

WHY SO RADICAL?

PREVENTING YOUTH RADICALIZATION THROUGH HISTORIC-CIVIC EDUCATION

Toolkit for youth workers



Why so radical - Toolkit for youth workers

Documenta – Centar za suočavanje s prošlošću

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THE PROJECT

The project “Why So Radical? Preventing youth radicalization through historic-civic education” deals with the issue of growing radicalization among European youth.

During the project, the organizers used the word "**radicalization**" as an **umbrella term**, gathering different dimensions connected to the issues such as hate speech, intolerance, revisionism and trivialization, racism and xenophobia, and discrimination based on perceived different ethnic belongings or sexual orientations.



The main aim of the project was to equip youth workers from Croatia, Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Slovenia with new non-formal methods, practices and skills from the historic and civic education fields, which would help them to address young people prone to radicalization in their local communities.



THE TRAINING

The main activity of the project consisted in a training for youth workers, which took place in Vukovar, Croatia, from the 21st to the 27th of June, 2022.

Why Vukovar?

Vukovar is a city in the eastern part of Croatia, whose population has been dramatically hurt during the war of the 1990s. Despite still being the scenario of divisions and confrontations, Vukovar is today also a stage for positive steps toward the pursuit of a common dialogue and examples of good practices.



During the training, the youth workers discussed how to support young people in understanding complex social and political processes and their connection to radicalization, how to improve their critical thinking and active learning skills, and how to better acquaint them with concepts such as multiperspectivity, tolerance, and dialogue.

THE TOOLKIT

This online publication was created by the coordinating team, project partners and participants as a project result. It collects the methods used during the training, as we hope these methods will motivate other organizations and people working with youth to introduce them in their work, adapting them to their needs, interests, local contexts, and everyday practices. The methods used are mostly from the fields of non-formal education and informal education, and are based in the practices of historic and civic education:

Non-formal educational methods:

Non-formal education refers to planned, structured programs and processes of personal and social education for young people designed to improve a range of skills and competencies, outside the formal educational curriculum. Examples of these methods are: projects, games, discussions, workshops.

Non-formal education should also be voluntary, accessible to everyone, an organized process with educational objectives, participatory, learner-centered, about learning life skills and preparing for active citizenship, based on involving both individual and group learning with a collective approach, holistic and process-oriented, based on experience and action, organized based on the needs of the participants.

Informal educational methods:

Informal education refers to a lifelong learning process, whereby each individual acquires attitudes, values, skills, and knowledge from the educational influences and resources in their own environment and daily experience. Learning in this way is often unplanned and unstructured.

Historic and civic education in non-formal education:

Approaches from historic and civic education support non-formal learning through the concepts of multiperspectivity, dealing with the past, and understanding of different experiences. Concepts that help young people in better understanding complex concepts, such as radicalization, identity, conflicts, suffering, was heritage, and coexistence.

Sources:

[Definitions \(coe.int\)](#)

[History and Civic Education – Documenta](#)

THE METHODS

AGREE OR DISAGREE?

Time: Around 1h and 30 min.

Methodology: before starting the activity, the organizers will divide the working-space in 3 sections, by sticking on the floor 3 lines with tape. The first section will be indicated with the symbol **+** (**plus**), the middle section with the **=** (**equal**), the last section with the **-** (**minus**). As the activity starts, all the participants will stand in the middle section (=). The organizers will then read the first statement and the participants will move in the space. If they agree with the statement, they will move to the plus (+) section, if they disagree they will move to the minus (-) part, while if they are not sure, they will remain on the middle section (=). When the participants divide in the space, depending on their agreement or disagreement with the statement, the organizers ask each group why they positioned in that way. The same methodology applies for the remaining statements.

Remember to plan enough time for a discussion of about 10 minutes after each statement.

Materials: Tape for creating the lines and dividing the working space; a projector to show the statements.

Description: the organizers will prepare from 5 to 10 statements on a given topic (in our case, we prepared them on the theme of radicalization), and will read them to the participants. The main idea of the method is to break the ice and **encourage a discussion** about the topic, so that the participants have the chance to exchange information, knowledge, and opinions about it, **discuss different opinions** in a mediated way, and **rethink about their beliefs and positions** by discussing with the group.

