

DASSS

DANCE AGAINST STRESSFUL SITUATIONS

BOOKLET



This document was developed in the framework of the DASS project with the contribution of all partners of the consortium.

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Dear Reader,

This Booklet that you are holding in your hands has been developed by the DASS partners with much care and affection, hoping to help youngsters in difficult times. Youth workers, educators, trainers, teachers, professionals of dance and artists that work with young people will find in its pages a valuable collection of methodologies they can apply with their groups.

As you go through the different sections of the Booklet, you will discover useful tools and methods that you, as a youth worker, can use in order to provide young people with ways to deal with their stress and express their emotions. To succeed in that, we, as a team, utilize different types of art that are known for unleashing creativity and facilitating the expression of feelings (no matter the effect they might have on us). In order to facilitate expression without words, because sometimes it's hard to find words, especially for adolescents, we devote a significant part to the art of dance and body movement which can undeniably contribute to stress release and stress management, the body being the temple of the emotions and the «unconscious memory of the events» (*Fabio DOLCE_choreographer_Cie Essevesse*).

In this Booklet you are offered two sets of activities that are comprised of Workshops with detailed instructions on how to implement them with your groups. The first set of Activities is the "Online Workshops" which can be implemented both virtually and physically, and they each explore different types of art and how these can help youth express their emotions. The second set of Activities is the "Face to Face Dance Workshops" that includes video tutorials with dance and movement activities conceived to release stress.

In addition, we provide you with useful tips and feedback from our personal experience on implementing the workshops, that will guide you through the procedure and guarantee a successful implementation.

We really hope that this Booklet will constitute a practical guide and a handy tool to assist young people into regaining a mental and physical equilibrium and tackle distress and unpleasant feelings.

Thank you,
The DASS Partners

**IT'S NOT THE LOAD THAT
BREAKS YOU DOWN,
IT'S THE WAY YOU
CARRY IT!**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE DASS PROJECT

The “DASS – Dancing Against Stressful Situations” project was created taking into consideration the consequences of the Covid-19 crisis on people’s mental health and the effects of lockdown, especially on young people that felt stressed, tensed, and overloaded with emotions. Although young people are major users of digital tools and social networks, the new reality of social life during the pandemic has caused deprivation of freedom and interaction, which are considered vital elements for youngsters. Apart from mental health issues, a considerable percentage of youth has experienced physical health consequences, isolation, family relationship challenges, uncertainty about life plans and future, as well as online pressure and cyberbullying.

The project addresses the increased levels of stress faced by young people in difficult situations and traumatic experiences and develops creative approaches to combat the psychological issues that may affect them. It primarily focuses on the empowerment of young people, with a special attention to those living in disadvantaged situations or in vulnerable conditions, by helping them overcome stress and discomforts they may face in their daily lives.

More specifically, the DASS project includes the development and application of dance and other forms of art as tools to support youth to concentrate on themselves and become aware of their body, release stress, regain balance and as a result improve their quality of life and their relations with others.

The DASS project is cofounded by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ programme, KA220 – Cooperation Partnerships in Youth and it involves five partners from five different countries:



Cie Essevesse (France) – Lead partner of the project, based in Marseille, France co-directed by Sicilian choreographers Antonino Ceresia & Fabio Dolce. Both artists came together to combine their knowledge and artistic visions to develop the three main directions of the company: Creation, Education and Research on the therapeutic effects of dance & body expression
Find out more: <https://essevesse.com>



CEIPES (Italy) – International Centre for the Promotion of Education and Development is a non-profit organisation founded in 2007 and based in Palermo, Italy. It leads a Network of more than 8 European and extra European associations focused on Education, Training and Social Development
Find out more: <https://ceipes.org/>.



Fundacja Diversity Hub (Poland) – Diversity Hub Foundation (DH) is a non-profit organisation with the initial aim to provide expert support in the field of diversity management. They deliver knowledge, experience, and best practices and help business benefit from diversity and at the same time have an impact on social change

Find out more:

<https://www.diversityhub.pl>



Smart Umbrella (Greece) – Smart Umbrella Management Solutions operates as a smart hub and support centre for innovation, start-ups, scale-ups and creative industries. It constitutes a Virtual Business and Development Hub providing business development consulting through counselling, coaching, mentoring, VET-training, and support through European project activities. Find out more:

<https://www.smartumbrella.eu/>



Asociacija "Aktyvus jaunimas" (Lithuania) – Active Youth Association (AY) is a non-profit organisation that unites young leaders from Lithuania willing to work to facilitate an intercultural dialogue and enhance competences of the European youth.

Find out more: <https://activeyouth.lt/>

The project incorporates multiple activities aiming at producing three main results. The first result refers to the development and implementation of the “Dancing and Artistic Online Workshop” which includes the creation of the content of 5 Online Workshops and the online training of youth workers in all partner countries. The second result refers to the development of the present DASS Booklet containing methodologies, practices and activities to tackle all sorts of feelings generated from stressful events. The third, and final result, refers to the development of the App “Mind yourself” which is a self-help mobile application for youth combining mindfulness, dance and art.

1.2 DASS AND ITS OBJECTIVES



The DASS project deals with challenges affecting youth, creating an educational path through training, applying therapeutic effects of dance and other forms of art, associated with experiences lived through other artistic disciplines, divided into different workshops. The project develops a creative approach that may act in the long-term to benefit young people and their well-being while tackling the negative impacts of a possible crisis.

Objectives:

- Foster creative responses for youth living in difficult situations.
- Develop artistic sensibility while promoting well-being and tackling mental and physical stress of youth.
- Develop the ability to understand and describe feelings without fear of judgement and the ability of self-expression.
- Providing long term benefits for young people by applying methodologies of dance along with complementary artistic tools, for young people who are experiencing stress and discomfort as negative consequences of the pandemic.
- Promoting social inclusion, diversity, and tolerance as well as the intercultural dialogue.
- Foster the positive and educational use of digital tools among young people, creating a safe virtual learning environment.
- Enhance the competences of youth workers through the training on innovative methodologies to apply in their daily work.
- Improve capacity building of youth workers and enhance high quality of youth work.
- Enhance the ability of partners' staff to deal with youth challenges and improve the impact of the organisations in the field of youth.

It is a fact that during the pandemic many institutions on national and European level have conducted research on the consequences on the mental and physical health of people due to the measures taken throughout the covid-19 period. To raise awareness and be more proactive, health ministries and services have circulated advisory lists with proposed actions to stay healthy in body and mind. The most promising and effective actions suggested in these lists include taking up a hobby that involves art and/or engaging in physical exercise.

Moreover, desk research developed by the consortium partners in their countries suggests that similar activities, either public or private, are being developed more intensely after the pandemic ([Annex I](#)). These activities target the mental health wellbeing, especially of young people that are uncertain on how to deal with stress and anxiety. Tools that are used to develop these activities include multiple forms of art, the most effective and widely used being dance and body movement, drawing, creative writing, etc. Additionally, research has shown that young people turn to social media and relevant online applications to get support and empowerment in order to release stress ([Annex II](#)).



1.3 TARGET GROUPS

Young people nowadays are advanced users of technological advancements and social networks and tend to turn to these provisions to get support and solutions to their problems. To this effort, the DASS project provides the essential tools to both the people that can play a key role in helping youngsters and to the young people themselves.



The DASS Booklet, which contains good practices, methodologies, activities, and practical exercises, is addressed to professionals who work closely with young people and are putting their efforts into uplifting them and making their journey through adolescence smoother. Therefore, the DASS Booklet constitutes an innovative tool that can be used by youth workers in order to guide young people. To be more specific, in this context, youth workers include the following groups:

- Educators
- Teachers
- Trainers
- Artists
- Professionals of dance
- Art therapists
- Therapists
- Social workers
- Mentors
- Mediators
- Other figures dealing with youth

Indirectly, the DASS Booklet is addressed to young people since youth workers can use the proposed methodology and workshops with them to reduce their stress caused by stressful situations and unpredictable phenomena.

However, young people are directly addressed by the DASS project as well, through the development of the App “Mind Yourself” that contains tools to support their physical and mental balance. The targeted group of this initiative includes young people that fall in these categories:

- Are from 16 to 30 years of age
- Live in the suburbs and rural areas
- Live in disadvantaged conditions
- Come from rough neighborhoods
- Vulnerable youth
- Young migrants
- NEETs

2. DANCE AND ARTS AGAINST STRESS

Words are not enough to allow a person to fully express themselves. Often there are no words that can translate an emotional state or a feeling, and this is why artists use their medium to get something out of them, something that frequently cannot be defined in words, even by themselves. The only thing that makes sense to them, is their artwork. Through this procedure, they can free themselves – at least for a period of time – of that need of communicating that specific feeling or emotional state.

This is why we use art to help people feel better, and combat stress. Of course, through this program, we are not going to train artists; we are sharing some tools that stimulate the needed creativity, through the use of art mediums, to express feelings and develop self-awareness. This may help finding solutions when we feel stressed by a situation. Since art doesn't need to be necessarily understood, especially when it is abstract, and remains a singular way of expression, it can take away the pressure of using words that people need to understand, helping the full potential of expression, transforming the emotions caused by stress in colors, sounds, movement, poetry, images, and whatever medium a person relates to. Furthermore, when we look at what we produce through an artform, sometimes we can unlock the comprehension of ourselves about that specific topic addressed, and this comes out as a unique and personal experience.

The use of dance includes indeed everything mentioned above, however, the particular strength of this artform lies in the fact that the body movement is involved. **The body is the temple of the emotions, all our experiences leave a mark within our body.** If we let the movement express the emotions that may be stuck within our body, we can free ourselves from pain.

Furthermore, dance can enhance the integration within a group whilst promoting one's singularity via a playful atmosphere. Interaction with others can help overcome one's limits and increase communication skills. Feeling part of a group may also be very helpful when we feel submerged by stressful situations since we can share our feelings and learn from others' experiences.

ENJOY CREATING
YOUR OWN PATHS
THROUGH ART AND
DANCE!

2.1 WHAT CAN DANCE BE ?

Dance can take many forms and each human being can have their own definition of this word. Depending on our cultural background or our education, dance can be very different things. Dance is movement, and starting from this definition, you can attribute any meaning that makes sense to you. There are three vital things that are dancing all the time: the psyche, the heart, and the body parts moved by our breath; they are in constant movement, always in motion, they never stop. So, part of us is always dancing. Of course, there are training courses that allow people to learn specific techniques that come from the history of dance: folk dances (very different in function of each region of each country), ballet, contemporary, hip hop, ballroom, voguing, street dance, etc. However, there is always space for singular body expression, and this is what we want to address through this program.



2.2 THE CREATIVITY APPROACH

Creativity can be viewed from various perspectives, including natural, biological predisposition of the human mind or as the "thinking style," encompassing how we perceive, process, and make decisions with information. Therefore, creativity can be defined as a universal human trait, representing the potential of our minds to generate inner visions, construct ideas and assemble knowledge into something new and greater. Although some individuals may possess a greater natural inclination for creativity, the most important fact is that each of us can be creative, and we each have unique ways of expressing it!

