



IN CONCERT: YOUTH CONNECTIONS ACROSS CULTURES THROUGH MUSIC

Context

This scenario originated in the context of youth workshops during which young artists had a task to organise small-scale exhibitions of their paintings and photographs. Soon they realised that music would greatly enhance the value of such events and started inviting local bands. The concerts, a few as they were organised to date, attracted a large audience and brought enthusiastic feedback. The audience included not only members of the local community of our small town of Wadowice in Poland, but also foreign guests. That's how the idea of this scenario originated: how about inviting musicians from other countries to play with us?

The youth workers in charge of this artistic project immediately realised the huge potential of this idea to facilitate a new programme of activities bridging a number of themes that relate to art, education, intercultural communication and social inclusion and reflecting authentic interests of young people. One of the prerequisites for participation is obviously at least some interest in art and music but not necessarily professional skills in these fields. The programme is also transferable to other youth work contexts where there is an appreciation of creative activities involving young people, a space where to host music events and a need to add intercultural dimension to youth activities, as in our small town distant from multicultural agglomerations.

Objectives

The main objective of this workshop scenario is to help participants organise a music event involving peer musicians from another country. With this overall objective we aim for the participants to:

- ✦ gain organisational skills in managing all aspects of preparations of the concert
- ✦ enhance their communication skills in the intercultural dimension
- ✦ develop appreciation of other music genres not typically listened by them



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- ✦ enlarge their social networks

This scenario is well framed in the Erasmus+ priorities addressed by the EUtopia project which promote common values, civic engagement and participation of young people as well as their sense of initiative and entrepreneurship. It also relates to the project's key objectives, making youngsters aware of their broader social and cultural environment, developing a tolerant vision of the future and inspiring further projects that will enrich local youth work.

Tools, resources and facilities

This workshop scenario consists of a number of sessions, both offline and online. The idea is to mobilise as many young people as possible and some of them may come from distant places so online communication will facilitate their involvement. Each participant can engage in line with their interests and competences so not all the sessions will require active participation of all. The important thing is to elicit contributions from everybody and use them in the course of preparations for a concert played by young musicians from different cultural/national contexts. The concert itself is then expected to gather all the participants and a much larger audience. The following tools, materials and equipment will be needed.


For preparations

- ✦ Video conferencing platform: Zoom, Microsoft Teams or Google Meet for virtual meetings
- ✦ Digital collaboration tools: Mentimeter, Mural, Kialo and Padlet for online communication and managing tasks
- ✦ Marketing and promotion tools: social media platforms, [Mailchimp](#), [Eventbrite](#)

For the concert itself

- ✦ Venue: a suitable venue for the concert, indoor or outdoor; depending on the type of concert and expected audience, it can be a room of at least 60 m² for a small-scale concert with the audience of around 30 people.



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- ✦ The budget: similarly to the above, depending on the scale of the concert; if the venue is provided for free and musicians have their own instruments no significant financial resources are needed.
 - ✦ Audio/visual equipment: sound systems, microphones, speakers, projectors
 - ✦ Stage setup with appropriate lighting and decorations to create an engaging atmosphere
 - ✦ Instruments: all necessary musical instruments
 - ✦ A youth worker to support the organisation process
 - ✦ Volunteers to help on the spot, if the event is expected to gather a large audience
 - ✦ Technical support: technical staff to handle any audio or visual issues that may arise
 - ✦ Security and crowd control: security personnel to ensure the safety of attendees

Description of workshop activities

As the title of this scenario suggests, the idea of the workshops is not only to organise a concert of a youth band, but also to use the young people's interest in music as a tool for intercultural communication. Such a need is particularly visible in small towns where there have been few opportunities for young people to meet and interact with peers from other cultural/national backgrounds, but which have recently faced an influx of newcomers from other countries, as our town which has received many Ukrainian refugees since the beginning of the war.


The whole workshop programme is divided into four phases:

- ✦ **Who's in the Band:** introductory team building activities
- ✦ **What's the Plan:** planning all organisational steps and assigning roles and responsibilities
- ✦ **In Concert:** the final music event with guest musicians from another country

The timeframe of this scenario, as we decided to implement it in our context, is spread over four months. However, it can be adapted to other youth work contexts where there may be different challenges in terms of recruiting participants, organising a venue, getting suitable resources and equipment, etc.

1. Who's in the Band?





Activities in this phase proceed from mobilising a core group of participants towards engaging a larger group of young people willing to contribute to this initiative.

Activity 1: The key players' meeting


The key players include not only musicians but also other young artists who initiated this project.


- ✦ Propose a date and venue suitable for everybody.
- ✦ Ensure a friendly and informal atmosphere at the meeting.
- ✦ Clarify the idea of this initiative so there is a consensus on what we aim to achieve.
- ✦ Agree with the participants on how to use their social networks to extend the initial group and involve musicians/artists from other cultural or national backgrounds.

[Brainwriting](#), one of the EUtopia tools, may help generate ideas and creative solutions at the meeting. Brainwriting is similar to brainstorming. It gives everyone an equal opportunity to participate in the discussion and allows everyone in the group to think and get involved without any blockages. An advantage of brainwriting is the participants' ability to develop others' ideas. All the others can use each suggestion written on the sheet by one participant to stimulate new thoughts and new ideas. The cumulative effect can be potent and can lead to the discovery of otherwise unattainable solutions.

