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# Safe Space Mission

**Inclusion for all Genders**

Erasmus+ PDA

## Resources & Activities Booklet

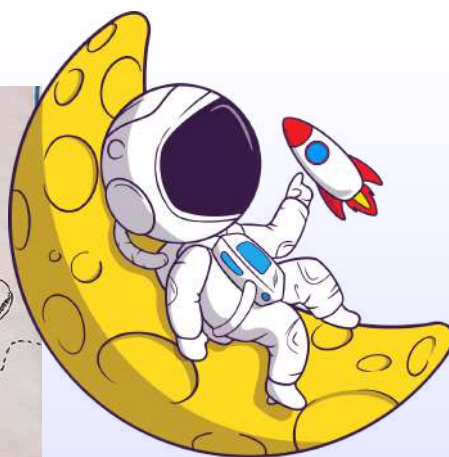
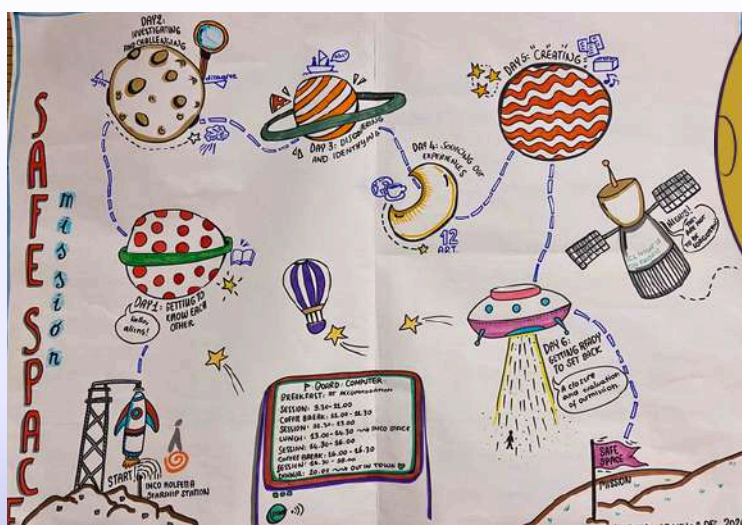


Associazione InCo

**Associazione InCo - Molfetta APS**

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# About the project



The main activity within the project is a **Professional Development Activity (PDA)** developed within the **Accreditation annual project 2023 of InCo-Molfetta** and funded through the **Erasmus+ Programme of the EU**.

A 6-day **international training** for **Youth Workers** to constitute a useful introduction to gender dimensions, gender-based issues (including gender-based discrimination and gender-based violence) by providing reflections and methodologies to tackle gender-based issues, specifically within the frame of Erasmus+ and ESC projects. The PDA focused on providing youth workers with the competencies to design, implement, and host their future projects with a comfortable environment: creating indeed a "safe space of inclusion".

The main objective was to equip participants with opportunities to exchange experiences, methodologies, activities and workshops about dealing with gender to improve the quality of their projects, but most importantly the well-being of their participants.

Other reached objectives included:

- ★ Raising awareness among youth workers towards the meaning of gender and respecting differences within gender dimensions;
- ★ Improving the abilities of youth workers to communicate with young people about recognizing and preventing the manifestations and symptoms of discrimination and violence, both in relation to themselves and in relation to other youngsters;
- ★ Encouraging and support the democratic participation of youth in participating communities, through increasing the inclusion of groups at risk of exclusion and who are dealing with gender issues, or gender-based violence or discrimination;
- ★ Increasing the impact of the Erasmus+ project on specific indirect target groups;
- ★ Enhancing the recognition of the Youthpass, through the recognition of the competencies of Youth Workers within the framework of ETS;

# Project Partners



## Level UP

Poland

Youth NGO

[levelupngo.com/en](http://levelupngo.com/en)



## Pas Alternativ

Romania

Socio-cultural Ngo

[salto-youth.net/PasAlternativ](http://salto-youth.net/PasAlternativ)



## Luznava Manor

Latvia

Cultural center

[luznavasmuiza.lv](http://luznavasmuiza.lv)



## Municipality of Altea

Spain

Municipality

[euroaltea.eu/en](http://euroaltea.eu/en)



## Kooperativet Fjället

Sweden

Non Profit Youth Centre

[fjallet.org](http://fjallet.org)



## Mladiinfo Slovensko

Slovakia

Volunteering organization

[mladiinfo.sk](http://mladiinfo.sk)



## Jedi Movement

Serbia

Youth Ngo

[dzedajskipokret.rs](http://dzedajskipokret.rs)



## Ser Joven

Spain

Youth Ngo

[ser-joven.org](http://ser-joven.org)



## Social Life Enhancement Association

Turkey

Social and cultural association

[soyged.com.tr](http://soyged.com.tr)



# Activities & Tools by InCo-Molfetta

## An Inclusive Glossary

### Objectives:

To build a shared understanding of key concepts related to social inclusion and gender terminology and issues.