Skills developed:

- multiperspectivity
- dialogue and debate
- communication and social skills

Example of possible statements to use when discussing radicalization:

- MINORITY GROUPS ARE MORE PRONE TO RADICALIZATION
- MEN ARE MORE EASILY RADICALIZED THAN WOMEN
- YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY ARE MORE RADICAL THAN THEIR PARENTS
- RADICAL LEFT AND RIGHT PARTIES SHOULD BE FORBIDDEN TO PARTICIPATE IN DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS
- TO COMBAT RADICALIZATION, STATES SHOULD INCREASE CONTROL AND SECURITY MEASURES, IN SPITE OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS, SUCH AS PRIVACY
- SOCIAL MEDIA SHOULD BE MORE COMMITTED IN CANCELING RADICAL DISCOURSES AND BLOCKING RADICAL ONLINE GROUPS

DEALING WITH THE KEY-TERM AND FINDING A COMMON DEFINITION

Time: Around 1h and 30 min.

Methodology: the main aim of the activity is to find a common definition of the main key-word: radicalization, for the participants to have a common reference when using the term during the training course. The participants first discuss and confront themselves in groups of 3 people. It is important that the groups are an even number (for example, 6 groups of 3). After 15/20 minutes, they should have a definition they all agree on. At this point, they join another group of 3. The group of 6 have to discuss and compare the definitions they gave, and create a new and common one. After 15/20 minutes, they then join another group of 6 and discuss together the definitions they have created. The groups join each other until there are 2 big groups left. In this way, in the end, the group is left with 2 definitions, to discuss all together with all the participants.

Materials: papers, pens, markers.

Description: after presenting the definition given by the organizers (see pag. 3 of the toolkit), the participants have time to reflect and discuss about the key-term. As radicalization is a complex and changing topic, this activity gives the participants the chance to explore their knowledge, ideas and opinions further, and to discuss with the others in the group. By joining different and bigger groups of people, the participants learn how to **discuss, debate and compromise**, in order to find a definition that can be shared and used by all the people participating.

Skills developed:

- group work
- dialogue and debate
- communication and social skills



RADICALIZATION IS AN INTERNAL PROCESS INFLUENCED BY EXTERNAL FACTORS OF DEVELOPING EXTREMIST EMOTIONS, BELIEFS, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS AGAINST INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS OR REALITIES. IT'S DONE, CONNECTED AND SUPPORTED BY COMMON PEERS, SHARING THE SAME IDEOLOGY IN ORDER TO ASPIRE SOME KIND OF CHANGE WITH SOCIAL IMPACT AND INFLUENCES.

RADICALIZATION IS STEADFAST FROM THE CONSENSUS, THE PROCESS OF CHANGE OF OPINIONS, BELIEFS AND IDEAS, TOWARDS AN EXTREME, THAT IS AGAINST THE STATUS QUO AND IT IS OFTEN CONNECTED WITH VIOLENT AND HATEFUL ACTS IN ANY FIELD.



MUSEUM CURATORS: REFLECTING ON MUSEUM VISITS

Time: Around 1h and 30 min.

