

DEMOCRACY & PUPPETRY



Democracy & Puppetry
 Demokratie & Figurentheater
 Demokrácia & Bábszínház
 Демократија & луткарство
 Demokracija & Lutkarstvo

DEAR READERS!

This catalogue of methods documents the teaching methods used in the Erasmus+ project „Democracy & Puppetry“. These were selected by polis - the Austrian Centre for Citizenship Education in Schools - and taught to the partners in workshops. The overall coordination of the project was done by the puppet theatre LILARUM from Vienna.

Subsequently, artists and teachers worked with pupils in four countries (Austria, Hungary, Serbia and Slovenia) to test how these methods work at the interface of citizenship education and cultural education. In each country, the students performed a puppet theatre performance they had developed themselves.

The multi-level approach (workshops on citizenship education, „action research“ phase and theatre pedagogical approaches) proved to be important for the success: a good preparation of the content led to a very conscious choice of topics for the plays, the different methodological approaches encouraged all young people to feel addressed and to get involved.

We hope that you will find many ideas for your own projects in this catalogue of methods. Any other art form can be used instead of puppet theatre. In any case, artistic approaches to political education bring particularly lasting experiences for the pupils.

Patricia Hladschik and Andreas Moritz
on behalf of the „Democracy & Puppetry“ team

More information on the project, suggestions and a richly illustrated documentation of the national projects and puppet theatre performances can be found in polis aktuell 7/2022 and on:

> www.democracyandpuppetry.eu

Fancy your own projects that combine artistic and political education?

> www.politik-lernen.at



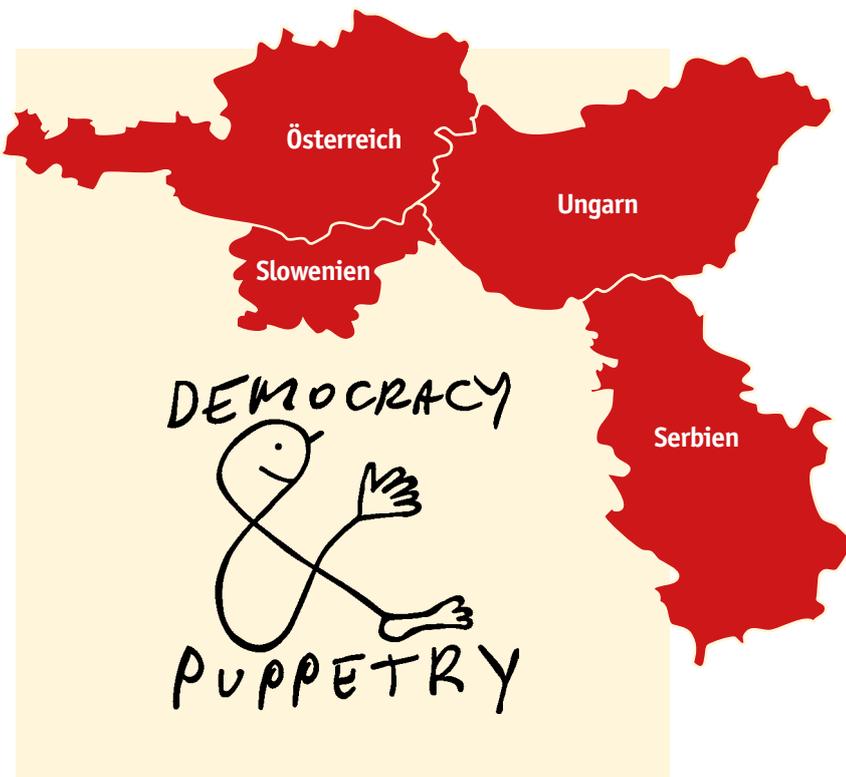
Project Coordinator:
Figurentheater LILARUM

Project partner in Austria:
Mittelschule Hainburger Straße
Zentrum polis – Politik Lernen in der Schule

Project partner in Hungary:
Interplay Hungary
Keleti István Alapfokú Művészeti Iskola és
Művészeti Szakgimnázium

Project partner in Slovenia:
Zadruga ZRaven, z.o.o. (Gledališče DELA/
Theater WORKS)
Šolski Center Ravne na Koroškem

Project partner in Serbia:
Malo Pozorište „Duško Radović“
Osnovna škola „Ilija Birčanin“



THE METHODS - THE POOL AND THE LESSONS LEARNED

INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE SELECTION OF METHODS:

- For an international project, methods in English are appropriate; if possible, they should also be available in the languages of the consortium partners.
- The methods must be easily adaptable and transferable to different national contexts.
- The methods must also be implementable by theater educators who have little experience with citizenship education.
- The methods should reflect the basic values and principles of the project, i.e. be participatory, inclusive and interactive.
- The methods should also strengthen the basic democratic attitude of the educators themselves and thus make them credible actors in the project.

