



# Forum Theater workshops in Budapest



## Who were the participants?

In the Youth 4 Youth project we had a 3-day training programme for youth workers in May 2016. In the training, we had an enthusiastic teacher and participants, who experienced Forum Theatre and Community Reporting. The teacher worked in II. Rákóczi Ferenc vocational school and said she would be happy to send students to the Y4Y workshops as she saw these methods useful to fight against early school leaving. There were some misunderstandings between her and the students about the reasons why she selected them (if it is a punishment or not), and if it was obligatory to participate or not, but the facilitators clarified with the youngsters in the first session that their participation was optional.

The other students came from Megálló school where the youth worker who were working with us helped to recruit and motivate the students.

The 15 participants included 11 girls and 4 boys, between the ages of 16 to 24. Some participants were facing addiction, 4 youngsters defined themselves as Roma. Some students specialized in Military studies in school.



## + About the workshop

### Where did it take place?

The workshops in Budapest took place in the community building of Megálló Csoport Alapítvány, a place where youngsters with addiction can finish secondary education. The participants came from 2 institutions: the II. Rákóczi Ferenc vocational school (where pupils specialize in military or economic studies) and the Megálló second chance school.

In the beginning of the workshop process we went to a closed 'theatre room' in the basement of Megálló, but due to some heating problems we had to move to the common room of Megálló where the buffet is served. This caused some difficulties – as it was difficult to create an intimate space. To avoid this difficulty and also to have bigger space we moved the last 2 final rehearsals to Koma Bázis, a community theatre centre. (see pictures added).

### Breakdown of sessions

We had 10 sessions biweekly, on Wednesdays from 10:00 AM till 13:00 PM between October 2016 and February 2017.

### Facilitators

At the beginning of the process we had some difficulties to find a co-trainer to lead the group. However we used this time to reshape our concept and opportunity regarding the methodologies and focuses.

## Methodology

The fact that the youngsters came from 2 different schools was challenging at the start as they were 2 distinct groups. The starting objectives of the workshops were to build bridges between the youngsters; to make them motivated to come to the next session; to create a team; to build up an atmosphere where the participants can open up and share their stories to the others.

To reach these goals the facilitators balanced the methodologies, combining activities in pairs, work in smaller groups and in big group, using techniques of improvisation theatre, image theatre, creative writing, etc. The focus was on the personal stories and experiences of the participants, tackling different domains of life (family, peers, school) with the different techniques.

## + Workshop outline

1<sup>st</sup> session “group building” – Get to know each other, 1 minute talk improvisations, Clarification of the workshops, creating videos about the expectations of the youngsters – 3 hours

2<sup>nd</sup> session “Obstacles in Life, difficulties in school” – approaching the topic, improvisation theatre in small groups, creating videos in pairs about the difficulties in life and in school – peer up – 3 hours

3<sup>rd</sup> session – Image theatre in the topic of family and improvisation theatre – 3 hours

4<sup>th</sup> session – Embryo of the story (creative writing and group discussion) and mid-term evaluation – 3 hours

5<sup>th</sup> session – Creating the story – improvising the scenes – 3 hours

6<sup>th</sup> session – Clarifying the roles individually with image theatre, adding new scenes – 3 hours

7<sup>th</sup> session – Rehearsal – 3 hours

8<sup>th</sup> session – Rehearsal and final evaluation – 3 hours

9<sup>th</sup> session – General rehearsal, pilot show – 8 hours

10<sup>th</sup> session - General rehearsal, pilot forum theatre session, rehearsing for the forum part – 6 hours