



MINIMAL & FUNCTIONAL YOUTH WORK CONCEPT

Tools:

Circus & Performing • Politics & Politician • Media Literacy



**Co-funded by
the European Union**



Intro & Engaging

How to use this document:

Print, prepare the simple materials, and follow the steps.

What is it?

Minimal & Functional uses very simple tools to create strong learning and participation experiences.

Why it works:



Circus = teamwork, confidence, resilience, creativity.

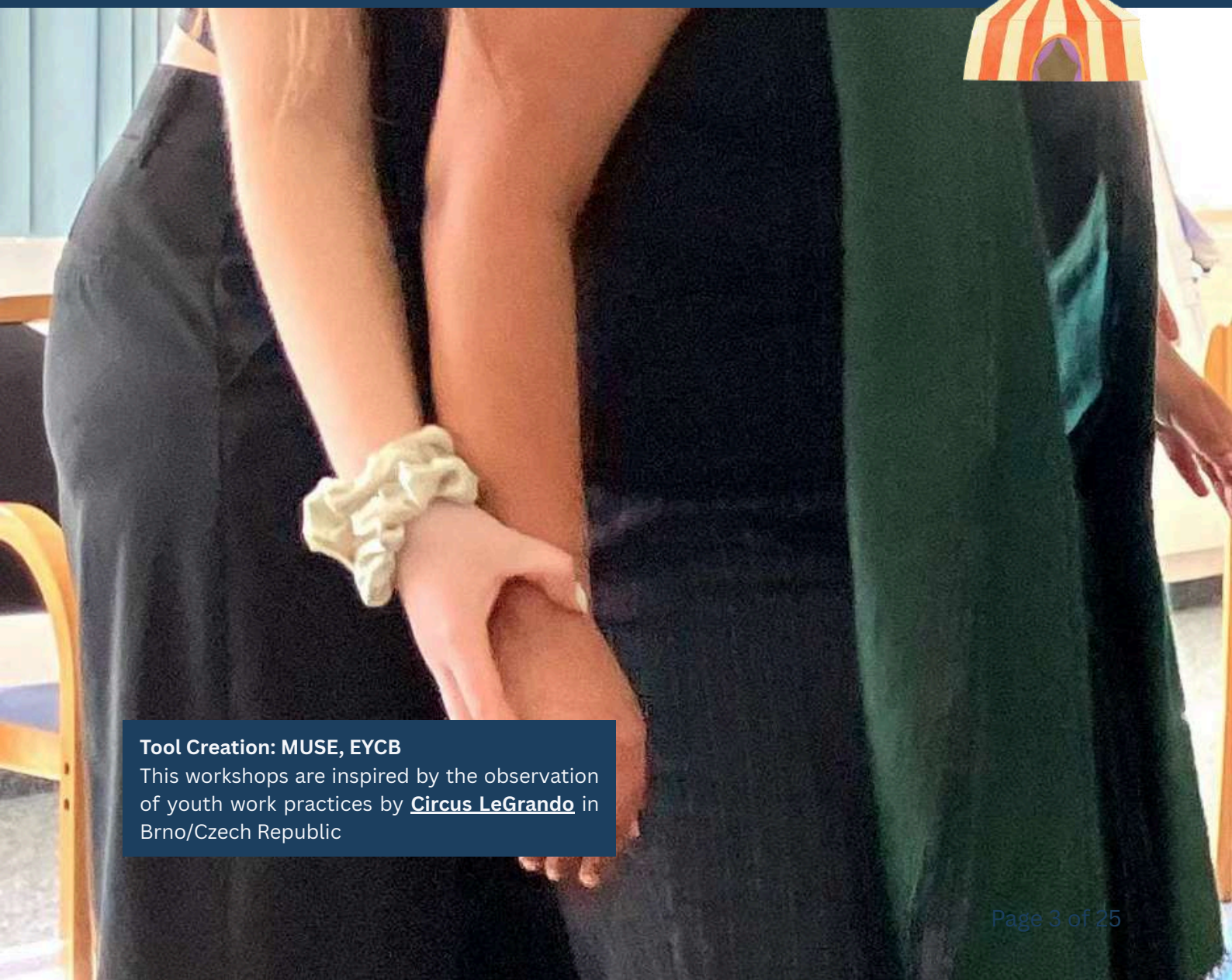
Politics = participation, voice, decision-making. Works anywhere with simple tools.