To foster inclusive and respectful dialogue on diversity and inclusion.

### Instructions:

The brainstorming session is conducted in plenary. The first word to be analyzed is indeed "Inclusion". The trainer asks participants to share their understanding of the word. Then, the correct meaning and origin of the word is provided. The trainer shares information about the concept of **social inclusion**, in comparison with the words "integration", "exclusion", "segregation" and "assimilation". Social inclusion refers to the elimination of barriers and the guarantee of equal opportunities for all people, regardless of their differences, to actively participate in society. On the other hand, social integration focuses on the adaptation of individuals to the established norms and values of society. Although integration can be an important step towards inclusion, it can also lead to assimilation, where individuals are pressured to abandon aspects of their identity or culture to fit into the dominant society.

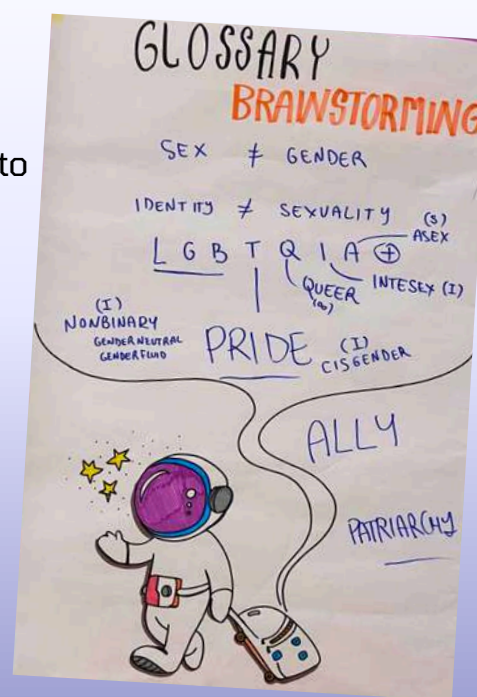
Then, the trainer then invites all participants to collectively define and discuss key terms related to gender issues, such as "gender," "sex," and "LGBTQIA+." An open dialogue is facilitated, where everyone can share their perspectives, clarify doubts, and explore the social implications of each term. Participants are to listen actively and contribute respectfully, ensuring a collaborative environment. This is a first activity that serves the need for all participants to start on the same page.

### Some relevant resources are made available:

[Gender Equality Glossary](#) from the Council of Europe

["Gender Matters" Glossary](#) from the Council of Europe

[Gender Equality: Glossary of Terms and Concepts](#) from UNICEF



# Take a Stand

The "Take a Stand" debate is an interactive activity taken from the "Compass" Manual (precisely inspired by the activity "Where do you Stand?") and adapted to the context of this project.

Participants have the opportunity to express their opinions and positions on a specific issue or topic.

## Instructions:

The room is divided into two sections, with one side designated as "agree" and the other as "disagree". The moderator or facilitator introduces the topic and explains the rules of the debate. Participants are then asked to position themselves physically in the room based on their opinion, either on the "agree" or "disagree" side. This physical movement visually represents their stance on the issue. Once participants are positioned, the discussion phase begins. Those on each side are invited to share the reasoning behind their positions and to listen to the arguments from the opposing side. The debate is moderated to ensure a civil and constructive exchange of ideas. Midway through the debate, participants are encouraged to switch sides if they find the opposing arguments convincing. This aspect fosters critical thinking and openness to revisiting their initial opinions. At the end of the debate, participants summarized the key arguments and conclusions, promoting a deeper understanding of the various perspectives on the topic.

