

# URB ART

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
THROUGH URBAN ARTS EDUCATION

## Baseline Survey on Multilingual and Transdisciplinary Urban Arts Education



With the support of the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

## Baseline Survey on Multilingual and Transdisciplinary Urban Arts Education

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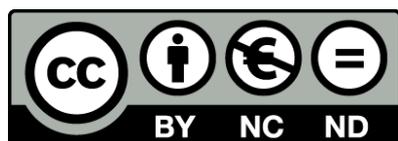
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# 1. Foreword

The "Baseline Survey on transdisciplinary and multilingual Urban Arts Education" is the starting point of the international project URB\_ART, which aims to support low-skilled adults in marginalised communities through the activities and concepts of Urban Arts Education. The aim of the survey is to identify national and transnational needs, and challenges, related to marginalisation in the fields of culture and education as well as success indicators related to Urban Arts Education, whilst considering concepts of trans-disciplinarity, metro- and multilingualism. The outcome includes recommendations for social access potentials and empowerment, through Urban Arts Education, of disadvantaged and marginalised adult individuals and communities. The URB\_ART project with its results is also a response to the COVID19 crisis, which hit hardest the non-formal creative and education sector which promotes social inclusion through inter- and transcultural platforms and encounters. The discontinuation of cultural education activities that strengthen community building, transcultural participation and integration, reinforces the crisis-related symptoms. Community intervention through art is one of the most effective methodologies to achieve a fuller education at all levels (affective, cognitive, social and motor) and aims to unite the community, including those who are socially excluded.

In the project, urban art is understood as a broad term that encompasses all artistic manifestations that develop in public space and offer non-specialised people contact and collaboration with artistic and cultural practices. In short, any manifestation in public space with open access to all members of the community can be understood as urban arts, which is also evident from the results of this baseline survey, which include a wide variety of arts. Furthermore, Urban Arts Education is a method of arts education that encompasses both the creative development of individuals and the understanding of regional and international arts and culture that takes place in large, densely populated urban areas with diverse populations.

When it comes to community arts for low-skilled adults from marginalised groups to overcome socio-cultural barriers and gain access to new social groups, the methods of trans-disciplinarity and multi- and meta-linguistics are considered. Transdisciplinary art functions as a communication tool for intercultural dialogue and social integration. It is also defined as a triangular concept of arts education, urban adult education and urban art. Multilingualism is a tool that promotes transcultural interaction and thus social inclusion, because it enables individuals to communicate and cooperate. However, not only verbal expressions, but also non-verbal methods of communication are part of language. Thus, art is also considered a universal form of expression that transcends language. The artistic disciplines, the multilingualism of art, defy vocabulary and grammatical laws and create a sub-level of communication detached from them, capable of overcoming social and cultural barriers. Even within the same verbal or nonverbal language, there are differentiations that can produce different modes of understanding and thus social hierarchies and social exclusion. This phenomenon is called metrolingualism, which is a product of modern and often urban interaction and describes the ways in which people from different socio-

economic backgrounds use the same language in different ways. Metrolingualism in art is thus the differentiation in art disciplines and manifests itself in different sub forms and interpretations of a discipline.

The partners in each country sought to engage as many people as possible who work as education providers and arts practitioners in the areas addressed by the project to share their experiences, outline their needs and challenges, and identify the issues they face in their work with disadvantaged or marginalised individuals and communities. To this end, we produced a common questionnaire for this target group, which was translated into national languages, as well as guidance on how to conduct focus groups and interviews in order to obtain data that could be considered at a comparable level. The following research questions guided the data collection in each participating country:

- What are the main factors for marginalisation in the fields of culture and education in urban areas?
- What are the main barriers to accessing community arts in urban areas?
- What are the language characteristics and conditions in urban community activities to promote social inclusion?
- What are the main success factors for promoting social inclusion through Urban Arts Education?

The baseline survey was conducted in Austria, Iceland, England, Portugal and Slovenia. In order to understand the results of the survey, we also need to know the specifics of each of the countries involved. For example, in Iceland, with its population of only 350,000 inhabitants, it is the small towns and villages with only a few thousand inhabitants that play an important role in the art scene with local projects inspired by the urban lifestyle and culture. In Slovenia, the small size of the country and the small population influence the expansion of activities in the field of urban arts and work with the marginalised. On the other hand, there are many starting points that are common to all the countries involved. For example, it can be noted that the target groups in each country come mainly from the capital cities, which indicates a strong centralisation of culture, art and work in the areas of social exclusion.

The present baseline survey consists of five chapters. In the following chapter, we present the working methodology and possible deviations from the planned work, which were either due to the difficulty of reaching the target groups because of the time frame or to the different epidemiological situations in each country. The third chapter contains country-by-country analyses of the questionnaires and brief descriptions of the interviews and focus group discussions conducted. The fourth chapter draws some essential conclusions based on the five national reports, highlights their common themes, explains the differences in some national reports and combines the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the information received. The final chapter offers concluding perspectives on common needs and challenges and recommendations for Urban Arts Education, targeting low-skilled adults in marginalised communities.

Through the Baseline Survey we attempt to grasp the broadness and varieties of the addressed sector in Europe and aim at broad definitions of the activity in the field of marginalisation and lingual sphere as well as to present potentials of Urban Arts Education in these fields. With this publication and its dissemination, we also enable to transfer the insights from the researched countries, to the other countries and sectors.



## 2. Methodology

The methodology of the "Baseline Survey on transdisciplinary and multilingual Urban Arts Education" which aims to define the types of marginalisation in the fields of culture and education, the role of multi and metrolingualism in urban areas and the possibilities of Urban Arts Education for social inclusion was developed by the URB\_ART partner consortium.

ZRC SAZU has extensive experience in the field of quantitative research and even more in the field of qualitative research. In developing the methodology, it was supported by Educult, which has both methodological knowledge and empirical experience with target groups. The methodology was discussed and agreed upon on the basis of their previous expertise and experience between all project partners during the project meeting, which was held online due to the pandemic. As there are many different characteristics and circumstances in the partners' countries and cities, the partners agreed on a broad understanding of the term 'marginalisation'.

In the activities of the IO1 project, 'marginalisation' is not used as a narrowly defined theoretical concept, but as a broad spectrum of different factors that make it difficult for a person to participate actively and confidently in social activities, including a wide range of social, economic, linguistic, religious and gender backgrounds. The openness of the term 'marginalisation' allowed participants in each city and country to answer the questions about marginalisation with content specific to their places and circumstances. The other key terms (urban adult education, urban arts, Urban Arts Education, multilingualism, metrolingualism) were also elaborated through the participatory process and included in the Glossary, a specific sub-section of the URB\_ART IO1 HANDBOOK (Baseline Survey on Transdisciplinary and Multilingual Urban Arts Education) prepared by ZRC SAZU, the lead partner for the implementation of IO1. The manual provides detailed guidelines for conducting IO1 project activities, online surveys, expert interviews and focus groups in each partner country.

As defined in the Project Concept, IO1 is designed to directly engage associated adult and community educators, social workers, arts and cultural professionals (target group 1) and independent arts educators and artists from various arts disciplines (target group 3), while indirectly targeting low-skilled adults in marginalised communities (target group 2). The perspectives of TG2 were reached through the responses of TG1 and TG3 who directly work with them. These two direct target groups residing or working in urban areas were included in the quantitative survey and later in the qualitative study. The groups of interviewees and focus group participants sometimes overlapped, but the partners attempted to cover as broad a spectrum of organisations and individuals involved in Urban Arts Education as possible. Responsibility for achieving the required number of respondents and qualitative survey participants was shared equally among the project partners, also considering the different population sizes in each country. The numbers were set as follows: 200 TG1 and TG3 members to complete the online questionnaire (at

least 40 per country), at least 20 experts to be interviewed (at least 4 per country) and at least 20 people to participate in 5 focus groups (at least 4 people per country).

In order to formulate the national and transnational needs and challenges related to marginalisation in the fields of culture and education, as well as indicators of success related to Urban Arts Education a quantitative survey in the form of an online questionnaire was implemented first, later the data was deepened with a qualitative approach in the form of expert interviews and focus groups.

ZRC SAZU prepared a draft of the questionnaire, which was sent for revision to all partners and discussed at the project meeting. The online survey was then conducted using an open-source online survey application (1KA; <https://www.1ka.si/d/en>) developed by the Centre for Social Informatics at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana. 1KA was chosen because all operations are performed with a minimal number of clicks or keystrokes, and the application also enables group work, international projects, and multilingual surveys. All partners had access to the survey data and the possibility to translate the questions directly in the tool. Project partners could decide whether to use the English version of the questionnaire (e.g. in Iceland) or translate it into the dominant ('national') language.

Each of the partners has made many efforts and used various means of communication to reach relevant and active actors in the field of urban arts in her country and invite them to participate in the survey. Respondents had the option to leave their contacts to be informed about further project activities or to participate completely anonymously. The number of people filling in the online questionnaire exceeded the required number but a significant number of the questionnaires were omitted in the analysis due to incompleteness.

ZRC SAZU edited the analytical data provided by the 1ka tool for each partner separately. All project partners were asked to statistically process data for their country, contextualise and interpret them. Their findings were made available to other project partners in the form of a national Baseline Survey Report, in which they summarised and edited the results of the survey in their respective country.

For the purpose of obtaining as complete and credible data as possible, organisations' representatives and individuals from the field of urban arts and Urban Arts Education were invited to participate in the expert interviews as they can provide accurate assessments of the indicators of marginalisation and linguistic factors or the potential of Urban Arts Education. The implementation of the interviews and focus groups followed a set of previously developed outlines, in which questions with a closed answer were avoided. Questions were posed in a logical sequence, without avoiding the questions that were of most interest to the research concern for achieving some minimum knowledge of the people to be interviewed, as well as to guarantee to the interviewees the anonymity of their true identity and the confidentiality of their statements, made available for analysis and rectification before being used, and the non-issue of value judgements about the statements made by the interviewees.

Each partner was obliged to conduct at least four interviews, but all of the partners managed to make them more, each lasting approximately one hour, which were documented with audio and photographs. Some of the interviews were due to the pandemic or logistic reasons held online, mostly through platform Zoom. The questions prepared by ZRC SAZU were adapted to the specific situation or characteristics of the interviewees. The interviews were also designed based on the responses from the online questionnaires. Therefore, despite the well-structured format of the interview, there was flexibility according to the respondents' answers. After the welcome, the interviewer briefly introduced the URB\_ART project and the topics of the interview. The prepared guiding questions were adapted to the profile of the interviewees and the dynamics of the interview. The interviewees were invited to speak openly and in detail about their experiences. The interviews were structured as follows: the introductory part provided space for the introduction of the URB\_ART project and the interviewees' self-representation, the main part was dedicated to questions in line with the project's research questions, and the concluding part ended the interview with a warm thank you and an invitation to the interviewees to review further project actions. The questions were related to personal data and self-representation, a detailed description of the interviewees' engagement in Urban Arts Education with good and unsatisfactory practices, and information about marginalised communities they work with.

Respondents were asked for their observations on the main factors of marginalisation in the fields of culture and education in the communities they work with. Time was also devoted to language characteristics and communication barriers in the field of Urban Arts Education in marginalised communities. Particular attention was paid to the key success factors for promoting social inclusion through Urban Arts Education as they emerged from the practical experiences of the interviewees. Respondents were given the opportunity to openly express their motivations for this engagement, any (lack of) support they felt, etc.

All respondents signed the "Informed Consent for participation in the study URB\_ART project", which is archived with the project partners. Due to the sensitivity of the personal data and information obtained in the interviews, the project consortium has decided to anonymise the interviewees in this report.

Each partner organised a focus group, either face-to-face (in the UK) or online (in Austria, Iceland, Slovenia and Portugal), depending on the epidemiological situation in that country. Their aim was to bring stakeholders from the cultural and educational sectors into an exchange on the topic, to uncover or identify indicators of marginalisation and language factors, and to define the potential of Urban Arts Education to improve the given conditions. Invited adult learning providers and community art actors (some of them were the same as in the interviews, but the majority were different) from interviewees. Focus groups were approximately 90 to 120 minutes in length and were facilitated by one or more project members. When inviting participants to the focus group, project members ensured that the participants were as heterogeneous as possible and were also aware of gender, age and power relations when moderating the focus group. The focus groups were either audio or video recorded and all participants were asked for informed consent to use personal details, portrait photographs of individuals/organisations and/or activities and

quotes from the recordings, which may be included to the Compendium of storytelling resources through Urban Arts Education (IO2). All were also asked to express interest in participating in future project activities.

The moderators tried to make close connections with and within the target group, but to remain neutral and ask broad questions to get a discussion going. They followed the guiding questions prepared by ZRC SAZU, but also adapted them to get a clearer picture of issues that had remained unclear in the questionnaires and interviews. Focus group participants were asked to introduce themselves and their work and to describe examples of encounters with marginalisation in society in general and in the education/arts world in particular. They discussed the possibility of including marginalised people in urban arts activities, the main barriers to people's access to the arts in the community, success factors for Urban Arts Education, and personal experiences of including marginalised people in urban arts activities. They were also asked about the language characteristics of their work with marginalised communities, local community and national policy support and funding for these activities, and the pressing issue of the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic on this field.

All the activities performed were summarised by the partners in a national report in which the partners described in detail the implementation of the activities and important findings. They analysed quantitative data from an online questionnaire which are related to responses from their country and regarding the situation in the country. In addition to describing the interviews and the focus groups, they paid particular attention to the recommendations for the more successful Urban Arts Education in marginalised communities as crystalised through the project activities. Conclusions of the national report show that the implementation of the survey was realised fully despite the challenging time-frame and the methodology used fully corresponded to the aims of the IO1.

# 3. Five Field Surveys

## 3.1 Austria

### 3.1.1 National Framework

Both in terms of geographic distribution and its historical emphasis on the arts and cultural sector, it was inevitable that about half of survey and interview participants would be from Vienna, Austria's major urban centre; where over a fifth of the Austrian population resides. To ensure respondents came from all over Austria, the interviews and focus groups focused on other urban areas, such as Graz, Innsbruck, Salzburg, and Linz. This gave the research more perspectives on topics such as funding, target audiences, barriers to participation, etc. Among the online survey respondents a few were even from smaller cities.

This project provided new insights into the composition of the Urban Arts Education field in Austria and led us to reconsider what arts education is. The work of the interviewees ranged from classical arts and cultural education (leading artistic workshops, teaching musical skills) to broader activities (advising on art school portfolios, collective construction of a parklet). We included these latter interviews because they lie at the intersection of art, education, and urban space, and symbolise a broader approach and the breadth of Urban Arts Education that this research has uncovered and, to some extent, reflects the diversity and heterogeneity of urban cultural phenomena.

### 3.1.2 Online Survey

#### Survey Participants

In total 37 participants from Austria took part in the online survey. About half live in Vienna, 8% in Graz and Salzburg, respectively, and just under a third are spread out over other Austrian regions. 11% answered that their place of birth was Vienna, 56% were born in other Austrian cities and 33% in different European countries. This shows that many of the interviewees have changed their city or country of residence, with migration patterns especially focused towards Vienna, as about half of respondents lived there although only 11% were born there. This underlines the importance of the city as a place of cultural creation for TG1 and TG3 as well.

36% of the respondents are currently employed in the NGO sector, 32% are freelancers, 8% work in the education sector, just as many in the public sector or in the business sector. The remaining 27% are artists or in the field of arts and culture. 74% are permanently employed and 26% have no permanent employment. Over half (57%) of respondents said they had formal training/degrees in arts. 47% categorised their profession as art educator or artist whereas 8% identified as social workers. Among the other 44%, respondents identified themselves as working in positions including trainers, cultural managers, researchers and architects. Theatre (54%), music (51%) and dance (40%) are the respondents' main artistic disciplines. Several forms of employment were considered, so the survey allowed for multiple responses. Out of 17, 59% reported implementing art

education projects more than 12 times a year, whereas 12% implemented 9-12 times and 29% implemented 2-9 times. Due to the low response rate, it can be assumed that many of the non-respondents do not engage in art education activities. Of the activities, 71% are financed by community funds, 59% by government funds, 24% by participation fees and 18% each by own capital and EU funds.

82% believe that their activities contribute to community education. In an open question the participants answered that their work contributes to the community through intercultural exchange, co-creation, networking, education, low-threshold, (non-verbal) communication/interaction through art interventions, local and collaborative cultural work, opening up and getting to know life worlds.

