on my professional experience, I can say that creative work in a group gives incredible strength to all participants and even the pedagogue! The message of the document should also be emphasized, that it is important and worthwhile to seek contact with the unaffected part of society, to involve the people living in our midst in the creative work, in the theatre piece being prepared. At this point, we also need to talk about the field of raising awareness campaign. (RAC) In addition to the many practical and applicable cases, the other most important message of the pedagogical kit is visibility. My favourite saying is "do good and talk about it"! In the 25 descriptions, the presentation of the art of people with disabilities and mental illness is emphasized in many places, but some cases (for example, the Florence Biennale, Portuguese library) draw special attention to the importance of presenting these results fully and bravely! Many of us tend to forget about this and settle for photo documentation. The pictures are prepared, which are then placed in the cabinet of our institute, we present our program to the family members of the participants, and that's it. In the Manual of Good Practices, we are encouraged to go further! Let's find (one or more) locations to organize an exhibition, let's take our play to many more people! The goal and the result are clear, a real win-win situation: our creators get additional motivation, and the receivers become much more accepting. Wider expansion of such programs (further experiences of other countries) and dissemination to many people would be extremely important!”

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LTTA´s participants testimonies

LTTA - Short Term Join Staff Meeting - Portugal

Annamaria Asmodei –
Testimony of Italian participant
in the LTTA in Porto, Portugal



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There are many aspects that struck me during the training in Porto. The knowledge of a cultural, political and social reality different from that of Italy has provided me with ideas for professional reflection. The experience that most conveyed to me formative elements was that of the project TUM TUM TUM. The experiential laboratory, the description of the activity, and the target audience made me understand that the skills learned in the art lab can become tools to be used in the professional field. The workshop, paying attention to the development of the ability to observe and listen to others to produce something artistic in group, develops the ability to discover your own resources and allows you to focus on yourself by developing the ability to relate to others.

This experience is not limited to socialization but becomes a moment of personal transformation that can be used in social and professional contexts. Another significant experience is that of the REVESTE project. Networking with fashion professionals allows young people participating in the project to learn industry-specific professional skills. The experience, in addition to the working aspect, takes into account teamwork, the relationship with others, the value of the objects and the creativity of each participant. Clothes are not only recycled but also transformed in the perspective of a sustainable economy, the work on recycling also becomes care for yourself and others.

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LTTA´s participants testimonies

LTTA - Short Term Join Staff Meeting - Portugal

Paula Castro- Testimony of Portuguese participant in the LTTA in Florence, Italy



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To give a brief testimony of my participation in the Training in Italy, within the scope of the Art & Inclusion Project, is something very difficult to put into words because it was an essentially emotive experience and the lessons learned from it were primarily emotional and valid for me as a concerned citizen of the world around me. I should point out that my participation in the Portuguese delegation of the Centro Social de Soutelo was a person engaged in amateur theater for about twenty years, and in literature (poetry) since always. From the workshops I attended, and organizations I visited, what I retained as a cornerstone is that the social inclusion of people with disabilities, and mental illness, is something tangible and desirable. The contribution of these people to a more beautiful society, with more hope and tolerance, was very clear in these brief moments that I was fortunate enough to share with these people. Their work and productions, their way of being in this world, were real-life lessons.

The arts, regardless of their form, can assume a prominent role, because they present practices that are easy to implement and sometimes of low investment, and whose results are not only beneficial for the participants/producers of the same, but also for the entire community in which they are involved if that community is duly made aware of the different realities that surround it. Likewise, the arts can involve not only trainers and participants but an entire audience, a community, which can contribute on a large scale to the replicability of artistic practices by others, as well as to the dissemination of the primordial concept of the arts as a tool for promoting the social inclusion of people with disabilities and mental illnesses.

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LTTA's participants testimonies

LTTA - Short Term Joint Staff Meeting - Hungary

Nikiforos Arsenakis/Nikiforos Georgakis,
 Testimony of Greek participant in the LTTA
 in Budapest, Hungary