The following sentences serve as subjects of the debates:

- Everyone has a duty to respect gender diversity, regardless of their personal beliefs.
- The primary role of a youth worker is to empower young people, not to protect them from discomfort.
- "These days, you can't say anything anymore!"
- If you need a safe space, you're not ready for the real world.
- We cannot claim inclusivity if we exclude controversial voices.
- New gender identities are a trend, rather than a true reflection of identity.
- Gender quota: It is offensive for women to involve them only because they are women.



# The Safest Youth Worker

## Objectives:

The activity aims to help participants identify and reflect on the key behaviors, attitudes, and qualities that define a "safe youth worker," someone who creates a protected and inclusive environment for young people. It encourages participants to think critically about how to ensure the emotional and physical safety of youth in their work.

## Instructions:

Participants are divided into four groups, and each group is assigned a "mannequin," represented by a participant who cannot speak or move during the activity. The rest of the group members work together to attribute characteristics to the mannequin that they believe define a safe youth worker. Through discussion and collaboration, the groups explore the behaviors, attitudes, and qualities necessary to foster inclusivity and security. Once each group completes their task, everyone comes together in plenary to share and compare their findings. The activity concludes with a collective reflection on the importance of these qualities in youth work and their practical application.





# World Cafe

## Objectives:

To reflect on key gender-related themes and explore their implications for youth work practices.

To foster inclusive and thoughtful approaches to combating gender stereotypes, discrimination, and systemic barriers in youth organizations.

To promote cultural exchange and mutual understanding through shared traditions and gastronomy.

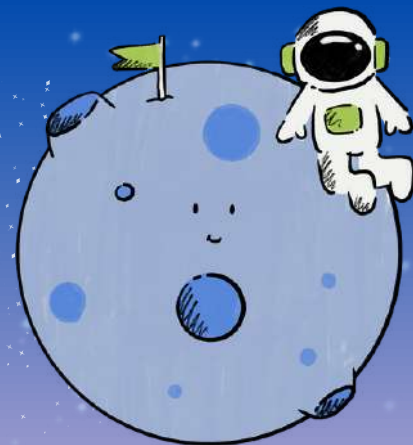
## Instructions:

The activity begins with a World Café discussion, where participants are divided into small groups to explore four main themes through a youth work lens. Each table addresses a specific topic, and participants rotate between tables, building on the ideas shared by previous groups. The themes and guiding questions include:

- **Gender Identity and Expression:** to reflect on gender roles, stereotypes, non-binary and fluid identities, and strategies for ensuring inclusivity in youth activities, focusing on participant comfort and safety.
- **Gender in Youth Work:** to examine the resources used, identify potential stereotypes in activities, discuss training for youth workers to address gender discrimination, and promote accessibility in selection processes and communication.
- **Gender Discrimination:** to explore strategies to combat gender-based violence and discrimination at social and community levels, and discuss how youth organizations can contribute through awareness campaigns and victim support initiatives.
- **Gender Equality:** to discuss equitable participation in decision-making processes within youth organizations, inclusion of LGBTQIA+ youth, breaking systemic barriers, and ensuring that gender equality policies are effective and not merely symbolic.

After each group has contributed to the discussion at their respective tables, they present the key insights gathered at the first thematic table they attended.

The activity concludes with an extended debriefing session, where participants collectively reflect on how these discussions can inform more inclusive and impactful youth work practices.





# Faces of Identity

**Objectives:** To explore topics such as LGBTQIA+ rights, gender-based violence, gender equality, and diverse standards of beauty.

**Instructions:** The activity uses photographs and the stories behind them to inspire reflection, dialogue, and action on these key social issues.

Upon entering the space, participants find photographs arranged throughout the room. Each photograph represents one of the themes. Behind each photo, there are three elements: a short real-life story of the person depicted or connected to the image, a thought-provoking question aimed at youth workers, and a QR code that links to practical resources or relevant information about the topic.

The activity begins with a brief introduction by the trainer, who explains the objectives: to raise awareness, foster empathy, and connect these themes to the participants' work with young people. Participants are reminded of the importance of respect, active listening, and maintaining confidentiality during the session. Each participant is then invited to walk around the room, observe the photographs, and choose one that resonates with them. They are given 10 minutes to read the story on the back, reflect on the associated question, and explore how it relates to their personal or professional experience.