### **Linguistic Characteristics**

86% of 37 participants said that German, which is the official language in Austria, is their mother tongue. 11% understand it very well and 3% stated that they understand it. 70% comprehend 2-3 other languages besides German, whereas 13% understand 0-1 and 16% understand 4-5 other languages. It can be concluded from this that multilingualism or linguistic competence is prevalent and important among the survey participants. This is also reflected by the fact that 81% said they speak the language of the neighbourhood they live/work in, whereas 19% do not. However, it is interesting to note that 97% of the respondents stated that they spoke German as their mother tongue or very well. This shows that German is not necessarily the dominant language in every neighbourhood/region of Austria. In addition to German as the dominant language, 31% of 29 people who answered this question stated that English is a spoken language in urban areas, and 6% each answered Arabic and Turkish. Half of the respondents affirmed the statement that there is a particular metro-language spoken in the city whereas the other half answered the question with "no" or "don't know".

### **Urban Marginalisation**

Out of a total of 29 people, almost 80% answered that low language skills, low income, and low level of education are the main factors for marginalisation. 66% consider social exclusion a barrier, 45% race and ethnicity. Only 14% each stated that various disabilities, gender or sexual orientation are the main factors. 97% said that there exists access to community arts activities in their city for people with fewer opportunities but 100% answered that this group doesn't know about the participation opportunities. 60% chose linguistic challenges, 53% cultural differences, 47% financial obstacles, about 40% each educational differences and segregation, 27% social obstacles whereas only 10% unattractive opportunities as main barriers for access to community arts. Multiple answers were possible here. This shows that individuals belonging to TG1 and TG3 believe it is not the quality and number of offers, but rather the lack of knowledge about them that creates cultural exclusion in Austrian cities.

23% believe that social inequalities become less visible in the arts education process, 43% answered that their activities affect social inequalities "moderately" whereas 23% "slightly" and 10% "not at all". Reasons for the reduced visibility of differences were stated as the "same starting point" in activities, the shared experiences during the process, and

because art and culture can function as a connecting and non-verbal, sensuous and intuitive form of communication.

### **Success Factors and Challenges for Urban Arts Education**

Out of a total of 29 participants, the main factors identified as helping promote social inclusion through Urban Arts Education are sufficient funds (79%), specific targeting (66%), social community work (62%), word of mouth (59%), clear communication (55%), promotion of urban arts opportunities (52%), attractive mediation offer (48%) and enthusiastic organisers (41%). Nearly 70% indicated that increased project funding and financial stimulation of participants could increase the social inclusion capacity of Urban Arts Education. More tailored, attractive, and low-threshold offers were mentioned as additional success factors and opportunities for improvement.

53% said that the COVID-19 pandemic has changed access to urban cultural offers, 30% answered “no”. Of the 53%, limited/no offers, fewer opportunities for interaction, and a shift to the digital space were seen as the main factors for this change. This was answered in an open question.

76% of the participants already have experience with artistic collaborations that addressed people from marginalised communities. Of these 76%, 76% believe that their activities have promoted the social inclusion of TG2. 82% even stated social inclusion as the goal of their collaborative activities, 41% stated entertainment, 36% gaining more competences and 27% self-promotion as objectives. In an open answer option, enabling cultural participation was mentioned as a further goal. This data shows that social inclusion and participation are highly valued by the respondents, but funding (56%), time availability of participants (50%) and communication problems (44%) are the main obstacles to success. Likewise, with 76% each, the target groups’ insecurities, feeling misunderstood and not being addressed were declared as the biggest problems in inclusive work. With 100% satisfaction with the interest of the participants, this is clearly not a barrier.

In contrast, 59% said that language was a barrier whereas 24% said it was not. Out of a total of 29 participants, 90% believe that artistic endeavours make communication easier. Creative/artistic and non-verbal forms of expression and creating together allow for communication beyond language. The most important non-verbal forms of communication chosen were artistic expression at 85%, gestures at 74% and facial expressions at 70%. As open suggestions for more linguistically inclusive practices in the field of Urban Arts Education, the respondents mentioned addressing participants in their mother tongue/languages of the neighbourhood or multilingual offers, the use of simple language, the development of non-verbal formats or artistic forms of expression and public interventions.

This quantitative study in the Austrian region was not able to generate insights into which forms of metrolingualism occur in larger cities and what significance they have.

Also surprising was the statement that TG2 has access to community arts, but cannot use them for certain reasons. According to this study, it is thus not a lack of offer, but rather lack of information and communication problems that are the cause.

### 3.1.3 Expert Interviews

**Interview 1** was conducted online via Zoom with an artist who founded an art collective focused on experimentation with audio-visual arts and arts education, and who has participated in an urban arts festival. He lives and works in Graz and often runs workshops in various contexts, including at universities, at festivals, with people battling addiction, and in open spaces. When planning workshops, his focus is on understanding the level of knowledge of the target audience and creating a low barrier to entry for arts education. This is shown by one of his projects, in which he adapted a baby stroller to function as a sound mixing station. He takes this installation into public places and interacts with the people there, teaching them how to use the technology, and jamming with them. Often, people in these parks speak very little German, and the artist noted: *“Mixing music has functioned really well as a nonverbal mode of communication [...] Then you have shared emotions, and through this communication you notice right away—he’s responding to my audio output—it leads to communication and joy, and a certain intimacy. And they’ll learn something about audio synthesis for the first time [...] without really knowing it.”* He also noted that going to public places or to places and organisations where marginalised people gather, is the best way to reach such groups.

Generally, he felt the art scene in Graz can be a bit homogenous and academic. According to the interviewee, the art scene in urban areas is unique because here people with different social backgrounds and beliefs must interact—it’s a place where social conflicts play out. Because of this, he also feels that Urban Arts Education plays a special role. When people work collectively and creatively, it gives them a shared basis for conversation: *“When a workshop takes place, the workshop is one thing, but the exchange afterwards, or before, or during, is actually the foundational element that I find important. When people talk and discuss, and exchange values.”* Challenges the artist faces, sees and experiences in Graz are language barriers (despite nonverbal communication working for some projects, for others, language plays a bigger role), urban regulations relating to sound, and motivating people to return to events.

**Interview 2** was conducted online via Zoom with an artist and activist from Linz. She is the head of an organisation which is heavily focused on advising artists who are women, trans-, or intersex, as well as conducting workshops for artists. In their advising work, those at the organisation work with artists who face exclusion on various fronts. Their sessions are cost free, to enable access for all. Advising people applying to universities includes evaluating their portfolios and suggesting changes they could make. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, both advising sessions and workshops moved online, and demands from various regions of Austria and Germany grew massively. Digital possibilities have opened up their work and lowered barriers so much that the organisation plans to stick with the format. The career advising also includes connecting women with potential galleries, venues, publishers, and more—their website also includes a data bank with funding calls.

Advice/education is offered in multiple languages, and the organisation has cooperated with other organisations that centre on groups such as migrants, the homeless, or queer people, in order to reach those target audiences. Reaching these groups is limited by lack of resources and time. Funding is also increasingly limited and project focused, so the organisation has to devote more time to seeking funding for and carrying out projects.

**Interview 3** was conducted face-to-face with an architect who works in a community building organisation focused on social integration. She is originally from Syria but has been living in Vienna for about 5 years. The organisation runs various projects including the building of a parklet and an intercultural university mentorship program. The interviewee's focus was on the parklets, which she architecturally designed. With volunteers spanning various ethnic groups, origins, religions and socio-economic statuses, all but one of whom had no experience with building or architecture, they built a mini park.

The interviewee discussed how through this process, the participants not only learned new skills and discovered interests they hadn't realised before, but that they were able to build friendships and understanding through their consistent and collective work. *"Of course, it can be better if people already have these skills, but in my experience it's nicer when people don't, and just come because they are interested. Because it's not about building a masterpiece, but just about creating a space where people meet, that brings people together."*

As the organisation focuses on intercultural exchange, language plays a central role. Exchange truly is the organisation's emphasis. The interviewee explained that integration goes both ways, as immigrants both need to learn the local language and feel that local people are interested in and care about their culture. They often use a mix of languages, German with an Arabic phrase occasionally thrown in, and focus on building a comfortable environment where it's okay to make mistakes. Community building works primarily through the creation of spaces in neighbourhoods that arouse interest in participation and co-creation.

**Interview 4** was conducted face-to-face with the founder and founding educator of an association which holds workshops with German learners, mainly in museums, combining language and arts education. They also offer training for teachers and conceptual work, e.g. for institutions. The founder is an art educator and German as a second language trainer. One of their focal points is multilingualism - the team speaks 16 different languages - though they also emphasise the approach of *"language through art"*. The target group consists mainly of adults learning German, but it is very heterogeneous. People from marginalised communities are among the participants, but the organisation prefers not to focus on disadvantages and deficits, but rather on commonalities.

Two elements central to their work are defining arts and culture together with participants, as well as the connection between arts and social issues. *"Everyone makes culture. We are cultural beings. But then there are also margins and priorities that a society sets. One culture gets more space than others. One culture is considered important, the other is considered*

*deficient and needs to be changed, adapted.*" As a result, the organisation sees "many psychological barriers, which also have to do with power relations in society". They have observed that mixing different people in public space is much easier than in closed spaces, which makes being active in the neighbourhood a central point in their work.

Funding presents many hurdles: firstly, success depends heavily on personal contacts, and secondly, they are at the interface between culture and education - so it is often not entirely clear which funding area they fall into. The team therefore works on a project basis and is not fully employed. An important strategy is visibility, being active in different fields - that's the way to reach the desired diversity.

**Interview 5** was conducted via Zoom with an artist/art educator who founded a non-profit association with a partner in 2012, which trains people with cognitive disabilities to become DJs, and acts as an agent for bookings. In the first few years, they were only active in Vienna with funded courses, but since 2016 they have expanded to Lower Austria. Their bookings are all over Austria. The aim of the association is to break down prejudices against disabilities and to show that they are not an obstacle in the creative industry. Furthermore, it is about the exchange between people with and without disabilities. In this way, they want to contribute to a more inclusive world. The courses are mainly financed by grants. The money from privately booked courses and for performances also flows into the association and contributes to the financing of grant funded courses. The courses consist of a maximum of 10 interested individuals, reached mainly through the institutions for people with disabilities.

A strong increase in self-esteem can be noticed among the participants, especially when they are then on stage. For some there is also a social aspect – they get out more. The project also has a great effect on the audience as barriers fall and new contacts are made between people with and without disabilities. Some participants also develop a lasting interest in music. Within the groups there is a close cohesion and a strong awareness of (different) disabilities.

Language does not play a role as such—there are also a few almost non-verbal participants who communicate with gestures or sounds. There are also people with other first languages, but the language of communication in their courses and work is German. Multilingualism manifests itself through other forms of communication. The trainers avoid using jargon in order to make the courses easier to understand and more accessible.

One challenge they encounter is the lack of visibility and funding possibilities. In this regard, the lack of clarity on whether they are in the social or cultural sector is an issue. Visibility, however, is the most important success factor.

### 3.1.4 Focus Group

The focus group was conducted online via Zoom on July 6<sup>th</sup> 2021 with artists and art educators from urban areas across Austria. These included the director of a poetry slam organisation in Linz, which focuses on workshops; an employee of a community arts

organisation in Vienna, at the intersection of arts, culture, and politics, which both plans art and culture events, and advises other institutions on promoting diversity, an artist in Graz, who migrated from Ukraine 10 years ago, whose focus is on sound design and composition, workshops, and art installations in public spaces, and an artist, psychologist, and sports scientist in Innsbruck with an atelier, who hosts school workshops, does portrait photography, and takes a holistic approach to human expression. The participants work with various individuals, among these are people with migration or refugee backgrounds and people living in peripheral areas of cities.

With exhibits or performances in public spaces the participants agreed that you can attract people who happen to be walking by, who might not otherwise engage with arts and culture. It was also noted by the artist from Graz to be the most democratic form of art presentation and education, while the participant from Vienna felt it was also a good way to tackle themes and topics neglected in the mainstream/elite art world. Hosting such events is also important in decentral areas, as they have less access to art and cultural institutions.

Another central topic in the focus group were the factors of marginalisation in Urban Arts Education. Those mentioned were varied (language, migration background, skin colour, gender, economic status etc). Two of the participants discussed their efforts to reach these groups specifically. Factors important for this were noted to be cooperation with other organisations that work with these target groups, having people in your organisation's team that reflect these experiences, needing long term projects to really engage these groups, and generally rethinking things like themes of projects, who is performing, location, etc.

The participants from Linz and Graz said they felt there are many organisations in their cities which do well reaching out to marginalised groups. In order to address the barrier of economic status, organisers often use a no or low-cost /low-threshold strategy. However, it was noted that with limited funding from public and private institutions, entry costs are an important source of financing for the artist's or organisation's activities—the participants from Linz and Innsbruck noted that they cannot afford to completely get rid of fees. The artist from Graz said he felt financially supported by the city, and the participant from Linz noted that his organisation recently had its funding increased. The artist from Innsbruck mentioned still seeking out funders for her art projects; she largely supports herself through her other work.

On the topic of language, two artists discussed the ability of arts to overcome language barriers—one discussed a project he worked on where artists from different countries had to design an exhibit together without using a shared language, instead communicating through body language and art, and the other talked about art as a form of expression or communication which builds connection beyond language. The multilingual approach is an important way to reach people who are often excluded on a linguistic basis—even advertising events in different languages helps to reach new audiences. However, some participants lacked the resources to do this. Another aspect mentioned was dialects—speakers must navigate the fact that dialects are often looked down upon or not as clearly

understood, while also being seen by fellow speakers as more authentic and legitimate. Dialect can thus open doors while often serving as a factor of exclusion as well.

### 3.1.5 Conclusions

Through analysis of the interviews, focus group, and online survey data, general results were identified, expressed by several of the people and institutions involved. Factors for marginalisation and exclusion mentioned were manifold—some respondents try specifically to reach people from these groups, others reach a general audience and thus sometimes include people from marginalised groups. The main factors for exclusion noted were language, economic status, migration experience, and lack of knowledge about offers, while gender and decentralisation are mentioned a lesser number of times. Overall, language was emphasised as a barrier to entry in the arts sector, with low income and low level of education also emphasised in the online survey. When people do not speak the dominant language, feelings of insecurity and judgment are a huge barrier to overcome—this holds them back from participating in cultural and artistic events, or often even leads them to not know about the existence of such events.

Unfortunately, most small organisations in the urban arts field say they lack the funding and staffing to offer all locally spoken languages, to advertise events in locally used languages, or even to reach out to groups excluded for other reasons. This was also reflected in the online survey, where respondents felt more funding was required to improve inclusiveness in Urban Arts Education. Other important ways to tackle the economic barrier, respondents said was the use of low/no cost strategies for participants; while low-threshold activities reduce insecurities and difficulties of engaging with activities in the arts.

Arts have the potential to overcome or reduce language barriers, because art itself can be a form of nonverbal communication. Even when verbal language itself is not understood—creative and artistic expressions, gestures, facial expressions and body language are bridge builders and tools of communication.

Several participants noted the importance of arts in urban public spaces and of being active in the neighbourhood. This engages people who might not normally take up cultural offers and thus reaches new audiences, creates interaction, and is democratic. Arts can also connect people with one another: shared work, creative expression, and performances can create inclusion and connection between people. Even when people come from different social backgrounds, a shared artistic project can help bring them together; such projects can also lead to the development of new skills, interests, and confidence. This is particularly important in the urban space, a place where people from many different social groups come together and must learn to communicate, integrate, and create shared values. Urban Arts Education can thus build a bridge between and within communities who are marginalised or are not.

## 3.2 Great Britain

### 3.2.1 National Framework

In the UK, urban arts are a vital and unique part of the local cultural ecology and urban landscapes, aiming to offer the broadest possible access to public engagement with the arts. They open up culture with challenging, engaging and sometimes confrontational work. Like all types of art, urban art comes in a variety of forms, from street art, murals that cover entire walls to sculptures, performance and music.

When it comes to London, the city the UK team focused most intensely on, it is probably the graffiti and street art scene that is the most visible and pervasive urban art form. Here world-wide acclaimed artists such as Banksy emerged. They are an essential part of the process shaping the modern cultural space of the UK and changing many people's perceptions of street art. Urban arts became an integral and important element in the body of contemporary art, a medium for voices of social change, protest, or expressions of community desire. Aware of their benefits for youth engagement, especially in marginalised communities, community cultural engagement and arts education in general, urban arts are an established alternative education offering.