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The short-term joint staff meeting that took place in Hungary and was hosted by Galileo Progetti significantly contributed towards the project's goal, which is to establish partnerships for the promotion of non-formal education through art as a tool to social inclusion of people with disabilities and people with mental illness. During the short-term meeting, the project's partners had the chance to learn more about the use of art in non-formal education towards the social inclusion of people with disabilities and/or mental illness, in Hungary. Therefore, the experience provided an excellent opportunity, not only for the exchange of best practices between organizations from different European countries, but also for the theoretical and practical understanding of practices within the Hungarian context. In that spirit, while there were a number of visits which grappled with the theory behind art education programs in Hungary, namely the methodological aspects, the prevalent approaches, the scientific context (i.e. the Pető András Methodology), these were balanced out by visits that focused on the more practical element. To be more specific, during the 1st and 4th days of the program two workshops took place, respectively. In these, the participants were encouraged to create their own crafts and ceramics, and wore equipment that limited their kinetic and sensory abilities. As a result, the activities invited them to step in the shoes of the beneficiaries, if only for a while, aiming to challenge their perspective. Finally, it is argued that the knowledge acquired can be of future reference and use, with the appropriate adjustment to the partners' national context

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LTTA´s participants testimonies

LTTA - Short Term Join Staff Meeting - Greece- CDI

Alek Ristovski; Drilon Saliu; Miroslav Kirovski and Kristijan Trifunovski,
Testimony of Macedonian participants in
the LTTA in Greece



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We found the training very informative about how people with disabilities (physical and/or mental illnesses) are included into everyday life in Greece. Overall the training was well organized, on time, and the information provided beforehand was easy to navigate through.

The visit to Kethea Diavasi was informative about how people with addiction are helped to stay clean with art and sports as a form of therapy. They worked with a former addict alongside them to help set up the workshop we participated in and answer any questions we had about the program which we felt was an excellent way of showing us some results of the program itself.

We were especially moved by the visit to “Open Door” and how synchronized the people with cerebral palsy were with the volunteers during the theater play rehearsal we attended. The comfort the people with cerebral palsy had with the staff indicates that if the work is put in; from both ends; that true inclusion can be achieved. In conclusion, the training left us more aware of the issues of segregation that dwell in our society when it comes to physical and mental disabilities. What we understood from the training is that more awareness needs to be spread, that we can use art as a tool, alongside other methods, to help us achieve inclusion with people with disabilities

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LTTA´s participants testimonies

LTTA - Short Term Join Staff Meeting - North Macedonia – Galileol

Claudia Piovano - Testimony from a participant and member of Galileo Progetti Nonprofit Kft. at the LTTA in North Macedonia



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The training in North Macedonia made it possible to meet experiences in which art, understood as figurative art, bricolage, music, are a support for the education and increase of skills of young people with disabilities. The economic resources are not very abundant, but the commitment and creativity of the professionals create the conditions for interesting and useful workshops, such as the artistic workshop of ZLATAN SREMAC SCHOOL, which stimulates the participants to share their own experience and state of soul and to learn to work in a team and to share, an important social skill.

Educators and teachers use art workshops to develop users' self-awareness, self-confidence, helping them to strengthen motivation and resilience in their training path, with the global aim of inclusion in the work market, and in the society. In addition to this, the artistic skills developed also have a professionalizing value, which can be spent in the world of work.

To help professionals to understand the specificities of their disabled users, and consequently how to best relate to them, in cooperation with the University of Psychology of Skopje are available very useful experiential workshops: experiencing disability directly - as far as possible - helps unquestionably in the conception of the activities to be proposed to people with disabilities to increase their skills.

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Based on the research conducted by the partners, we present a set of recommendations that highlight that arts have been increasingly used for the development of soft skills of persons with disability and persons with mental health problems and the promotion of their social inclusion. However, despite the existence of several good practices, these are being implemented in a fragmented and non-sustainable way. Therefore, we listed the follow recommendations that we consider relevant to improve the social inclusion of vulnerable groups:

- Greater participation and involvement of people with disabilities and mental illness in projects that work on the dimension of their inclusion, using a previous participatory diagnostic, including them in the process of implementation and evaluation of artistic practices, reflection and recommendations;
- The integration of artistic activities in the national strategies and policies for social inclusion and education, targeting vulnerable groups, mainly persons with mental health problems and persons with disabilities. Such policies should be characterized by a long-term approach and sufficient allocation of funds which will ensure the effectiveness and long-lasting implementation of such activities;
- The establishment of partnerships with the participation of both public and private organizations, especially with CSOs, whose experience in the field is crucial. Partnerships are extremely relevant in order to reach a wider audience, exchange expertise and share costs of project's implementation;
- Implementation of raising awareness events and the organization of artistic activities in order to promote and sensitize the general public, reducing the stigma and the discrimination that these groups are experiencing;
- Participatory approaches are considered of utmost importance. Regardless of the form of the artistic activity, the close cooperation of all engaged actors (health, arts and educational) is crucial in order to achieve the foreseen results;
- Development of (online) platforms and networks for sharing relevant knowledge, considering the limited levels of dissemination of best practices and the lack of knowledge regarding the practices that are being implemented at the local level;
- Investment in monitoring and evaluating the benefits of such practices in terms of employability and active citizenship;