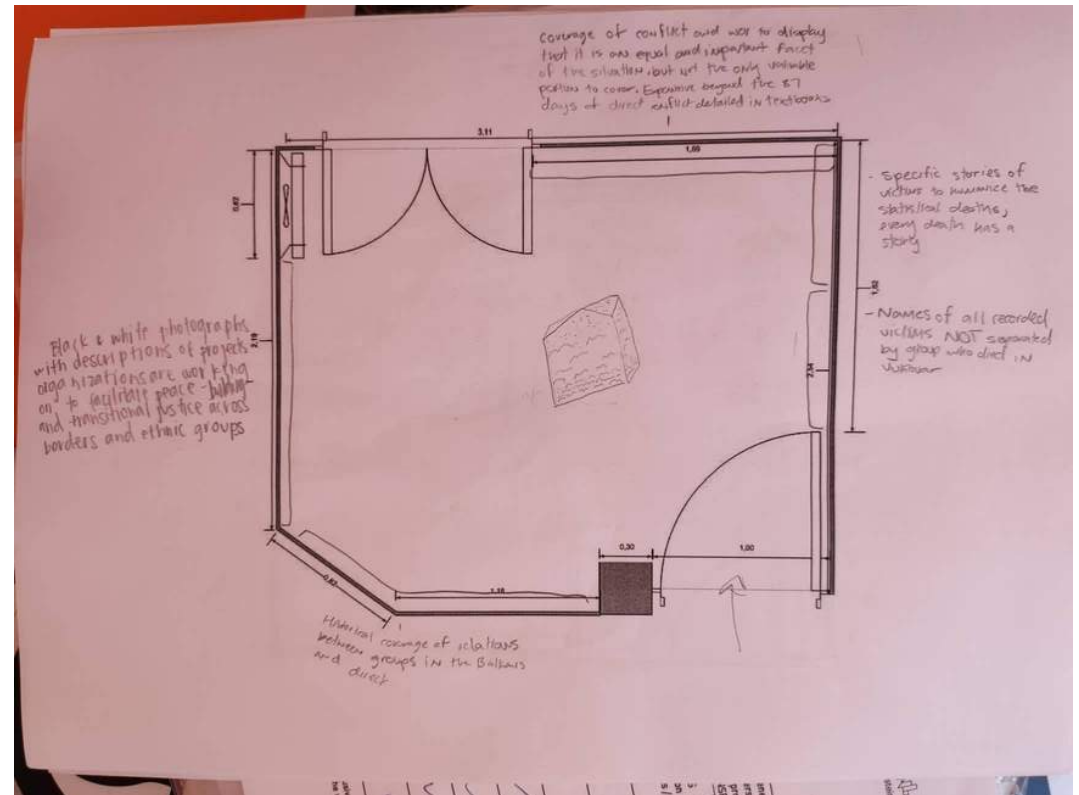
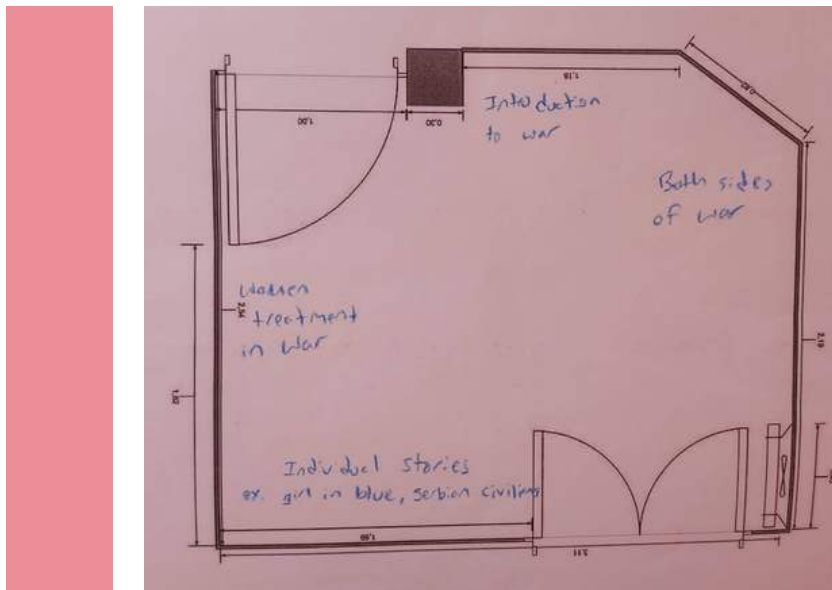
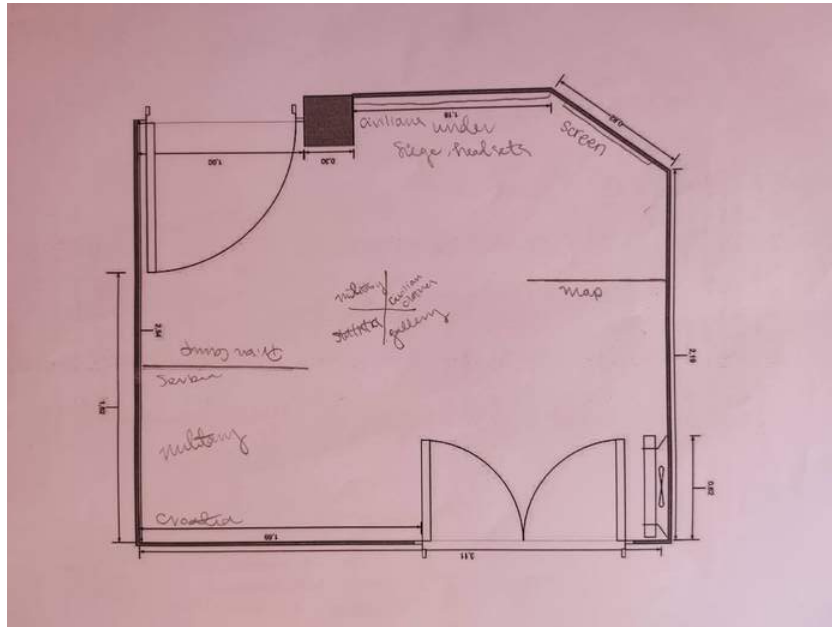
Methodology: this method should be used as a strategy for starting a reflection after a visit to a museum, memorial place, or other institutions of this kind. After the visit, the participants are divided in smaller groups and given a print-out of a room. Their main objective is to create a room with educational purposes to be added to the spaces of the museum they have just visited. After around 50 minutes, the participants get back together in the main group and present their ideas to the others.

Materials: print-outs of the room (one per each group), pens, markers, materials for drawing.