### 3.2.2 Online Survey

#### Survey Participants

In total 96 participants from the UK took part in the online survey. The majority of the respondents are in the 18-30 age category (52%), an additional 19% are 30-40, and 18 percent in the 40-50. The vast majority live in London (85%) with the rest from around the UK. While the majority live in London, only 32% were born in the UK, the rest coming from a number of different countries, including Bangladesh (15%) and Russia (10%), reflecting the cosmopolitan demographics of London.

The majority of our UK respondents do not have a formal arts background (53%). 40% identify as artists, 9% as arts educators, and the same percent as community educators. Visual art is the field of the majority of the respondents (41%), with storytelling (22%) and design (16%) the next two most popular.

Of our arts educators, the majority implement art education activities more than once a year (14% once or less, 86% more than once), with 29% putting them on 2 to 9 times a year, 29%, 9 to 12 times and 29% more than 12 times. The majority of these programs are funded by participant fees (71%), with community funds and personal funding contributing to 43%, government funding, 29% and donations, 14%.

#### Linguistic Characteristics

49% of all respondents have English as their mother tongue, an additional 25% claim to speak it very well, and 20% are fluent in English; 61% of all the respondents can speak more than one language.

## Urban Marginalisation

Three quarters of our respondents perceive low-income as the main factor in marginalisation in London and in general the UK, followed by race and ethnicity (55%), social exclusion (51%) and low education (49%). Weak linguistic competencies (35%) are seen as more marginalising than disability (23%) and age (21%). The majority of our respondents do not have experience with arts for marginalised communities (57%). Of those that do have experience, joint art projects are the reason (63%) along with occasional workshops (53%), voluntary association (47%) and spontaneous collaborations (47%).

Reassuringly the majority testify that there are opportunities within their city for individuals with fewer opportunities to access community arts (64% to 36%). One of the key barriers to these individuals accessing these community arts courses is awareness, with 80%, indicating not knowing about the courses as the main barrier, this is followed by financial restrictions (67%).

The majority of respondents believe cultural, religious and ethnic differences become less visible in art education, with 87% rating it between slightly and extremely, with the majority believing the differences become moderately less visible (48%). Less believe that general social differences become less visible, with 80% rating it between slightly and extremely, with again the majority believing this is moderately true (41%), with no clear consensus on why this is.

The main purpose of these collaborations are increased social inclusion (67%), entertainment (60%), and learning/educational (50%), with the majority believing that the project supports participants on the path to inclusion (67%, Yes). Lack of funds is raised as the main barrier to the collaboration (66%) with time pressures the second reason (36%). The vast majority is happy with the participants' engagement with the project (90%).

## Success Factors and Challenges for Urban Arts Education

Key factors in successful arts education are according to the British respondents: funding (74%), promotion (68%), communication (60%), with better event marketing, increased financing and incentives for participants as the way inclusion of people with fewer opportunities could be increased (63, 62, and 60% respectively).

Regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, the respondents recognise there has been a change of access (42%) the vast majority say there has been a change in delivery/access as a result of COVID. The reason for this change is primarily the closure of venues and the reduction in face-to-face events due to social distancing/isolation. Other factors include less money available and financial barriers. Surprisingly, in this case very few mention the arts programme moving to a digital delivery model.

Language in communicating with marginalised individuals is rated as very important by the majority (47%) with 9% disagreeing, saying it isn't at all important, 11% saying it is a bit important and 14% saying quite. The majority believe language to be a barrier to wider

participation (59%), with fear of not being understood the top identified problem (73%), followed by participants' insecurities (63%), and trouble with basic communication (54%).

The majority believe that art makes communication easier (58% with only a small percentage) disagreeing. Several respondents remark that art is a shared language, or becomes a form of visual communication, or can be used as a way of expressing feeling. Facial expressions, gestures, and art itself, are ways that our respondents transcended the language barrier. Multilingual resources, multilingual educators and translators/interpreters are all suggested ways to improve the delivery of art to groups that include marginalised communities with language barriers.

### 3.2.3 Expert Interviews

**Interview 1** was with an urban artist specialising in film and photography. Jamaican born but living in London, he has experienced marginalisation in the artistic world throughout his career cycle, including the hiring, getting relevant opportunities and promotions at work. He believed he could not *“bring his culture to work”*. He said that there were subsidised art activities, such as youth clubs, offered for the local communities in his area, but they were mostly reserved to a certain group of people, and that there was an elitist streak to the organisation of such activities and class divide.

He mentioned that there were many barriers for people to access community arts in his areas, including language barriers, not knowing about the opportunities, and believed this could be countered by advertising opportunities in languages other than English. He said the promotion of local activities needed sufficient funding from the local authorities and beyond. He believed that all artistic practices (film showings, exhibitions, practical workshops, lectures) seemed to be good at overcoming inequalities.

**Interview 2** was conducted with an educator and award-winning filmmaker with over 30 years' experience working in the media. She is currently director of the Centre for Media Monitoring, promoting fair and responsible reporting of Muslims and Islam. She has worked as a producer/director for BBC Television as well as for Channel 4 and other international broadcasters. She runs urban media skills workshops for disenfranchised communities in the UK, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Throughout her career she has experienced a form of marginalisation, being a female Muslim from an inner-city comprehensive school who went to an average university, surrounded by white, middle-class men who graduated from Oxford/Cambridge. The main barriers in her opinion are financial restrictions. Apart from museums, most other forms of art charge for access, as a result restricting access to those in the community with available funds.

She also believes there is a lack of cultural engagement in marginalised communities and a belief that arts are the reserve of white middle classes. She believes not enough is done to encourage marginalised people into the arts, with not enough commissioning from people of colour or investment in minority communities. Sustainable levels of funding are a key

success factor in her opinion. She believes in the need to give artists the funding they need to showcase their work in the community and make it accessible to the communities they are aiming at engaging, and importantly that they are from. She believes in the power of *“consultation, representation and inclusion”*.

**Interview 3** was conducted with a performer who uses poetry as a tool for healing and processing emotions. She uses common experiences to link people and poetry, which is universal, as a tool for bringing people together, enabling mutual understanding and creating community. She migrated online during the COVID-19 lockdown period which gave her access to expat and mainstream communities through new workshop facilitation formats and, as cultural centres open up, like other artists she is now exploring hybrid working which combines live events with a strong social media presence. Individuals can, for instance, send questions in advance of sessions and participate remotely in this way. Funding is an issue as ticketed events are restricted at present and not sustainable if you want to be inclusive and maintain prices of £5 or less. Speaking of marginalisation, she notes she has not experienced exclusion and limitations to her skills and creativity but does in terms of finances. While she is often offered opportunities to work, usually the projects are not funded fully or depend upon ticket sales.

She has noticed that minority ethnic communities are generally not well connected through virtual information-sharing networks and social media. As a result a lot of gatekeepers are prominent community personalities who have the power to connect and bridge a gulf between mainstream and marginalised creative people and communities. Simply translating information into minority ethnic language does not help as most participants speak a bit of English and non-verbal communication helps share messages so the need is really about changing mind-sets and ensuring everyone feels welcome into wider networks and valued before they are likely to connect with gatekeepers. Platforms for the creative sector are accessible to most people. Screenings, exhibitions and music, in particular, do not require verbal language and so enables wider audiences to show their work and connect. The key component lies in whether you feel welcome, whether there is a pre-existing stereotype of genres expected of people from specific socio-cultural and class backgrounds and whether this will exclude wider audiences. She notes that her daughter is unlikely to consider attending a classical music concert but will look up Indie music concerts which she feels are targeted to people like her. A white man recently contacted her to ask whether a workshop she was running was designed for Bengali-heritage people only or whether he could join in; opening mind-sets from all sides is therefore crucial.

**Interview 4** was conducted with an Irish folk singer musician who has performed internationally and with bands heading folk festivals but who works as a builder to pay bills. His art activities contribute towards building communities but only within very specific cultural contexts. COVID, his performances were cancelled or he was asked to perform on Zoom concerts. He did not feel Zoom worked for him and he felt a lot of performances witnessed did not display a lot of artistic merit but were often somewhat exhibitionist rather than engaging.

He feels local funding does not support his work because he does not fit within the local minority demographics while he has never been able to access national funding opportunities. He wrote music and attempted to find support for several centenary events for WWI but could not afford the images he wanted to use to accompany his musical project. He attempted to contact several organisations including the Heritage Lottery but could not access such funding as an individual.

### 3.2.4 Focus Group

The UK focus group consisted of five participants, besides the local team members. Among the participants were three men, a filmmaker, designer and a Russian-speaking events organiser, and two women, an educator and an artist, as well as a digital worker and an artist. All of whom were from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.

In the focus group, we discussed diversity and marginalisation, the barriers to participation and cultural engagement, and the funding and support available to both artist and urban community arts programmes. This discussion first centred on the many similarities between the “real” world and the art world, namely that the art world mirrors the actual one where there is an eternal lack of inclusion, diversity, representation, and a clear class divide.

One of the participants exposed that marginalisation exists in the art world throughout the career cycle, as well as the artistic education. Being Jamaican by origin, he highlighted that he does not feel like he can “*bring his culture to work*”, and that he feels like he is a “*different person*” at work and outside of work. Another participant, originating from Harare, Zimbabwe, felt similarly, while another exposed that disadvantaged communities are disproportionately under-represented in the arts and media industries. “*In a city that is full of different cultures, people and nationalities, why are the arts not more diverse?*” One of the participants emphasised that she has been raised in a range of cultures, so does not really notice being marginalised as she is used to being an outsider. “*I’ve always been the outsider, so I expect it now*”, while another experienced marginalisation through cultural production and presentation: “*all foreign-language events get marginalised away from the main cinemas, forums, and festivals.*”

The group pointed out that opera, ballet, classical music, and art in galleries have a low attendance from marginalised groups, because they feel that these are “white culture” and elitist arts for “posh” people. People from marginalised communities are not interested in “mainstream white arts”, but are still interested in art related to their own cultural heritage, especially those that connect people to their history, past or ancestral homeland.

We debated the barriers the unprivileged face when it comes to their access to community arts: language barriers, a lack of marketing that would target them in particular, and in general low cultural engagement amongst individuals living in socio-economic deprived areas of London. Local communities could support artists in marginalised communities by promoting their languages and culture, and “inviting” the mainstream cultures into “their” cultural space. One of the correspondents mentioned that subsidised activities, such as

youth clubs, are offered for the local communities in his area, but they are mostly reserved for certain groups of people. He also drew parallels with America's tendency to advertise in Spanish language in mixed-race areas and invited suggestions to place adverts in local languages, educating the wider communities on these opportunities. Another barrier is the cost of attending or participating in cultural/artistic activities for low-income families and individuals (black and minority families are more likely to be low income), and concerns about feeling uncomfortable or out of place were also raised.

Language barriers can, according to the focus group participants, cause marginalisation, more concretely, “foreign” films and culture tend to be side-lined from mainstream arts and “Anglo-American” content. Urban Arts Education has the ability to “*shed light on the minority communities and their cultural specifics*”, which could be a useful “door-opener” to those cultures. The success of urban opportunities depends on the amount of funding, promotion of these opportunities, and the management team. Discussing funding and support in more detail, the participants explained that it is difficult to make a living from art. Funding needs to be more focused on inclusion, by giving funding to those marginalised communities and encouraging them to broaden their audiences, as well as ensuring “traditional” arts and culture also increase their diversity both in people on stage, screen as well as in their audience.

Another highlighted the importance of an URB\_ART project which could “*promote and support people of ethnic backgrounds to acquire careers in either the arts or the media.*” The participants discussed the role of the local community in supporting artists in marginalised communities by promoting their languages and culture, and “inviting” the mainstream cultures into “their” cultural space. An efficient way, identified, could be through film screenings as a very inclusive form of showing different cultures and overcoming inequalities.

Although the group has little direct experience of Urban Arts Education, apart from one who had run some community workshops, all are acquainted with urban arts in the British setting and agreed more needed to be done to combat the lack of diversity and representation in arts of marginalised communities.

### 3.2.5 Conclusions

The benefits to the participants range from personal development - improving mental health, self-resilience and self-awareness – to the creative – with workshops and hands-on experience in a non-formal education setting providing inspiration, skills development and fostering engagement with learning.

On the basis of the expert interviews and focus group some recommendations in improving different fields addressed in the project can be made. Addressing the diversity in the arts, the correspondents emphasise that the UK’s population is increasingly diverse. The experts and focus group believe arts organisations should ensure that their work draws on and reflects the full range of backgrounds and perspectives to be found in our society, as well as ensure that the leadership and workforce of arts and cultural organisations reflect the

diversity of contemporary England. Diversity of thought, experience and perspective are vital, along with inclusivity and relevance.

The correspondents feel we need to make arts provision more inclusive, and that there is a need to diversify the cultural sector – the leadership, workforce and governance of organisations, as well as the audiences and visitors influencing and experiencing the creative and cultural offer; and the artists, creatives, and producers. There is a particular need to engage participants in areas where provision is poor and engagement is low. The experts and focus group recognise the value of creative arts engagement in achieving social outcomes.

The majority of the artist experts and focus group had experienced marginalisation in their professional lives, feeling that they had not the same opportunities as British-born, white, middle-class men. This was experienced both overtly and also perceived due to perceptions that “it was not for them”. The UK’s largest arts organisations are in our most ethnically diverse regions, so there is no excuse for the current lack of representation.

They also stress that working in the arts should not be about privilege. The experts feel that the arts sector in London often excludes young creatives from minority backgrounds: insufficient grants, unpaid internships and degree requirements for entry-level positions, create an unwelcoming, and exclusionary environment. Language is a key barrier, along with class and race. Some arts are considered the domain of white, middle classes with little BME representation or engagement.

The funding needs to be easier to achieve for individual artists and better marketed to those in areas of low cultural engagement; the government and Arts Council should prioritise organisations that receive little or no provision from other arts providers but are engaged in the grassroots. The experts believe more funding needs to go into amplifying the voices of ethnically diverse artists and curators.

## 3.3 Iceland

### 3.3.1 National Framework

The Icelandic Baseline Survey on transdisciplinary and multilingual Urban Arts Education reached out both to native Icelanders and the new-Icelanders, representatives of minorities living and working in Iceland, who are often marginalised. The experts and respondents who contributed to the Icelandic Baseline Survey are an ethnically diverse group of multilingual art educators.

Greater Reykjavík, the capital region of Iceland, is the major urban centre, and due to its crucial role in the Urban Arts Education, most of the respondent of the Icelandic Baseline Survey come from this area, however, some respondents of the Online Survey live and work in other parts of the country. It is important to mention that the population of Iceland is only 350,000, so small towns and villages, even if only of a few thousand

residents, play an important role in the art scene, with local projects inspired by urban lifestyle and culture.

In recent years, Iceland, a small and isolated country at the very edge of the Arctic, went through a big change. In two decades, the number of immigrants increased to 15% of the population, meaning that, currently, every sixth resident of the island was born abroad and brought up in a foreign culture and language. The biggest minority living in Iceland are Polish, with a population of over 20 000. Although the Icelandic language is a basic element of the national identity of the Icelanders, the increased migration has necessitated a change with regard to social inclusion and providing equal access to information, education, social support, and culture. In the last two decades, Icelandic national and regional governments, followed by schools, organisations, and creative companies have been creating policies and programs embracing the new multicultural and multilingual reality.

## 3.3.2 Online Survey

### Survey Participants

42 residents of Iceland took part in an online survey. The biggest group of the respondents are native Icelanders (47%). The second group are people born in Poland (14%). Among respondents, 47% are freelancers, 29% work in the education sector, 12% are still studying, 10% work for NGOs, 10% work in the public administration sector, 10% are currently unemployed, and 7% work in business. 55% of respondents have permanent employment. 76% of respondents have a formal education degree in arts. 76% identify as artists, 17% community educators, 14% art educators, 5% social workers. 50% of respondents state that their activities are funded from the government funds, and 50% point to their own finances as a source of funding, 17% are using community funds, 17% use EU funds, 17% participation fees and 17% explain that their salary covers the cost of their teaching activities.

67% feel very supported by their community, 17% moderately and 17% slightly supported. The cultural institutions support is described as only “slightly supported” 50%, “very supported” 33% and 17% moderately. 50% don't feel supported at all by the policy and administration, 17% very supported, 17% moderately supported and 17% slightly supported.

The three biggest groups specialise in visual art 38%, performance 38% and theatre 36%. 27% specialises in storytelling, 21% in music, 17% in dance, 14% in design, 12% in literature, 10% in digital arts, 7% street arts and few in other art forms. 50% of respondents implement art activities more than 12 times per year, 17% 9-12 times per year, 17% 2-9 times per year, and 17% less than 2 times per year.