In the DASS project, we approach creativity as a competence that can be learned, discovered, and mastered regardless of our innate predispositions. This approach views creativity as a combination of skills, experiences, knowledge, and attitudes that can be utilized in various situations. In this booklet, we aim to introduce you to the knowledge and best practices of creativity. Our focus is on unleashing CREATIVITY, which involves the attitude of trust towards oneself in order to find one's unique way. We propose a journey that includes the experience of different art forms, which may help in managing stress, expressing emotions, cultivating self-acceptance and thereby overcoming life challenges. What is your preferred means of self-expression? We hope that this booklet will assist you in identifying your unique approach to incorporating creativity and art into your daily life and youth work.

3. METHODOLOGY

The DASS Booklet offers 2 sets of Activities. The 1st Activity refers to four Online Workshops and the 2nd Activity to three Face to Face Dance Workshops.

An important and fundamental fact to bear in mind for the purposes of understanding the proposed methodology, is that being creative and making art are two different fields. In this present context we focus mainly on creativity because **ANYONE CAN BE CREATIVE!** ([The Creativity Approach](#))

Moreover, the reason behind the Online Workshops, lies in taking precautionary measures and being more prepared in case of another lockdown. However, it is possible to adapt the content for physical sessions and it is up to the facilitator to do so, by maintaining the original principles of the methodology.

The methodology we used for both sets of workshops uses creativity as a tool that favors a deep connection with one-self in order to face stress. It involves setting up a safe space, using ice-breaking activities, creative activities, and wrapping up the experience with an assessment session.

When it comes to the creative part, the core of the process, the activities are offered in such a way as to leave space for interpretation to the participants, they are not considered as exercises. An exercise implies a more or less correct way of conducting an activity, and for what we propose, there are no wrong or correct ways of participating in the activity, but there are as many ways as the number of participants since their interpretation of the activity is the most important thing at that specific moment. Within the frame proposed ([Activities](#)), when it comes to the creative part, the facilitator should simply open the activities and leave the participants to adapt themselves, in function of their understanding of what is said. There will be no right or wrong and no judgment either from the facilitators to the participants or from the participants toward their peers.

We propose this methodology in order to invite the participants to find solutions, their own solutions when they face a “problem”. Within our methodology, the 'problem is represented by the fact that the activities are open to multiple interpretations and therefore, multiple outcomes: **WHAT DO I DO?** By making their choice, they will stimulate their creativity and affirm somehow themselves and, no matter what outcome they will deliver, they will confront their solution in that present moment. This might help to unlock the participants' functioning when facing a stressful situation, helping them to find their own way of tackling it.

The duration of each activity proposed is very flexible in function of the participants' availability, however you will find suggested timing for each activity in the sessions below. Whether the workshops are facilitated online or face to face, the duration might differ, and the facilitator will judge it according to the correspondence of the group. On the other hand, the order of which the workshops are implemented is of great importance. The workshops, both online and face-to-face have been created in a chronological order, enhancing the introspection of participants gradually until they reach to their own conclusions. Therefore, you are advised to follow the order of the workshops as they are proposed.

The methodology used for both sets of activities is based on the same principles. However, there are certain crucial differences that have been detected during the testing phases of the DASS project. These include:

Online Workshops

The online workshops imply the use of different art forms: drawing/painting; music; writing; singing; dance; visual art (videos, photographs, etc.) in order to stimulate creativity. Each workshop includes an icebreaking activity, one or more creative tasks, and a personal and collective evaluation.

To participate in these workshops, there is no need for particular competences or skills, as the creative tasks will be interpreted by the participants in their own way and with their capabilities.

Participants will never be obliged to show the outcome of their creativity during the sessions, in order to maintain their experience as personal and intimate as they need, so that they can fully express themselves. However, participants will be able to share their work, if wished. This aspect is very important to take in consideration if the facilitator decides to lead these workshops in physical form.

We recommend an online meeting with the participants before the start of the program ([Workshop 0](#)) to explain its specificities and the rules for a safe virtual space. The promotion of a safe virtual space is crucial to our methodology and is further analyzed below ([Rule of Benevolence](#)).



Face to Face Dance Workshops

The dance workshops are composed of 4 sessions: the warmup, which is the same for the three workshops; the creative activities, which are presented with a progression throughout the program; the stretching, that remains the same for the three workshops; a space for sharing any feelings or comments by the participants.

Before the warmup, the facilitator should always ask the participants if they have any body issues, making sure they pay attention to their body: **we do not propose here a dance class but a workshop focused on expression and creativity.**

However, during the warmup and the stretching we share some specific exercises that must be adapted to the audience participating. More often, when in the presence of people with physical disabilities, the best way is to ask them to adapt themselves: they will know what they can do and how to avoid hurting themselves. In the presence of people with mental disabilities, the facilitator should lead the workshops alongside an expert in that specific disability.



3.1 WHY THIS METHODOLOGY ?



This methodology is specifically tailored to meet the needs of young people.

Adolescence and young adulthood are formative periods of human life when the mind is open to creative explorations, which enable individuals to construct their identity, acknowledge social responsibility and develop the ability to cope with stressful situations and regulate emotions. Therefore, creativity plays a vital role enabling individuals to grow and become fulfilled.

The adolescent mind is oriented to seek novelty and experiences, which are necessary for achieving cognitive and emotional maturity. As we transition from childhood to adulthood, we need to explore ourselves and the world around us to make decisions of who we are and set the direction in future life. Numerous neuroscience studies have demonstrated that the teenage phase is a time of significant change in the brain, where new connections are formed, and the brain itself reaches maturity, stability and a relatively permanent structure. However, this process often is very chaotic, generating doubts, unpleasant experiences or even a sense of loneliness and social isolation. It can be considered a naturally stressful period of life.

The methodology presented in this booklet is designed to support teenage development by allowing young people to explore their inner selves and find tools for self-expression. It is not a guidebook on how to become an artist or a dancer, but a comprehensive method for creating, reflecting, connecting mind and body and finding one's own path towards growth and coping with difficulties.

Imagine being a teenager, with your body changing, experiencing various new emotions, and wanting to be part of society, to have a voice and be independent. By sharing our methodology, we invite you to create a safe space that supports the developmental needs of youth, helping them achieve self-acceptance and relief from stressful experiences.

The presented methodology is recommended to be used within your group not only as separate activities, but as part of your daily work with young people.

**ENJOY FINDING YOUR
RHYTHM WITH THE
GROUP!**

3.2 IMPORTANT BEFORE STARTING



3.2.1 General Tips for Facilitators

Once a youth worker gets acquainted with the methodology, there are some important points to be aware of before starting. Based on personal experience, the partners of DASS project gathered specific tips for facilitators on how to use the given methodology to its fullest.

There are certain main guidelines to follow that are true in cases of facilitating online and offline activities. In the first part of this section, we provide youth workers with general tips to use while implementing the activities, and further on, we separate main points for online and offline activities. Last but not least, we give information on how to establish a Safe Space within the workshops.

General Tips

As a youth worker, it's important to be prepared to facilitate both face-to-face and online workshops. These tips are a good start on getting a better idea on how to provide your participants with a rich workshop experience. Whether you're working with one participant or a group, there are a few key tips to keep in mind to ensure a successful workshop.

It is recommended that you work **with at least one other facilitator** to guide the activity. This will help to provide support, ideas, and different perspectives. Remember that your role as a facilitator is **to guide the activity, not to judge the participants**. This point is important, because when a participant is feeling as being watched, he cannot fully relax and immerse into the creative activity. Every feeling and interpretation of a given task is welcomed and it's important to make sure that the participants feel supported.

When facilitating both face-to-face and online workshops, **managing time** is crucial. A facilitator can use time management according to what results they want from the workshops. Time could be used to achieve different goals: if a facilitator gives a scarce amount of time, it may encourage participants to finish the creative activities later on – so the participant takes more time on the activity on their own. On the other hand, if a facilitator gives a greater amount of time, it can make participants push themselves in the surplus of a given time – do more than the bare minimum. Play with time and be flexible, use it according to the goals you want to achieve. Keep track of time and communicate it to the participants, so they do not have to worry about it and they can focus on creativity. Moreover, make sure to **take breaks when necessary**.

Creation of a safe space (more info below) is one of the keys to a successful implementation. It is true in both cases: during the online and off-line activities. For the online activities, bear in mind that the participants might not know each other, be very different, from different environments and experiences, including the ones from disadvantaged backgrounds. Therefore, being attentive to each participant's needs and concerns is also important for ensuring that everyone feels heard and valued.

At the end of the activities, invite the participants to share their reflections, give them space to discuss, as useful conclusions are often raised. However, it's important not to force them to do so as this may make them uncomfortable.

Become recognized as an outstanding leader. A dynamic learning atmosphere must be maintained throughout the workshop by maintaining an upbeat attitude and high spirits. Celebrating the group's accomplishments, differences, and similarities can foster a sense of belonging and encourage a fruitful learning process for all parties involved. Even if some people opted out of participating in specific activities, it's crucial to show thanks for everyone's involvement and ideas at the end of the session.



Important point that is worth keeping in mind: by choosing to stay out of an activity, a participant is already making a specific choice of participation. Participants can take control and ownership of their learning and engagement when they are given the opportunity to decide how much they want to be involved in the activities. Some people might fully participate in every activity offered, while others might prefer to watch from a distance or abstain from some activities entirely. All choices are valid and should be respected. Participants who do not actively participate in one activity might be able to participate in the very same activity later on, in another moment, in another group, with another facilitator, so make sure to remember this point when facing a NO from a participant.

Overall, facilitating workshops can be a fun and rewarding experience for both the facilitator and the participants. By keeping these tips in mind, you can ensure that your workshops are successful and enjoyable for all involved.



Tips for the Online Activities

Facilitating an online workshop can be a challenging yet worthwhile experience. A successful online workshop requires careful preparation, clear communication, and a positive attitude.

To start with, **good technical preparation** is crucial. First, it is important to choose a suitable online platform. A facilitator must be familiar with the platform and get acquainted with the platform's tools and parameters: how to create breakout rooms, how to disable or enable microphones, how to play videos with sounds and so on. Secondly, participants should be informed upfront about the online websites and tools applications that will be used during each workshop. You might want to introduce online applications and tools in the beginning of the workshop and give some time for the participants to get familiar with how to use them, or, if possible, inform them beforehand through your means of communication. For smoother interaction and involvement, advise the participants to favor PCs instead of phones.

To continue with, qualifying for a successful online workshop requires preparing yourself and the participants on a mental level. Let the participants know the aim of the workshops and the expectations from them. Inform them about the interactiveness, artistry, and intimacy of the workshops. Meaning that during the workshops, and for getting the full experience, participants **should stay in a quiet and private space**, a room where they can focus, be themselves, be relaxed, without any interference.

Furthermore, the good preparation of the facilitator is extremely important. Get familiar with the ice-breaking activities and the workshop activities to be able to communicate them very clearly – clear communication in the online activities is crucial and can be trickier than during the face-to-face activities.

For the creation of a safe space online, it is important to make everyone heard and allow them to express their worries or limitations with the facilitator. This can be achieved by allowing participants to ask any questions or express themselves in a **private chat** on the working platform. More tips on creating a safe space are presented below.

In conclusion, facilitating an online workshop requires careful preparation, clear communication, and a positive attitude. Providing a safe and respectful space for all participants is essential to creating a dynamic and engaging learning environment. By following these tips, facilitators can ensure rewarding and successful online workshops for the parties involved.