Target group:
Young people
16 to 19



Part A: Circus & Performing



Tool Creation: MUSE, EYCB

This workshops are inspired by the observation of youth work practices by [Circus LeGrando](#) in Brno/Czech Republic



Overdramatic Intros

Materials

None

Steps

- One by one, participants step forward dramatically.
- They announce an absurd talent in exaggerated style.
- The group reacts with applause, gasps, fainting.

Tips

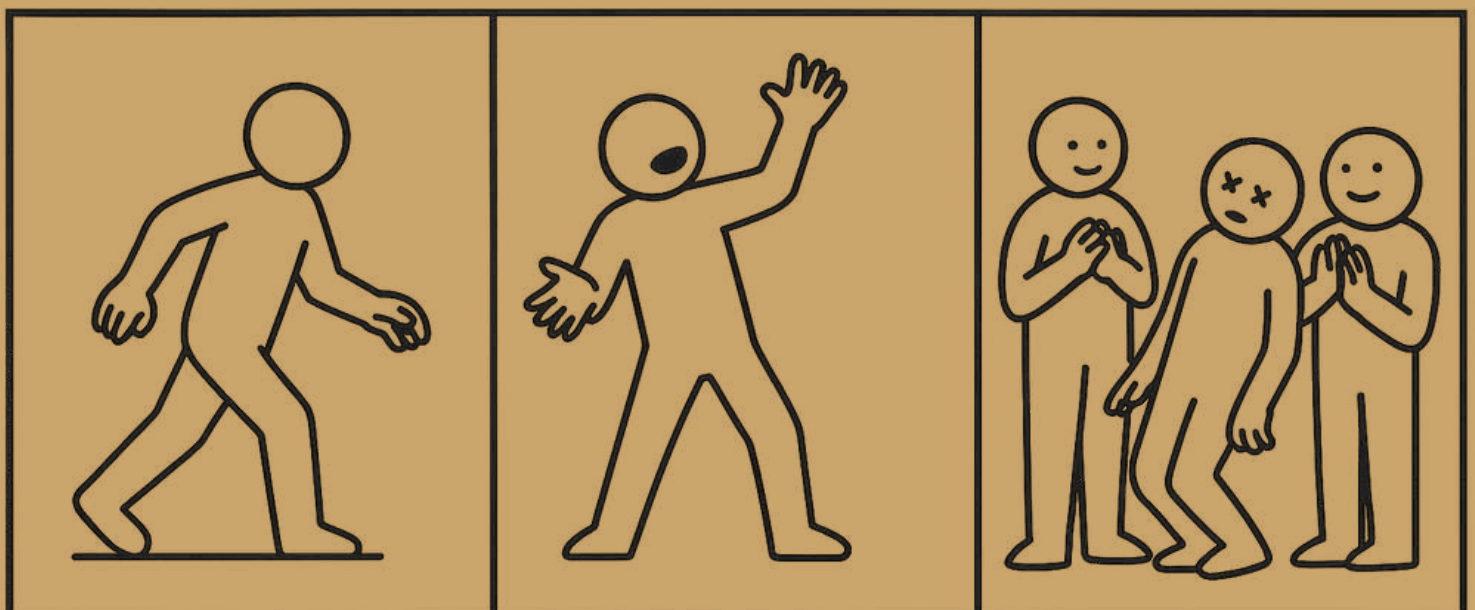
Keep rhythm fast. Encourage absurdity.
Don't let anyone freeze too long.

Outcomes

Energy, openness, quick bonding.

Time

30 minutes





Alien Personality

Materials

None

Steps

- Each invents an alien character.
- They act alien for a few seconds.
- The group nods seriously in response.

Tips

Encourage strange gestures and sounds.

Outcomes

Creativity, humor, reduced barriers.

Time

30 minutes





Electrical Device Personality

Materials

None

Steps

- Each picks a device (toaster, washing machine, vacuum, smartphone).
- They act it out with sounds and movement.
- The group imitates in chorus.

Tips

Ask for surreal scenes (toaster shooting toast, washing machine rolling).

Outcomes

Playfulness, imagination, group cohesion.

Time

30 minutes





Juggling Balls

Materials

3 balloons, rice, tape, scissors

Steps

- Cut and fill balloon with rice.
- Tie and wrap balloon to make a ball.
- Juggle 1 → 2 → 3 balls.