EXERCISES FOR THE WORKSHOPS WITH THE STUDENTS – SELECTION OF PROVEN COLLECTIONS IDENTIFIED AS SUITABLE:

COMPASITO – A MANUAL ON HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN



Online version: www.eycb.coe.int/compasito/
Third revised version. Council of Europe, December 2020:
<https://rm.coe.int/compasito-3rd-edition-isbn-8794-0/1680a4d571>

Methods tested in the training:

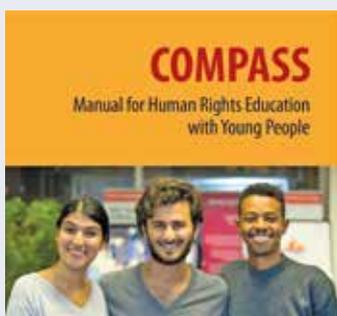
- Who are I?
- Sailing to a new land
- Take a step forward
- Who should decide?
- What if?
- Puppets tell the story

COMPASS. MANUAL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

www.coe.int/en/web/compass

Method tested in the training:

- Take a step forward

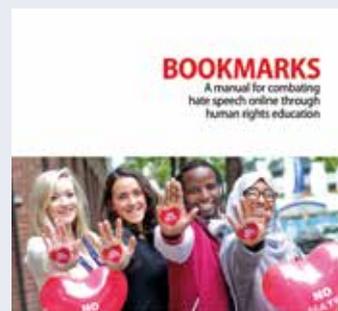


BOOKMARKS – A MANUAL FOR COMBATING HATE SPEECH ONLINE THROUGH HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

www.coe.int/en/web/no-hate-campaign/bookmarks-connexions

Methods tested in the training:

- Roots and branches
- Tree of knowledge



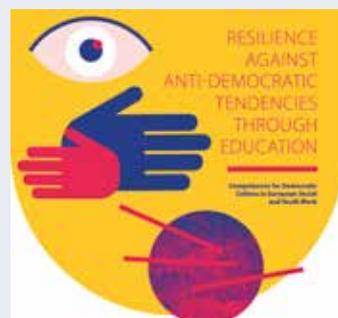
Methods that were collected in the project:

REDE – RESILIENCE THROUGH EDUCATION FOR DE- MOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

www.politik-lernen.at/rede_en

Methods tested in the training

- Arbitrary vote
- What politics is or isn't



CLASSIC METHODS that can be used in a wide variety of contexts and topics:

- Sociometry and constellation work
- Placemat method
- Team-building-exercises that work with students' prior political experiences

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ACTION RESEARCH

In the course of the project, the children and young people researched their environment and generated the ideas for the puppet plays from this. Here you will find a few impulses for the course of such action research phases, which can be easily adapted.

PARTICIPATION – WHERE DO I HAVE A SAY? EXPLORING MY SURROUNDINGS. WHERE DO YOU THINK CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE MORE TO SAY?

Age group: 10 years and older

- In small groups, the pupils think about a short story (scene) on the topic of participation or non-participation of children and young people. School is a good place for this, but also places where young people like to spend time (e.g. parks, youth centres, etc.).
- In line with the idea of the story, they take five to ten pictures that can be put together to form a picture story.
- The pupils create a collage with speech or thought bubbles, narrative texts, creative elements etc. that match the pictures. For this, the photos are either printed out or edited on the PC.

- Presentation in class.
- Debriefing: Cluster and discuss what should happen with the results (e.g. exhibition in the school or on the school website).

WHAT DO WE (NOT) LIKE ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY?

Age group: from 8 years
Duration: approx. 2 teaching units (incl. taking pictures)
Materials: Paper, pens, pin board

- The pupils should photograph at least one thing they like in the community and one thing they don't like.
- These photos are printed out and arranged thematically in the class, they are put on posters and labelled. Both positive and negative things should be mentioned.
- The posters are handed over to community leaders.