### Linguistic Characteristics

52% of respondents are native Icelandic speakers, 26% can understand it, 12% can fluently communicate, 5% describe their language skills in Icelandic as very good and 5% are non-

speakers. It is a multilingual group, linguistically connected with their environment: 83% can understand more than one language: 3 languages (41%), 3 languages (27%), 4 languages (12%). Additionally, 93% can communicate in the language of their neighbourhood.

Among the spoken language, the majority declared Icelandic 78%, other languages appearing among answers are: English 59%, Spanish 11%, Polish 11%, German 8% Danish 8%, Italian 5%, Portuguese 5% and others.

The opinions about metro language are divided: 37% of respondents don't know if there is one spoken there, 34% think there isn't and 27% believe there is. The respondents pointed at using Icelandic words when speaking English and Polish, "sprinkling English into Icelandic", the other names for this are "sletta" and "slangur".

### **Urban Marginalisation**

The main factors for local marginalisation are low language skills (75%), low income (64%), social education (58%), race and ethnicity (53%), disability (42%), age (25%), and rural background (14%). Among other answers were: gender (6%), religious belonging (3%), sexual orientation (3%), and coming from abroad (2%).

83% of the respondents believe there are opportunities to access the art education for marginalised, yet the obstacles are: not knowing about opportunities (89%), linguistic challenges (72%), financial obstacles (53%), cultural differences (33%), unattractive opportunities (28%), spatial obstacles (25%), segregation (19%), educational differences (8%), lack of internet (2%), exclusive art scene (2%).

52% believe the cultural, religious, ethnic, linguistic, socioeconomic, differences between the participants and general social inequalities became moderately less visible in the art education process and that general social inequalities became moderately less visible in the arts education process.

Among the respondents, 85% have experienced artistic collaborations that included people from the marginalised communities through joint art projects (55%), spontaneous collaboration (48%), occasional workshops (41%), providing education (38%), voluntary association (34%), community centre (28%). The particular goals for the collaborations are: increased social inclusion (85%), entertainment (54%), gaining more competencies (31%), self-promotion (21%), increased possibility of funding (4%). 69% of the answerers think that their collaboration has supported participants from communities with fewer opportunities on their path to social inclusion.

The respondents encountered obstacles such as: lack of funds 54%, lack of participants' time 33%, communication issues 25%, lack of participants' interest 21%, different expectations 17%. Among other answers was a lack of infrastructure.

93% are satisfied with the participants' interest. Among reasons for non-participation were: teacher being an outsider to the marginalised community, lack of time and lack of interest.

## Success Factors and Challenges for Urban Arts Education

The main factors for social inclusion are: sufficient funds (71%), clear communication (62%), enthusiastic organisers (62%), promotion of urban art opportunities (59%), word of mouth (53%), social community work (47%), specific targeting (41%), referrals from other professionals (24%), attractive media offer (9%). Among others (18%) respondents pointed at: information available in different languages, willingness to build a better community for all, constructive collaboration celebrating diversity, learning opportunities for future facilitators, platform gathering interested artists from different groups, strong promotion, free access.

According to the answers, the inclusion of marginalised people could be increased by increased project financing (71%), better event marketing (62%), bonuses such as childcare (50%), financial stimuluses for participants (50%), and other means.

Among respondents, 56% believe that COVID-19 changed the access to art education. 41% don't know and 3% don't think so. Among the reasons and changes, respondents pointed at the restrictions causing isolation and making the financial situation of the most vulnerable more difficult.

About the importance of communication, the majority 35% thinks it's very important, quite important (26%), a bit (15%). 10% think it is not important and 10% don't know.

74% perceive language to be a barrier to wider participation of people from marginalised communities to community arts education. Among the issues are: fear of not being understood (64%), participant insecurities (59%), troubles with basic communication (55%), feeling of being not addressed (50%) and issues with event marketing (45%). 74% believe that artistic endeavours make communication easier. *Art doesn't always need words; Art is another form of communication; You can use another communal language of making.*

Among other ways of communication that can be helpful are: artistic expression 93%, gestures 79%, facial expression 76%, and other (14%) mention: touch, eye contact, written communication in different languages, improvisation with and without words, kindness. Among the suggestions to more inclusive linguistic practices in the field of Urban Arts Education were: education of teachers, direct funding, cultural policies, more collective action, fewer words, and multilingual educators. Also, creating theatrical performances celebrating multiple cultures and languages and increased funding for translators.

In addition to that, the participants pointed out the need for better recognition of the needs of a particular group we want to address, sustainable funding, and allowing people to express themselves.

There should be more opportunities for people to learn Icelandic, free or minimal cost of language learning, increasing the number of inclusive artistic projects with elements of local and other languages, more funding and better marketing.

The educators should consider the vulnerability of the participants, learn and teach different ways of communication using different languages and could hold introductions in different languages

### 3.3.3 Expert Interviews

**Interview 1** took place online with an American-born, female artist living in a small town Northwest of Reykjavík. She speaks English, Dutch, Icelandic, German, and Italian. She is a self-employed artist and art teacher, specialising in visual art. She owns an art studio where she teaches workshops that expand imagination. Her specialty is organising spaces where individuals and groups can connect with their own creative source, by limiting or reducing inhibitions and opening to art. Her students are a wide range of individuals from people who *“lost touch with their creativity”*. A few examples of her workshop offer are blind painting with sounds and movement, explorative drawing sessions, and action painting. *“Create a space, a tactile, sensory environment that enables people to really connect in a very profound way with their artistic selves. Environment is everything. It’s not that I want to teach them a method, but a method of connecting.”*

She has been a member of a few support groups for creatives, but she finds them not sustainable enough. She has used the services of a small private company offering consulting, project management support and services in the field of education and culture. Through the years, she received numerous regional grants and was hired by the local government to work in numerous art and education projects. She believes that the biggest support for her community would be a community centre, a public space where she could reach larger groups. *“Not everyone feels comfortable visiting a private residency. An established community centre where everyone can gather, can bring their skills and talents and create together ...”* She strongly feels that it is much harder to reach the “foreign” participants, and during years of her work her studio was visited by mostly native Icelanders.

She points also at the rigidity of the education system, *“As soon as you become an adult, there is no time for fun, joy or bliss. It’s all about hard work.”* The formal adult education is focusing on practical studies and creates a perception of art as unnecessary and impractical. *“Including art in higher education programs is a message that art is an important part of human development.”*

During individual lessons, she speaks Icelandic, but her experience taught her that she is better received when speaking in English with Icelandic adult groups. She finds it easy to switch between the languages. In her community, people mostly speak Icelandic, but she hears German, Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Italian with English, connecting all nationalities. She finds that the language issue can be very limiting for members of her community, especially Poles and Italians, who often need to choose between learning Icelandic or English.

COVID impacted her work. The restrictions made it impossible for her to run her company and offer classes face to face.

**Interview 2** took place online with an Icelandic female artist and art teacher living in

Reykjavík. She speaks Icelandic, English, and Scandinavian.<sup>1</sup> She holds a bachelor degree in Fine Arts and master's degree in Art Teaching. She works at the Icelandic Art Academy. She is the head of the department of a one-year art programme at the Reykjavík Visual Art School, a teacher at an adult education centre for people with disabilities, a school that hires all kinds of specialists who support teachers in creating the most favourable conditions for students with special education needs. Most of the courses are accessible to people across a broad spectrum and different levels of ability, perception and experience. Most courses can be adapted to any attendant, regardless of abilities. She also teaches at an art studio where people can come and work independently with professional artists and teachers on their own premises. At the Icelandic Art Academy, she teaches a course about inclusion in the classroom. *"It's important to acknowledge that accessibility to mainstream courses in art is not general. A lot of us, or some, are neurodiverse."*

In her opinion, progress in education is marked by inclusion of different marginalised groups: women, people of different ethnicities and finally, people with disabilities. *"Those marginalised, like everyone else, have so much to give and so much to share, so they are so valuable. To acknowledge this, to work with this and set a goal. To send a message to everyone: 'You are welcome. We want you here.' Sometimes we have a perspective that the student has a problem, but the problem is in how the educational system, school establishments, and courses are designed. In order to be inclusive, whether it be courses or anything else, you can reach out for help to all kind of experts, because maybe you just need to change one little thing, and then you open up the whole course for that one person. But the main thing is that it is your goal to be inclusive."* *"The biggest challenge is always the system, because it's designed for people within the normal curve, which is only around 60% of our population. If you like to reach the margins, you always need to do something extra."* In her opinion, inclusion and accessibility should be part of the programme for teachers, where they can get tools and look at their own practice, get in experts on the subjects if needed.

One of the biggest challenges, in her perspective, is the limited financial support for arts in general. *"I think marginalisation is a big problem in Iceland, and the art scene belongs to a small group of people. That's a problem! I'm vocal, I have the language, I have my network. I'm so privileged. A lot of people don't have those opportunities. Yet, the whole system is built around people like me. We have to take some responsibility and make that system inclusive."*

**Interview 3** was conducted with an Icelandic male dance and music teacher living in Reykjavík. He speaks English, Icelandic, and a little Danish. He is a musician with a higher education, working as a pianist, piano teacher and vocal coach in the Reykjavík Academy of Vocal Arts. He runs a swing dance school. He teaches adults in dance classes, choir singing, music history, singing and piano. Among his dance students, there are twenty to forty-year-olds, both Icelandic and foreign-born residents and exchange students. Some of his students are on the spectrum. In music education, the age of his students is varied, from

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<sup>1</sup> Scandinavian is a common Icelandic term used to describe a mixture of Danish, Norwegian and Swedish.

young adults to elderly, mostly retired men in their seventies. Among the music students, all are Icelandic and some have dyslexia. The most important aspect of teaching for the interviewee is to connect with the students to investigate and understand their aspirations. The most challenging part of dance teaching is to help students understand that the body works slower than their minds. The teacher helps them embrace the process, keep their goals realistic and their motivation up.

In his experience, the marginalisation, outside cultural background and language skills, is influenced by the economic situation. He uses the music school facilities for his private music classes to reduce any additional cost. When organising dance workshops, the most challenging are the funds and organising the venue. One needs to sell the idea to institutions and venues, to be able to pay for the studio, teachers and organisers.

He often mixes Icelandic with English. "Sletta" is common in Iceland, especially when using professional terms, references to popular culture, and quoting. When teaching music to foreign students, he sometimes mixes Icelandic with English to make it easier for students. They want to speak Icelandic, but sometimes it is easier for the student to understand his instructions in English. It is important to promote art activities in languages that are being used in the local community. The more languages, the better. Another idea would be to provide special programs for groups to include more people: elderly, disabled. Grants and stimuli from the government would be very useful.

During COVID, the dancing classes were cancelled, and the music classes were a bit stressful and confusing when trying to keep all the sanitary restrictions.

He feels supported by the local community, the school where he is working and by the groups he is teaching. He wished his activities would be more supported by the local government. For swing dancing it is challenging as it is a fringe dance and does not get enough recognition in comparison to mainstream dances. The interviewee feels that there is a lot of nepotism and favouritism in grant distributions and that should be minimised.

**Interview 4** took place online and it was with an Icelandic female artist and art educator living in Reykjavík. She speaks Icelandic and English, using both languages in her art practice and when teaching. She holds a master degree in performing arts and specialises in performing arts and education. She was educated in the US, and since then she has been a part of many international projects. She operates as self-employed by organising art projects and hosting workshops. During her studies, she started developing community-based workshops using physical theatre, embodiment, vocal training, and releasing creative force exercises. In her perspective, very important elements of the community project she is leading are staying together, eating together, cooking together, and learning together. Currently, she is doing a project, dedicated to experiencing being a plant and training how to be a plant. It exercises adults to become something else than they are, expands their physicality and imagination, offers the know-how of making the impossible possible, unlearning, and undoing adulthood. In another of her projects, she has been bringing art workshops to a prison, where she has a small group of male inmates with

whom she explores different art practices: performing, writing, voice work, in order to open up to something they might have not experienced before.

Both in her art practice and in her teaching, she is driven by the idea of holding a space for others. Her projects are an investigation on how the group leads itself. *“I’m a space-holder, who suggests and teaches a few things, but I usually work with the energy in the room and see where the group goes together. I love to explore the element of surprise when the students surprise themselves. Being a teacher, it’s not so much about taking up space, it’s about giving space. This is where the transformation happens.”* She invites her students to work in rural areas to connect with nature. It has a soothing and nurturing impact on people.

She finds the time pressure the most challenging part of her work. Her practice is more process oriented. Marketing, advertisement, getting people can be also problematic in her work. More funding and additional grants would make the cost of participation easier. In her opinion, there is a need for a platform, a website that would hold all the information about art workshops and teachers would be very helpful. Another form of support would be space in the form of an art residency program in the countryside, where she could invite groups from urban areas to go and explore art.

**Interview 5** was with a male artist and art teacher born in Colombia, living and working in Reykjavík. He speaks Spanish, English and Icelandic while learning a few others. He works as a kindergarten teacher and as a pedagogic therapist. He specialises in performative arts and igniting creativity in others. *“Creativity doesn’t belong to the artists and those who graduate from art studies. Creativity is a need of the human soul.”* He uses theatre, film, media as a part of his teaching activities: workshops and projects. For example, in collaboration with the National Theatre, he organised theatre training for groups of immigrants, based on development of performative skills and preparing a play together during weekly sessions over a couple of months.

In his opinion, the biggest challenge in the field of art education in Iceland is the institutionalism and stiffness of the system that hinders creativity and does not recognise the non-formal methods of education. *“The question is how to negotiate with decision-makers and institutions in order to open spaces for recognition of new ways or different ways of doing things.”* Another challenge is to create a safe space for people where they could find their own way to do things. *“Art is not only about aesthetic appreciation or the joy of beauty, but it’s also about liberation and freedom.”*

In his teaching practice, he implements the concept of connection modelling: *“When we talk about education or recreation, we assume that people are already connected or open to that. We have been trained to feel separation, but people, things, objects, art, nature are one. So the big question is: how can we model connections? How can we open spaces for connections? When you talk about safe space, it’s not about protection, it’s about connection. How you create a connection is more important in my perspective than education because we need to begin with what we lack. We lack real connection with people.”* To cultivate connection he recommends practicing gratitude, grieving, silence,

paying attention, active listening, good questioning, and storytelling. *“We need to tell stories in order to integrate our understanding about ourselves, but you can’t tell a story if there is no one to catch your story.”*

About his teaching practice, he says: *“You need to create a playground for learning to happen. My role as a pedagogic therapist is to create a space for a learning experience to happen, and I have to be ready enough for if it happens I have to catch it in the air and make something out of it. This is art. This is the challenge.”* He has multiple recommendations, but the most important in his perspective is not assuming the needs of the public and the audience.

In his opinion, in Iceland, the marginalised groups are minorities and immigrants, especially those who cannot handle the language and culture, as institutionalism and the system are not ready yet for assuming or integrating people.

*“It’s not only about spoken or traditional languages, a very important language when it comes to connection modelling is silence. When you use space as a language, you open space for other perceptions to appear.”*

### 3.3.4 Focus Group

The group met online, because of the COVID pandemic situation in Iceland. It consisted of a Polish writer and project manager living in Reykjavík with experience in creative writing teaching in community projects. She has been working with Polish women living in Iceland who experienced violence, prisoners, and in creative writing workshops with many groups of multicultural communities in Iceland. She initiated many projects for the international community, among them a writing collective and the Reykjavík Ensemble international theatre company. Among the participants was also a Canadian poet, editor, and interdisciplinary artist living in Reykjavík, who has over twenty years of art education experience. She has been working in collaboration with cultural public institutions and independent art organisations offering writing, vocal and contact improvisation workshops. She has a great number of international collaboration projects on her account. The third participant was a PhD student of education, a composer, musician and music teacher. Born in Poland, but living in Reykjavík. He has been teaching for more than 20 years. Outside of university work, his main occupation is community art projects. He leads intergenerational sessions of live music workshops based on listening and improvisation, workshops for teachers and family music classes for parents and children, both in Icelandic and in Polish. He has also an international experience of teaching adults, teachers, professional artists through projects organised by various community centres, organisations, and institutions. He also worked with therapists in a variety of projects where music improvisation was offered as a supporting practice for physical and mental well-being. The fourth participant was a Brazilian-Italian poet, translator and scholar living in Reykjavík. She specialises in teaching creative writing and translating poetry. She has been teaching in university programs in various courses related to poetry, literature and translation. She has been working also as an actress. In her art practice, she has been exploring the subjects of identity and multilingualism. The last participant was a multidisciplinary Icelandic artist

with a background in visual anthropology. She has been teaching at the University of Iceland and Icelandic Art Academy. Her artistic practice includes installations, sculptures, photos and films, in which she critically explores the human desire for uniformity and absolute truths and their inherent failure. She is also a documentary filmmaker. In the last years, she was involved in an international collaboration project with Poland which included the participation of blind adults.