Description: The method motivates youth workers to include young people in a more **participative way** during study visits and museum visits, as they are asked to add their personal ideas, needs, and viewpoints to the exhibitions and displays they have just visited. By creating an additional room to the museum, targeting other young people, and with educational purposes, the participants will be able to critically approach the "museum-space", reflecting on what was successful in their opinion, missing, or could be interpreted in a different way for attracting a younger audience. Also, through this method, the participants have to ask themselves "what is the main aim of the museum? What does it want to represent? Which kind of ideas and values is passing to young people? How is this connected to radicalizing viewpoints?", and have the chance to **critically approach** these questions.

Skills developed:

- critical thinking
- group work
- creativity





IDENTITY GAME

Time: Around 1h

Methodology: the participants sit in circle. First they have the task to write down on a paper 6 attributes that "make their identity". The 6 attributes can be connected to their nationality, to their home-town, but also to their interestes (musician, animal-lover, gamer...), or to their role in society or in their social context (teacher, mother...), or any other thing the participants feel as important for their identity. They have around 15 minutes to write down the 8 attributes that make them "them", It is important to mention to the participants to list attributes they are comfortable with sharing, as they will be discussed in the group. After around 15 minutes, the participants will exchange their paper with the person sitting next to them. At this point, each participant will have to cross 2 of the 6 attributes, "taking them away". They have about 10 minutes. After that, the paper will return to the participant who wrote it in the first place (so each participant will be returned a paper with their attributes, minus two). At this point, they will have around 10 minutes to cross 2 attributes more from their own list. After that, the participants are all left with 2 attributes. They discuss in groups the process and what are they "left with".

Materials: papers and pen

Description: the main idea of this method is for the participants to reflect on the theme of identity and question "how do I see myself? What is important for me? What makes my identity?". By exchanging the papers with the attributes and having the task to "erase" important parts of the identity of another person, the participants become more aware about others' background, opinions, ideas and perspectives, and will be surprised to see what is most important to "keep" for them and for the others. The method is used to discuss how mutable and different identities are, and for the participants to reflect about the images they have of themselves and of the others.

Skills developed:

- group work
- empathy and understanding
- multiperspectivity

WORKSHOP ON PROPAGANDA

Time: Around 1h

Methodology: the participants are divided in smaller groups. Each group receives a text. The texts are extratcs from propagandistic speeches, books, and pamphlets. The participants aren't provided a context and, from reading them and discussing among each other, have to understand who the author is, when was it written, what was the text's target public and the reason why it was written. After arond 30 minutes, the organizers hand the groups the sources and solutions. The participants have then 10 more minutes to research the author of the texts, and see if the answers they guessed were correct. After that, the participants gather all together and each group presents to the others their text and the discussions they had.

Materials: printed papers with the texts.

Description: by examining the texts without any context, the participants have to make a group effort to understand its author, message, and public. In this way, they read the text from an "unaware" perpsective, that make them reflect more in deep on the direct and indirect messages which are present in the text. In this way, they become more aware how to approach a text in a critical way, and to question its origin, author, and main message. Through the texts, the participants question if some forms of propaganda and radicalization might not be perceived as such and how the perceptions of what is "radical" and what is not changes during different time-periods.

Skills developed:

- media literacy
- critical thinking
- group work

In the following pages, you can find the texts we used for the workshop, the questions connected to the texts, and the actual authors and sources.



INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY AND ITS FUTURE

Introduction

1. The Industrial Revolution and its consequences have been a disaster for the human race. They have greatly increased the life-expectancy of those of us who live in “advanced” countries, but they have destabilized society, have made life unfulfilling, have subjected human beings to indignities, have led to widespread psychological suffering (in the Third World to physical suffering as well) and have inflicted severe damage on the natural world. The continued development of technology will worsen the situation. It will certainly subject human beings to greater indignities and inflict greater damage on the natural world, it will probably lead to greater social disruption and psychological suffering, and it may lead to increased physical suffering even in “advanced” countries.

....

3. If the system breaks down the consequences will still be very painful. But the bigger the system grows the more disastrous the results of its breakdown will be, so if it is to break down it had best break down sooner rather than later.

4. We therefore advocate a revolution against the industrial system. This revolution may or may not make use of violence; it may be sudden or it may be a relatively gradual process spanning a few decades. We can't predict any of that. But we do outline in a very general way the measures that those who hate the industrial system should take in order to prepare the way for a revolution against that form of society. This is not to be a POLITICAL revolution. Its object will be to overthrow not governments but the economic and technological basis of the present society.

...

QUESTIONS:

- Who do you think is the author of the text?
- In which year do you think it was written?
- Who is the target audience?
- What is the main message of the text? Is it a radical message?