Tips for the Face to Face Dance Activities

Whether we offer online or face-to-face workshops, the aim is always the same: to empower young people through the arts. With this programme, the face-to-face activities are developed mainly through dance, and a few considerations are necessary to ensure everyone's safety and comfort.

Before starting any physical activities, it's important to conduct a proper warm-up that is both effective and safe. Take the time to demonstrate each movement and ensure that participants understand how to perform them correctly. If you need to touch participants to demonstrate proper technique, **always ask for permission first**.

During the activities, it's important to create a fun and relaxed atmosphere that encourages participants to express themselves and engage with the tasks at hand. Encourage silliness and playfulness to ease any tension and make everyone feel comfortable. Remember that everyone has a unique personality, and **there's no wrong way to approach a task** or express oneself as long as it's done in a safe and respectful manner.

At the same time, it's important to ensure safety following any necessary guidelines or precautions. If a particular physical activity has the potential to be dangerous, make sure to **clearly communicate any necessary safety measures** and precautions to the participants. You can check tips for the warm-up and the stretching implementation in our video tutorials prepared by professionals (links: [Warm-up](#); [Stretching](#)).

Throughout the workshop, be sure to actively listen to the participants and provide support and encouragement where needed. Encourage participants to support one another as well; this will help build a stronger sense of community and cohesiveness within the group.

Summing up, to facilitate a face-to-face workshop requires careful attention to safety, while also creating an environment that is fun and engaging. By following these guidelines and fostering a supportive atmosphere, you can ensure a successful and enjoyable workshop for everyone involved.

DASS

DANCE AGAINST STRESSFUL SITUATIONS





3.2.2 Rules of Benevolence for a Safe Space (virtual and face to face)

The following rules are collected to ensure a safe virtual space and more in general to prevent cyberbullying. They must be regarded as tips or guidelines for youth workers who carry out workshops online or with a blended approach.

Internal rules for a safe virtual space

► Communication - Vocabulary

- The facilitator should ask the participants their name or their nicknames and their gender, to be sure each participant is gendered as they want and use an inclusive language.
- The facilitator should ask the participants if there is something that might offend them, or invite them to send a private message, if something said has been inappropriate.
- When it comes to dance activities, the facilitator should ask first if there are any body issues, any pain, and make sure each participant respects their body and its state.
- The facilitator should invite the participants to use the "Raise Hand" option, if they have questions or need to tell something whilst someone else is talking.
- The facilitator should make sure the participants have space to share their feelings or ideas.

► Safe virtual space

When scheduling the meeting:

- Put a security password to join the meeting (only users who have the invite link or passcode can join).
- Place a waiting room, in this way only users admitted by the host can join the meeting.
- Video settings for participants: as host or co-host of the meeting, enable at the beginning all the settings related to meeting security through the green shield button on the top left side of the screen.
- Choose the advanced options that you need as mute participants upon entry or approve or block entry for users from specific countries/regions.
- Never publish online the link to the meeting.



When implementing the meeting, on Security settings you can:

- Lock meeting.
- Enable waiting room.
- Hide profile pictures.
- Allow participants to share screen, chat, rename themselves, unmute themselves and start video.
- Participants should not try to distract each other.

Suggestion:

Always keep in mind that the online meeting needs to be handled with the same consideration and respect of a face-to-face meeting.

Alert for Cyber Bullying

Cyberbullying: the activity of using the internet to harm or frighten another person, especially by sending them unpleasant messages.



Cyberbullying is bullying with the use of digital technologies. It can take place on social media, messaging platforms, gaming platforms and mobile phones. It is a repeated behavior, aimed at scaring, angering or shaming the targeted people. Examples include:

- spreading lies about or posting embarrassing photos or videos of someone on social media.
- sending hurtful, abusive, or threatening messages, images, or videos via messaging platforms.
- impersonating someone and sending mean messages to others on their behalf or through fake accounts.

Face-to-face bullying and cyberbullying can often happen alongside each other. But cyberbullying leaves a digital footprint – a record that can prove useful and provide evidence to help stop the abuse.

Cyberbullying, in its different forms, is very common, especially among children and adolescents and is facilitated by the increased use of technology.

The consequences of cyberbullying could be severe, especially on mental health, potentially leading to suicide in extreme cases.

Although parents, schools and online social networking sites are encouraged to provide a safe online environment, little is known about the legal avenues which could be utilized to prevent cyberbullying or act as a deterrent.

To learn more, visit the following link: [Science Direct - Cyberbullying](#)

3.3 FACILITATORS' FEEDBACKS ON THE WORKSHOPS

3.3.1 Feedbacks from the Online Workshops

The DASS Online Workshops were implemented in the Partners' Countries, namely, France, Italy, Poland, Greece, and Lithuania. Six online pathways have been designed to help young people to cope with stress through art therapy tools, and help us develop the outcomes of the DASS project (the content of this booklet and the content of the APP) as well as refine the 4 online proposed workshops. The online format was challenging and the consortium has been unanimous on the fact that after COVID, the participants of artistic workshops prefer to meet in person and avoid webcams. However, it has been important for us to keep an online format in order to be able to measure the impact these workshops might have in case of a future lockdown. For some young participants, it has been particularly challenging, but older participants found it engaging. Participants from disadvantaged backgrounds found the programs helpful. The facilitator's positive attitude and respect for privacy and emotions were crucial. The workshops focusing on dance and movement received the most positive reviews and were the most popular. Safe space was important and easier to create after participants got to know each other. Good preparation also proved crucial, including a quiet environment, and seeking recommendations from youth centers for participants. Overall, the programs were effective in addressing stress and helping participants learn new techniques for coping and expressing their emotions.



In France, the facilitators encountered challenges such as participant dropouts and difficulties with the online format. However, they adapted to the participants' needs, repeated workshops, and created a safe space for artistic expression. The participants appreciated the program's variety, virtual tools, playfulness, and workshop structure, though they expressed a desire for face-to-face interaction. The facilitators received positive feedback and valued the opportunity to enhance their skills. [Here you can have a look at the participants' feedback.](#)



In Italy, the training targeted socially disadvantaged youth. The participants showed interest but struggled with the online format. They found drawing emotions effective and desired offline experiences. The facilitator adjusted their approach based on participant feedback, creating an inclusive and safe space. Technical difficulties and social media engagement posed challenges, but the methodologies and facilitator were highly regarded. The facilitator recommended a hybrid format and emphasized preparation and inclusivity.



The Greek facilitator faced challenges with scheduling and participants' hesitations. However, they fostered a friendly atmosphere, resulting in creativity and positive experiences. The facilitator received praise for creating a safe and comfortable environment and encouraging relaxation and self-expression. They identified areas for improvement and expressed personal growth from the training. [Here you can have a look at the participants' feedback.](#)



The Lithuanian facilitator faced difficulties in gathering participants but found progress and enjoyment throughout the online workshops. They emphasized the challenges of involving reserved participants and provided recommendations for clearer communication and participant selection. Stepping out of their comfort zone, the facilitator gained valuable lessons.



In Poland, participants faced significant stress and initial hesitations. The facilitator gradually encouraged participation and individual harmony. Older participants showed more openness, while younger adolescents preferred working independently. Individual approach and addressing difficulties were crucial. Participants found the experience supportive and inspiring, but active engagement should be considered beforehand. The facilitator suggested to favor the face to face workshops for younger participants and emphasized the importance of the respect of privacy and voluntary participation.

Overall, the facilitators highlighted the importance of adapting to participants, creating a safe and inclusive space, and valuing individual needs. They emphasized the benefits of art and creative methodologies, personal involvement, and providing diverse experiences. Encouraging participants to try new things while respecting their preferences, self-knowledge, and emotions was considered essential.

3.3.2 Feedbacks from the Face-to-Face Dance Workshops

Based on the feedback from 10 youth workers who participated in the international training of the DASS project, the dance activities and methodology used during the sessions were highly regarded. The warm-up session was particularly appreciated for preparing both the body and mind for the creative activities, with the majority of participants expressing their intention to incorporate the learned techniques into their daily work with young people. Participants found the warm-up session to be effective in breaking the ice, boosting energy levels, and creating a safe space for movement. Some suggestions for improvement included diversifying the exercises and considering the needs of participants with injuries or limitations.

Participants found the workshop **'Shape your movement to dance'** particularly valuable for introducing new tools and language of expression. It allowed the participants to express their ideas freely through dance and encouraged movement through easy shapes.

Overall, participants found the workshops to be useful and well-structured. They appreciated the adaptability of the methodology to different situations. They also recommended ensuring a variety of music during the activities and giving the participants the option to work individually or in groups.

The dance-based activities were successful in helping participants explore their emotions and express themselves through movement. The stress-related activities were particularly helpful in understanding and managing stress. In addition, the stretching techniques learned in the workshops received positive feedback, with the majority of the participants indicating their intention to incorporate them into their daily work with young people.

Based on this feedback, it is evident that the dance activities and methodology employed in the workshops have the potential to be beneficial for youth. They can help young people analyze the effects of traumatic events, address their needs, and empower disadvantaged individuals. These activities provide new tools and techniques for youth workers to incorporate into their non-formal activities, allowing young people to explore different forms of expression and cope with their challenges. **It is important to note that while these activities have therapeutic benefits, they should not replace professional mental health care or crisis interventions.** However, when used appropriately, movements, dance, and other forms of art can serve as valuable tools for youth workers in supporting young people through their journey of healing and personal growth.



4. ACTIVITIES



4.1 Online Workshops

Below you will find materials, structure, and information on implementing the 4 Online Workshops of DASS artistic and empowering online training to be held in an online or physical form. Each workshop focuses on a single artistic technique used to identify feelings, express oneself and cope with stress. The 4 Workshops are preceded by an introductory workshop (Workshop 0) whose aim is to introduce the DASS topics and objectives to the participants.



WORKSHOP 0: INTRODUCTION TO THE DASS TRAINING

General Aim: Introduce the DASS online training and its online workshops to the participants.

Participants: Maximum 10 young people

Estimated total time: 30' minutes

Ice Breaking Activity: 10' max

Facilitate the presentation of each participant, including the facilitator (with at least their name or nickname and their gender, if they wish to express it).

Integration activity:

Online: [Emotion wheel](#).

The facilitator shares the screen with the Emotion Wheel and each participant will play the emotion that randomly comes out, trying to convey that feeling through facial expression and body movement.

Face to face: create a QR code of the online wheel of emotions or build a wheel yourself: cut a circle of paper board, divide it in cloves and draw an emoticon in each one. Cut an arrow of paperboard and assemble them with brads.

Then, you will do exactly the same as for the online workshop.



Presentations

- Present [The Rules of Benevolence](#) – how to organise a virtual safe space.
- The facilitator should present the [DASS project](#) and inform about the 'Mind yourself APP'.
- Present all the tools that will be used and the needed material so that the participants get familiar to them, such as [Jamboard](#).
- Stress the fact that the 4 workshops are tailored for them to live an intimate experience, however they will be allowed to produce some content for social networks if they wish to be part of the DASS community.
- Reminder of what Cyberbullying is, and the importance of avoiding it.
- Ask the participants if they can be alone during the 4 workshops and, if they can, suggest they find a calm space.
- Define the rules to feel secure according to the suggestions of all the participants.