ON THE ROAD AS COMMUNITY DETECTIVES

Age group: 11 years and older
Duration: approx. 1 unit (implementation) and 2 units (reflection)
Materials: log sheet, pens

- As community detectives, the pupils research the wishes and needs of community residents.
- They are divided into small groups.
- They walk through the community and ask passers-by what they like about their place of residence, where they see problems and what changes they would like to see.
- The pupils record their answers on a previously prepared log sheet, which they then evaluate together.
- Afterwards, the topics are presented and discussed in class.

The results can serve as the basis for a project.

EXPERT INTERVIEW

Age group: 11 years and older
Duration: 1 unit (implementation)
Materials: Recording equipment, questionnaire/interview guide

- The pupils interview different actors in their community (e.g. mayor, councillor, social worker, carer, etc.) on a specific topic they are concerned with.
- To do this, they first work out an interview guideline or a questionnaire and conduct the interview in small groups.
- The interview is recorded, evaluated and published in the school newspaper or on the homepage of the school.



SELECTED FEEDBACK ON THE METHODS

In each country, the educators chose different methods - appropriate to the age group and the topics they wanted to work on. In order to document how the methods worked, we decided to collect structured feedback on the methods used. The trainers filled out a questionnaire for each method, which was made available to all partners. Below you will find a selection of reflections.

SAILING TO A NEW LAND

The kids were amused by the fact that they can fly a balloon and made really wise choices according to their age. They got agitated by the fact that less and less items were left. It created a good debate among them. It was surprising, that they thought it was a real option to move abroad, and they did not mind much to leave the country, their parents and cultural roots.

Kasija: *"I liked the activity, but I would have done it differently. Now that the whole process is finished, I realize I would have made different choices."*

Marija: *"Me too, I realize now I would have done it differently. Now I realize some cards we threw away at the very beginning were some things we actually need, and we kept some unnecessary things instead."*

PLACEMAT METHOD

It worked well, since the children were already familiar with the type of the task. They were given the term democracy. Children didn't like this type of the activity so much, because they prefer those with more movement and activity. However, it was a useful activity, because they had to think about what it means to them, as well as in general, listen to each other, share, reach a consensus, show respect for each other's opinions.

WHO SHOULD DECIDE + ROOTS AND BRANCHES

We connected the topics of the exercises - education and leisure, poverty and social security and hate speech. We want them to think about the topics of democracy through movement.

The children liked it and found it amusing because for lots of topics they did not think about it. They also found it funny as these are often taboo themes. We had a feeling that we opened new areas to talk about in their group, with their families or friends.

WHO SHOULD DECIDE?

We formed a circle, and the dramaturg stood in the middle. She asked questions, and the kids, actors and drama teachers had to answer. It was good, that not only the kids, but adults took part, and they could explain their preferences and make a comparison.

> It was nice to see, that children and adults voted differently. The kids were quite self-confident. They knew what was good for them definitely.

TAKE A STEP FORWARD

Conversation after the activity was more important than the activity itself because children realised how much life circumstances shape and influence your life and your possibilities to have better quality of life.

Anja: *"I understand people better now and I have more understanding for other people's circumstances."*

At the beginning, they found it difficult to create characters for the exercises and to really dive in. With a little bit of patience they managed it very well at the end.

We were doing this exercise with 35 children at a time. It was too much, some had to have the same life story, and ended up in the same position

OPINION BAROMETER

The children liked this exercise, because it was a clear visual demonstration of their opinion, not just a theoretical recital of facts and lexical knowledge. They like, when movement of physical activity is involved, not just talking. They found the three phases very useful, as at school they do not get enough possibility to express their own opinion. This method helps to improve their ability to argue and express their opinion in a well-mannered and sharply verbalised way.

WHO ARE I – IDENTITY MOLECULE

We transformed this method into a moving exercise. We asked them to show their interest with either to stop walking or to start walking. There were also exercises where they had to show the parts of the identity only with moving and no words. Children liked it, nevertheless they are all boys, almost men, and the dynamic is very strong. They need lots of action and in the end reflection and a debate about the workshop. Exercise was really nice and also useful to get to know their interests and opinions. They found it funny as they do not do this kind of exercises usually. They liked it a lot, because it was a different approach from what they are used in their everyday classes.

