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## **TITLE: Youth Needs and Visibility of Youth Programmes in the Field of Culture in the Republic of Croatia**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The regional project "The Melting Pot" is a partnership initiative implemented in 3 countries (Croatia, Serbia and North Macedonia) with the support of the Erasmus+ programme through the National Agency Tempus Foundation from Serbia, with a duration from March 2021 to September 2022. From each of the included countries, one national network and one institution from the field of culture were involved in the implementation of the project: National Association of Youth Work Practitioners - NAPOR and the Gallery of Matica Srpska from Serbia, the Croatian Youth Network and the Zagreb Center for Independent culture and youth "Pogon" from Croatia, and the Union for Youth Work and the Museum of the city of Negotino from North Macedonia. The partners joined together in a strategic partnership in order to contribute to bringing the youth and cultural institutions closer together through youth programs.

During the planning of the project, the partners from the cultural institutions noticed that young people are less and less interested in the offer of the traditional cultural content (exhibitions, performances, concerts and film screenings). Having in mind data by Eurostat that in 2019, 94 % of young people in the EU-27 made daily use of the internet, and that 92% of young people used mobile phones for that purpose, it is clear that cultural institutions need to follow the development of technology and create different interactive methods and approaches in presentation of culture contents to young people. Also, the partners took the recommendations from the final report from the EACEA "Access of young people to culture" into account, where it is emphasized that access and participation are the key elements for ensuring the cultural rights of young people, therefore, it is recommended to "take into consideration the non-users – through surveys, contacts with communities and NGOs. Analyse the reasons for not coming, and what it would require to bring different audiences to the institution. The use of new technologies, non-formal educational programs and volunteer activities may help to engage them. Equip staff with the expertise and skills to manage cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. This may require the setting up of training and discussions also in networks and partnerships with other cultural and academic institutions and with NGOs, etc."

The general intention of the partners with this project is to contribute to bringing cultural institutions closer to all young people through youth work and programs with the inclusion of interactive and innovative methods and tools, as well as creating prerequisites for the professionalization of youth workers and employees in cultural institutions. Therefore, they set specific goals:

- To increase visibility and recognition of youth work and cultural institutions' potential to respond to the identified needs of various youth groups at local, national, regional and EU level.
- To raise the quality of youth work across the region by introducing innovative and creative methods integrated into culture and arts programs.



- To increase the professionalism of youth workers and employees in cultural institutions by creating curricula for their education.
- To establish cross-sectoral cooperation among youth workers and cultural institutions at the national and regional level.

In order to achieve the project goals, the partners planned and implemented a series of different activities:

- Conducting comparative research on the needs of young people in culture, based on national research in each of the countries (based on surveys for youth, focus groups for youth, surveys for cultural institutions, analysis of documents) in which it was planned to include 320 young people from the three countries.
- Developing a curriculum for the education of youth workers in cultural institutions.
- Developing of six (6) educational youth programs and testing half of them, that is, implementing three (3) of the developed educational youth programs in cultural institutions, while involving 60 young people.
- Development of a booklet "*Melting pot of innovation in youth work and cultural institutions*" with fifteen identified examples of innovative and creative methods in working with young people from Croatia, Serbia, North Macedonia and Europe.
- Organizing national and regional events for the presentation of the achieved results and products of the project, and for raising awareness about the needs of young people, about the importance of investing in developing services for youth work in cultural institutions due to the positive impact on the development of young people, like: study visit for 12 youth workers and cultural workers in Serbia; breakfasts with journalists in each country; interactive event realized at the same time and connecting participants from Serbia, North Macedonia and Croatia via the Internet; regional conference in Croatia.

With the activities, it is planned to reach at least 150 organizations and 150 cultural institutions from Serbia, Croatia and North Macedonia, and to about 200.000 citizens. The project partners put special emphasis on the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities.

Through the implementation of the project, the partners strengthened mutual relations and cooperation, determined some of the challenges in the area of cooperation and communication between young people and institutions in the field of culture and art, explored innovative practices, and developed and tested new youth programs. With the finalization of this project, the partnership does not end, but the partners are determined and better prepared to continue working on overcoming challenges and improving conditions for working with young people and youth programs in the field of culture and art through future collaborations.