Materials & Logistics

Online:

- Internet, personal computer or tablet with a camera, the used platform (zoom, whereby or google meet), PPT.
- [Emotion Wheel](#)

Face to face:

- QR or physical emotion wheel (for physical form).

WORKSHOP 1: STRESSFUL SITUATIONS & ART

General Aim: Analysis of the stressful factors in young people's daily life, above all those incurred since the pandemic began, and introduction to the methodologies of dance and movement.

Specific Objectives:

- Introduce young people to the identification of their emotions by using creative methods.
- Listen to their needs.
- Express themselves through painting and drawing.

Participants: 10 young people

Estimated total time: 90' minutes

Introduction (10' max):

- Remind the participants to keep a [safe space](#).
- Present the main objectives of the Workshop
- Show the [dance video](#) created during the pandemic or [this video](#) in order to show an example of creativity that has been developed during the pandemic to the participants.
- Present the structure of Workshop 1: the participants will go through an Ice Breaking Activity, some Creative Activities and a Self and common assessment.

Ice Breaking Activity (5' max):

Invite each participant to present themselves by saying their name/nickname, reminding their gender and making a movement that represents them.

(e.g. "Joe" says his name, his gender (him) and makes a wave with his arm).

Everybody will repeat the names, the genders and the movements of the previous persons in the chronological order.

At the end of the presentation, the last person will repeat the name, gender, and movement of each participant in the right chronological order. Don't hesitate to offer some help!

Medium:

We present a creative method of analysis through drawing/painting, during which the participants will be able to express themselves, without any judgment. They will be able to choose a virtual drawing/painting or a physical one. [see "materials" below]

Please refer to the [Methodology](#) above.

Creative Activities (30' min)

1st activity (5' min)

Participants should attribute:

- one color to the period of their life before the pandemic,
- one color to the pandemic period,
- one color for the present moment.

2nd activity (15' min)

Participants should now draw:

- a trait from A to B representing their life before the pandemic (any shape allowed). (5' min)
- a trait from A to B representing their life during the pandemic (any shape allowed). (5' min)
- a trait from A to B representing their life now (any shape allowed). (5' min)

3rd activity (10' min)

Invite the participants to tell their story before, during and after the pandemic, by marking a sheet of paper, e.g. write, draw, color, etc., taking into consideration what they have discovered in the 2 previous activities (virtual option permitted). They should finish their activity with some trait(s) and color(s) they would like to tend to. (Make sure you answer the participants' questions according to the methodology!)

Debriefing & Evaluation:

We propose a creative evaluation of the experience through Google Jamboard.

Suggested question: – How do you feel now? Have you ever tried to give shape and color to your emotions? Do you find it useful?

Optional Activities:

If the participants wish to be part of the DASS community online, you should remind them to be as creative as they wish in order to convey their message through social media. We warmly invite you to always ask them to tag [@dass_project](https://www.tiktok.com/@dass_project) on Tik Tok and [@dassproject1](https://www.instagram.com/dassproject1) on Instagram Reel, and use the **#dassproject**.

Materials & Logistic:

Paper, colors, painting, internet, personal computer or tablet with a camera, the used platform (zoom or others)

Free online painting/drawing websites:

- [sketch together](#)
- [Kelki](#)
- [Sumo paint](#)
- [Aggie](#)

Free Music:

- [Freemusicarchive.org](#)
- [Epidemicsound.com](#)
- [Freesound.org](#)
- [YouTube Audio Library](#)

WORKSHOP 2: THE SOUND OF EMOTIONS

General Aim: Tailoring the therapeutic approach according to the issues raised in the previous workshop. Working on stressful situations, distress, fears, and reactions.

Specific Objectives:

- Identify feelings.
- Express them through music and words.
- Share emotions.
- Listen to each other.

Participants: 10 young people

Estimated total time: 90' minutes



Introduction (5' min):

Always remind the participants to keep a [safe space](#).

Present the structure of Workshop 2: the participants will go through an Ice Breaking Activity, some Creative Activities and a Self and common assessment.

Ice Breaking Activity (5' min):

"Who is the Orchestra director?"

Choose one person to be "it" and leave the plenary room (in the online version sent to a breakout room). Then choose a second person that will be the orchestra director among the online participants (players).

From that moment, the orchestra director will produce a simple sound (e.g. clapping hands or pulsing on the chest) that everyone should reproduce simultaneously. The director will then change the sound and the others should follow, and so on.

Before "it" returns inside the room, the facilitator should ask the players to avoid staring at the director in order to avoid revealing their identity. To do so, the players should rapidly follow the sounds made by the orchestra director with nonchalance.

When "it" comes back to the plenary room, they have three guesses to identify the orchestra director.

Medium:

During this workshop, the creative mediums will include sounds, words, poetry, music and songs. The participants will have virtual options [see "materials" below].

Creative Activities (30' min):

1st activity (2' min):

- Invite the participants to write down a few key words (between 6 and 10) from their last creation/production made during Workshop 1.

2nd activity (3' min):

- Ask them to create (by themselves) a rhythm or pick an already existing one (duration of 30 sec - 1 min) by clapping hands or any noise they can make. You can use [BeepBox](#).

3rd activity (3' min):

- Invite them to create a song (rap, or poetry) inspired by the words chosen (including those words in their song) using the created or chosen rhythm.

4th activity:

- Invite each participant to share their song with the group (if they wish).

Debriefing & Evaluation:

Jamboard: use free creative ways to reply to the questions using jamboard tools

Suggested question: What kind of emotion do you stress from your song?

Optional Activities:

If the participants wish to be part of the DASS community online, you should remind them to be as creative as they wish in order to convey their message through social media. We warmly invite you to always ask them to tag [@dass_project](#) on Tik Tok and other social media (Instagram Reel [@dassproject1](#)) and use the [#dassproject](#).

Materials & Logistic:

Paper, pen or pencil, social media, internet, personal computer or tablet with camera, the used platform.

Link to virtual writing tools:

- [Storybird](#)
- [Story Jumper](#)
- [Beepbox](#)

Free Music:

- [Freemusicarchive.org](#)
- [Epidemicsound.com](#)
- [Freesound.org](#)
- [YouTube Audio Library](#)



WORKSHOP 3 : EXPRESS YOURSELF

General Aim: Working on expressing the feelings through movement and developing the connexion with oneself and the others.

Specific Objectives:

- Work in duets.
- Express oneself through dance and movements.
- Connect with others through movement.
- Share emotions.
- Create a choreography with another person.

Participants: 10 young people

Estimated total time: 90' minutes

Introduction (5' min):

Always remind the participants of the rules for the determination of a [safe space](#). Present the structure of Workshop 3: Express yourself.

Ice Breaking Activity (5' max):

Emotional shower:

Invite participants to stand up and reproduce a shower moment, to wash away the emotional and body tensions. They will start from the head, massaging shoulders and arms, passing through the body and finishing with legs and feet.

Medium:

During this workshop the medium used will be dance and body expression. At some point of the workshop, the participants will work in duets (this represents the first creative-interactive activity of the program).



Creative Activities (40' min):

1st activity (10' min) – Relaxation moment:

- Invite the participants to close their eyes (if possible) to connect with the inhale and exhale for at least 2' min.
- Invite them now to imagine a pleasant place where they feel at ease, for at least 3'-5' min.
- Ask them to imagine a dance in that place, for at least 2-3 minutes.
- Bring the participants back to focus on their breathing one last time and, after 1 minute, invite them to open their eyes.

(Example of a relaxing music to be shared with the participant)

2nd activity (5' min):

- From the imagined dance, the participants should choose and experiment with 5 movements.

3rd activity (10' min):

- Split the participants in duets randomly (online: breakout rooms)
- Ask each duet to create a choreography starting from the 10 movements they have found (5 each person). They could also draw inspiration from the use of the camera shown in the [video](#) created during the pandemic and shared during the presentation of Workshop n1.

4th activity (15 min):

- Invite each duet to show their choreography to the rest of the group.

Debriefing & Evaluation:

Jamboard: use free creative way to reply to the questions using jamboard tools

Suggested question: How did you feel during the interaction with your partner?

Optional Activities:

If the participants wish to be part of the DASS community online, you should remind them to be as creative as they wish in order to convey their message through social media. We warmly invite you to always ask them to tag [@dass_project](#) on Tik Tok and other social media (Instagram Reel [@dassproject1](#)) and use the #dassproject.

Materials & Logistic:

- Music, social media, internet, personal computer or tablet, the used platform
- [Link to the proposed music](#)

WORKSHOP 4: POSITIVE STRATEGIES

General Aim: Working on creating physical and mental positive responses.

Specific Objectives:

- Identify a valuable coping strategy.
- Match art and coping strategy.
- Provide creative solutions.
- Working in groups.

Participants: 10 young people

Estimated total time: 90' minutes



Introduction (10' max):

Always remind the participants of the rules for the determination of a [safe space](#). Present the structure of Workshop 4: Positive strategies.

Ice Breaking Activity (5' max):

Option 1 – “Can you hear me now?”

This is a teambuilding and cooperative activity that consists of one of the participants (the descriptor) describing an image for the others (the drawers) to guess and draw. The image can be generated by the [following program](#).

The drawers should be as precise as possible, according to the description. At the end of the activity, the descriptor shows the image, and the drawers show theirs.

(This activity is recommended when the facilitator needs a workshop that enables the participants to practice communication skills and teamwork values, as it stimulates accuracy for the person describing the image, and concentration for the person listening).



Option 2 – Spreadsheet Art

This is an activity that can be useful online.

For the realization of this activity, the following spreadsheet '[template](#)' is required (please make sure to make a copy of this template before using it). The group should reproduce the given image. In order to do so, each participant should write the numbers corresponding to the colors (as you can see on the left table, e.g. number 1 corresponds to red, and so on – more explanation below), on the cases of the sheet. The participants will only have 10 minutes to make the best replica of the given image.

Explanation: By writing a number on the cells, you will be able to color them. The number corresponds to one color according to the table you can see on the left side of the screen. If you click on the color, the correspondent number will appear on the fx of the excel file.

This activity is recommended when the facilitator wants to dynamize the meeting.

Medium:

During this workshop, the participants will use their communication skills in order to develop autonomy, reflection, cooperation and creativity.

The participants will form 2 groups of 5 people (gender balanced) in order to work together and find a new creative activity, conceived to help young people to face stressful situations, with a positive approach.

Creative Activities (30' min):**1st activity:**

- Invite each participant to think of the tool(s) that brought positive responses during the previous workshops.

2nd activity:

- Create 2 breakout rooms for 2 groups of 5 people.
- Invite each participant to share their chosen tool(s) (e.g., dancing, movements, drawing, poetry, playing music etc.) to their peers.

3rd activity:

- Each group should now invent and propose a new creative activity according to the issues raised during the 2nd activity.

Debriefing & Evaluation:

Jamboard: use free creative way to reply to the questions using jamboard tools

Suggested question: What is your vision now on the impact of arts?

Optional Activities:

If the participants wish to be part of the DASS community online, you should remind them to be as creative as they wish in order to convey their message through social media. After this workshop you can invite the participants to use their new activity (experiencing the concept they developed through the 3rd activity of Workshop 4) to create some social network content as a group.