LIVE SCULPTURE AND IMPRO

We had to divide the kids into groups of 4-5. It was nice to see, that they ended up in different groups all the time during the project, and no one was complaining, that he did not want to work with X or Y or sit next to Z. They managed to cooperate in any possible ad hoc mixture. They found it difficult at the beginning. With a little bit of patience they managed it very well at the end.

TREE OF KNOWLEDGE

This activity was liked very much by children, trainers had to give more time than they first planned because children were highly motivated and inspired and opened up to tell their stories.

Reaction of the children:

- Everybody has their own life story and we can learn a lot from each other's life experiences.
- I feel I know my friends better now.

PUPPETS TELL THE STORY

Sometimes it looked like students could express themselves better through the puppet and sometimes, as they were only boys, the puppets were too childish for them or they didn't want to play some emotions. For example anger was difficult for them – nevertheless they could show it good but not when they were in the focus.

They had fun and they found it difficult to create something for the stage. They liked to play but to show in public is the other level. But they did it and this is important.

This activity was most enjoyed. Children liked it, trainers liked it and it was useful at the same time. Most of the groups chose to work on fairy tales, just one on a film scene. Children enjoyed most making the puppets and working on the scene. They successfully made the connections between the story and real life situations. One play was presented for the school principal with a lively discussion afterwards.

RECOMMENDATIONS/EXPERIENCE

■ Actually try out the exercises and act them out.

Experience shows that educators are more likely to use exercises that they have tried out themselves.

■ Work on the attitudes of the trainers and educators:

The project's approach of not only presenting the methods theoretically, but also trying them out and acting them out with the educators and theater makers themselves, automatically led to an examination of their own conceptions of democracy and participation. This reflective and self-reflective approach was important in order to guarantee that they are credible actors in the project.

■ Allow enough time for the preparation and adaptation of the method.

How do I need to set up the exercise to make it inclusive?

How do I need to adapt the exercise to fit the project context?

Does the exercise fit the group?

Does the exercise fit me as a trainer? Do I feel comfortable leading this exercise?

■ Allow enough time for joint reflection with the children and young people.

This approach is important in two respects. On the one hand, sustainable learning progress only emerges in the reflection of the process. On the other hand, the joint reflection shows the young people that they are taken seriously in their experience and that the educators also perceive themselves as learning persons in the process.

■ The combination of citizenship education methods and artistic methods leads to a particularly lasting learning experience.

The multi-stage approach (citizenship education, action research phase, theatre pedagogical introduction) proved to be important: a good preparation of the content led to a very conscious choice of topics for the plays, the different methods encouraged all young people to feel addressed and to get involved.

THE TIMELINE

October 2020

Application Erasmus+ call

January 2021

Funding approval

March 2021

Start of the project

3 June 2022

Online kick-off meeting

September 2021

Transnational meeting

February – May 2022

Workshops in the schools

21 April 2022

Performance in
Ravne na Koroškem

26 May 2022

Performance in
Budapest

15 June 2022

Performance in
Belgrade

27 June 2022

Performance in
Vienna

September 2022

Publication of the
mediation methods,
the “*polis aktuell*”
magazine and the DVD





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Das Projekt Die Partner Nationale Projekte Lehrmethoden Download-DE Deutsch

On the multilingual project website you can find additional information about the project and the partners as well as detailed reports on different project stages in the participating countries. The special edition of the magazine "polis aktuell" as well as this method catalogue in the project languages can also be downloaded there.

www.democracyandpuppetry.eu/



Nationale Projekte

Premiere in Belgrad: „Better Field or Playing the Republic“

📅 Juni 1, 2022

👤 Little Theatre Dusko Radovic

Am Mittwoch, den 15. Juni um 20 Uhr zeigen Schülerinnen und Schüler der Grundschule „Ilija Bircanin“ im "Little Theatre Duško Radović" die Uraufführung des Stücks für Jugendliche „Better Field or Playing the Republic“ von Aleksandra Jelić nach einem Drehbuch von Bogdan Španjević. Über das Team Regisseurin und Moderatorin des Drama-Prozesses:

[Read More](#)

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The Methods - Democracy & Puppetry

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