



## Broadening perspectives through the creative process



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Although we have already entered the new year, we are pleased to reflect on our activities from the previous year in this text. In Slovenia, the project's cultural partner, Tina Rataj from **Portret**, Association for the Development of Creativity and Potential, had the opportunity to collaborate with two primary schools from different regions. In both schools, children aged 9–12 (school A) and 11–14 (school B) participated in the theatre club, held once a week.

Both groups concluded their creative process with a theatre play at the end of the school year, prepared for the school and local community. During the activity, the main focus was not the content, but the creative process itself. Initial meetings were dedicated to establishing a safe space and group dynamics. It is vital that the children feel accepted, heard, and safe enough to express their feelings, even about sensitive topics. Without this, difficult themes do not emerge. Once this foundation was established, the

children used creative methods – theatre, improvisation, association, drawing, collage, writing, and working in smaller groups – to explore their interests.

Peer violence, questions of power, inequality, and discrimination quickly emerged as common topics, as well as experiences that youth often encounter online: offensive comments, humiliation, and the silence of bystanders. It is interesting that in both schools, regardless of different ages and environments, the participants highlighted violence – each time in a slightly different form, but with the same significance. This concept did not appear as something to be specifically addressed, but rather as something already present in their thoughts, conversations, and everyday experiences. The differences between the two groups became apparent only in the way the children spoke about violence.

School A presented the topic of violence through relationships. By questioning friendship, power,







and the sense of belonging, the students explored what it means to be strong and when strength can become a burden. Segments from everyday school life intertwined with the scenes, such as words that cause pain, looks that withdraw, and silence, which sometimes speaks louder than actions. Strength revealed itself as something not always visible, but with a significant effect: in the courage to speak up, the ability to set boundaries, and the decision not to look away.

In School B, the topic of violence developed differently. The story took the form of a courtroom, focusing not on questions of guilt and punishment, but on what remains hidden in the background. The children wove personal stories together to highlight the pain that accumulates when calls for help go unheard. Violence emerged as a slow, quiet, and persistent process that escalates until it crosses boundaries.

Both theatre plays addressed the same question, each in its own style: What happens when we do not notice, do not hear, or do not react? The younger students ex-

plored this question through relationships and everyday choices, while the older students examined it through the consequences of long-term discrimination, loneliness, and helplessness. The difference between the two plays did not arise from the weight of the topic, but from the language the children chose to explain it.

In the process of co-creating with children, Tina was reminded of the importance of providing young people with an environment where their experiences can be shared and heard without rushing to conclusions or offering pre-designed answers. The theatre process proved to be a safe space, allowing even heavier topics to be explored – not to solve them, but to attempt to understand them in all their complexity. Understanding of individual stories was not only fostered through the creative process, but also enhanced the ability of children and even parents to listen and be empathetic. Perhaps this is the greatest value of creative processes: not offering answers, but opening a space where we can see one another differently.



## Our plans for 2026

To ensure a motivated and coordinated start to the final year of the project, the first consortium meeting in 2026 was held. Partners met in Wrocław, Poland, on 21 and 22 January, where they reviewed the work completed so far and focused on planning upcoming activities. Two important events are approaching; one will be the summer school, and the other our final conference that will take place in Germany in November. Keep following us!