Tips

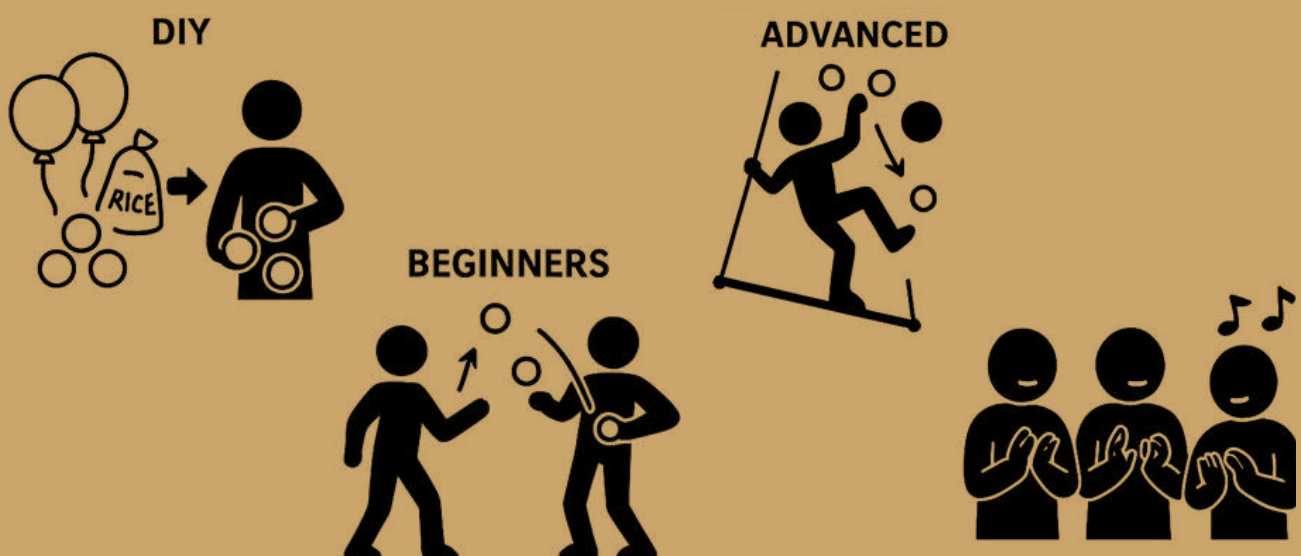
Remind: dropping = progress. Encourage laughter at mistakes.

Outcomes

Coordination, focus, resilience.

Time

60 minutes





Trapeze



HELMET

Materials

Rope or bar fixed low to the ground

Steps

- Set up trapeze close to the ground.
- Participant holds and balances carefully.
- Others cheer and clap.

Tips

Keep it safe and low.
Pair advanced with beginners.

Outcomes

Balance, focus, confidence.

Time

30 minutes



Balloons

Materials

Balloons

Steps

- Inflate balloon
- Group keeps balloons in the air together.

Tips

Add music to raise energy.