The participants detected different successful strategies in art education, they mentioned community projects in prisons, where creative writing was presented as a form of entertainment, spending time together and socialising; workshops and programs designed to include people living at distance, in areas far away from cultural centres; family sessions for immigrant parents with children under pre-school age; workshops intended to help overcome language barriers and socialise etc.

Among the crucial methods the participants mentioned was: the role of the leader who should strive to blend with the group and share on equal terms, which might include excluding the teacher in case he/she stands in a way of the group's development and creating a safe space; the group of students should be consulted about the time needed to finalise a task, for the students to feel included in shaping the form of the workshop; occasionally the relationship between the teacher and the students does not work and that is normal; and there should be an inclination towards including examples from different parts of the world.

Thoughts on art education were formulated along three pillars: it is not about the results, but about the process; a teacher sometimes only joins an already existing and well-functioning community, where art is a tool to improve relationships in the group, and lastly the most important outcomes of art education are visible outside the class and are not easily measurable, especially on an emotional and existential level.

Urban Arts Education, however, also poses many challenges. As teaching is commonly a self-taught job on the side of one's artistic practice, the independent art teachers could use more support from educational opportunities to grow, be part of a teachers' group or network. They assume that art teachers are isolated from the teaching community because their work is perceived as less important than other disciplines. Their involvement could also help when the teacher becomes almost a social worker or therapist, but very often has no education for that and no support in their practice. Working as an independent art educator is also precarious financially. In connection to this, the participants mentioned that most of the projects are short-term because of the financing, and hence never fully beneficial for the students.

The recommendations the participants put forth suggest that there should be a support structure where independent art teachers could receive support. A community space that art teachers can share and use, and an online platform for promotion and marketing would also be beneficial. When designing the community art projects, it should not be 'for' but 'with' communities.

There is general cultural funding on local level, but no specific art education funding for independent teachers, which the participants would appreciate. Also, financial support should be offered not only for the actual teaching, but also for inventing and designing art education activities. The funding should also be more of a stable nature, not only short term. When formally assessing the funding for the project, the reviewers ought to keep in mind that community art projects usually start small and at a first glance might not look attractive.

### 3.3.5 Conclusions

Although, in Iceland the arts are included in the school programmes for children and young people, art education of adults is regarded as inessential and impractical, and often omitted by the higher education system. All this creates a situation in which Urban Arts Education is an under-financed field. Teachers specialising in Urban Arts Education are often self-employed, independent educators and artists who rely on grants or participation fees. They do not receive enough financial, organisational, physical (space), psychological support when working with vulnerable members of our society.

There are multiple reasons why people are marginalised in Iceland. However, these factors are most often interrelated. All experts see the need for intergenerational education and activities offered to the oldest members of our society, who are often isolated. Among the marginalised, prisoners and former inmates, seem to be an overlooked group both by educators and the system with no cultural offer and art education opportunities.

The most successful practices of Urban Arts Education relate to creating a safe space, based on the idea of connection, free and playful creation, with focus on the process instead of the results, where the most important role of the educators is to hold the space and allow the participants to reach to their own creative source.

Multilingualism, accessibility and intergenerational approach are the recommendations for inclusive art education in Iceland, and they should be supported through increased funding, building social awareness, and creating support structures for urban art educators.

## 3.4 Slovenia

### 3.4.1 National Framework

Slovenia's capital Ljubljana is the country's biggest urban centre with a dynamic cultural scene. It comes therefore as no surprise that a bit over half of the online survey respondents, interviewees, and focus group participants live in Ljubljana. Despite a rather small number of towns one could undoubtedly define as urban and infused with Urban Arts Education, we strove to invite respondents from all over Slovenia, who, however, still

often times talked about their experiences with Ljubljana or about the collaboration with artists from Ljubljana.

We also strove to invite a heterogeneous group of respondents, which was oftentimes not easy because of the small population of the country but also because it is in comparison to Iceland and Austria, or at least the city of Vienna, more homogeneous in terms of religion, language, and ethnicity. Even more, those working in the field of urban arts normally belong to the upper social strata, which is another reason behind the respondents' non-migrant roots.

## 3.4.2 Online Survey

### Survey Participants

There were 38 valid responses to the online survey, majority of which were participants aged under 40 (56%), with the age group between 30 and 40 years old leading in responses with 37%. majority of the participants (circa 53%) come from Ljubljana. About 16% have stated Škofja Loka and Nova Gorica as their city of residence (8% each), followed by Domžale with about 5%. Only 8% were not born in Slovenia. 5% were born in Croatia and 3% in an unspecified ex-Yugoslav country.

The vast majority of participants (38%) work in NGOs, followed by freelancers with 19%. The answer "other" takes the third place and it consists of the answers of the employees of the publicly funded institutions, such as museums or youth centres. 38% of the participants are not permanently employed. The majority pointed out their activity was funded with public funds (64% government funds, 36% community funds and 27% EU funds). 27% (sometimes) charge participation fees and 18% (sometimes) fund their activities with their own money. Participants feel moderately supported by their local communities, cultural institutions and policy and administration. Only 32% of the answers point at a formal education in arts.

Most of the participants work in education. 30% are artists, which shares the percentage with art educators but does not necessarily overlap. Majority work in visual arts (38%), theatre (30%), music (27%) and dance (27%), followed by performance (24%) and street arts (24%). 82% implement art education activities more than 12 times a year.

### Linguistic Characteristics

Almost all of the respondents (92%) indicated Slovenian as their first language and extraordinary linguistic competences: only two answers point at only comprehending one language, the vast majority (69%) comprehends 3 or more languages (besides Slovenian mostly English, German, Italian, Spanish or the languages of ex Yugoslavian nations), while 3% cannot communicate in the language(s) of their surroundings, but there are no further reasons why is that so.

61% point out that some kind of metrolanguage exists and only 17% stated that there is no metrolanguage in their city. Most of the answers (58%) don't suggest the name for their

city's metrolanguage. 8% hinted at the ex-Yugoslavian languages, 3% at the capital Ljubljana and 3% at the official ethnic minorities living next to the border.

### Urban Marginalisation

Low income (81%) and social exclusion (75%) were suggested as the strongest factors of marginalisation in Slovenia, yet 91% answered that there are opportunities for the marginalised to access community arts in their city. Not knowing about the opportunities (81%) leads as the main barrier for the people with fewer opportunities, followed by social (47%) and financial (44%) obstacles. One participant pointed out that marginalised people do not participate in creation of the programs, hence they also do not attend.

The participants highlighted the inclusive nature of their workshops, education and personal development of participants. *"Greater visibility of marginalised groups"* or *"connects, includes vulnerable groups, enables artistic expression for financially weak"* is what some respondents stated. Participants generally expressed the opinion that the cultural, religious, ethnic, linguistic and socioeconomic differences between the participants became less visible in the art education process – 10% answered with "Extremely", 61% with "Very" and "26% with "Moderately". Majority of the participants also suggested the reduction of visibility of general social inequalities in the art education process. One of them commented: *"it seems to me that because participants focus more on their own work/education/creation rather than on social inequalities,"* while another one put forth their argumentation for it: *"Partly because the artistic language is universal, but they do not disappear."* Almost all of the answers also suggested the cohesive nature, though one participant expressed the opinion that inequalities become even more visible.

### Success Factors and Challenges for Urban Arts Education

Social community work (74%), clear communication (71%), enthusiastic organisers (71%) and sufficient funds (68%) have been suggested as the main success factors for social inclusion through Urban Arts Education. "Promotion of urban art opportunities" took the fifth place of importance and has been chosen as a success factor by 45% of participants. In regard to that, it is interesting that "Not being informed" leads with 81% as the main barrier for the people with fewer opportunities in one of the previous questions. "Better event marketing" (60%) shares the top answer with "increased project financing" (60%) as a solution for increasing the inclusion of people with fewer opportunities in Urban Arts Education.

Only 6% of participants answered that the COVID-19 pandemic did not change the access to urban arts, while 66% pointed out the opposite, saying *"urban arts were also in isolation."*

Majority (84%) of the participants have experience with artistic collaborations that include people from the marginalised communities. Most of them gained their experience through various workshops (85%), but also through providing education and participating in voluntary associations (48% respectively), joint art projects and spontaneous collaborations (44% respectively), and working in the community centres (37%). Increased social inclusion was the main goal of those collaborations (85%), followed by

entertainment, and seeking to gain more competences (48% respectively). Only 4% of the participants in the survey believe their collaboration did not provide any support for the marginalised participants, while 78% expressed the opposite.

Among the obstacles, the respondents kept mentioning the lack of funds 58%, followed by the communication issues and lack of participants' time, 35% respectively. Importantly, 100% of the participants expressed satisfaction with the participants' interest.

Participants in the survey acknowledged the importance of language with "quite" (47%) and very (37%) leading as the chosen answers. Also, the majority (48%) suggested language as a possible barrier, while 32% did not share the opinion. Participants' insecurities/restraint (86%), fear of not being understood (79%) and feeling of not being addressed (71%) have been chosen as top three answers about the potential problems in communication. At the same time 87% believes that artistic endeavours make communication easier. *"In artistic creation we can rapidly forget about the daily problems and escape into a world where we feel creative, in short what is important for the growth and development of their own spirit."*

All the provided answers for the ways of communication that the participants find helpful have been chosen as a possible solution by >80% of participants, with "facial expressions" leading with 90%. Participants also suggested some inclusive linguistic practices in the field of Urban Arts Education, including cultural mediation, sign language, inclusion of a member of a focus group as a performer, art workshops, connecting with language courses, etc.

### 3.4.3 Expert Interviews

**Interview 1** was - as all of our other interviews - conducted face-to-face. It was with a theatre producer, university teacher, and an occasional artistic workshops leader from Nova Gorica. Her experiences are with the disabled, blind, elderly, and children. She conducts workshops on a project basis. Such collaborations are challenging, she mentions that her "hosts" often do not prepare her to work with people with special needs and that she has to educate herself before the workshop and think about appropriate approaches for each group. She defines herself as working in the field of visual arts, but she is also involved in puppetry and fine arts. Besides Slovenian, also speaks Italian and English, studied scenography in Venice, and also has a degree in pedagogy and andragogy.

She is disturbed by the segregation of society, lack of cooperation and separation of the programmes for e.g. people with special needs, the elderly, and children, not for all kinds of people together. It bothers her that there is no integration or merging of society.

She has not yet worked with groups with whom she would encounter a language barrier, but she finds it important that the way of verbal communication is adapted to the group of people she works with. She sees fine art or artistic expression in general as a completely different type of communication where other elements are at the forefront, e.g. shapes,

colours, composition. In fine arts, she sees a deeper type of communication, one based on an emotional basis, but at the same time global and understandable to all.

In her opinion, (urban) art in Slovenia is accessible to vulnerable groups, but this is not an inclusive society; foreigners often do not benefit from these offers. She sees the biggest barrier to urban arts in Nova Gorica for people with reduced mobility, as they cannot access certain institutions. The greatest advantage of involving vulnerable groups in artistic practices, in her opinion, is the fact that they gain more self-confidence, are heard and seen. She believes that cultural and other differences are in the artistic process largely blurred, but that some differences still exist and remain. She also believes that social inequalities are being diminished, but at the same time emphasises that fine arts in general are an expensive leisure activity that not everyone can afford.

She sees the main success of her collaboration with the disabled in making their protégés proud and satisfied with their artwork, while at the same time enabling them to be more confident by presenting their works and creations outside the institution. As the biggest obstacle or challenge she highlights the emotional responses she experiences from the participants, so she always asks that there are professionals who can take care of their basic needs. It also often happens to her that the clients do not want to participate for various reasons, but most often when they are not interested or the activities seem too difficult for them. She says that her biggest motive for working with vulnerable groups is not money. She adds that she would not be able to make a living of this type of work.

The pandemic has brought great changes, everything has moved online, which is not the same as before, as there is no human interaction, which is necessary in artistic practices. Also, some activities were completely suspended as it became a closed area to which external collaborators had no access. Now that things are relaxing, she is surprised there has not been as great a rush to art performances as they expected.

**Interview 2** was conducted with a master student of social pedagogics. She has a National Vocational Qualification as a youth worker. Since finishing high school, she has been working with youth and marginalised groups. She has been employed at an institute for six years where the focus is on hip-hop culture. The workspace of this project is located under the railway station where different people meet every day. The youth that uses the workspace comes from different backgrounds but most of them live nearby. They reach them through personal invitations on the street, flyers and on social networks. Also, *“young people have ‘adopted’ the space and are spreading the word further.”*

Besides hip-hop and workshops, the “theatre of the oppressed” is also on their “menu”. Before the epidemic they also had a migration group, in which not only immigrants participated. It was a strong community connecting people from different backgrounds addressing discrimination in the Slovenian society. Another theatre group connected artists and people with experience of being homeless.

In Ljubljana youth centres have a hard time because of the lack of accessible spaces, especially because of high prices. She works in projects that are mostly financed by the

city, the ministry of education, Erasmus+, and the local community; they do a lot of volunteer work and also obtain some donations.

Hip-hop is not so marked by a language barrier, but it has its own language. Their posts on social networks are not in standard Slovene. The name of the project itself is in street language. Their co-workers are a part of hip-hop culture – the female boss of the space is also a recognised break-dancer. They accept the users as they are, do not expect them to change and try to help them as much as possible. Some come for the sake of art, others come for the sake of the non-formal education; they try to include both in several aspects of the work.

COVID really affected their work. Before the epidemic the space was in use from eight in the morning until midnight. They “went online”, but it was not enough. They tried to return to the workspace as soon as possible but they had to respect the restrictions. This changed the dynamics as informal gathering before and after the workshops contributed significantly to the community building.

**Interview 3** was conducted with a middle-aged “creator”, as she calls herself, from Ljubljana. She is involved in various types of art, including singing in various ensembles, making decorations from waste materials, and drawing. She studied interior design and has a degree in textile design. She organises workshops, but mainly makes a living from designing interiors, arranging weddings, etc. Some of her funding comes from public tenders. She speaks English and Serbian, which helps her a lot when conducting workshops; it makes it easier for a person to open up.

According to her, people living on Ljubljana’s social margins are those city residents who are addicted to drugs, criminals, the disabled, those who do not know Slovenian. She further estimates that an individual is deprived mainly because of the environment in which he or she grew up, because of lack of support, self-confidence, but also because not everyone has the same access to information and education. Ljubljana itself offers a lot, but it depends on whether an individual can get this information at all.

She has experience working with troubled youth, individuals with brain injuries, and Muslim women. She likes to offer opportunities and keeps telling people to “*give themselves a chance*”.

When leading workshops she notices who comes from what environment by their expression. She likes to show them that despite their uncertainty they can create: “*We all know how to create, there is always time and will for that.*” She has a feeling that her work has some effect, she gets good responses. She likes to educate herself in terms of psychology, so that she can approach participants better; believing in something along the lines of, “*if you create, you help yourself.*”

Language has, according to her, never been an obstacle. She uses different languages, combining them if needed. Also, the participants do not seem to have problems with language. “*Art doesn't have a language, if you create something with your hands, it doesn't matter what language you speak. Everything is possible if you want to.*”

Sometimes she encounters urban slang, and then they explain it to her, but it does not affect her work in principle. Certainly, there are people who do not join workshops because of the language barrier. It happened to her that someone was “sitting in the corner” because of this problem, and then she paid much more attention to them.

In the context of the workshop, she notes diminishing differences between the participants. The responsibility for this rests heavily on the workshop contractor, who must give the opportunity to everyone, regardless of personal preference. Usually in the end everyone is happy, they see that it is not difficult and they want new opportunities.

Regarding success factors, she says it is crucial to accept, respect and even guide a person - if they want to. A large part of the responsibility for success lies with the leader, and she believes that a cultural and creative centre where everyone would be welcome would contribute to the inclusion. To ensure success, she would invite people online, but also physically, in the field and with posters. She also mentions the importance of connecting different associations.

The COVID crisis did have an impact on her work, but with her financial situation being stable, she felt privileged and constantly strove to remain creative.