This partnership and the project itself are particularly interesting and useful for several reasons:



- They represent a rare example of strategic cooperation between the youth and cultural sectors, which can be learned from and built upon;
- Provide data on the needs of young people in the field of culture and on the visibility of cultural programs for young people, and also present the recommendations provided by the young people themselves, which can and should be used in the future during planning in the field of culture and youth work, since, in reality, such data is something that was missing in the region;
- Create products (curriculum for education of youth and cultural workers, booklet with positive practices, youth programs) that are relevant, current and in accordance with the needs, and that have a high usable value for both the youth and cultural sectors in the region and in Europe.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cultural programs and events offered by various cultural institutions and organizations are often in discrepancy with the needs of young people, and the omission of young people when creating cultural programs for young people is noticeable. Precisely for these reasons, through the project "The Melting Pot" in 2021, research with young people "Visibility of cultural programs and the needs of young people regarding culture in the Republic of Croatia" and research "Cultural institutions/organizations and young people" with employees of cultural institutions/organizations was conducted in order to identify the interests and needs of young people, all for the purpose of future work on bringing culture closer to young people.

Research with young people was conducted through an online questionnaire and focus groups. Respondents, i.e., young people between the ages of 16 and 30 (average age around 22) who participated in the online survey are in most cases female (80.1%), in education status (71.9% compared to employed 24.8% and young people in NEET status 3.3%), and they come from places with more than 50,000 inhabitants. A certain part of the respondents included young people with fewer opportunities (people from rural areas, national minorities, LGBTIQ+, economic difficulties, people with disabilities). Overall, 43.1% of respondents declare themselves as members of one of the mentioned minorities, that is, almost every other person. The focus group participants (N= 30) were young people aged 16 to 30. Focus groups were conducted online using the Zoom platform.

The conducted online research with young people (N= 246,  $\bar{x}$ = 22 years old) found that young people believe that the vast majority of institutions/organizations/state bodies **do not include young people** in the process of designing programs related to cultural content in the local community or in designing policies for youth related to culture (online survey, 92.3%). A small part that includes young people does this by using questionnaire methods, focus groups or discussions at workshops. This is mostly done by youth associations and organizations, museum curators, independent cultural organizations and high schools. Given that the majority of the participants of the three focus groups (N= 30,  $\bar{x}$ = 21



years old) claim that **cultural institutions are not open to young people's proposals** because they have pre-defined programs, are not financially available and do not want to do content beyond those already foreseen, young people see it as a space for their own involvement through **counseling** during the creation of visuals for cultural content and especially **during the development of programs for young people**.

In contrast to the opinion of young people, employees of various cultural institutions/organizations (online questionnaire, 76.9%) believe that young people are involved in the planning of cultural content in their institutions/organizations, and **almost every other employee** (46.1%) is somewhat satisfied with the interest and the arrival of young people at organized events. A total of 13 people took part in an online questionnaire for cultural institutions/organizations, which sought to collect opinions on the reasons of young people for not visiting them.

Culture and artistic expression represent an **important part of the lives of young respondents** of the online questionnaire (79.2%) and participants of the focus groups. Cultural life for many young people (online questionnaire, 67.9%) includes the active expression of creative ideas, while for almost every second young person (46.3%) it means filling free time. However, **the visibility** of cultural programs and content is not sufficiently promoted and young people highlight this as a reason for not attending events - both in cultural institutions and on the independent cultural scene. The joint proposal of the respondents of the online questionnaire and the focus groups is **a greater investment in promotion adapted to young people**, which could contribute to more frequent visits to cultural institutions/organizations.

*"The biggest problem for me is that I don't know which programs are intended for us teenagers, which ones are not, and maybe it could be shown in a different way to whom it is intended."  
(Young person from focus group)*

Both young people and employees of cultural institutions/organizations agree that young people perceive art as elitist and reserved only for eccentric people, which can indirectly send messages that they are not up to the task of understanding the artistic event. The institutions themselves often have a prejudice that young people will not understand their content or do not want to make an effort to attract young people to their own events, because young people are sometimes a hard-to-reach target group. Employees of cultural institutions, on the other hand, believe that problems arise during schooling and growing up when young people are not sufficiently exposed to cultural content and the creation of an affinity towards culture is missed. Taking into account the above, there is still a clear need for young interviewees and focus group participants that **culture must be inclusive for young people**, not traditionalist and elitist. Cultural programs for young people must be **created in close cooperation with young people**.

It was recognized that programs for young people are in most cases organized guided tours/tours, while more inclusive programs are reserved for children. It is precisely for this reason that cultural institutions/organizations recognize that they need **cooperation with youth organizations and**



**youth workers**, the acquisition of skills for working with young people and greater financial support from local/national institutions in order to be able to (co)create content for young people.