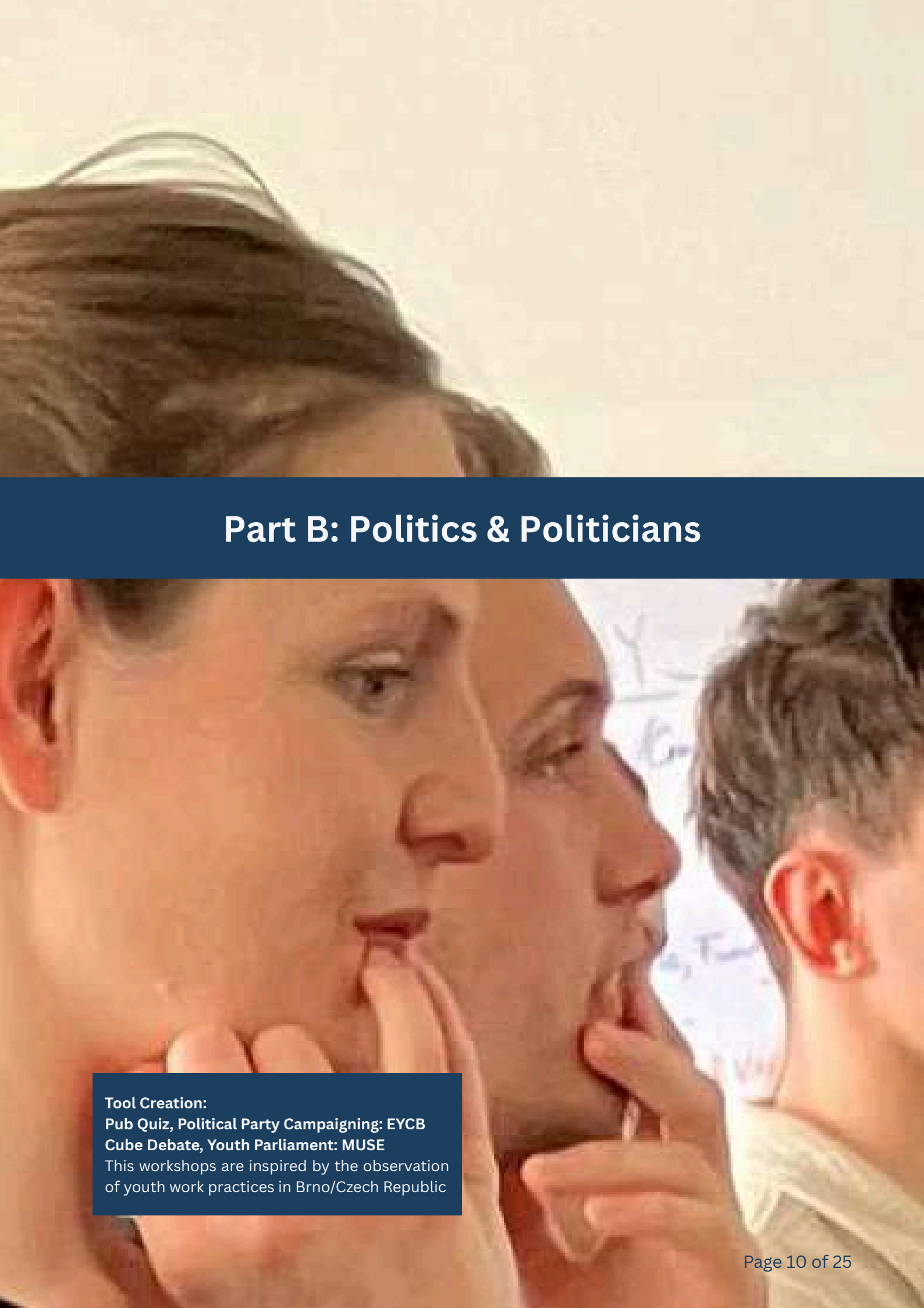
Outcomes

Energy, playfulness, group spirit.

Time

30 minutes





Part B: Politics & Politicians

Tool Creation:

Pub Quiz, Political Party Campaigning: EYCB

Cube Debate, Youth Parliament: MUSE

This workshops are inspired by the observation of youth work practices in Brno/Czech Republic



Cube Debate



Materials

Paper cube with topics, pens

Steps

- Cut and fold cube with topics.
- Roll cube to get a topic.
- Teams prepare arguments and discuss.

Tips

Keep topics short and fun (e.g., Should homework be banned?).

Outcomes

Critical thinking, speaking, debating.