Source: „THE UNABOMBER MANIFESTO: INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY AND ITS FUTURE“, THEODORE KACZYNSKI, 1995.

[washingtonpost.com: Unabomber Special Report](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1995/04/04/unabomber-manifesto/1995-04-04/)

IX. SPACE

...

First, I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth. No single space project in this period will be more impressive to mankind, or more important for the long-range exploration of space; and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish. ... We propose additional funds for other engine development and for unmanned explorations – explorations which are particularly important for one purpose which this nation will never overlook: the survival of the man who first makes this daring flight. But in a very real sense, it will not be one man going to the moon – if we make this judgment affirmatively, it will be an entire nation. For all of us must work to put him there.

...

This decision demands a major national commitment of scientific and technical manpower, material and facilities, and the possibility of their diversion from other important activities where they are already thinly spread. It means a degree of dedication, organization and discipline which have not always characterized our research and development efforts. It means we cannot afford undue work stoppages, inflated costs of material or talent, wasteful inter-agency rivalries, or a high turnover of key personnel.

New objectives and new money cannot solve these problems. They could in fact, aggravate them further – unless every scientist, every engineer, every serviceman, every technician, contractor, and civil servant gives his personal pledge that this nation will move forward, with the full speed of freedom, in the exciting adventure of space.

...

QUESTIONS:

- Who do you think gave this speech?
- In which year do you think this speech was given?
- Who is the target audience?
- What is the main message of the speech? Is it a radical message?

Source: „PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS ON URGENT NATIONAL NEEDS“, MAY 25, 1961

[President Kennedy's Special Message to the Congress on Urgent National Needs, May 25, 1961 | JFK Library](#)

3

Life in this society being, at best, an utter bore and no aspect of society being at all relevant to women, there remains to civic-minded, responsible, thrill-seeking females only to overthrow the government, eliminate the money system, institute complete automation and destroy the male sex. It is now technically feasible to reproduce without the aid of males (or, for that matter, females) and to produce only females. We must begin immediately to do so. Retaining the male has not even the dubious purpose of reproduction. The male is a biological accident: the Y (male) gene is an incomplete X (female) gene, that is, it has an incomplete set of chromosomes. In other words, the male is an incomplete female, a walking abortion, aborted at the gene stage. To be male is to be deficient, emotionally limited; maleness is a deficiency disease and males are emotional cripples.

The male is completely egocentric, trapped inside himself, incapable of empathizing or identifying with others, or love, friendship, affection of tenderness. He is a completely isolated unit, incapable of rapport with anyone. His responses are entirely visceral, not cerebral; his intelligence is a mere tool in the services of his drives and needs; he is incapable of mental passion, mental interaction; he can't relate to anything other than his own physical sensations. He is a half-dead, unresponsive lump, incapable of giving or receiving pleasure or happiness; consequently, he is at best an utter bore, an inoffensive blob, since only those capable of absorption in others can be charming. He is trapped in a twilight zone halfway between humans and apes, and is far worse off than the apes because, unlike the apes, he is capable of a large array of negative feelings – hate, jealousy, contempt, disgust, guilt, shame, doubt – and moreover, he is aware of what he is and what he isn't.

...

QUESTIONS:

- Who do you think is the author of this text?
- In which year do you think it was written?
- Who is the target audience?
- What is the main message of the text? Is it a radical message?

Source: „THE SCUM MANIFESTO“, VALERIE SOLANAS, 1968

[Valerie Solanas' SCUM Manifesto \(neu.edu\)](https://neu.edu/valerie-solanas-scum-manifesto)

4

DON`T TALK IN PUBLIC PLACES: ...

DON`T EXPRESS VIEWS ABOUT MILITARY MATTERS, IN OTHER WORDS YOU SAY NOTHING to any person. Don't be seen in public marches, demonstrations or protests. Don't be seen in the company of known Republicans, don't frequent known Republican houses. Your prime duty is to remain unknown to the enemy forces and the public at large. ...

Another important thing volunteers must realise and understand is the danger in drinking alcohol and the very real danger of over-drinking. Quite a large body of information has been gathered in the past by enemy forces and their touts from volunteers who drank. Volunteers are warned that drink-induced loose talk is the MOST POTENTIAL DANGER facing any organisation, and in a military organisation it is SUICIDE.

...

The Army as an organisation claims and expects your total allegiance without reservation. It enters into every aspect of your life. It invades the privacy of your home life, it fragments your family and friends, in other words claims your total allegiance. All potential volunteers must realise that the threat of capture and of long jail sentences are a very real danger and a shadow which hangs over every volunteer.

...