We warmly invite you to always ask them to tag [@dass_project](#) on Tik Tok and other social media (Instagram Reel [@dassproject1](#)) and use the [#dassproject](#).

Materials & Logistic:

- Social media, internet, personal computer or tablet, the used platform.
- Link to [generator](#).
- Link to [spreadsheet art template](#) (make a copy).

Activities proposed by our participants after Workshop 4:

The provided draft of the workshops designed by young people during the practical session of Workshop 4 aims to help participants connect, express themselves, and develop their creativity. You will find the French and Italians participants' invented workshop in the [Annex III](#) of this Booklet.

4.2 FACE TO FACE DANCE WORKSHOPS

In this paragraph you will find the description of the three dance workshops along with the tutorials.

We created six tutorials for you and they are uploaded in the following [YouTube DASS playlist](#).

The tutorial [Welcome to the DASS programme](#) helps you understand the methodology with some feedback from the participants.

The [Warm Up](#) tutorial presents the warmup activities to be conducted at the beginning of the workshops and the [Stretching](#) one presents the stretching exercises to be led at the end of the workshops (both of the tutorials remain the same for all three workshops and are presented in real time, as if taught live).

The 3 last tutorials (of which you will find the links below) present the dance activities of each workshop: they show the creative experience of the participants who attended the testing phase of the project and they remain an example of how the activities can look like.

Please make sure you watch the tutorials and carefully read the description of the dance activities below along with the [Safe Space](#) and the [Tips for Facilitators](#) before leading these workshops.

Workshop 1: Shape your movement to Dance

This workshop is conceived to stimulate the creativity of the participants and help them create their dance vocabulary to facilitate their expression and communication.

Warm up (approx. 10 min):

This activity is designed to lighten the mood and cut the tension among the participants, move the body joints and warm up the muscles in order to prepare the dance activities.

You should always ask the participants if they have any particular body issues before starting and asking them to respect their body and their limits.

You can use it also at the beginning of another workshop or group sessions with your participants.

Please follow the [tutorial](#) carefully and adapt if needed by your groups.

Remember, it will be the same for the 3 dance sessions.

Activities:

- The facilitator invites the participants to pick 3 shapes: one easy shape, one more complex and the last one even more complex, and draw them on a paper sheet (approx. 3min). Please follow the instructions according to the [tutorial](#).

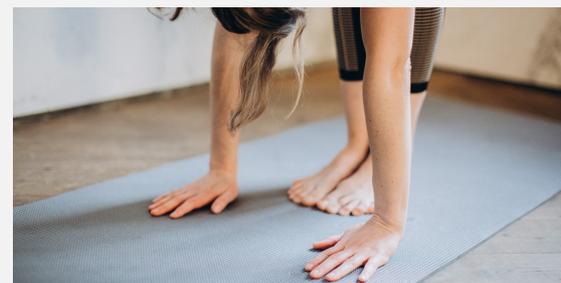


- The participants should now split into duets. When ready, the facilitator invites them to pick 3 joints, different from their partner, and create three movements representing the 3 shapes they have chosen. They should also pick a journey within the room, covering the amplitude of the room, going through: lying on the floor, standing tall, and moving in between the two. Within this journey, they should include the movements they have created in the order and the speed they decide (they can combine the movements as they wish). (approx. 15 min)
- When ready, they should show their journey and movements to their partners and combine them to create a choreography together, the way they wish (approx. 30 min).
- Now, it's time for each duet to show their choreography to the rest of the group, if they wish.

Stretching and deeper connection with oneself (approx. 15 min):

This activity is designed to stretch the muscles, mobilize the spine, release the body tensions and connect with the body senses in the present moment.

Important: this activity is very helpful against stress by itself and should be suggested as a good daily practice among young people and everyone else. You can use it also at the end of another workshop or group sessions with your participants. Please follow the [tutorial](#) in our playlist. It will remain the same for the three workshops.



Assessment of the session:

This part of the workshop is designed to allow the participants to share their feelings, insights, comments about the experience in order to verbalize, if wished, their emotions and open an opportunity of a different medium of expression.

The participants should never be obliged to share something in the big group; the facilitator should always favor the body expression during these workshops.

It will present the same principle for the three workshops.

Workshop 2: Color your feelings and Dance

This workshop is conceived to use dance as a personal and collective way of expressing emotions.

Warm up (approx. 10 min)

Please look at the [tutorial](#).

Activities:

- The facilitator invites the participants to lay down onto the floor and guide them through an imaginary journey to relax and abandon the body weight onto the floor, creating a mental space where they feel at ease and where they can connect with their senses, emotions, and feelings. Please follow the guiding-voice that you will find in the [tutorial](#) (starting at 1'22) and respect the timing.
- At the end, the facilitator invites the participants to identify the three strongest feelings they have and attribute a color for each of them.
- Now the facilitator invites them to stand up carefully and wash out those feelings by bouncing on their legs, shaking their body, making some noises with their voice as they bounce (using the sound of the 'a' vowel for example) and resume a body state ready to move (approx. 10 min).
- The participants should now attribute 2 movements per color they have identified, one with the upper body and one with the lower body, and they can be as long as they wish (approx. 10 min).
- When ready, they should form trios and teach one another their movements, combine them as they wish and pick a journey within the room in order to create a choreography. Within the choreography, they could include solos, duets, trios, unisons, and let their creativity be expressed (approx. 20 min).

- Now it's time for them to show their choreography to the rest of the participants.

Stretching and connection with oneself (approx. 15 min)

Please look at the [tutorial](#).

Assessment of the session

Please use the same methodology of the previous workshop.



Workshop 3: Dance your story

This workshop is conceived to connect with personal experiences, process them and use creativity in order to promote personal development.

Warm up (approx. 10 min)

Please look at the [tutorial](#).

Activities:

- The facilitator invites the participants to write down some dance steps they know. They should also invent some new steps that they think should be included in the dance vocabulary. (approx. 5 min)
- When ready, they should put all the steps together in order to have a list. The invented one should be underlined.
- The participants should take a few minutes to go through the list and explore movement about some of the dance steps. (approx. 10 min)
- Now, the facilitator invites the participants to find a spot in the room where they feel good, find a comfortable position and close their eyes to recall two events that happened in their lives, one where they felt exciting stress, and one where they felt unpleasant stress. They should visualize the body state connected to the 2 different experiences. Please follow the guiding-voice that you will find in the [tutorial](#) and respect the timing. (approx. 1'58sec)
- They are now invited to form duets and talk to their partner about the experience they just had and show the body states they identified. (approx. 5 min)
- Now the facilitator invites the participants to form groups of 4 people and tell a story through choreography. The vocabulary used should come from the list they have made including half of existing dance steps and half of invented steps. (approx. 30 min)
- When ready, they should show their story.

Stretching and connection with oneself (approx. 15 min)

Please look at the [tutorial](#).

Assessment of the session

Please use the same methodology of the previous workshops.





Recommendations

Recommended clothes:

Comfortable clothes (avoiding jeans and tight clothes).

Material needed:

- Speakers with BT or jack connection for music.
- Pens, pencils, colors, paper sheets.
- Flipchart.
- A dance studio or any place that can allow people to dance (make sure the space is safe and warm enough).

Suggested music:

You can use any music you like in order to help manage the atmosphere within the group. Make sure it helps with the purpose of the activity:

- during the warmup make sure to use cheering up music;
- during the activities that invite people to concentrate, make sure to use calm music;
- when it comes to the creative moments, make sure you alternate cheering up music with calm music and let the participants choose their own music when they share their choreography;
- for stretching make sure to use relaxing music.

CONCLUSION

The DASS Booklet is a tool developed in the framework of the DASS Project; an Erasmus+ project aiming at empowering young people, especially those living in disadvantaged situations or vulnerable conditions, by creating innovative approaches for combating stress and anxiety. To this end, the Booklet has been developed to offer creative methodologies to enhance your capacity building as youth worker and give you some tools in order to apply dance and other forms of art to support your groups in releasing stress and regain balance and control of their lives and their relations with others.

After have set the foundations for the development of the proposed workshops by analyzing the results of both primary and desk research in each partner country ([ANNEX I](#)) and gathering information from the target group – young people – in order to understand their needs in stress management ([ANNEX II](#)), the partners of the DASS consortium warmly and surely invite you to contribute in the dissemination of this Booklet and the 'Mind yourself' APP within your network and your groups.

Having in mind the stimulation of creativity that the DASS project conveys and the power of arts in transforming people, JOIN US on this amazing journey and HELP youngsters develop SELF-EXPRESSION and CREATIVITY!

LINKS OF INTEREST

[Beautiful Mind International](#) project aims to educate people what is mental health, its issues, and ways to overcome them.

[Dance Against Bullying](#) is an Erasmus+ Project aiming at tackling the phenomenon of bullying among young people using the tools of contemporary dance and nurturing an innovative methodology.

[Improve by Move](#) is an Erasmus+ Project which aims to share some bases of dance for youth workers in order to favor the use of movement among youngsters.

[Lifelong Dancing](#) is an Erasmus+ Project aiming at sharing a dance pathway for adult education in order to foster self-empowerment and inclusion.

[Skill IT](#) for Youth project is a European initiative aiming to increase the quality of youth work, combining higher levels of excellence and attractiveness in services, obtained through the digitalization of youth work.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: TRANSNATIONAL RESEARCH

Methodologies:

The partners of our consortium developed transnational research on the initiatives being undertaken across our countries to utilize dance, art, and social media to empower and support youth facing uncertainty and mental health challenges due to COVID-19. These initiatives aim to promote personal and social well-being, address bullying and offer therapeutic approaches like dance therapy, music therapy and art therapy. Some countries have government support and established programs, while others rely on private initiatives and NGOs. Challenges such as fundings, resources and accessibility remain, and there is a need for creative approaches involving youth workers, educators, and professionals in dance and art.



In Italy, projects like D&MY, APID, DAB, and Love Life and Dance, promote personal and social well-being through dance and movement and address bullying and well-being. Social media initiatives like YEPP Media Italy and #EUDEFENDERS promote relevant topics and cultural heritage. However, the research emphasizes the need for support beyond technological tools and social media, and calls for a creative approach involving youth workers, educators, and professionals in dance and art.



Art and dance therapy are increasingly being used in Poland for youth mental health, incorporating techniques such as fairy-tale therapy, bibliotherapy, choreotherapy, music therapy, and theater therapy. Research shows positive impacts on mental health, including reduced anxiety and depression, improved self-esteem, body awareness and social relationships. Challenges include fundings and resources, but increasing public awareness and collaboration with mental health providers could help address these issues.



In France, partnerships between Public Health France and Fil Santé Jeunes offer anonymous services and online resources for young people, but there is a lack of widely available artistic tools like art therapy or dance for youth. Despite dance's popularity on social media, there is no mobile application that allows young people to connect with their creativity through contemporary dance and choreographic creation related to mental health. Addressing this gap could provide new avenues for supporting youth mental health in France.