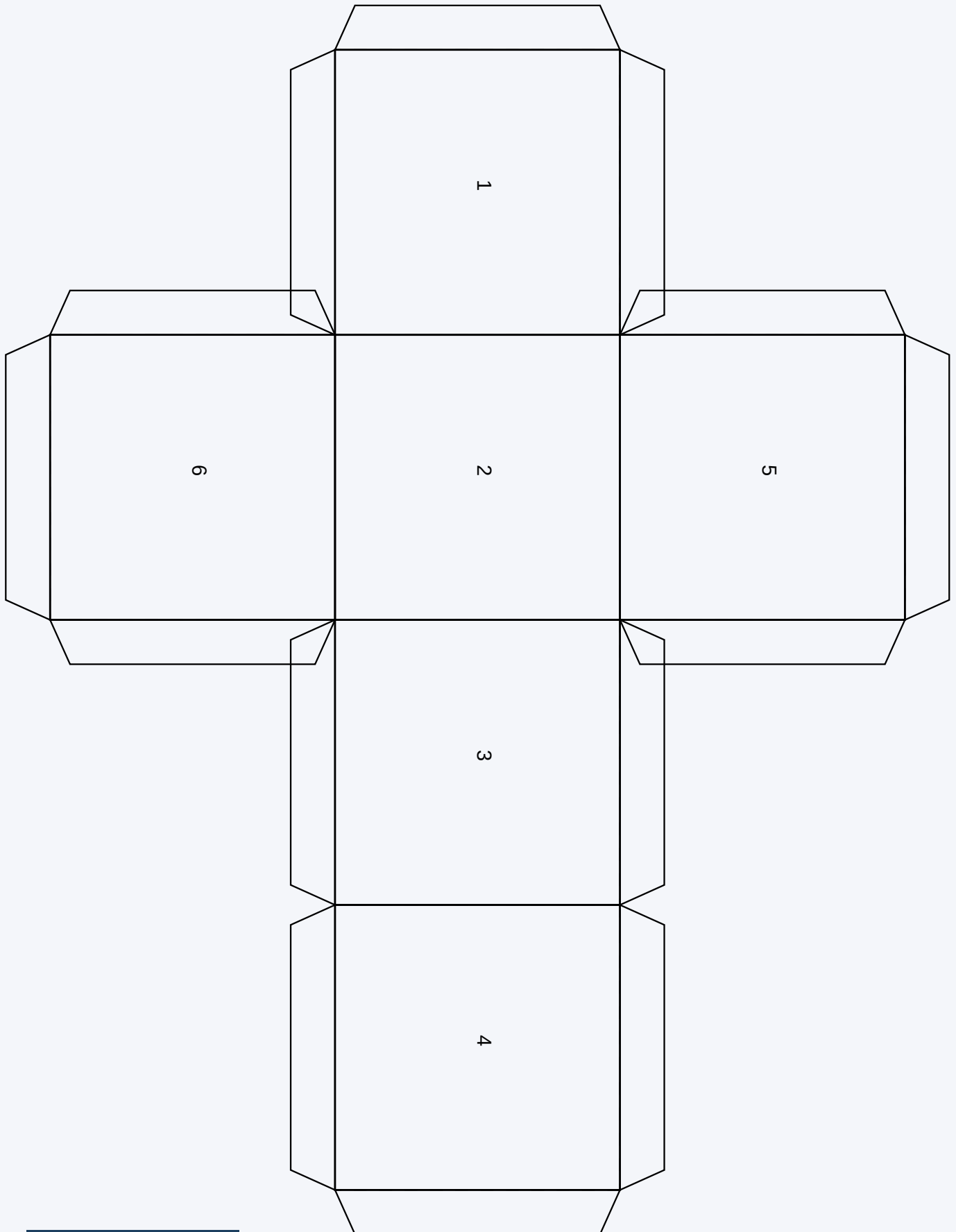
Time

60 minutes

-- Cube template see next page --

Cube Debate

CUBE TEMPLATE





Pub Quiz

Materials

Tables, chairs, quiz sheets, pens, projector or printed questions.

Steps

- Divide participants into teams.
- Present questions round by round -
- Teams discuss and write answers.
- Collect and check answers - announce scores and winners.

Tips

Keep questions varied in difficulty and topics. Maintain clear timing.

Outcomes

Teamwork, general knowledge on politics and related topics, communication, friendly competition.

Time

60 minutes



Pub Quiz

Example Questions

1. Which country joined the Schengen Area in 2024?

- a) Bulgaria
- b) Croatia ✓
- c) Romania
- d) Serbia

2. How many member states does the European Union have in 2025?

- a) 27 ✓
- b) 28
- c) 30
- d) 25

3. Which politician has been elected as the new President of the European Council in 2024?

- a) António Costa ✓
- b) Mark Rutte
- c) Emmanuel Macron
- d) Angela Merkelová

4. How many months have passed since the beginning of the war in Ukraine (question was asked in April 2025).

- a) 27 ✓
- b) 30
- c) 10
- d) 25

5. Which film won the most Oscars this year (2025)?

- a) The Brutalist
- b) A Complete Unknown
- c) Anora ✓
- d) Wicked

6. Where will the Ice Hockey World Championships be held?

- a) Portugal, Spain
- b) Norway, Finland
- c) Iceland, Sweden
- d) Sweden, Denmark ✓

7. What animal is the symbol of this Lunar New Year?

- a) Fox
- b) Wood Snake ✓
- c) Wood Dragon
- d) Rabbit

8) How many billions of people are there in the world?

- a) 8,1
- b) 8,2
- c) 8,9
- d) 13,4

9) What is the name of the Czech president:

- a) Petr Pavel
- b) Pavel Pavel
- c) Petr Petr
- d) Bořivoj Kořen



Youth Parliament

Materials

Tables, chairs, podiums (optional)

Steps

- Two participants present arguments at podiums.
- Jury (rest of group) listens carefully.
- Jury votes or decides.

Tips

Encourage respectful listening and strong voice projection.

Outcomes

Public speaking, democratic practice, decision-making.