After this period of individual reflection, participants come together in a circle. One by one, they share their chosen photograph, summarize the story, and discuss their thoughts and feelings about the question provided. This sharing phase, lasting about 10 minutes per person, creates a space for diverse perspectives and meaningful dialogue. To close the session, the group engages in a final reflection, guided by the trainer. They are encouraged to discuss what they learned from the stories and the shared reflections, how these issues connect to their work, and what steps they can take to address these challenges within their communities. The QR codes provide participants with additional resources they can use beyond the session.

This activity combines personal reflection with group interaction, empowering youth workers to deepen their understanding of these topics and apply what they've learned to create positive change.

*[Find here](#) the printable of the photos for the activity!*



# Activities from the Manual: "Gender Matters"

Among the activities designed by InCo-Molfetta for the project, we tried out the following two Activities from the Manual "Gender Matters" from the Council of Europe. Despite these two activities are designed to a target group of youngsters, we worked them out from the perspective of being youth workers.

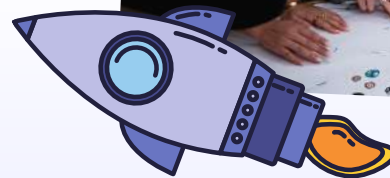
**Here is the link to the Manual**

# Good, Better, Best

The activity "Good, Better, Best" from the Gender Matters manual was carried out, which focuses on exploring gender stereotypes and how society attributes certain values to "feminine" and "masculine" qualities.

The activity is ideal to inspire participants to reflect on how gender stereotypes influence society, discussing whether the labels assigned to each adjective are accurate and how these stereotypes impact behavior and the treatment of others.

*Find this activity at page 94 of the manual!*



# Stella

The activity “Stella” was carried out following the method described in the “Gender Matters” manual. Participants reflect on a gender-based violence situation, exploring the dynamics involved. The activity stimulates discussions on individual and collective behaviors, promoting awareness on how to prevent violence and support victims. After the group discussion, each participant has the opportunity to share their opinions and ideas on how to prevent such violence and support those who have experienced it, using the educational materials provided during the workshop.

*Find this activity at page 160 of the manual!*

# Experiences & Tools

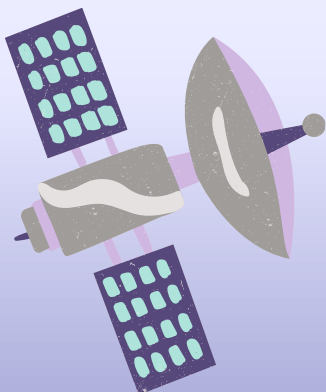
## Presented by Partners

### Theater of the Oppressed

**Objectives:** Theater of the Oppressed was developed by the Brazilian Augusto Boal in the 70s, with the goal to use theatre as a means of promoting social and political change. Adapted to youth work, the objective is to put the participants "in the shoes" of someone else, to give them the space to present a scene of oppression from real life on stage, and then try to recognize the power dynamics and the roots of the oppression, in order to perceive where change can come from. The actors together with the audience explore, show, analyse and transform the reality in which they are living.

**Description:** The participants prepare a short theater scene, representing a real-life situation of oppression they previously discussed and agree on. They present it to the public. Then, they play it again for the audience, but this time the audience members have a chance to stop the performance at any moment, and take over the role of one of the characters to try to change the situation. The actors play out the scene with the change, and then it is discussed with the audience. The activity ends with a short debriefing aiming at reflecting with the participants on what kind of change was produced: are they happy with the result?

**Presented by:** Ser Joven, from Spain



# #Guytalk



**Objectives:** #Guytalk aims to challenge destructive masculinity norms, stereotypical gender roles, and macho ideals. It is a way to promote gender equality, boost the boys' self-esteem, and create a safer and more respectful atmosphere where emotions and thoughts can be shared freely. The purpose is to create a safe space for boys to discuss sensitive topics and break destructive behavior patterns.

**Description:** #Guytalk (previously called #Guydinner) is a method for starting conversations about what it's like to be a man, based on different themes. The ambition with #Guytalk is to give guys and men the chance to start with themselves when working towards an equal society for all. Staff should act as role models. If it's a new group of youth, we follow them to shop as part of the process. The shopping should be done in advance. If the group is used to participating in #Guydinner, they can manage the shopping by themselves. Start with warm-up questions to create a relaxed atmosphere. What is said during the conversation stays in the room. Listen actively without judging or interrupting. Base what you say on your own experiences (use "I" instead of "we"). Everyone gets equal speaking time, and the discussion remains respectful and on-topic. Most often, we prepare questions and put them in a box. Each person picks a question and reads it out loud. Each person gets to answer the question. We don't force anyone to talk, but we encourage everyone to actively participate. During the cooking of the dinner, assign tasks to everyone present. Cook, clean, and eat together to build community. At the end, do a closing round where everyone reflects on the evening. Leaders ask the participants what they learned, what they liked, and if there was something they didn't like.