Governmental efforts for utilizing dance, movement, and art for youth empowerment are limited in Greece, but private initiatives by professionals offer various practices such as dance and movement therapy, painting, drawing, and writing. Online applications offering relaxation exercises, breathing exercises, stress assessments, music, and anti-stress games are widely used. Despite limited government support, private initiatives and international projects are contributing to youth empowerment through dance, movement and art in Greece.



In Lithuania, NGOs like Youth Line and initiatives like Capoeira Connects Europe and Beautiful Mind International use dance, martial arts, art therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy to support young people. Organizations like Dance-Movement Therapy Association conduct research and offer therapy sessions and there are also apps that promote mental well-being. However, further efforts are needed to increase accessibility, digitalization, networking and dissemination of these practices to reach more young adults.

In conclusion, the use of dance, art and social media to support youth mental health and well-being is gaining traction in our partners' countries. The positive impacts of these initiatives on youth mental health are evident, but challenges such as fundings, resources and accessibility need to be addressed. Further efforts are needed to increase awareness, collaboration and dissemination of these practices, and to ensure that youth facing uncertainty and mental health challenges receive the necessary support through creative and innovative approaches involving dance, art and social media.

Survey:

The project combines two significant and relevant keywords: art and stress. DASS has a noble objective: to enable youth to use art as a tool to overcome challenging situations. Yet, the way how to do it cannot be groundless.

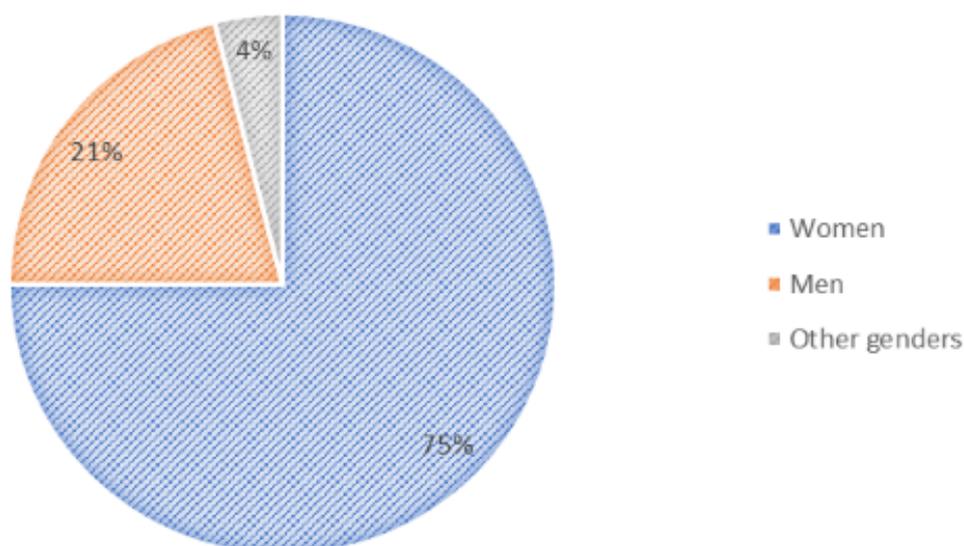
As the main goal of the project is to help young adults to deal with stress using art, first of all, it was needed to clarify what exactly could be improved. The questionnaire served for such research. The survey was meant to represent the situation as it is, as it was during the pandemic and what is missing in the youngsters' lives, regarding mental health.

As a result, the partner countries conducted a questionnaire to gather insights on how young people engage with art during stressful situations. The questionnaire asked youth to share their experiences with different art forms and their areas of interest. Given the impact of the pandemic, the questionnaire also explored whether young adults were actively practicing or missing out on certain art forms due to restrictions. Additionally, the partners sought to understand whether art was being utilized as a coping mechanism during this challenging period. Furthermore, the questionnaire examined the role of social media in dealing with stress, including whether it was perceived as helpful and actively utilized by youth.

Based on the analysis of the research, online workshops for youth workers were created. The online workshops are built on the methodology and the activities and best suit youngsters' needs according to the questionnaire analyzed below. Therefore, the survey served as a tool to create the methodology on the report of the analysis.

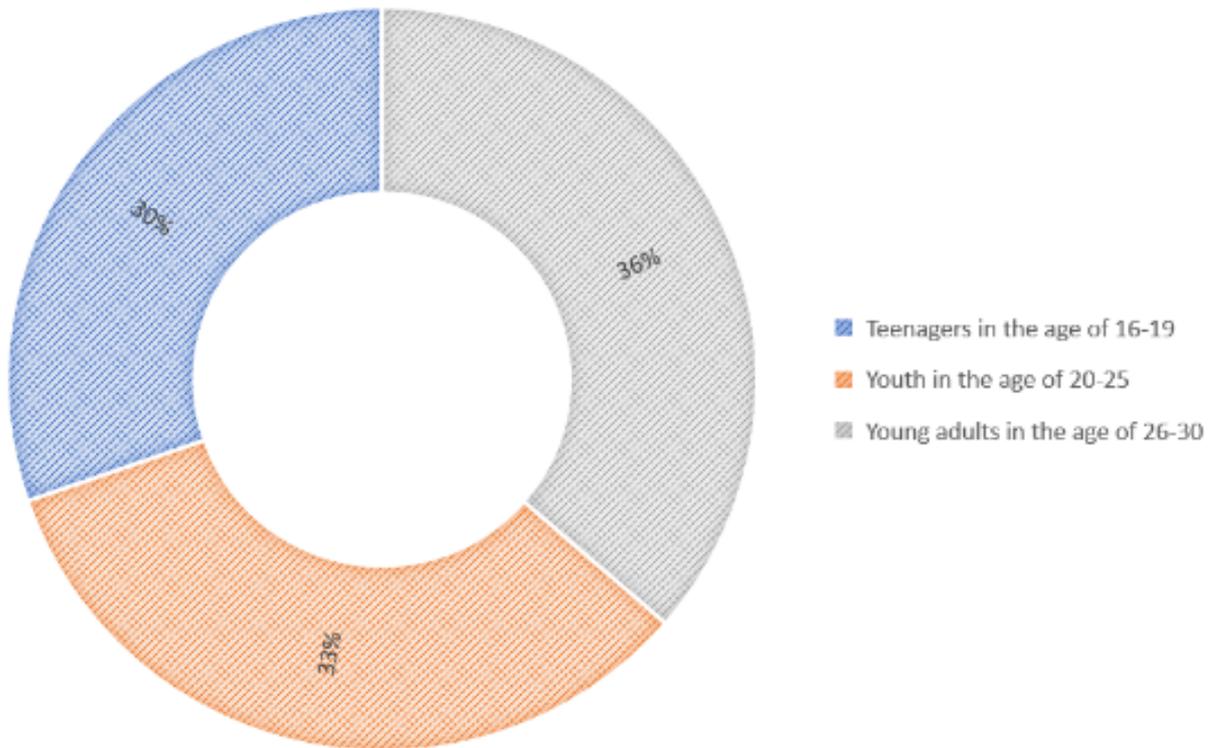
The target group was young adults from various backgrounds (including those from disadvantaged backgrounds). The participants were from Lithuania, Italy, France, Poland and Greece. Why was the target group of young adults (16 – 30 years old) chosen? The aim of the DASS project is to help the youth to deal with stressful situations such as pandemics, wars and other geographical or socio-economic obstacles. This group is one of the most vulnerable as their daily life was affected almost the most during the pandemic. Most of the youngsters at this age do not have a family or routine that would keep them balanced during isolation from most of the activities, public spaces. And, in general, it is a stressful period in life: graduating from school, exams, starting to live on their own, creating a family... Therefore, with the help of the questionnaire we were aiming to understand how art is used to combat stress by this age group. Also, we were trying to acknowledge the art related practices, issues and aspirations of young adults. In the end, the ultimate goal of DASS is to create an app, which will be used mainly by youngsters, to help them cope with isolation, stresses and challenges.

The survey was conducted in 5 countries – France, Italy, Greece, Poland and Lithuania, with a total of 221 respondents. Among the participants of the survey, 166 (75%) were women and 46 (21%) were men. 9 of the participants (4%) categorised themselves as other gender.



The survey assumed three age groups broken down as follows:

- 66 teenagers in the age of 16-19 (30%).
- 74 youth in the age of 20-25 (33%).
- 80 young adults in the age of 26-30 (36%).



The 3 results: the online workshops, this booklet and the app result from one another and have a solid development of thought. First, the questionnaire allowed us to understand youngsters' needs. Second, it provided the best base for creating a methodological tool for youth workers. Trained youth workers with the knowledge of youngsters' needs and methodology have been enabled to help the youth to deal with stress using art during the testing phase. Once these practices were tested, they have been refined (according to our participants' feedback) and shared in this booklet for youth workers, a handful in youth work. It is available online in 6 languages, therefore, could be used throughout Europe. And, finally, based on the information gathered, we developed an app "Mind Yourself". The app is an aid for troubled youth in troubled times. It contains all the best practices that derive from the understanding of youths' needs from the questionnaire and our experience developed throughout the project.

ANNEX II: STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

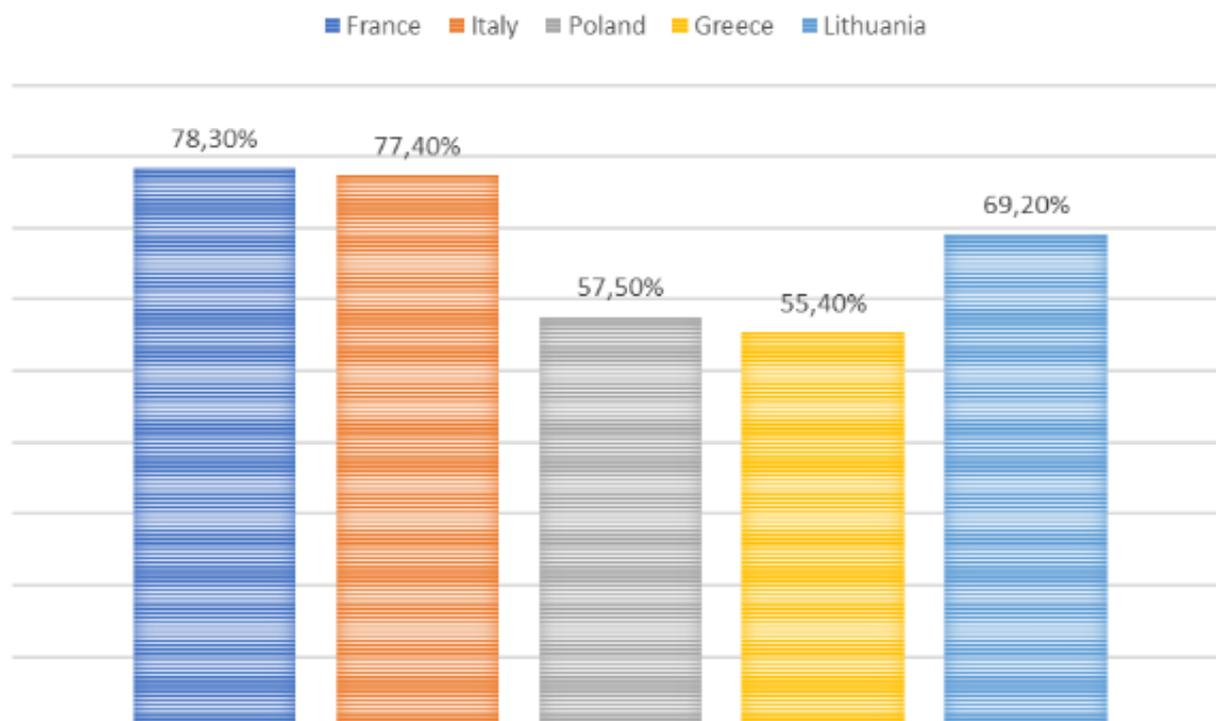
Stress coping

The first part of the survey referred to evaluating how young people deal with stress. Among all respondents, 36,78% declared that they know how to cope with stressful situations. The results in each country were similar:

■ France ■ Italy ■ Poland ■ Greece ■ Lithuania

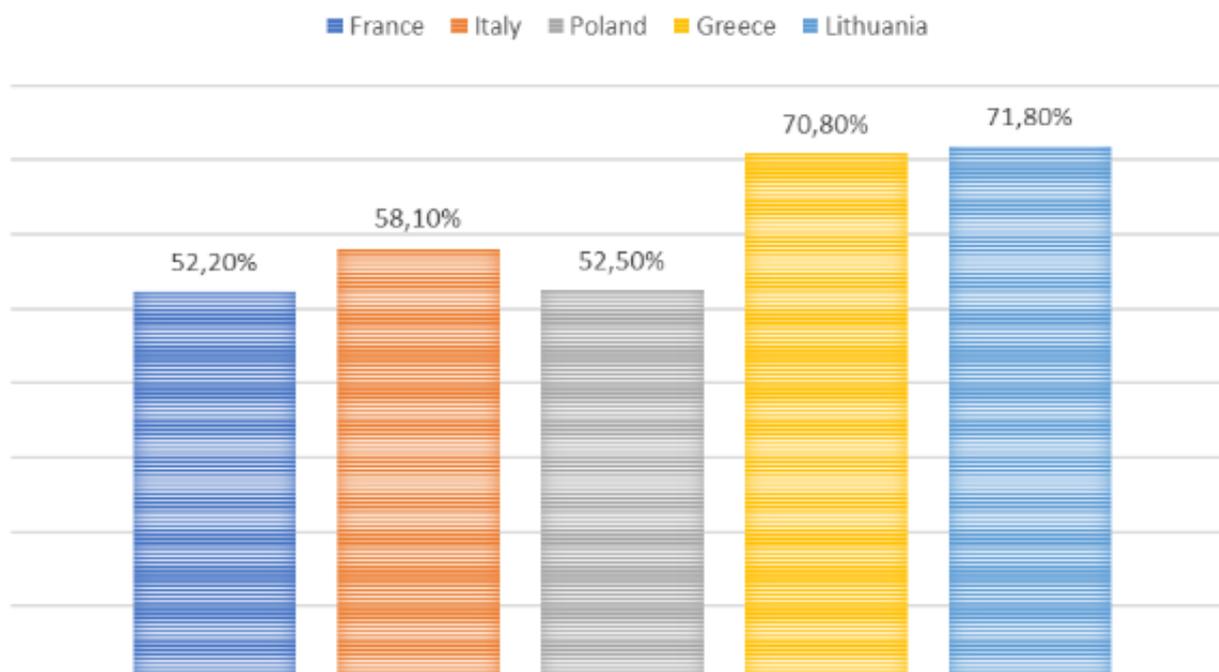


Out of those surveyed, 67,56% confirmed that they use stress management techniques. The country results were as follows:



Art as a tool to deal with stress

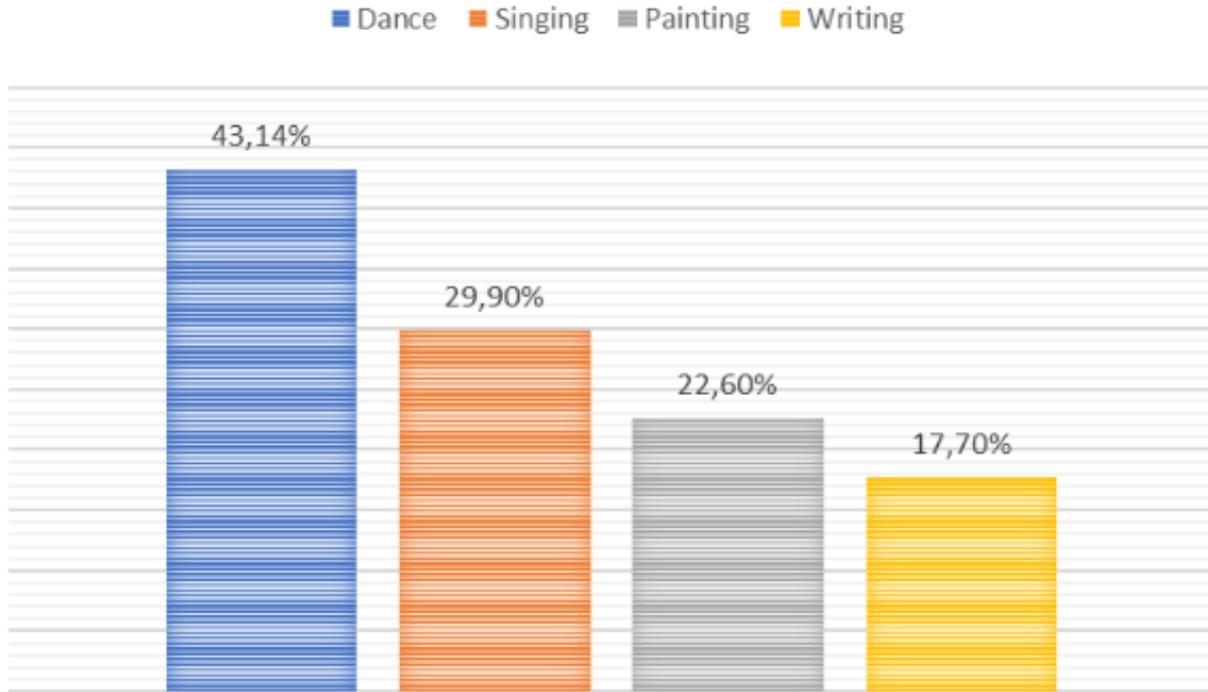
Moreover, the participants were asked whether they have used art as a method of coping with stress. The results showed that 61,08% of respondents benefited from art to manage stressful experiences. The biggest usage of art in purpose of stress dealing was showed in Lithuania (71,80%) and Greece (70,80%), but in all countries more than half of respondents declared to benefit diverse form of art – in Italy 58,10%, in Poland 52,50% and in France 52,20% of participants. These results are shown in the graph below:



The participants who declared using art were then asked to choose the types of art that would help them cope with stress. The results varied significantly between countries:

- In **France** the most common art forms were writing (25,9%), dance and music (18,5% for each category).
- Among **Italian** respondents dance (42,9%), acting (23,8%), video-making and photographing (19% for each category) were chosen most often.
- **Greek** youth have commonly chosen dance (78,7%), singing (36,2%) and painting (21,3%).
- Among **Polish** youth, the most answers concerned painting (59,1%), singing (50%) and dance (27,3%).
- The highest rates of answers in **Lithuania** were to dance (48,3%), singing (37,9%), painting and writing (24,1% for each category).

In general, a summary of the results in all countries showed that dance (43,14%), singing (29,90%), painting (22,60%) and writing (17,70%) were the most frequently chosen forms of art as the methods of stress relief among young people. Those data are represented in graph below:

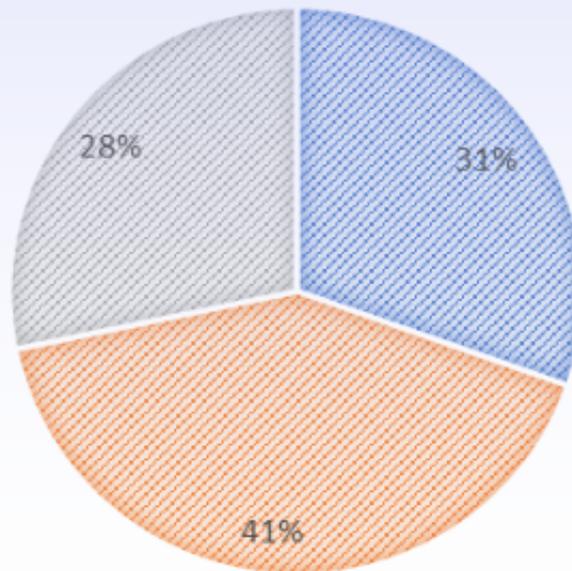


Use of social media

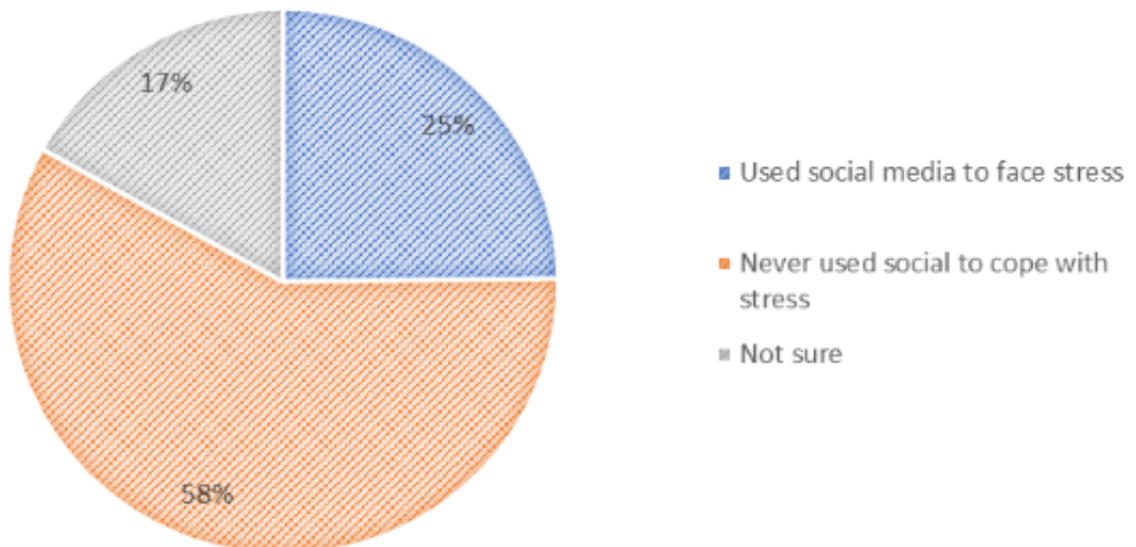
The next part of the survey was a diagnosis of the social media usage among youth in terms of coping with stressful situations.