Volunteers are expected to wage a military war of liberation against a numerically superior force. This involves the use of arms and explosives. Firstly the use of arms. When volunteers are trained in the use of arms they must fully understand that guns are dangerous, and their main purpose is to take human life, in other words to kill people, and volunteers are trained to kill people.

...

QUESTIONS:

- Who do you think is the author of the text?
- In which year do you think it was written?
- Who is the target audience?
- What is the main message of the text? Is it a radical message?

Source: „GREEN BOOK“. IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY, 1977

CAIN: Events: Text of Irish Republican Army (IRA) 'Green Book' (Book I and II) (ulster.ac.uk)

5

...

6. We Want All Black Men To Be Exempt From Military Service.

We believe that Black people should not be forced to fight in the military service to defend a racist government that does not protect us. We will not fight and kill other people of color in the world who, like Black people, are being victimized by the White racist government of America. We will protect ourselves from the force and violence of the racist police and the racist military by whatever means necessary.

7. We Want An Immediate End to Police Brutality and the Murder of Black People.

We believe we can end police brutality in our Black community by organizing Black self-defense groups that are dedicated to defending our Black community from racist police oppression and brutality. The Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States gives a right to bear arms. We therefore believe that all Black people should arm themselves for self-defense.

8. We Want Freedom For All Black Men Held in Federal, State, County and City Prisons and Jails.

We believe that all Black People should be released from the many jails and prisons because they have not received a fair and impartial trial.

...

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

QUESTIONS:

- Who do you think is the author of the text?
- In which year do you think it was written?
- Who is the target audience?
- What is the main message of the text? Is it a radical message?

Source: „THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY TEN-POINT PROGRAM“, OCTOBER 15, 1966

(1966) The Black Panther Party Ten-Point Program •
(blackpast.org)

IDEAL MONUMENTS

Time: 1 hour and a half

Methodology: the participants divide in smaller groups. They have 1 hour for creating the monuments. 30 minutes for the presentations.

Materials: Clay or plasticine for creating the monuments

Description: divided in smaller groups, the participants have the task to create a plasticine monument, which could be used as a symbol of peace-building, coexistence and living together. We decided to use this method connected to the city of Vukovar, to motivate the participants in reflecting about culture of memory in the city, and about the possible steps to be taken for a more successful representation of the different communities that live and lived in the city.

Skills developed:

- Creativity
- Raised awareness on dialogue and peace-building
- Teamwork and team-building skills

In the following page, you can find the monuments created by the project's participants





CONFLICT TEXTILES

Time: Around 1h and 30 min

Methodology: the participants are divided in pairs or groups of three and are given the task to choose one photo, depicting Vukovar in different time-periods. They have around one hour to discuss the chosen picture, devise a character to add to it, and create a small yarn doll, representing their character. In the end, the dolls are taped to the pictures and presented to the other groups and pairs.

Materials: printed photos, yarns and wool, stockings, needles and other materials for sewing, tape and glue

Description: the methodology used in this workshop was developed by Roberta Bačić, the curator of the "Conflict Textiles" collection (<https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/conflicttextiles/>). The collection consists of a large number of international textiles, which originated in Latin America and later spread to other parts of the world, in particular the countries affected by conflict and war. The majority of the collection consists of arpilleras, a three dimensional embroidered tapestry from Chile. Arpilleras were mostly made by women, who wanted to denounce human rights violations and the repression they experienced during the Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990)

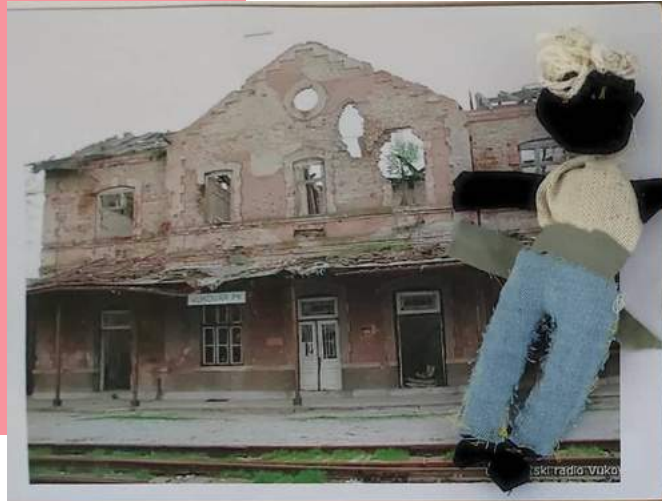
Through this workshop, the participants are able to express their creativity and, at the same time, put themselves in the shoes of their character, trying to imagine their name, situation, and feelings as staged in the photograph.