Document the reflections to be able to follow up and adjust for the next occasion. In Fjället we decided to do the discussions before the dinner. Otherwise, there is a risk that the youths will leave after the dinner without taking part in the discussion.

Depending on the participant, it's possible to change the order or to have the discussions during the dinner. Adjust the method to your target group and try out what works for you. You decide what you want to talk about during your dinner.

A good base to get the conversation started is our [conversational guides](#).

[Here](#) you can find more information about the method and all the materials.

**Presented by:** Kooperativet Fjället, from Sweden





# Relational Exchanges

**Objectives:** for youth workers, to learn about the 4 types of selves and to recognize how to use them in the work with young people.

**Description:** The presentation begins with drawing a line on the floor, representing an axis, on which we will place 4 text-signs as follows: at the left end of the axis - the Victim Self, at the right end - the Grandiose Self, in the middle of the axis - the Balanced Self, and between the Victim Self and the Balanced Self we place the Vulnerable Self. Participants are divided into 4 groups, using different division methods, each group sits on the axis according to the assigned Self and receives a handout with a description of a Self. They have the task, in about 10 minutes, to prepare a statuary group that best captures the characteristics and emotions of the represented self. After presenting the statue, each group describes the represented Self.

Next comes the request for a volunteer to play the role of an abused young woman, from a situation that is described in a case study that will be played in a role-play. Each group receives the case study, as does the volunteer. The groups have 15 minutes of preparation time to prepare an intervention per case, according to the self that that group presented. The role-play stage is moved to the "aquarium", placing two chairs, face to face, in the center of the circle of participants. On one chair sits the victim character who calls on the services of an NGO, meeting with the youth worker. In turn, from each group, a representative comes, in the role of youth worker and has a specific interaction with the abused young woman (Ana, in the case presented). The order of interactions is: Victim self, Vulnerable self, Grandiose self, and finally comes the youth worker in the role of Balanced self. After each interaction, the facilitator asks Ana how she feels, if the youth worker was helpful. All participants have the role of observing the difference in the results obtained at the level of the young woman. At the end of the role-play, the debriefing is carried out based on the following questions: What did you observe during the game? How did you feel in the different roles played?

What lessons can we extract for our role as youth workers?

How does awareness of these types of selves help us?

How can we use this knowledge in our work in the future?

**Presented by:** Asociatia Pas Alternativ, from Romania



# Social Panorama



**Objectives:** Social Panorama by Lukas Derks is used as a psychological and social diagnosis tool and is applied in the treatment or problem solution of social relationships such as: love, hate, injustice, power, identification, leadership, etc.

**Description:** Explain to the group that this exercise will help them understand how they see themselves and others in their “mental space” (the way their mind organizes relationships). Then, ask participants to close their eyes (it helps with focus). Ask them to imagine the people in their life (family, friends, colleagues, etc.) and notice where they “see” these people in their mental space: *Are they in front, behind, to the side? Are they near or far? Are they above or below?* Guide participants to reflect on how the positioning feels: *Does the closeness or distance feel right? Do they feel good or uncomfortable with someone’s position? Does anyone feel “too big” or “too small”?*

If someone feels too close or overwhelmed, ask: *What happens if you mentally move them further away or shrink their size?* If someone feels too far or distant, ask: *What happens if you bring them closer or make them bigger?* Encourage participants to move the people around in their mind until it feels better. They are essentially “editing” their social map. Ask the group to pause and reflect: *How do they feel about the new positions? Does the adjustment make their relationships feel healthier or more balanced?* Explain that these mental adjustments can help them feel more at peace in their relationships. Suggest observing how their interactions change after doing this exercise. Be patient and create a safe environment. Remind participants there’s no right or wrong way to position people—it’s about what feels right for them. Keep it light and exploratory; this is a tool for self-awareness, not judgment. With practice, this simple method can improve understanding and harmony in personal and group relationships.