- Fostering partnerships with the business sector, especially to promote greater capacity building of employers, in order to achieve a wider range of potential job's opportunities for persons with disabilities and mental health disorders;
- Promote mentoring and monitoring of social entrepreneurship projects for organizations which develop their work within the disability and mental health;
- Provision of training to professionals and stakeholders to improve their understanding on the issues of disability and mental disorders, which will allow them to provide better support and facilitate the employability of the target groups;
- Improve the accessibility of persons with disabilities in services and areas;
- Improve the functionality of referral systems between and within health, social, education, community and religious sectors;
- Promoting transnational cooperation, considering that some EU Member States have progressed more than others as regards the use of arts and culture as a tool in non-formal and informal education for the promotion of social inclusion of persons with disabilities and persons with mental disorders. Thus, better cooperation will make it possible to recognize good practices in this area and lead to more effective interventions.

CONCLUSION

The Art&Inclusion project is in line with EU objectives and acting in accordance of the Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways, the ET2020, the European Disability Strategy 2010- 2020, the European Pillar of Social Rights, the European Parliament Resolution 2008/2209 (INI) and the European Pact for Mental Health and Well-Being. Thus, the project developed an innovative approach focusing in the exchange of good practices, complying the following outcomes:

- **Two Transnational Meetings;**
- **Five Short-Term Joint Staff Meetings for exchange of good practices and the capacity building of the participants**, such as teachers, educators, psychologists, social workers, social educators, monitors of artistic activities, and managers of organizations, who work with vulnerable groups, specifically persons with disability and mental health disorders.
- **Five Multiplier Events** to disseminate the project´s results;
- **Three Intellectual Products:** 1) **The Research of Good Practices** - “Art is a way of inclusion”. A manual of good practices research describing innovative intervention methodologies in non-formal adult education, using art and culture as a strategy for developing soft skills and employability for the target groups of the project. It also includes a research and description of the national context of each partner country about adult education and training (formal and informal), regarding disability and mental health. 2) **A Pedagogical Kit for Practitioners** focuses on the creation of instruments and mechanisms that combine lifelong learning and art, targeting professionals who intervene with the project's target groups. At least, 3) The **Final Report** which intends to present a holistic reflection of all the project's activities and intellectual outputs.

Over the two and half years (2020-2023) of the project much has been achieved, through the exchange of good practices and innovative practices during the LTTA and the construction of the intellectual outputs and their dissemination. We believe that the Art&Inclusion project will contribute to increasing the participation and the social and community inclusion of people with disability and people with mental illness in lifelong learning activities, investing in the professionals´ training and the dissemination of the best intervention methodologies and practices.

We highlight that these projects supports the capacity building of professionals, organizations and stakeholders, at local, regional, national and European level, combining non-formal education and art, using good practices that can be adapted and transferred to other social and cultural contexts, in order to cooperate and integrate the values of Europe and generating a more equal society.

In conclusion, we defend that the Art&Inclusion project, and other similar projects, as well as the important support by the Erasmus+ programme should continue in the EU, because there is still a long path to go along within the social inclusion of vulnerable groups. The Art&Inclusion project intends the renewal of fundamental values such as learning, inclusion, integration, diversity, cooperation and networking, aiming for long-term social positive evolution.

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ARCA COOPERATIVA SOCIALE (ITALY)



<https://www.arcacoop.org/firenze/>



<https://www.facebook.com/arcacooperativasociale>



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC244ZPUohcDkHoRUkP0bM1A>

CENTRO SOCIAL DE SOUTELO (PORTUGAL) COORDINATOR



<https://www.centrosociaisoutelo.org/>



<https://www.facebook.com/centrosocialdesoutelo>



<https://www.instagram.com/centrosocialdesoutelo/>

GALILEO PROGETTI NONPROFIT KFT. (HUNGARY)



<https://galileoprogetti.hu/language/hu/home/>



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KOINONIA ISON EUKAIRION-EQUAL SOCIETY(GREECE)



<https://equalsociety.gr/>



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ZDRUZENIE INSTITUT ZA RAZVOJ NA ZAEDNICATA - CDI (NORTH MACEDONIA)



<https://cdi.mk/>



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https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCA2lQY89kHwmyl29_KfQq1w



<https://mk.linkedin.com/company/community-development-institute-macedonia>

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