Skills developed:

- empathy
- creativity
- multiperspectivity

In the following pages you can find the creations made by the participants.

For more information on how to use the method in youth work you can also consult:
[1328_Building Peace-report-compressed-110719.pdf \(ulster.ac.uk\)](#)





METHOD CREATION

On the last day of the training, the participants had the chance to create, in groups, their own methods on preventing radicalization among young people. This last session aimed to develop their organizational and creative skills, and create the space and opportunity for them to curate methods which could work in their local context, and that they could bring home with them and further explore and use after the end of the project.

To support their reflection and idea-creation, the organizers created a document, which the participants followed in their groups:

1) GROUP NAME:

2) PARTICIPANTS:

- Which topics do you deal with through your work/education?
- What are your strengths as a group?

3) TARGET GROUPS:

- Do you work with young people? Which age-groups?
- What are the needs of these groups, connected to prevention of radicalization?

4) METHOD CREATION:

- What do you want to achieve with this method?
- How the method builds on your strengths?
- How does it answer to the needs of the target groups?

BRIEF METHOD DESCRIPTION:

Name:

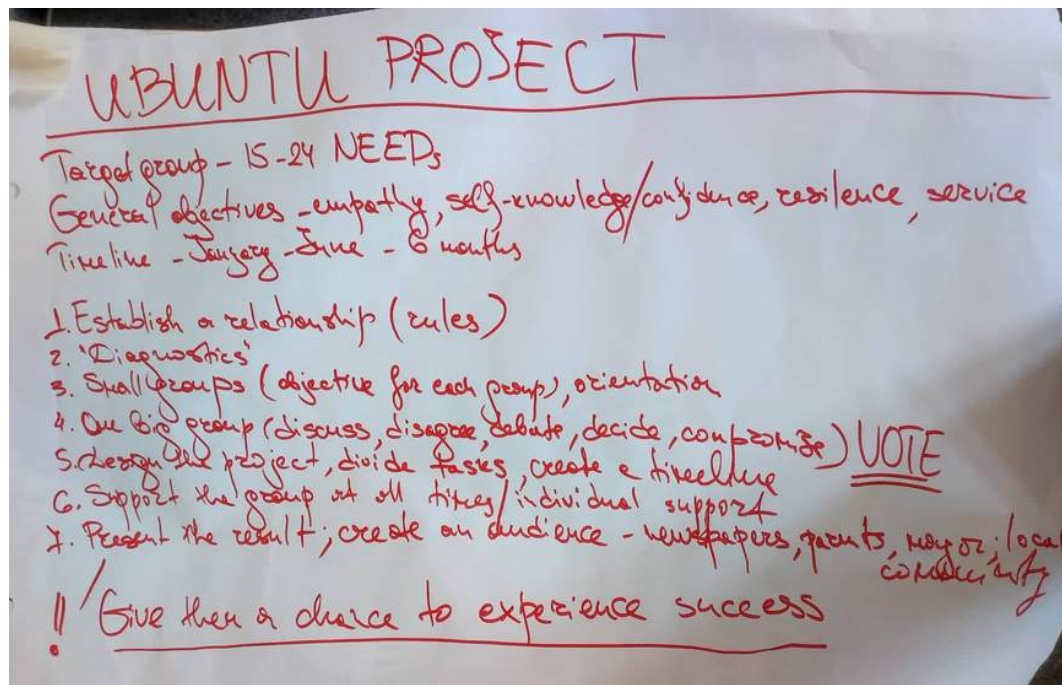
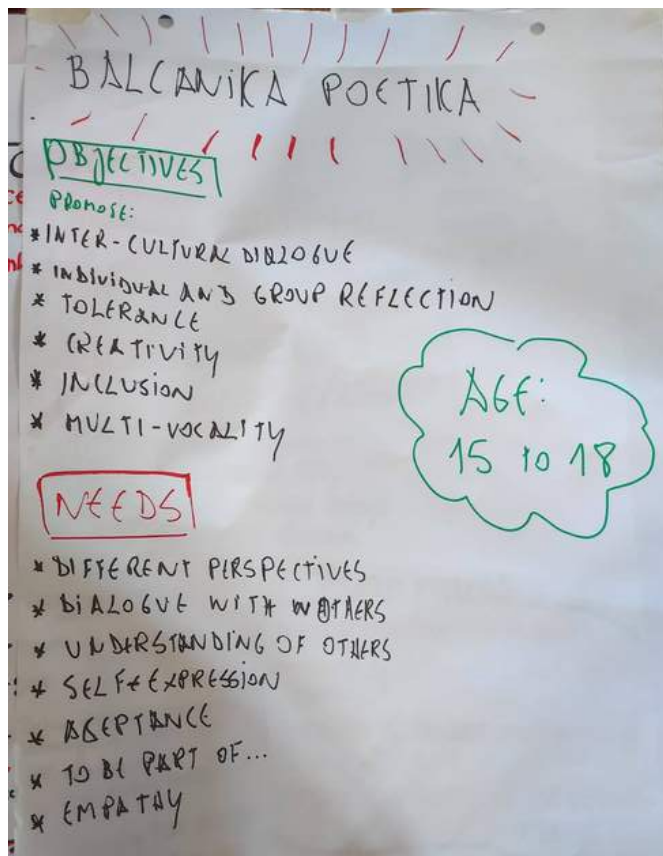
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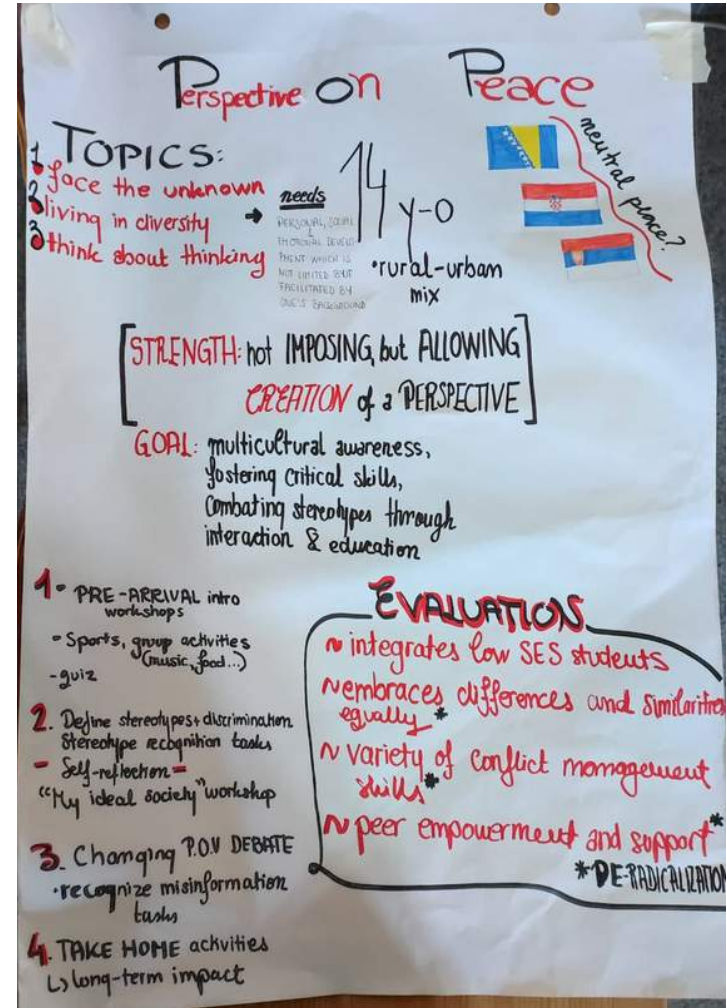
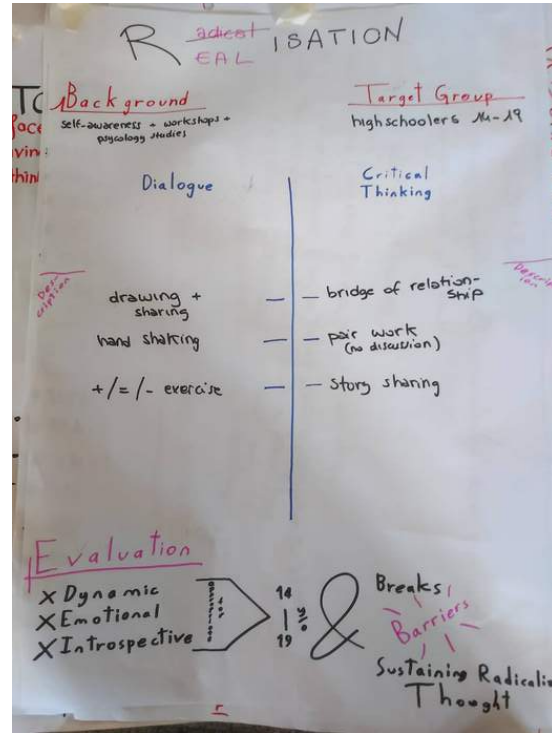
Description:

5) EVALUATION:

Why is the method appropriate for the needs of your target group?

How does it answers to challenges connected to the creation of a sustainable peace-building and dialogue today?





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THE PARTNERS



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Why so



radical?