Activity 2: Spreading the word

This activity is conducted mainly online, also face to face whenever the participants find an opportunity to meet prospective new members of this initiative.

- ✦ Participants identify sites with info on young musicians and their performances throughout the region.
 - ✦ They create a calendar of such events at a reachable distance and within the time framework of this project.
 - ✦ They use their social networks and attend music events to communicate invitations to the planned concert.
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[Mentimeter](#), one of the tools recommended by EUtopia, can be used to create an engaging presentation of their initiative and elicit feedback from prospective participants. It is a digital tool to make an interactive presentation. You can add questions, surveys or quizzes that the spectators can respond to in real-time. This tool is available for any youngsters who want to create a striking presentation of their project.

Activity 3: Engaging new members

At this stage participants act on promising answers from the above outreach campaign.

- ✦ They establish direct contacts with peers who expressed an interest to join the initiative.
- ✦ In the case of musicians who considered playing at the forthcoming concert, they discuss their possible involvement in terms of the music they want to play, its style and cultural background.
- ✦ They exchange videos, recordings and any other information helpful in learning about prospective contributions from the new members.
- ✦ It is likely that some of the foreign musicians engaged in the conversation will not be fluent in the participants' native language so provide support in the use of a shared language, if necessary (English most probably).

Encourage participants to use [Mural](#), a digital collaborative tool recommended by EUtopia. It is created and designed to facilitate exchanges, organisation and brainstorming for remote teams. It is a digital and shared whiteboard where interactions of participants take place in real-time. Mural is a useful tool to collect and formulate ideas from everyone, to brainstorm and work together. It can be used by all youth with a computer and an internet connection.


2. What's the Plan?

Activities in this phase focus on working out a preparation plan for the concert and implementing it with assigned roles and responsibilities.

Activity 1: Planning steps to follow

Ideally, this activity should involve most of the participants in a face-to-face meeting.



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- ✦ The whole group may meet face to face for the first time so some ice-breaking activities can be useful.
 - ✦ It is likely that a group leader/s has already emerged in the course of previous activities. If not, a youth worker should take this role.
 - ✦ The discussion of the plan should take into account all the key factors that will impact on the concert's success: venue, resources, timeframe, external support, safety, etc.

Encourage participants to analyse all major context-related factors using this EUtopia tool: [Context analysis](#)

Activity 2: Task sharing

This activity can directly follow the previous one if there is enough time. The participants should divide tasks among themselves regarding:

- ✦ The artistic programme which may also include an art exhibition
- ✦ Organisation of rehearsals for the concert
- ✦ Ensuring availability of the necessary instruments and sound/lighting equipment
- ✦ Safety measures
- ✦ Promotion


Some disagreements may arise as to who does what. In that case try these EUtopia tools to facilitate a discussion on site: [How to disagree](#), and online to include participants unable to attend the face to face meeting: [Kialo](#). Eutopia Toolkit also includes a very useful [Action Plan](#) template that can be introduced to the participants at this stage.

Activity 3: Acting out the plan

The implementation of the plan will obviously depend on many factors that cannot be known at this stage but will most probably include:

- ✦ Music sessions in which a newly formed band for this concert will have to rehearse their programme
- ✦ Contacting and working with local stakeholders having potential and willingness to contribute to the project
- ✦ Media campaign to attract interest in the forthcoming event






EUtopia resources include an excellent tool helping youngsters to work together on their projects and implement their ideas into action, try it: [Padlet](#)


4. In Concert

This is the final activity in the scenario, bringing all the actors together, 'in concert'. According to their undertaken roles and responsibilities, the participants will perform the following tasks:

- ✦ The musicians will be the key actors on stage, playing music that involves tunes and themes from their native countries.
- ✦ The stage and the auditorium must be prepared for the concert: decorations, arrangement of sitting places, snacks and beverages if they are to be served, etc.
- ✦ Support technical staff will manage the audio and lighting equipment; possibly, some of the participants will have relevant skills to manage these technicalities.
- ✦ Participants acting as 'hosts' will manage the auditorium: welcoming guests, guiding people to sitting/standing places, maintaining order, etc.
- ✦ All present, the organisers and guests, will enjoy the cross-cultural encounter 'in concert', appreciating the music first and then discussing its origin, style and links with familiar tunes.

Learning Outcomes

- ✦ Participants will acquire practical skills in planning and managing all aspects of a music event.
 - ✦ They will gain experience in using digital tools for a collaborative project.
 - ✦ They will develop intercultural communication skills by collaborating with musicians from different countries.
 - ✦ They will broaden their musical horizons by exploring genres and styles of music from other cultural backgrounds.
 - ✦ They will learn to navigate cultural differences, fostering empathy, respect, and understanding across cultures.
 - ✦ They will expand their social networks by connecting with peers, musicians, and artists.
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- ✦ They will develop interpersonal skills such as teamwork, leadership, and collaboration through engaging with diverse groups of individuals towards a common goal.



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