In order to make culture, cultural programs and content more interesting to young people, **8 recommendations** were made by respondents of online questionnaires and focus group participants:

1. Better promotion of cultural events and programs adapted to young people, using the language of young people and current communication channels (Instagram, interventions on the street, direct invitations to young people)
2. To create interactive and interesting cultural programs for young people in direct cooperation with young people
3. To bring classic and high art closer to young people in an interactive way (e.g., through digitization)
4. To make the contents of independent culture clear and close to young people
5. Develop cultural habits and cultural capital of young people through the educational system
6. Reduce the formality of events in cultural institutions
7. Better recognition of informal youth associations by cultural institutions as important participants in content creation
8. Provide discounts on tickets for young people

### **3. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY**

With an aim to determine the needs of young people in the field of culture and the reasons for their (non)involvement in the cultural institutions, a quantitative and qualitative research was conducted in each of the included countries, while following the same methodology.

The basic questions that were attempted to be answered through the research emerged from the project:

1. Why (the main reasons) young people are not involved in cultural institutions;
2. What are the ways to involve young people in cultural programs (identifying channels to be used, communications messages, as well as different innovative methods to be used in programs);
3. What are the real needs of young people when it comes to culture and art.

Accordingly, the main questions of the research were related to the examination of a) the real needs of young people when it comes to culture and art, and b) what is the visibility of cultural programs for young people.





The research hypotheses are:

- There is no difference in the perception of the young people and the representatives of cultural institutions regarding the reasons why young people do not attend the programs of cultural institutions.
- Young people are dissatisfied with the available offer of cultural programs in their place of residence by cultural organizations/institutions.
- The young people, in contrast to cultural institutions/organizations, believe that cultural institutions/organizations do not enable the inclusion of young people in planning cultural programs.
- Research instruments for collecting qualitative and quantitative data included: document analysis, online questionnaires and focus groups.

During the detailed planning of the methodology and design of the research instruments, and the preparations for the implementation, the research team and the partner organizations faced various challenges, and were limited in terms of funds and time, as well as coping with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic which affected every society, but nevertheless made special efforts to make the research as comprehensive as possible, and usable according to the requirements of the project, but also to the needs of the partners, and especially considering that during the planning of the project itself, it was determined that there is a real lack of research in the area.

Also, in order to harmonize the understanding of the different terms and terminology used in the included countries, as well as to facilitate the research process, the partners and the research team set some basic "definitions" for certain terms, phrases, which were considered important for the context of and for the needs of this research, such as:

- "culture" includes the arts;
- "cultural programs" – refers to programs in the field of culture;
- "cultural institutions" and "cultural organizations" refer to institutions, ie institutions, and organizations working in the field of culture;
- "cultural workers" – the term will be used in a broader sense and will refer to persons who work in the field of culture and/or arts, such as: artists, independent artists, artistic collaborators, professional collaborators who work in various cultural institutions and activities
- "independent cultural scene" – consists mainly of organizations dealing with contemporary culture and art, encouraging interaction between art, technology, culture and society. Independent culture organizations introduce new themes, ways of working and production in contemporary culture and art, and through activism, education and networking, work to improve the contemporary culture and art.





- "youth programs" – are specifically planned programs for young people that are not one-time events/activities, but are implemented over a certain period of time by youth or cultural workers using methods of youth work;
- "participation of young people" – will be considered from 3 aspects: young people as participants in decision-making processes related to the area of culture; young people as creators of a cultural product; and, young people as consumers of the cultural product, that is, the audience.

Two surveys were conducted by Croatian Youth Network (further: CYN) in order to identify the needs of young people in Croatia, namely quantitative and qualitative research, while the initial step was the implementation of desk research. Desk research was conducted with the aim of detecting existing youth programs and methods used in various cultural institutions (museums, theatres, cultural centres, galleries, etc.)

The first survey was quantitative, consisting of two online questionnaires, and a qualitative survey conducted using the focus group method.

The target group of the quantitative part of the research were young people and cultural workers who participated in the research by filling out an online survey. Young people were also the target group of qualitative research conducted through three focus groups.

### **1) Online questionnaire "Visibility of cultural programs and the needs of young people regarding cultural content" - youth**

Research on the visibility of cultural programs and the needs of young people in relation to cultural content was conducted through an online questionnaire designed for young people. The online questionnaire was disseminated on the social networks of the Croatian Youth Network, through the joint email list CYN, which includes over 70 members of the association of youth organizations and youth organizations, and through the CYN website. The online questionnaire, created via the Survey Monkey platform, was available for two weeks, i.e. from September 2nd to September 17th, 2021.