Time

60 minutes





Party Campaigning

Materials

(A3) Paper, pencils, tables, chairs

Steps

- Participants form groups (max. 4)
- Each group designs a political party (name, program, aim) and presents their party to others
- Hold a simulated election (voting)

Tips

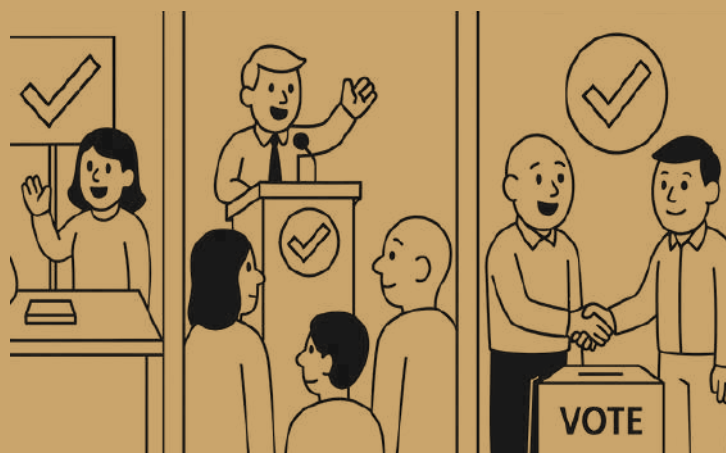
Encourage creativity in party identity and messaging; use limited time to force prioritization

Outcomes

Understanding electoral mechanics, communication, teamwork, persuasion skills, and critical thinking about political messaging

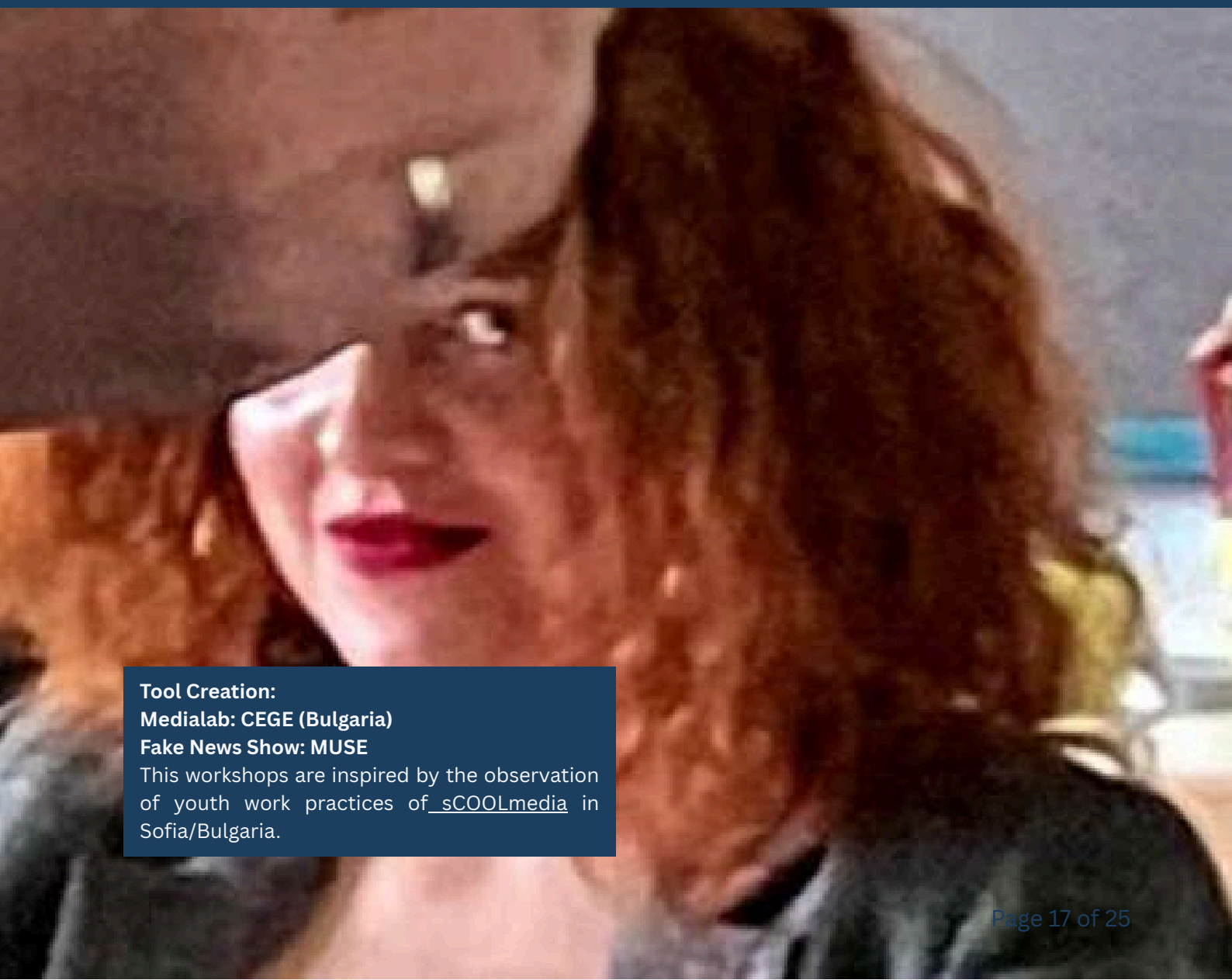
Time

90-120 minutes





Part C: Media Literacy



Tool Creation:

Medialab: CEGE (Bulgaria)

Fake News Show: MUSE

This workshops are inspired by the observation of youth work practices of [sCOOLmedia](#) in Sofia/Bulgaria.