**Interview 4** was with a male filmmaker with 15 years of experience, originally from Škofja Loka, but residing in Ljubljana. During his Cultural Studies degree he started to make documentary films. He is formally unemployed, but earns money working on projects, film workshops with different kinds of participants: youth from the social centres, prisoners, asylum seekers, etc. Often, he works with colleagues from their own cultural association; a group of friends working on film, music, theatre, and visual arts. Besides Slovenian he speaks English, German, Spanish, Croatian. He feels supported by the local community, otherwise he could not do it. He needs financing for the projects as the participants usually do not pay for them directly; some have more understanding for this than the others – Ljubljana has a good system with the neighbourhood community centres. It is hard to provide workshops as a freelancer, you need another job.

He has experience working with prisoners, the goal of their workshop was to make a feature film with added documentary footage from the interviews with prisoners. After the introduction to film theory all the creative choices were made by the prisoners themselves – they decided what to tell and how to do it. Through the process, the prisoners experienced self-reflection. *“Someone mentioned that the workshop brought them a moment when they could ‘disconnect’ from prison life; look at things from a distance and with different eyes.”* The prison has strict rules, with the workshop they changed the routine and, in a way, disrupted the order – it was liberating. He also has experiences working with refugees they shot a feature film about border crossing. *“It seems to me that direct approaches in their own way can also have a therapeutic effect.”* In his workshops, the main objective is finding something that is common to all, a problem that is reason enough for the people to connect and share their views. *“I find it important to give the opportunity to speak out to those who would not otherwise have the chance to say it.”* The differences between the participants become less visible during the workshops.

He has never had a problem because of language, personally. *“I had the experience when I came to places in this world where I didn’t know a single word but I still managed to communicate with people.”* On the other hand, he knows others may not participate due to not understanding the language, and he sees problems in how organisers invite people who speak a different language to a project. Once there, it can be solved in different ways - the project can be adapted to the knowledge of the language, it is not necessary to work with words; it can be visual, situational as in a theatre. They communicated well with asylum seekers, also in English.

The COVID situation did affect his work; he did not hold workshops during lockdowns. *“My medium is socialising. If socialising is limited, such things are hard to do. It requires some intimacy, some contact.”*

**Interview 5** was conducted with a middle-aged anthropologist and artist working in Ljubljana. The art form she feels closest to is photography, which she also studied and, in this way, encountered participatory practices, community engagement, and art in general. She speaks Italian and English, as well as Serbo-Croatian, French, Spanish and Romanian. She is also a person with a disability. She works on various research and application projects, conducts workshops, and teaches the elderly and in museums.

In terms of working with the marginalised communities, she worked with the elderly, Roma people, and deaf individuals. In museums, she worked on the inclusion of members of vulnerable groups in the work process; involving them in the preparation of the exhibition and gathering their own interpretation of their past. She worked with a deaf student who became a deaf guide and co-author of the exhibition. This possibility of participation facilitated his position on the workforce market. They are not just vulnerable, *“we always invite them, ‘Come help, it’s good for you!’, then they do everything for free. It’s like calling an expert, a scientist, and saying ‘Although you’re doing it for free, it’s good for you’... I mean, absurd, totally”*.

Such practices, she said, connect the community. Her purpose is in providing content: *“You’re trying to offer another experience that they wouldn’t have in their own environment because they have completely different worries, they’re concerned with how they’re going to survive from day to day.”* Even more, *“art is a language that opens many doors with its symbolic language, it is a different view it offers. It also offers a reflection of your own life, where do you stand, it has therapeutic effects.”*

She also wondered if art changed anything. Last year, she had interviews with various artists, creators, and workshop organisers. They concluded that art in itself does not change anything if there is no political change, no social struggle. *“Art is a language, it is a path, it is one door that opens and enables political activation.”* Sometimes, with such workshops, social strength of the deprived group is established. The story of the vulnerable was interpreted in the space of a public institution, which is extremely strong.

Language does not pose a major obstacle to her work. She worked with a deaf person with no problems. It would probably be different with Roma, if she knew the Romani language. It would be much easier for the deaf if they could be more easily informed and

communicated with. Many fear social stigma. *“If you come somewhere and you don't understand anything, you're miserable.”* The problem is also on the side of the society that is poorly informed about communicating with, for example, the deaf. It would be difficult for her to talk about a metro language. The language is, of course, different everywhere, there are mixes, but not so intense.

In general, she assesses the interest of the deprived population in art as weak, as they have other concerns. They follow things in the local environment, on television, and music. In her opinion much of the art and dedicated spaces are meant for the elite. She thinks the underprivileged should be included more, as active members.

Discussing the success factors for urban arts education, she believes the workshop leader has to master what he is doing; there are a lot of workshops, so there has to be quality as well, you have to *“know your audience”*, The audacity to dare to experiment a bit is also important. People should not be underestimated; it is important not to enter into a relationship with some kind of piety, but as an equal who, however, has some knowledge to share with them.

### 3.4.4 Focus Group

The focus group was conducted via Zoom. There were 5 participants all working within non-governmental cultural organisations. Two are youth workers at a hip-hop centre in Ljubljana that offers support in developing personal potentials and project ideas, a space for spending unstructured free time, and provides space for various activities. One of the two is also a master's student of painting and a mentor of street art and hip-hop culture drawing workshops. The third participant comes from Škofja Loka and has rich experience volunteering in an asylum home and project work with Albanian-speaking immigrants, now she works with immigrants from the former Yugoslavia. In their NGO, they use embroidery and knitting in order to bring marginalised women together. In the last project, they made embroidered graffiti in different languages and hung them in the city. The fourth participant comes from an NGO working with pensioners, immigrants from the former Yugoslavia, and in recent years, with people with international protection, political refugees (from Turkey, Syria, Iraq, African countries ...). They started as a textile artist, working with immigrant women mainly with textiles, but also with other media in the fine arts, occasionally inviting actors and directors and thus developing skills in the field of video content, drama, and gaining performative and movement experience. They were previously located in Jesenice, the last two years in Ljubljana.

The individuals working with marginalised women emphasised the need to reach these groups, as they are determined by the norms of the cultures they come from, so they often stay at home, do not learn the dominant language, and find it difficult to integrate into the environment. As a result, it is also more difficult to get them to join. Motivations for inclusion are different. Some are attracted by a Slovene language course, conversations, some by artistic creation. They invite women through educational institutions in which their children are involved, they also connect with various organisations, associations that help them access the deprived, and in some cases they are referred to them by the

Employment Service and the Centre for Social Work. Young people are approached differently, by good experiences that spread by word of mouth, through social networks, workshops, festivals, street work, and when the general public is introduced to youth centres.

All interlocutors emphasise that the goal of their work is integration and not art products; creation is just a path to social and cultural integration. Some (immigrant women) are not interested in artistic creation, so in their workshops they also offer, for example, conversation, language learning, and through this attract them to artistic activities. Some are willing to do anything due to loneliness. Participants in the focus group emphasise that their programs primarily offer a safe meeting space to a group of like-minded people. In some cases, through time, a permanent community of people is created, these workshops become a meeting place and a way of spending free time. For some, the goal is also to activate participants to work in the community and take responsibility for reaching other marginalised women, i.e. training new "staff".

The participants encounter language issues when working with female immigrants and refugees, while none have problems understanding the languages of the former Yugoslavia. When necessary or possible, they communicate in English, and for other languages they sometimes provide translation assistance through project calls (it is not easy to get it for all languages, like Farsi). They try to create groups of participants with a maximum of two languages, as otherwise communication would be chaotic. The use and change of slang is noticeable among young people, and no one has any problems understanding Slovene. In general, language integration is most problematic for women, as they are less involved in the living environment. Even if they get a job, they often work where they do not have to communicate in Slovenian.

The interlocutors emphasised that the results of their work are qualitative and therefore difficult to measure, and that the indicators required by the project bureaucracy are non-vital. It is important for them that each individual they attract, integrates, opens up emotionally or makes friends with each other or with mentors outside the programs. The main problems they encounter at work are: poor financial support, the need for material support, the need for resources for supervision, translation assistance, psychotherapy for users (as there are difficult, intimate stories in the field of the deprived). Project work also does not support long-term activities, at the same time thematically oriented programs and tenders sometimes direct them to topics that are not close to them.

Official policy and state institutions are also problematic in the field of migration, immigration and integration; they feel that they support a poor political system, as they care about what the state should take care of, while also having bureaucratic hurdles that erode the time spent working on content. The funding regulators are bureaucrats and not experts in the field of content they address.

## 3.4.5 Conclusions

Despite Slovenia's size, we found a sufficient number of diverse participants in the online survey, interviews, and the focus group, which proves the field of urban arts in Slovenia to be active and heterogeneous. The forms of arts were a bit more traditional, as storytelling and gaming are far away from competing with visual arts. Marginalisation factors are, as everywhere, numerous, but our respondents believe economic difficulties are the most influential. In their work, which takes place especially within various NGOs and community centres, art educators attempt to address particular groups of deprived individuals, perhaps less commonly refugees and immigrants in general, as there is a disproportionate number of them in Slovenian urban centres.

The offer in the field of urban arts is, all in all, rich, an array of high-quality activities is offered free of charge, but the art educators complain that the issues arise in attracting deprived individuals. More precisely, it is not their lack of interest or satisfaction with the contents provided, but the initial communication in terms of inviting them, letting them know of the existing possibilities, and making them feel welcome even before their arrival. Language is rarely in issue, partially because of the educators' good linguistic skills and partially because, as in all other countries, the educators believe art is a language in itself. The respondents are proud of what they do. They wish for more stable funding, but in general feel supported and believe in the good that they do. They see their work has many effects, usually not immediate, but they are certain they contribute to a more empathic, tolerant, and integrated society.

## 3.5 Portugal

### 3.5.1 National Framework

The number of artistic interventions in the urban spaces in Portugal has increased in recent years due to economic development, increased social sensitivity and the need to stimulate and restore urban spaces that are often derelict. In fact, urban art has been promoting the social and economic revitalisation of Lisbon's most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, mainly through the creation of tourist guides and itineraries of urban art pieces created by the community that lives in those neighbourhoods, giving them a sense of empowerment and community identity. However, there is a clear lack of democratisation of access to Urban Arts Education in Portugal.

Almost half of all respondents participating in the Portuguese national survey are younger than 30 and geographically spread throughout the country, yet with the highest number of respondents from Lisbon and Porto. The vast majority, about 90% of our participants are individuals with Portuguese origins, we can thus provide only a small insight into experiences of migrants. The Portuguese sample is specific also in terms of the art field urban educators are active in, as many among them denote themselves as street artists.

## 3.5.2 Online Survey

### Survey Participants

A total of 45 respondents from Portugal participated in the online survey, in which 21 live in the metropolitan area of Lisbon, 17 in Porto District, 4 in Braga, and a few in other cities. From this sample, it is possible to note that 98% of the respondents live in strong urbanised cities along the Portuguese Coastline. From this sample, three respondents stated that they were born in foreign countries, Brazil and Angola.

Regarding employment and current professional areas, ten respondents stated that they work in the education sector, followed by nine working in NGOs, six still students, four freelance professionals, three working in the public sector and three currently unemployed. In terms of professional backgrounds, eight respondents are community educators, six art educators, six artists and six are social workers. The 'other' fields included volunteers, students, and a content manager. When asked about academic qualifications, nineteen respondents mentioned having a formal degree in the field of arts.

In terms of the artistic field, five respondents work in the field of visual arts, four in digital arts, in dance, theatre, and storytelling respectively, and one in gaming, music, performance, and architecture respectively. One respondent referred to plastic arts.

### Linguistic Characteristics

All respondents from Portugal mentioned that Portuguese was their mother tongue, and 90% of the respondents stated that they understand and speak more than one language, namely English and Spanish. In terms of metro-languages used in the city/region where the respondents live/work, two participants from Lisbon mentioned a strong influence of words and expressions commonly used in the Portuguese-speaking African Countries (PALOP), namely Angola, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique, and São Tomé e Príncipe.<sup>2</sup>

### Urban Marginalisation

When asked about the main factors of marginalisation in their cities, 96% of the respondents referred that low income and low education contribute directly for the marginalisation circumstances of their surrounding communities, followed by social exclusion, religious belonging, race/ethnicity, weak linguistic skills, sexual orientation, rural background, disabilities, gender, and age. It is possible to note that the linguistic background in the urban areas of Portugal is not the main challenge and/or consequence of community marginalisation.

In terms of opportunities for people with fewer opportunities to access community arts in their cities, 26 reported that there is no access to community opportunities for artistic

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<sup>2</sup> According to the latest statistics, 81.389 people from PALOP countries were living in Portugal in 2018, in which 52.273 were living in Lisbon (Gabinete de Estratégia e Estudos, 2020).

activities, and 15 mentioned that there are opportunities for the communities to join in such activities. In terms of main barriers for the access to community arts, 31 respondents stated that the main reason is that people are unaware of these opportunities, followed by financial obstacles, segregation, cultural differences, unattractive opportunities, educational differences, linguistic challenges, and spatial obstacles.

### Success Factors and Challenges for Urban Arts Education

Regarding the main success factors for social inclusion through Urban Arts Education, 36 participants stated that the promotion of urban art opportunities is crucial, followed by having access to sufficient funds, social and community work, enthusiastic organisers, clear communication, attractive mediation offer, word of mouth and specific targeting. The inclusion of people with fewer opportunities in Urban Arts Education should be increased through project financing (25), better event marketing (17), bonuses such as childcare (14) and financial stimulation for participants (12).

25 participants agreed that COVID-19 has influenced access to urban arts, 15 respondents stated that they are not aware of the situation, and 2 claimed not to be aware of the impact of COVID-19. The participants from Portugal stated that *“existing funding for urban arts decreased due to COVID-19. In addition, physical distancing measures have not helped either”* or *“the restrictions of contact with people, the fear, the discouragement of face-to-face events”* were the ultimate consequence of COVID-19 in every art sector. However, one participant stated that COVID-19 also brought opportunities for urban arts, referring that *“The pandemic affected urban arts both negatively and positively. On the one hand, it has limited the creation of urban art. On the other hand, it has made urban arts more accessible online.”*

## 3.5.3 Expert Interviews

**Interview 1** was conducted with a community theatre director in the north of Portugal. His theatre company is non-profit and only works with funding mechanisms and donations from other organisations and entities. The non-formal artistic practices of the organisation include theatrical processes, which can take various forms: from performances in shows/events to presentations on the methodology of intervention that they use (e.g. socio-educational approach to theatre).

He mentioned that theatre has progressively emerged as a strong support in the integration of multicultural groups in society, which has promoted a contemporary wave of studies that analyse the impact of this art form in the context of social integration of communities at risk of social exclusion. In fact, he mentioned that theatre is a great tool to help migrants learn about the socio-cultural communication symbols of the host country.

Furthermore, our participant mentioned that by assuming that the theatrical language is the human language used by individuals in their daily lives, everyone can develop it and perform theatre, broadening their possibilities of expression. By recovering the means of theatrical production for the people and its access to disadvantaged sections of society, it is possible to analyse other ways of repressive situations, by giving value to the creative

potential of people, particularly the oppressed (or marginalised). With his intervention and theatre, he aims to create social awareness and give the means and tools for these disadvantaged communities to transform their reality, to empower these communities in the defence of their rights and encourage their civic participation.

**Interview 2** was conducted with a freelance photographer that delivers participatory photography workshops for educators, social workers and professionals of the social and human sciences field that directly work with communities at risk of social exclusion. The interview delved into participatory photography as a mechanism for social inclusion of migrants and refugees that live in the metropolitan areas of Lisbon.

He mentioned that traditionally, the social realities of problematic contexts are captured by professionals such as documentarians, journalists, and photographers. However participatory practice has become an important subdivision of Participatory Action Research, since it gives the opportunity to benefit social groups, especially those outside the discussion and with the formulation of the policies that directly affect them. In this context, this methodology is a strategic instrument because it gives migrants and refugees the opportunity to share their visual representations of their life story with their host community.

It is important to note that during his workshops, he delves deeper into the concept, characteristics, and types of application of Photovoice in a wide range of environments. If the goal is to promote the social inclusion of communities at risk of social exclusion, the target-groups collect images of their daily reality, reflect on it, and then show them to the community. He mentioned that Photovoice has been a quite useful alternative for the social integration of not only migrants and refugees in their host communities in Portugal, but also the integration of ethnic minorities (e.g. the Roma) and homeless communities.

**Interview 3** was conducted with a DJ that lives in Porto, Portugal. During the interview we discussed the importance of urban arts (mainly hip-hop culture) in the marginalised neighbourhoods of Portugal. He mentioned that the creation of musical rhythms through the manipulation of records is one of the oldest components of hip-hop culture. However, in Porto, hip-hop culture only began to have more impact from the 1990s onwards. In Porto, graffiti makers, break-dancers, MCs, and DJs used to gather in a bar in the city centre to socialise and share ideas. It was in these most deprived neighbourhoods of Porto that several crews were born, composed of artists skilled in different arts.