Firstly, the beliefs regarding using social media as a way to face stress were explored. Only 31% among all surveyed agreed with this statement. 41% of participants were convinced that social media are not applicable with stress relieving, while 28% of participants expressed ambiguity. Those data are illustrated in below graph:

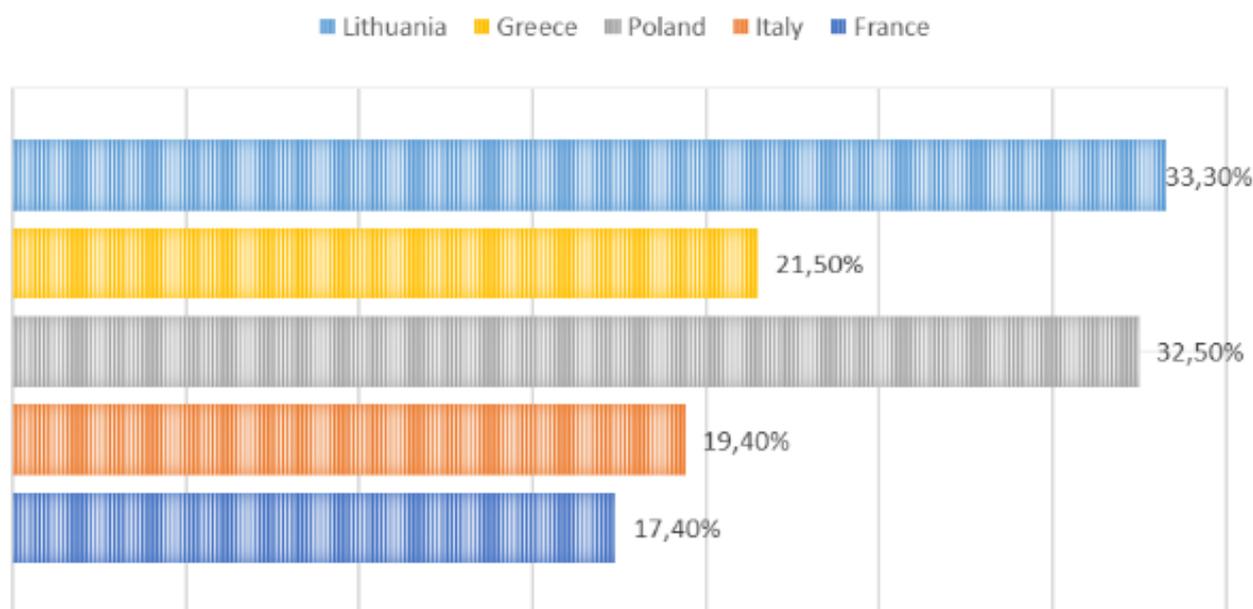
■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ Not sure



Following, participants were asked of their experience with stress coping through social media. The results remained similar – only 25% of young people have been using social media to face stress, while 58% of participants do not have this experience. 17% of all surveyed were not sure if they have ever used social media for the purpose of stress coping.



Opinions among youth in partner countries were insignificantly different in this regard. The following indications are cross-country comparisons of how many young people have been using social media to cope with stress:

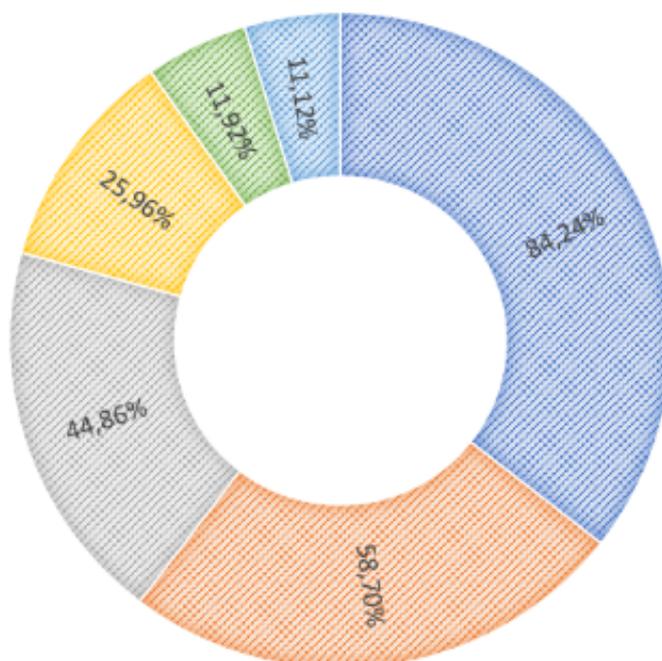


Moreover, those participants who declared they have used social media to cope with stress were asked what helps them the most. The results were unequivocal in all countries:

- 51,62% of young people use social media by following people who encourage them to feel good about themselves.
- 44,18% of participants have indicated that they follow people who teach them how to face stress.

The survey also aimed to find out which social media apps young people use most often. The results are shown below:

Instagram Facebook TikTok Snapchat Twitter Telegram

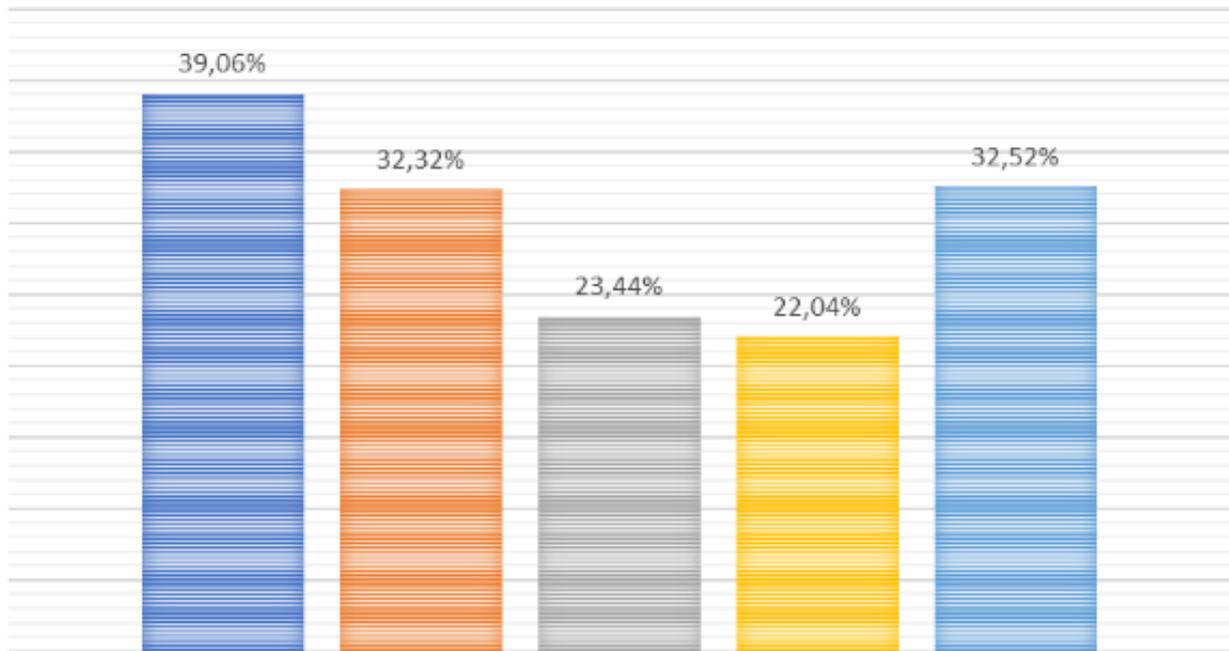


In this case, the cross-cultural results differed. Although Instagram was the most popular social media in all countries, the other apps mentioned are used to varying degrees:

- Among **French** teenagers, Snapchat and TikTok proved to be the second most popular media.
- In the **Italian** survey, Facebook was second, while Telegram was third.
- In **Polish** surveys, Facebook proved almost as popular as Instagram. Young people also use TikTok and Snapchat very frequently.
- Among **Greek** youth, both Facebook and TikTok were among the most common choices.
- **Lithuanian** youth, on the other hand, pointed mainly to Instagram and Facebook as the most commonly used apps.

Young people were asked if and how they express their feelings on social media. The most frequently chosen answers were: to express oneself through pictures (39,06% of all participants), stories (32,32%), texts (23,44%) and memes (22,04%). Also importantly, 32,52% of young people declared they do not use social media to express any feelings.

■ Pictures ■ Stories ■ Texts ■ Memes ■ Not using social media to express feelings



ANNEX III : YOUTH COLLECTION OF WORKSHOPS

In this section you can find additional online workshops that you can use with your participants. These Online Workshops were inspired, created, and proposed by our participants during the online training.

FRENCH PARTICIPANTS. WORKSHOP 1



Ice Breaking Activity

WHERE AM I?

- 1 to 3 people choose a place (either the place they are in or a place that is dear to them).
- The goal is to use the senses to guess the place by giving clues such as colors, smells, sounds or other information specific to the chosen city: 1 clue per sense.

Main Activity

IMMERSE YOURSELF AND CREATE

- Immerse yourself in listening some sounds (you can use tools such as a sound bank: <https://bigsoundbank.com/>. Example of sounds: city noise, underwater noise, forest noise, sea noise;
- Use those sounds to write a text (key words, poem, sentences...);
- Send the sound and the text to your partner who creates a dance from these supports;
- Creative extension: create a video-dance-poem from these materials.

Evaluation

- Online questionnaire with possibility to add comments and explanations.
- Talking within a circle: exchange of experiences.

WORKSHOP 2

Ice Breaking Activity

DEFINE YOURSELF

- Introduce yourself with one or more adjectives that define you.

Main Activity

SHARE YOUR STORYLINE

- Little rule: each person must use at least one adjective they gave to define themselves during the ice breaking.
- Following a set order, each person will write four or five sentences with the aim of creating a story:
- The first participant writes 4/5 sentences;
- The second will have to read the last words of the first writer to write 4/5 sentences in turn;
- The third will do the same and so on until all the participants write their sentences;
- At the end, a reading of the story created together will be carried out, a reading with several voices. An order of narrators is defined. The first narrator reads his entire sentence or a selected sentence, then the second and so on...

Evaluation

Read the whole story to the other groups and to the facilitator, if the participants were divided in groups;

Share your feelings about the writing exercise (orally or by another artistic means).

ITALIAN PARTICIPANTS. WORKSHOP 1



Ice Breaking Activity

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

- Guided meditation on body awareness

Main Activity

DANCE YOUR FEELINGS

- When you are alone or with friends and feel upset, use your body to express your feelings, turn on the music that represents them the most and dance it.

Evaluation

- Write on a piece of paper or in your diary 3 emotions that you feel before and after the dance activities.

WORKSHOP 2

Ice-Breaking Activity

WITCH COMMAND COLORS

- One participant will be chosen by the facilitator to be “the witch”. The witch shouts aloud “Witch command color”, adding the name of a color of your choice, e.g. “Witch command color... red!”. At this command, the participants have to run and touch any object of the indicated color.

Main Activity:

WALL PAINTING – MAKE YOUR FEELING HEARD

- Analyze the feelings that you struggle to face, that have a strong relation with the social/civic environment you live in, and discuss them within the group.
- Divide in pairs and try to graphically represent your feelings. Each duo will present to the whole group their drawings and together they will vote for the preferred ones.
- Paint on a wall: now if authorized by your school, local institution or in a private wall, paint on the wall the graphic representation established in group. Street art murals will be painted and signed by authors to share with the local community their feelings and their message.

Evaluation

- Publish short videos on Tik Tok or Instagram to express how you felt during the workshop and open your videos to the comments.

DASS

DANCE AGAINST STRESSFUL SITUATIONS

THANK YOU!

DANCE IS THE JOY
OF MOVEMENT AND
THE HEART OF LIFE!