Fake News Show

Materials

Optional microphone

Steps

- Person enters and gives exaggerated slogan.
- Delivers surreal headline as press conference.
- Audience reacts dramatically with boos/cheers.

Tips

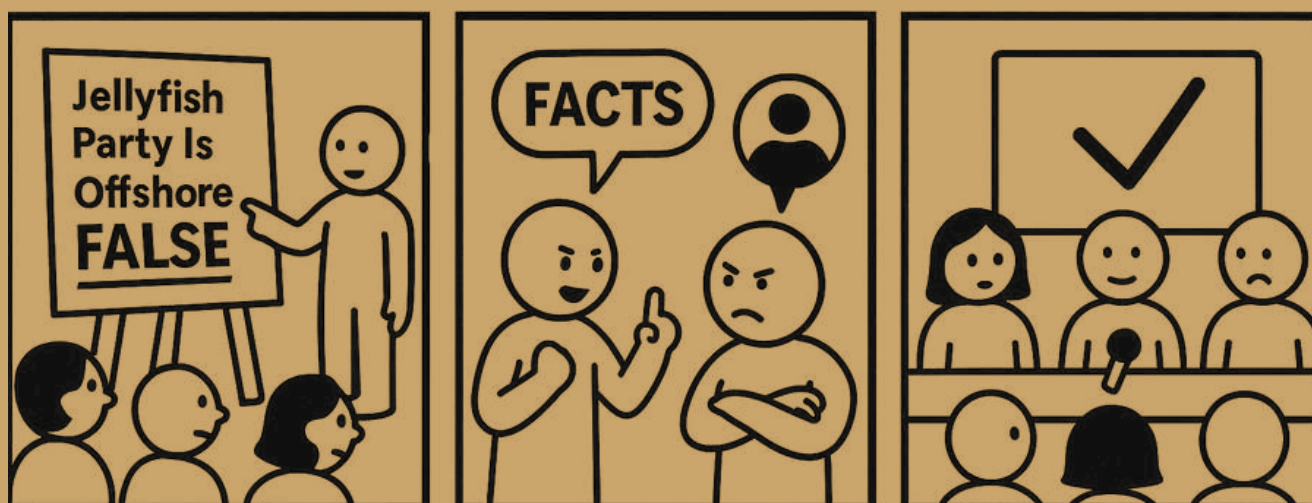
Encourage dramatic gestures and confidence.

Outcomes

Understanding fake news, media literacy, rhetoric skills.

Time

30 minutes





Media Lab



Materials

Tables, chairs, paper, pens; Optional: projector, phones/cameras, laptops.

Steps

- Form small teams.
- Choose a topic and prepare 5+ questions.
- Take notes or record 2–4 short interviews with phone/camera.
- Write a short article and/or make a short video.
- Present to the group.

Tips

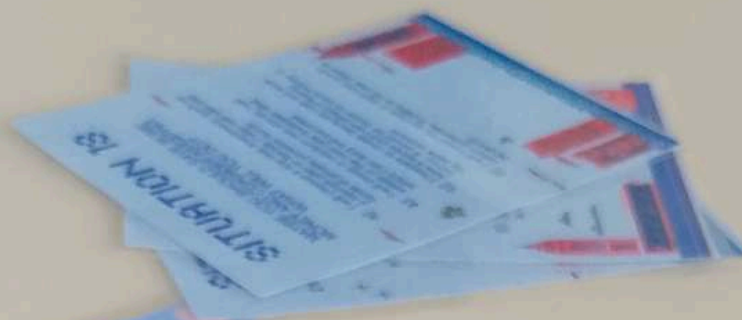
Keep interviews short. Encourage creativity. Max. one device per group.

Outcomes

Article, video, teamwork, media and critical thinking skills.