During the interview, we also talked about the barriers of urban arts and the still existing stereotype of urban arts as vandalism. He believes a change of mentality and the acceptance of urban arts in all its spheres as a tool for participation and social inclusion should be valued. In the future, he wants Urban Arts Education to be democratised all over the country - and not only in Lisbon, where democratisation of all kinds of art is more accepted. There is still a lack of opportunities to work in urban arts steadily. This happens due to lack of knowledge, the symbolic stereotypes that have been discussed and inwardly, and often due to lack of information on the part of municipalities.

**Interview 4** was conducted with a rapper and hip-hop producer that lives and works in northern Portugal. Hip-hop enables him to feel like he belongs somewhere: young people that live in the urban peripheries and have fewer social and economic conditions identify themselves easily with the hip-hop culture. The elements of hip-hop are characterised by a constitutive mark of an "identity" or a place through which people relate to each other and to the world. He mentioned that the emotional atmosphere of collective sharing of rappers' life stories is an important indicator of the reflectiveness triggered by rapping. Young, marginalised people understand the verses as an element of identification with the truth and with their life story, forming a collective sharing of lived experiences.

He says he writes about episodes and circumstances that he experienced during his teenage years in his neighbourhood. He writes about the racial-ethnic conflicts, the conflicts with the police, and the stereotypes and social inequalities that he felt from society. Today, he teaches young people from these social neighbourhoods and attempts to give them a voice. These young people feel that they do not have an active voice in society, but that through music they are able to express what they feel about the social problems they experience. He also mentions that he encourages young people to think about the technical skills they get from song writing and singing. The cultural democratisation of this knowledge emerges as possibilities for them to obtain technical and specialised knowledge, which will be very useful to them in the future.

### 3.5.4 Focus Group

The focus group was conducted online with a hip-hop professional dancer and three art educators from Lisbon and Porto. These art educators work mainly in the development and implementation of non-formal arts education programmes with young people and young adults in dance (two dance teachers that work with hip-hop and dancehall) and performative arts (one theatre teacher).

All the participants from the focus group live in the metropolitan areas of the two biggest Portuguese cities. The three art educators that participated in the focus work in the so-called social neighbourhoods of Lisbon and Porto. In Portugal, a neighbourhood is characterised as a group of social housing buildings or dwellings, whose construction was planned jointly and may or may not have been developed in phases. All the participants agreed that there is still a clear stigma and stereotypes against the communities that live there, mainly due to the worsening of drug consumption and trafficking. These behaviours seem to be affecting the local identity of these neighbourhoods in a decisive and strongly negative way.

One of the main characteristics of dance is the promotion of integration of people, regardless of their social condition. The educators agreed that dance breaks prejudice and makes migrants feel more confident. By realising that they can use their bodies as a communication tool, young migrants start to understand that there are no differences that can separate or isolate them from society. They agreed that hip-hop created means for young migrants to be heard, to share their own culture: they feel unique and at the same time they feel that they belong to a close-knit community.

Furthermore, all the participants agreed that there should be more funding for national programmes that use art as a means of social intervention for groups in situations of vulnerability or exclusion. This funding should not be for short-term projects only, but should understand the needs for an adequate infrastructure and for a stable work contract for the employees. Usually, the teachers hired for these projects are freelancers in precarious situations.

### 3.5.5 Conclusions

In the process of gathering participants for the study, we tried to contact artists from different urban art fields and geographic locations, so that data collection would be as rich and diverse as possible. Most of the Portuguese participants agree that urban arts are an important mechanism for the social inclusion of migrants, refugees, ethnic minorities, and other communities at risk of social exclusion, such as drug addicts and homeless people. In fact, the use of urban arts has innovated social and educational intervention methodologies in various contexts, emphasising innovation and access to new opportunities for community regeneration. It is important to highlight that most of the participants do not feel linguistic barriers in interventions with marginalised communities, since most of the population, whether Portuguese or foreign, speaks Portuguese or is originally from the PALOP countries.

During the analysis of the qualitative answers, we came to an interesting conclusion that urban art, as well as other art practices, express a contradiction between those who live it exclusively in the street in a more informal way, and those who make it as a means to make a living, seeking ways of professionalisation as artists or as promotion agents in the cultural field. Most of our respondents mentioned that there is a long pathway towards the democratisation of urban arts and the access of professional opportunities for artists to have a stable career. Nevertheless, it is also important to note that according to the Portuguese sample, it is not yet possible to assess the impact of COVID-19 in the access to urban arts opportunities in Portugal, but suggests urban arts are one of the means to move forward to a more economically stable and tolerant society.

# 4 Essential Conclusions

## 4.1 Introduction

Our survey strove to offer more concrete tools to improve the lives of marginalised individuals through Urban Arts Education. Building first on a quantitative survey, we conducted numerous open-ended interviews, and focus groups through which we wanted to detect the main factors of marginalisation in the fields of culture and education, main barriers to access in community arts in urban areas, linguistic characteristics and conditions in urban activities to promote social inclusion, and the main success factors for promoting social inclusion through Urban Arts Education. Although our actual target group are low skilled adults (TG2) our survey did not include them directly, but entrusted art and community educators, artists, social workers, and other professionals in the artistic field (TG1 and TG3) to offer an insight into the field. At the same time, the researched group of people predominantly works in a very particular field, Urban Arts Education, which makes the present survey a state-of-the-art survey on European urban art providers themselves and not only a survey of the success factors and obstacles they encounter in their work.

The in-depth national reports do provide a peak into the state of Urban Arts Education in five European countries or rather its urban centres; the present chapter is intended to bring these five national reports together, to highlight its common threads, attempt to explain the differences in some national reports, combine the quantitative with qualitative, and all in all reach some conclusions this body of gathered material offers.

The present chapter is subdivided into 7 subchapters: the present introduction to essential conclusions; a subchapter on the social characteristics of our survey participants; then the meaning and effect Urban Arts Education has on low skilled adults from marginalised communities; followed by a subchapter on the importance of public funding and the concrete ways art educators could benefit from a changed financial scheme; on the role of urban art educators themselves, what is it that they bring to the table and how important is it; a subchapter on the role of language and communication, including metrolanguage, in Urban Arts Education; followed by a subchapter on the effects (and the opportunities) of the current pandemic, and, lastly, a concluding thought on low skilled adults from marginalised communities as active agents.

## 4.2 Participants

As the underlying idea of our survey was not to write up a general survey on Urban Arts Education, none of the partners was seeking to form an entirely representative sample, still they were all encouraged to find individuals of different gender, age, origins, place of living, religion, ethnicity etc., which was because of the particular profile of people we were interested in and their limited time not necessarily easy. The following pages, hence, in no way offer a representative picture of urban art education in Europe, avoid giving

particular and limited conclusions and highlight some broader trends and solutions for urban arts in contemporary Europe.

Approximately one third of all participants can be considered young, many younger than 30, with another third age between 30 and 40. Each of the five partners used their own national networks to disseminate the survey, so it comes as no surprise the participants reside and to some extent also originate from these countries, yet our online survey depicted that artists and art educators in these countries do in fact originate from all over to world, from Syria to Australia and from Angola to Sri Lanka, an especially numerous group of respondents answered their country of origin as Bangladesh (5%) and Poland (4%). 67% speak their country's first language, another 14% speak it very well, the remaining are less fluently, but only 1% (2 people) do not speak it at all. Their language competences are otherwise "good", 32% speak another two languages besides their first language and 28% speak as many as three.

60% of the respondents claim to be permanently employed, 28% are freelancers, 20% employed in NGOs, followed by the business sector, education, while a few are students, unemployed, and employed in public administration. Here the national samples really differ, partially due to the chosen samples, but undoubtedly also with the trends and general economic circumstances in particular states.

A little less than half of all respondents obtained a formal degree in arts (49%). The forms of arts the respondents engage with are very diverse, visual art prevails (33%), but there was an almost unlimited number of art forms and its combinations detected. The fact we are interested in urban arts in particular lead to what we can assume to be an above average number of artists and art educators experienced in various street art forms, for instance graffiti making, DJing or hip-hop dancing.

What probably points out to the heterogeneity of the respondents is our survey question about how they would categorise themselves professionally. On the first sight it seems we asked the wrong question because the majority chose "Other" and thus did not select any of the listed possibilities, but then put down their own, very diverse answers. There seems to be a variety of career paths artists and art educators take, from researchers, librarians and journalists to architects and attorneys.

We just presented a broad social picture of our respondents', urban educators': their age, education, work experience etc., but did not explain their precise role, how meaningful it is for the education process, and how they see themselves and their success. They share an appreciation for creativity and express interest in various forms of art forms. Interviews and focus groups revealed art educators working with low skilled adults as empathic and dedicated to solidarity in all of its forms. Some talk of "helping out", some avoid such discourse as they see it too patronising, even pitying – if you treat someone as weak and in need of help, you cannot empower her or him. The ideal is to let the participants co-create.

It is hard to know if or how biased our respondents exactly are, but they see their own role as crucial. In addition, or precisely because of that, they take their job seriously, keep

learning new approaches, and implementing new methods. Especially when working with vulnerable individuals, their role in assisting them to overcome fears and insecurities is essential. Also, they reckon their methods should be adapted to each individual and his or her needs. As an Icelandic interviewee put it, *“If you like to reach the margins, you always need to do something extra.”* What they also find extremely relevant is providing space, in symbolic terms, for all participants. In other words, they attempt to offer participants an opportunity for something new, more liberating that they can do at their own pace and on their own terms.

Before concluding the section, 92% of the respondents of the online survey claim they are satisfied with their participants’ interest, which probably indicates their personal satisfaction with the work they are doing.

## 4.3 Urban arts as an opportunity for low skilled adults

Factors for marginalisation are manifold and interlaced, their clarification remains out of the scope of this survey and depends on the country, the Icelandic case had, for instance, shown a bigger need for intergenerational collaborations, but we could overall state the respondents blame low income, followed by social exclusion, low education, weak linguistic competences, racial and ethnic belonging, and other. That being said, 70% of the respondents answered that their city has art opportunities for the deprived, but the issue remains that the marginalised members of the society are not aware of their opportunities. As many as 83% of the respondents of our online survey thought so. The offer exists, it is there, but awareness about it does not spread or convince low skilled adults from marginalised communities. Other factors contributing to them not knowing about their options are lack of internet connection, financial obstacles, linguistic challenges, cultural differences, and other.

Some art forms are commonly stereotyped as elite ventures or necessarily connected with one’s cultural capital. As one of our online survey’s respondents put it, *“I have experience of studying in a prestigious arts university where I slowly realised my wealthier peers of international heritage were able to pay for arts materials, technical support, marketing in magazines and access to galleries because they were from a well-connected elite.”* Indeed, the findings of the baseline survey indicate some art forms might intimidate low skilled adults and make them focus too much on the final creation and not the process. When included in artistic programmes, communities at risk of social exclusion might feel more marginalised, even silly or boring because of how unknown the territory is. It ought to be pointed out also more directly that we do not idealise arts as a universe in itself, but a place where social inequalities persist, yet urban arts educators seek to get past this. One of the ways is to offer more democratic art forms. Some art forms seem more appropriate or easily accessible to particular groups of participants, one of the Slovene NGOs we got to know focuses exclusively on knitting because the leaders found this to be the way for the immigrant women they target to feel most welcome and feel qualified. What is more, they

emphasise knitting because of its repetitiveness and therapeutic rhythm, and can even lead to a meditative state.

As already briefly mentioned, our respondents told us it is not about one's talents or the final product, but about their curiosity, freedom, playfulness, and simply the willingness to create. This understanding came across repeatedly. As an Icelandic interviewee put it, *"Art is not only about aesthetic appreciation or the joy of beauty, but it's also about liberation and freedom."* And, similarly from an Austrian interviewee, *"it's not about building a masterpiece, but just about creating a space where people meet, that brings people together."*

In accordance with what we consider the general public opinion and the statement we presented already in our project proposal (for instance, *"arts education leads to social inclusion, participation and empowerment of individuals and social groups"*), the gathered data reconfirms Urban Arts Education as an inclusive practice that can be entertaining, but also empowering and innovation inspiring. Participants were predominantly confident their work contributes to the local community building, only 2% of the online survey respondents thought it does not. When they were invited to share their opinion on why that is so, many emphasised the power of artistic expression to integrate the excluded groups. Arts was illuminated as a means for them to tell their story, which consequently made them visible and introduced them to other members of the society and led to an increased sense of belonging for the marginalised participants. The possibility for arts to address broader political problems came up as well, while some stuck to more tangible reasons: joint workshops help establish local networks and cause growth in one's social capital. One of the Austrian interviewees with rich experiences working with disabled DJs noticed a strong increase of participants' self-esteem, especially when the participants got the chance to get on stage.

According to our online survey, only 7% believe cultural differences do not become less visible in the course of providing art education and 12% thought the general social inequalities do not fade away in the process. The majority, hence, believes various cultural differences and power inequalities become less visible. We also asked for the argumentation and the gathered answers could be summarised in the following terms: art has the power to "bring people closer," as one respondent put it, as already suggested in the paragraphs above. More precisely, when, for instance, workshop participants focus on something they have in common and on making a product, other social and cultural elements fade away.

## 4.4 Public Support

The respondents' work in the field of art and art education is prevalingly funded from the public funds. Many rely on a number of different sources and are in precarious situations, but among the sources, government funding was chosen by 57%, community funding was chosen by 49%, and EU funding was chosen by 23% of the respondents. In correspondence with this, the majority feels supported by the local community and the administration, but wishes for more.

One can only wonder what would happen if the municipalities, states and the EU cut the budget? Could urban arts thrive with increased and more steady support? The question of financing is not minor, in point of fact it turned out to be one of the crucial questions in disentangling the world of Urban Arts Education.

As previously stated, baseline survey participants come from different countries, backgrounds, classes, and are, simply, hard to imagine as a homogeneous group, but there is something they all agree on, namely the need for increased and more stable public funding of their activities. This is something we detected in the questionnaire (71% of the respondents thought sufficient funds are the success factor, and 68% thought inclusion through urban arts could be enhanced with a better financing), but further concentrated on more intensely in our interviews and focus groups.

In concrete terms, respondents wished for more or rather better equipped community centres where arts would be constantly on offer and participants and teachers would join as equals. As community (art) centres are not something entirely new or extremely rare, we suppose there are issues with *how exactly* the existing ones operate, so here are more tangible characteristics our participants agree such centres – and Urban Arts Education in general – should offer.

- Rooms should be spacious, comfortable, airy and as open as possible. Participants need to have the possibility to distance themselves from the group in case they need to calm down or simply have some time for themselves. Openness was not intended only in the symbolic sense, but also in concrete terms suggesting an outside park, terrace or other kind of facility where all passers-by could stop and get curious and potentially immersed in urban arts. The Austrian DJ we interviewed is, for instance, intentionally taking his baby stroller installation to public places, which leads to interaction with people despite their differing linguistic competences.
- Unlike short-lasting projects, a more stable financing can enable a more permanent and safer environment that many vulnerable participants wish for. Such an environment allows them to open up, express curiosity, and the willingness to learn. Unlike the majority, they need a longer period of time to relax and for a certain progress to be noticed. This is, therefore, another reason to establish a more permanent funding scheme.
- A regularly updated, dynamic, easily accessible website where all art offers could be found was also highlighted as one of the goals. It seems simple, but it is not necessarily so, because such online platforms rarely exist or stay up to date for longer than a few years when the project funds expire.
- Art education content should be co-created by participants. Put differently, community art projects ought to be designed *with* and not *for* the local community. In this way, artists and art educators do not simply assume what the needs of their audience are but give them an opportunity to express them.
- Art educators at times find themselves in the role of social workers or various kinds of therapists, which they are not equipped for. Some suggested art centres should also offer psychological support for most vulnerable participants and education as

well as supervision and possibly therapy itself for teachers. Many educators and artists complained about the lack of support they face, in comparison to the regular school teachers.

- Besides therapists and other kinds of psychological support providers, such a centre would ideally also host staff specialised in communication, so participants with different language capacities and neurodiverse individuals could be invited in an appropriate manner. The advertising of an event or a workshop series is one of the biggest challenges for urban art educators.

Survey participants protested also against the narrow administrative categories they need to fit when applying for funding. An NGO that is, for instance, formally dedicated to helping troubled youth, can often not apply for an art-oriented project funding. The applicants need to fit a certain profile, which administrators, detached from the project, come up with.