[Find here more resources.](#)

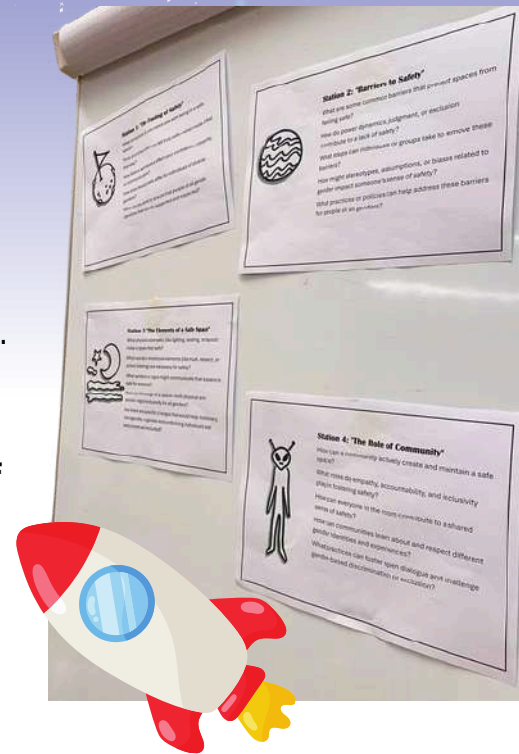
**Presented by:** Social Life Enhancement Association, from Turkey



# "Safe Space" Results

## The Activity and the Process

The workshop focuses on creating safe and inclusive spaces, with particular attention to gender inclusion. Participants are divided into four groups that explore the concept of a "safe space" and could choose to represent it through various creative methods: videos, Lego constructions, collages, writing, role-playing, music, and the use of artificial intelligence to generate texts or images. Before starting the group work, participants visit four stations, each offering reflections and questions on **Emotions, Barriers, Physical elements**, and **the role of the community** in creating safe spaces. The workshop concludes with a collective reflection on the ideas that emerge and how to apply them concretely.



## The results

Each group presents their expressive methods and the results achieved. The presentations are particularly inspiring and creative: each group shares its unique approach to representing a safe space, highlighting not only the physical aspect but also the importance of gender inclusion. The outcomes are truly impressive: the videos tell moving stories, the Lego E constructions depict welcoming and inclusive spaces, and the collages and visual posters convey a powerful message of respect and acceptance. Written texts and role-playing activities also inspired deep reflections on how we can all contribute to building safer spaces for all genders. Overall, the results are highly appreciated, emphasizing the strength of the ideas shared and the potential to transform these concepts into concrete actions.



## Group 1 - Letter

Participants of this group chose to describe a Safe Space through a text in a letter form. Here's their result:

Dear Andrea,

It's been a while, I have so much to tell you. When you first told me about this place, I had so many worries. I was in my lowest and I felt scared to seek help. I had no support from my family and my abusive boyfriend was the only close person I had.

Now after two months I can tell you...

Leaving behind the glance of my armor,  
the metallic taste of your judgment I'll leave this station in silence

My destination is warm and carries the scent of candles and peace,

Here I will be free, like I'm floating back to the surface  
Together we can abandon our shell  
and learn to embrace one another,

may our shades and nuances together shine the brightest.  
Thank you so much Andrea! You showed me my safe space.

Love, from Anna

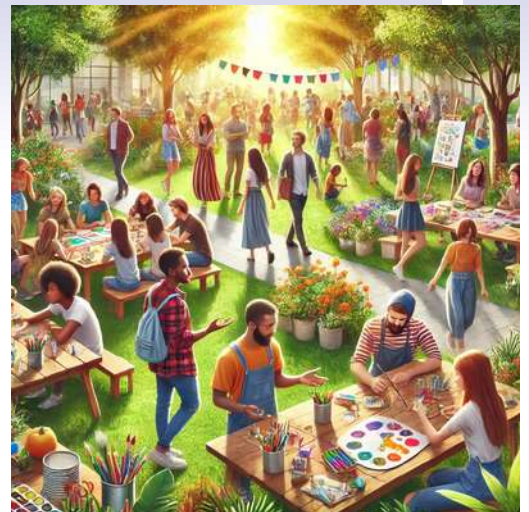




### Group 3 - AI generated pictures

Participants of this group chose to create the atmosphere of a Safe Space through the AI generated pictures. Find below the inputs and results achieved:

**Prompt 1:** Create an inclusive and safe space for young people of all genders. Create a welcoming atmosphere that fosters a sense of belonging and community with quotes and motivation sentences. Make a space which will encourage self-expression, mutual respect, and inclusivity, to show that we are all the same in diversities.