Time

120-180 minutes



* Bonus Game *

Daily Choices for Functional Life



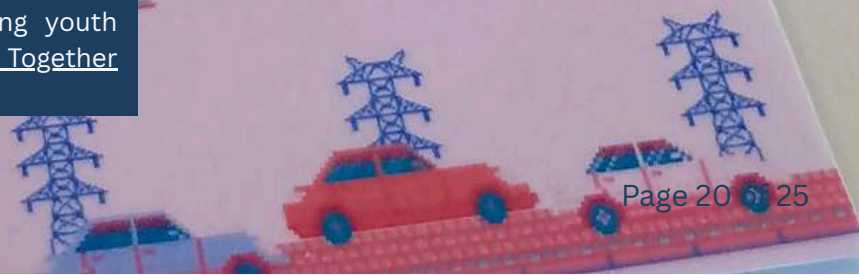
SITUATION 12

YOU ARE CHOOSING A NEW CAR.
WHAT WILL YOU CONSIDER?

- A) I will buy whatever I can afford at the moment, without thinking about fuel costs or maintenance
- B) I will invest in an electric car because it's cost-effective in the long run
- C) I will choose a reliable and fuel-efficient car
- D) I will take a loan for an expensive car to look good

Tool Creation: CEGE (Bulgaria)

This game was inspired by observing youth work practices of the association Walk Together in Sofia/Bulgaria.





Daily Choices for a functional life

A group game about financial literacy and wellbeing

Materials

Markers, paper,
pens, flipchart
(optional)

To print (please
follow the links):
[https://shorturl.at/
/MKq1B](https://shorturl.at/MKq1B)



Steps

- Divide participants into 4 teams; give each a character card.
- Explain the backstory of the four characters.
- Read situation cards one by one.
- Teams discuss (1 min) which answer matches their character.
- Teams simultaneously show their answers.
- Facilitator records choices (e.g. on a flipchart) and later awards points via a key.
- After all situations, tally scores, and declare a winner.
- Conduct a reflection / debrief.

-- Continuation see next page --



Tips

- Encourage participants to “role-play” their character rather than respond personally.
- Keep time tight to maintain pace.
- Use the flipchart visibly so all can follow score progress.
- In debrief, ask how choices aligned or diverged from own values.

Outcomes

- Enhanced empathy and perspective-taking
- Practice in decision-making under constraints
- Improved critical thinking about consequences of small choices
- Skills in teamwork, discussion, reflection, and scoring systems

Time

90+ minutes



LET'S PLAY⁺



Implementation & Toolbox

Target group:
Young people
aged 16 to 29

Works anywhere:

youth clubs, schools, outdoors

Needs only balloons, rice,
ropes, cubes, paper, pens.
Other materials are optional.

No training needed:

Any youth worker can run it.

Resources:

Cube template, juggling guide, workshop outlines.





About the development of this Youth Work Concept

The idea for the Minimal & Functional Toolbox grew out of a simple question: how can youth workers deliver meaningful learning experiences with the least possible resources? In many youth projects, budgets and materials are limited, yet the need for creativity, empowerment, and engagement is constant. The Erasmus+ project Minimal & Functional set out to answer this challenge by collecting, testing, and refining activities that use minimal tools but generate strong outcomes.

The process started with partners from Austria, Bulgaria, and Czechia gathering good practices from their local contexts. Each partner contributed with different expertise. CEGE, the Bulgarian partner, developed the MediaLab, a method for creating articles and short videos through teamwork, interviewing, and critical reflection on media. Verein MUSE from Austria focused on participant observation, designing approaches for youth workers to document group processes and reflect on behavior in real time. EYCB from Czechia shared and tested political literacy and empowerment activities such as Political Campaigning and simple circus activities.

These practices were piloted during the **Learning, Teaching & Training Activity** (LTTA) in Austria.

Youth workers and participants tested each method, discussed its challenges, and suggested improvements. The feedback cycle was crucial: it helped simplify instructions, cut unnecessary materials, and ensure that each activity could be delivered quickly, clearly, and with minimal preparation.

Once the activities were refined, the partners worked together to document them in a common format. Each activity was written with short, practical sections: Materials, Steps, Tips, and Outcomes. To support accessibility, the toolbox also includes IKEA-style illustrations that show the flow of activities without relying heavily on text.

The result is an online toolbox, freely available for youth workers, educators, and NGOs. It brings together methods that are adaptable to many contexts—whether a youth center, a school, or an outdoor camp.

The Minimal & Functional Toolbox is more than a collection of activities. It represents a shared commitment to sustainable and inclusive youth work. By focusing on simple tools and functional outcomes, the project demonstrates that impact does not depend on expensive resources, but on creativity, cooperation, and clear facilitation.





Project Coordination



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