A very similar issue arises when recognising the effects of a particular project. Public administrators want to see instant and concrete results, while Urban Arts Education is not a quick fix, but a slow and curvy process that can be measured only in the long run. An interviewee from Ljubljana was, for example, discussing her experiences working with people with hearing loss. The effects of her teaching were at first sight invisible, but through time led to the student's entirely new position on the job market and eventually a steady job.

Before concluding this subchapter, we should also mention a commonly encountered contradiction. The participants wish for more, especially governmental, support, yet simultaneously underscore arts should be less integrated within the existing state and the power system as such. In other words, art and art education should be more independent, separated from the national structures, and distanced from the dominant school education scheme. It seems like the ideal is to have freedom, but be entrusted with sufficient and permanent funding.

## 4.5 The Importance of Language

Educators, artists and others with experiences providing Urban Arts Education to low skilled adults, on the one hand, underscore the importance of language, and, on the other hand, refer to art as a language in itself.

In more precise terms, 45% of our online survey respondents claim language to be very important in their communication with deprived participants of their workshops or other urban arts offer, while 57% say language can be a barrier to a wider participation because individuals with limited linguistic competences can fear being misunderstood (74%), become insecure (69%), fear not being addressed (58%), and other. That being said, 74% also claim art makes communication easier.

They further explain art as “a form for expressing that breaks down barriers,” “social glue”, and, all in all, also as means to improve language skills. We know from our focus groups and

interviews that art workshops have the potential to help immigrants learn a new language in an informal and relaxed, but still valuable way. Some of our collocutors promoted content that would combine art classes and language courses.

Besides language itself, as usual in communication, non-verbal as well as non-vocal elements have the capability to communicate messages. The survey participants mention different forms of communication, from gestures, facial expressions to body language and doodles, that complement artistic and creative expressions as a universal language. An Icelandic art educator stresses silence as an imperative bridge builder because it lets people connect on other, non-verbal levels.

There are, however, cases when low skilled adults, predominantly immigrants and refugees, do not speak a work of the dominant language, nor do they speak English or another language that art educators might comprehend, which leaves no other way but to find a translator. This indubitably increases the overall costs. Non-speakers and people with very weak command of the language often experience insecurity and fear being judged, according to artists and art educators. Here, educators come to the fore again. More precisely, the teachers have to seek to adapt to the students' needs also in terms of language. An Icelandic music teacher, for instance, mixes Icelandic with English because that increases the comprehension for foreign students. We have also learned from the Slovenian experience with people with hearing loss that there are special skills the teacher can acquire to facilitate the communication with participants. Art educators are hence hopeful and believe language is important, but rarely discourages people from doing arts once they become part of the programme, workshop or other form of urban art collaboration.

Where our respondents really think there is space to improve is the articulation and the dissemination of the initial invitation to an art event or a series of events. Our survey showed that lack of knowledge about offers is among the biggest reasons why few people from marginalised groups end up participating. The organisers should think of tailoring the invitation to a particular group. If possible, this initial step should be made together with an individual from the invited group or left to them all together. For instance, how can an upper-class woman in her 50s prepare an appealing call for teenagers living on the streets?

One of the goals of the URB-ART project is also to integrate the concept of metrolinguism as *“an instrument that promotes transcultural interaction and in turn fosters social inclusion, since it enables individuals to communicate and cooperate. But not only verbal expressions, but also non-verbal communication methods are part of language.”* By using this concept, we aimed to go beyond the grammar and vocabulary and detect a new kind of communication form, where urban dwellers use the same language in a new way or mix different kinds of languages. It seems especially useful because it characterises people from different socio-economic backgrounds. The latter feature is perhaps the reason why our respondents did not really provide an answer to this concern raised in our project proposal.

The opinions on metrolanguage were divided. The online survey did not really contribute much to disentangling the role of metrolanguage on the ground, while our focus group participants and interviewees indeed talked about the potentials of mixing different

languages and non-verbal forms, above all art expressions, of communication, but did not really recognise or wanted to discuss the concept of metrolingualism. This in itself is not an issue as it was, since the beginning, intended as a concept that could explain findings on the ground and not as something our target groups would actually operate with in their everyday life. In anthropology, this would be defined as a difference between the emic and etic perspective, the look from within and the conceptual look from the outside. Yet, regardless of that, the respondents of our survey did not really formulate their thoughts and opinions in a way we could talk of metrolingualism exclusively, but in general emphasised the importance of connecting through arts that can be a language in itself.

## 4.6 Urban Arts in Isolation

COVID-19 has been strongly affecting our lives since March 2020. The restrictions limited or even completely erased in-person programmes, workshops, and events. For instance, all dance courses were at some point cancelled, as they represented a threat to individual well-being and public health. What is obvious already now, while still in the midst of the pandemic, is that this pandemic changed Urban Arts Education. One of the goals of the baseline survey was to detect those changes and more, what could the role of Urban Arts Education be in the recovery process.

The sanitary restrictions constrained art gatherings and initially caused stress primarily to artists and art educators. Many precariously employed individuals feared for their economies and eventually also general well-being. It is no secret the two are strongly interrelated. Yet, in the course of weeks and months after COVID-19 first hit art as a part of public life started fading away also from the lives of the general population, galleries closed, crafting classes ended, and concerts became a distant memory. In the colder countries, where less activities can be moved outdoors the effects were even worse. True, much of the art offer moved to the online platforms, often in an innovative and stimulating way, but our respondents agreed the new online opportunities cannot match the in-person activities.

Among those affected were low skilled adults that would otherwise profit from Urban Arts Education, but now could not. Following our online survey, more than half of the respondents believe COVID-19 did change the access deprived have to art content, while 42% do not know, and only a few think it did not have an effect. The online offers do exist, according to our interviewees and focus groups participants, but were by one of the Slovenian art educators commented in the following manner, *“If the meetings don’t take place live, a lot of social momentum and opportunities for knowledge transfer is lost.”* Besides, our online survey revealed that the existing online offer is insignificant and increases the chances of problematic language barriers. In the online world, many otherwise meaningful tools of communication disappear. In addition, low skilled adults might have troubles accessing the online content along with other worries, such as monetary commitments, that COVID-19 brought along.

On the bright side, the move to online platforms made art content also more accessible to some, especially in countries where urban agglomerations are geographically spread out, as in Iceland.

Much has already been said about the therapeutic effects of arts and in general about the potentials of Urban Arts Education to equip low skilled adults, connect the members of the community, and all in all contribute to a more tolerant and successful society. This precisely is the opportunity for urban arts in the post-COVID-19 era, where shared work, creative expression, and performances can create inclusion and connection between people. Even when people come from different social backgrounds, a shared artistic project can help bring them together; such projects can also lead to the development of new skills, interests, and confidence. This is particularly important in the urban space, which is a place where people from many different social groups come together and must learn to communicate, integrate, and create shared values. Urban Arts Education can thus build a bridge between and within communities who are marginalised in a certain way/level or are not.

For all these reasons, Urban Arts Education has the potential to help the current crisis, which worsened the employment conditions, individuals' mental health and will require a long recovery. We are still in the pandemic, without a clear image of when it will end, so is hard to say what long term effects the restrictions will have on society and on Urban Arts Education, but it seems like a topic worth researching, as it could really shed light onto the meaning of Urban Arts Education in general.

## 4.7 Where are Low-Skilled Adults in Marginalised Communities?

Experienced art educators and all those working with marginalised communities reckon that for the learning process to be successful participants have to be respected, seen as different, but equal, and taken on as co-creators, collaborators, and not only “consumers”. In correspondence with this, some of the interviews and answers to open-ended survey questions suggested we invited artists and associated art educators to speak in the name of TG2, low skilled adults in marginalised communities. If we wanted to know their stories, if they were our direct targets, we should have asked them directly. *“Give them the floor,”* as one of the Slovenian interviewees said. This is to some extent true, but it would be tremendously hard to get their perspectives in such a short period of time. Besides, many of them have experiences with one art education activity only, whereas educators are more practiced and see the whole situation “from above”. It can be agreed the present baseline survey would be enriched with the data “from below”. In accordance with that, we think of target group 2 as active agents and not as objects, but we were on this occasion compelled to choose a swifter, although less profound, road.

Before concluding the present chapter on essential conclusions, we want to return to the same Slovenian interviewee who vividly expressed something many of our survey participants have in common. *“I would like it the most if we started thinking not only about ‘what’ but ‘why’. Not only that people are marginalised, but why is it so, but I suppose this is a question for a whole new project.”*

# 5 Concluding Perspectives

This project aims to support low-skilled adults in marginalised communities through activities and approaches from Urban Arts Education. The first step in achieving this goal is the nuanced elaboration of the state of the art in this field in the countries participating in the project and transnationally.

In the project, Urban Arts Education is defined from the conceptual triangle of arts education, urban adult education, and urban arts. Urban Arts Education encompasses the creative development of the individual as well as the understanding of regional and international art and culture in large, densely populated urban areas with a diverse population. Our focus was initially on urban arts as a form of arts arising in urban areas inspired by urban lifestyle, initially especially by underground movements. In the course of our research, numerous forms of art began playing a role, which led us to expand our view and include various art forms. We also kept our eyes open for the transdisciplinary art forms, which commonly function as communication instruments for intercultural dialogue and social integration.

Our baseline survey on transdisciplinary and multilingual Urban Arts Education aimed to formulate national and transnational indicators of success and challenges with regard to marginalisation in the fields of culture and education as well as success indicators with regard to Urban Arts Education, taking into account concepts of trans-disciplinarity, metro- and multilingualism. Although our goal was to support low-skilled adults in marginalised communities on their way to social inclusion and empowerment through activities and concepts of Urban Arts Education, our survey respondents, interviewees and focus group participants represented artists and associated art educators from five different EU countries. The question of what are the prevailing needs, challenges and success factors in the field of community art and Urban Arts Education is presented here as perceived by the people involved in these fields in the participating countries. In the present survey, the floor was given to adult and community educators, social workers, arts and cultural professionals, as well as independent arts educators and artists from various arts disciplines that have rich experiences in working with low-skilled adults in marginalised communities. Baseline survey participants come from different countries, backgrounds, classes, and are, simply, hard to imagine as a homogeneous group, but their responses have some intersections that serve as a basis for us to make some recommendations for more inclusive Urban Arts Education and in empowering people with fewer opportunities through these programs. By involving a range of independent artists and educators and numerous associations not formally involved in the Urb Art project, we have been able to draw on experience and expertise from the outset, ensuring that we can address the existing needs and challenges and provide practical help and support in subsequent project activities. This not only gives the word to people from Urban Arts Education, but also creates a symbiosis between the partner consortium and the stakeholders involved, as both groups of actors can learn from each other, but also benefit.

The group is in many regards very diverse, yet all participants claimed to possess rich experiences with providing art education to low-skilled adults (and frequently even richer experiences with educating children and youth) and often expressed similar opinions. It is highly unlikely that any previous survey covered such a big number of art educators that are familiar with assisting deprived adults, which indicates the collected empirical data to be of great value already on its own. Let us, nevertheless, once again dig into the main findings of our baseline survey: the needs, challenges, and recommendations of Urban Arts Education.

Through analysis of our online survey, interviews and focus groups, general results were identified that differ remarkably little from country to country. In the project proposal and the already conducted work on the project itself, our definitions of marginalisation remain vague. It is not the lack of data or decisiveness that led us, but acknowledging the fact that marginalisation can oftentimes not be objectively measured, and hence be situational and subjective. We left it to our survey participants to decide what causes marginalisation in their city and remained open to their interpretations. Unsurprisingly, economic status, migrant status, and language kept coming up as the factors contributing the most to what they in their locality denote as marginalisation.

Urban art is generally seen as an artistic activity that encourages curiosity, freedom, playfulness, and a willingness to create, and it favours the creative process rather than the final artistic product. Therefore, it has an inherent possibility of being more inclusive and is not necessarily connected with one's economic and cultural capital. The data gathered in our survey reconfirms Urban Arts Education as an inclusive practice that can be entertaining, but also empowering and innovation inspiring. Moreover, when people focus on the creative process together, other social and cultural elements fade away.

Art educators and artists we talked to were certain of the positive effects their work has on the communities and take pride in having the capacity to improve someone's life, at least partially. According to them, shared work and artistic expression connects people regardless of their social background and creates inclusion. All this is particularly important in urban spaces, where individuals from many different social groups come together and must learn to cohabitate. There was a common agreement among our informants that when low-skilled adults from marginalised communities engage in Urban Arts Education this opens up a new path, one where it is easier to overcome socio-cultural barriers, where participants can simply be heard, where they can relax, make friends, gain confidence, perhaps even meditate, learn new practical skills, and, not least, a new language. It seems like in the frame of different art workshops and classes provided for marginalised adults, art itself often flows in the back, it is more or a setting, a background, a pleasing endeavour that enables other important social processes to take place and never strives to achieve a certain aesthetic, technological or monetary value.

At the same time, our informants confirmed their work brings pleasure also to them personally. It seems like their role is crucial for Urban Arts Education, their knowledge and motivation turned out to be essential for the process. What should not be neglected is, in their point of view, the need to take participants seriously, to actually think of them not

merely as participants, as passive listeners, but as actors who have the will and capacity to influence the course of the workshop. Art education content should be co-created by participants. Community art projects ought to be designed *with* the local community. In this way, artists and art educators do not simply assume what the needs of their audience are, but give them an opportunity to express their creativity and feel like real creators, not only of arts but also of their (community) life.

The art education offer is abundant in all five partner countries. The problem hence certainly is not in the lack of options provided to low-skilled adults from marginalised communities, however, that being said their participation could be increased. Our survey detected that the issue lies in attracting potential participants, who are rarely informed about the existing options. One important solution relies on the arts taking place in urban public spaces. In other words, Urban Arts Education thrives better when active in neighbourhoods where people feel more invited and approach cultural offers they would otherwise not. Even more, arts taking place outdoors or in open/public places call for interaction, intrigue anyone passing by, and have a democratic character.

Another, perhaps simpler, way to approach people is for the art education providers to target their invitations better, to really think of the language, style, and media used to attract participants. Therefore, the people with less opportunities should be invited to these activities personally or with notices that would be understandable and appealing to them in their life situation. Recognisable and permanent websites with all the Urban Arts Education offers should be established and be regularly updated and easily accessible.

As already indicated, language can be a barrier to entry to the arts sectors and in general contributes to one's marginalisation. When people do not comprehend the dominant language, feelings of insecurity and fear of judgement can arise and turn into barriers that are hard to overcome. This discourages low-skilled adults from marginalised communities from joining cultural and artistic events. And yet, once individuals do get invited to an event or a series of events and join them language is usually not a barrier. Our informants agreed that art is a form of nonverbal communication. Dancing, painting, DJing, and other art forms are expressions that transcend language and help to communicate even when verbal language is not understood. Besides, art educators and artists have many experiences with individuals who do not command the dominant language, yet manage to communicate through art, but also gestures, facial expressions, body language and other nonverbal bridge builders, which should not be neglected.

The concept of metrolingualism, which we highlight in the project, needed to be addressed indirectly as many participants did not understand it. When the partners attempted to illuminate its meaning, informants did get a hang of what we were aiming at but rarely recognised it as common in their work.

What, however, did turn out to be an enormous obstacle in the development and success of Urban Arts Education are financial means. Put differently, one of the important issues that relates directly and indirectly to both groups we are addressing in the project (arts educators and marginalised or disadvantaged people) is funding. Most small organisations

in the urban arts sector claim they lack the funding and staffing to offer locally spoken languages, to advertise events in locally used languages, or even to reach out to groups excluded for other reasons. This was also reflected in the online survey, where respondents felt that to improve inclusiveness in Urban Arts Education necessitates more funding and a more stable one. Art educators and artists find ways to tackle the economic barriers, they have an excellent command of low or no cost strategies, but it tires them. It is no wonder most of our survey participants can be qualified as young, precarious work takes its toll and many prefer to switch to more secure, permanent jobs after a few years. Personal satisfaction is not enough. Unlike short lasting projects, a more stable financing can enable a more permanent and safer environment that many vulnerable participants wish for. Such an environment would allow them to open up, express curiosity, and the willingness to learn.

Systemic and financial support (without excessive bureaucratic hurdles) is essential so that the existing staff, which is not so numerous, does not give up and leave the sector. Even more so in the times of COVID-19. We believe that the COVID-19 times could be fatal for the existence of many art organisations. At the same time, the existing personnel in the field of art education and social and community work has a great potential to awaken new interests in this field. Their training and rich experience could offer help and awaken the interest of the rest of the population in this type of work. In short, Urban Art Education is not merely a place of struggle, but a place of hope.