**Prompt 2:** Create a photo of outdoor safe space for young people of all genders, fostering connection, creativity, and community engagement. Young people actively participate in miningful communication, various workshops and activities, art sessions. This safe space fosters creativity, diversity, and a sense of belonging, offering opportunities for engagement regardless of background, gender, or experience.

Some extra results which were unsatisfactory for participants:



## Group 2 - Performance

Participants of this group chose to represent a Safe Space through a performance. Find below the text of the performance, then the video and the process of creation by participants.

“

my safe space, lots of green  
inclusion is what we want  
no safety = no learning, no communication,  
no fun, no hope  
guiding the cacophony of voices to make  
harmony  
this woman sings lovely  
to feel safe is a human right  
help! help! help! but no-one came, no-one  
heard, no-one cared  
reassess, reevaluate and ask  
without wishing for a specific answer

”

### Participants process:

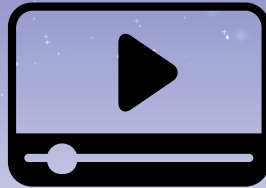
The text for the performance was generated using a dissociated writing technique adapted from Dadaism, whereby a text is created by various authors who write on the same theme but do not know what the others have written. We were a group of four. Our only equipment was a small piece of paper and a pen. The first person wrote a sentence inspired by the theme “Safe Space”, then folded the paper and passed it to the next. Without knowing what the first person had written, the second wrote their own phrase before again folding the paper and passing it on. After circulating the group twice, the result was eight dissociated sentences on the same theme, a kind of dadaist poem. The performance simply consisted of unrolling the paper and revealing its hidden contents.



[click here for the video of the performance](#)

## Group 4 - Stop-Motion Video

Participants of this group chose to embody a Safe Space through a scenography of a Youth center and film a stop-motion video of it. Find below the participants' processor of creation of this concept and the final video result.



[Click here for the stop-motion video result!](#)

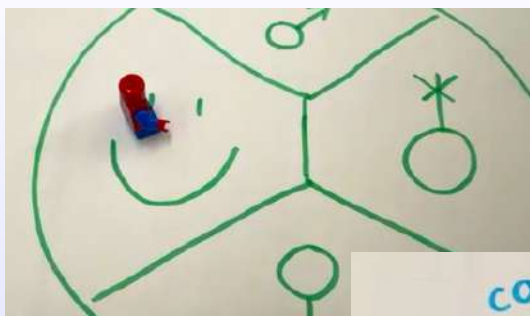
### Participants process:

The basic idea was to create an inclusive and safe Youth Center with multiple spaces and represent the experience of a young person in this youth center. As a final result we produced a video, in which we used the stop-motion technique to illustrate what a safe environment means to us.

First, we thought of a welcoming entrance to make anyone who enters feel at home. Next, we envisioned a game room where people can have fun and interact with each other (a ping pong table).

Another very important aspect is the possibility of having gender-inclusive restrooms: male, female, or non-binary. Moving forward, you can see a creativity wall, a workroom, a kitchen, and a video game room.

For us, this environment helps foster greater interaction among its visitors, while also serving as a space to spark new professional collaborations and work stress-free.





# About Associazione InCo - Molfetta APS



**InCo Molfetta** is a non profit association, born in 2016, thanks to a group of members moving back to Apulia region after several years of mobility experience abroad. The members decided to establish a new local organization in Apulia in order to provide local youngsters the same opportunities as they had benefited.

**InCo** is an acronym standing for "Interculturality and Communication" because the main aim of the association is to put in contact different cultures. Beside that InCo promotes and supports mobility abroad, contacts, exchanges and meetings at international level; it promotes mutual tolerance and intercultural sensitivity among young people and adults; supports the unformal process of European integration in the local community; contributes at the recognition of the youth work and enhances its quality at local and national level.

**InCo Molfetta's** activities are addressed to create intercultural abilities and non formal competences for all the participants.

## Contacts & Social



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<https://www.incoweb.org/>



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Associazione InCo (Molfetta)







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Erasmus+ PDA

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