**Young people aged 16 to 30** were the researched population who were invited to participate in the research through an online survey. The final random sample consists of **246 young people aged 16 to 30 years**. The demographic data of the participants are given below.

The average **age** of the participants is around 22 years, with the majority of participants aged 16 to 19 (34.1%). There were 27.2% of participants aged 22 to 23, participants aged 24 to 27 (26.8%), while the lowest number of participants was aged 28 to 30. According to the **gender**



**identity** of the participants, the vast majority were women (80.1%), 16.3% were men, while 3.7% of the participants described themselves in some other way.

Regarding **employment status**, i.e. schooling status, students made up 48.4% of the sample, and employees 24.8%. Vocational school students make up 15.4%, gymnasium students 8.1%, while persons belonging to the NEET group make up 3.3% of participants. Furthermore, the majority of participants come from **places** with more than 50,000 inhabitants (52.2%), i.e. every second participant comes from Zagreb. Participants from rural areas, up to 5,000 inhabitants, make up the second largest group (19.9%). This is followed by participants from places with between 10,001 and 50,000 inhabitants (18.3%), while those who are coming from places with between 5,001 and 10,000 inhabitants (8.9%) are the smallest group.

The research also included young people with **fewer opportunity groups** (rural areas, poverty, national minorities, LGBTIQ persons, etc.). The most participants are from the LGBTIQ community (20.3%), followed by people facing economic difficulties (15.4%), and individuals living in rural areas (14.6%). They are followed by national minorities (4.1%) and people with disabilities (2.4%). In total, 43.1% of participants declare themselves to be members of one of the mentioned minorities, i.e. almost every other person.

Following the estimation of **property status**, the majority of participants think that they are financially equal to their environment (57.7%), 27.7% think that they are slightly better or much better than their peers, while 14.6% think that it is their financial situation is slightly worse or much worse than most others.

## **2) Online questionnaire „Cultural institutions/organizations and the Youth“ - cultural institutions/organizations**

The part of the research within the project “Melting Pot” concerning gathering information from cultural institutions/organizations in Croatia was conducted in the period from September 14th till September 23rd 2021.

After the process of mapping out institutions, according to the Cultural institution table Croatia each institution was contacted via email. Only one organization (NGO Drugo more) responded immediately, other institutions responded either after the reminder email sent on the 20th or more often after a direct phone call to the department or the department head on the 21st. In spite of constant reminders and promises of filling out 15 institutions did not respond to the questionnaire due to other obligations.



The second part of the quantitative research included conducting a survey with representatives of cultural institutions/organizations. A total of 13 persons participated in the final sample. One person participated from cultural institutions theatre, music, cinema, sculpture, cultural homes, independent cultural scene/non-governmental organizations, collectives, two people each deal with literature and performance art, while 3 people deal with painting.

Other socio-demographic data were not requested from the participants.

### **3) Focus groups "Visibility of cultural programs and the needs of young people regarding cultural content" - youth**

CYN and Pogon Zagreb - Center for Independent Youth and Culture have forwarded an invitation for participation in focus groups to their members. The call included and a request that young people, aged 16 to 30, pass the call on to their peers. In the third focus group, only high school students participated in a targeted manner. The focus group was intentionally organized with high school seniors because the opinion of younger youth (17 to 19 years old in this case) is very often ignored. All three focus groups were conducted online using the Zoom communication platform, according to the wishes of the participants.

A total of 20 people participated in 3 focus groups. All three focus groups formed a convenience sample collected using the snowball method. The first focus group was attended only by female students, the second by students and young employees, and the third of fourth-graders from the X Gymnasium Zagreb. The average **age** of the participants is 21 years (from 17 to 28 years) and according to **gender identity**, the number of men (9) and women (10) is equally included, as well as one person who is described in some other way. The vast majority of participants according to their **place** of residence live in Zagreb (75%), and one person comes from some other counties of the Republic of Croatia.

The sample also included three people belonging to the LGBTIQ community, two people with disabilities and one person living in a rural area. A total of 30% of participants declared themselves to be members of a **minority**.



## 4. RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

### **WHAT IS...**

*In this part we shall review the current situation i.e. what IS now.*

### **4.1. YOUTH CULTURAL PROGRAMS**

With the aim of collecting and analysing relevant information and documents related to the existence and implementation of youth cultural programs and the methods used, CYN conducted desk research.

The analysis showed that in the Republic of Croatia there is a lack of long-term programs for young people implemented in various cultural institutions, conducted by cultural workers and carefully planned, continuously implemented with constant financial support from state institutions (e.g. Ministry of Culture, Central State Office for Demography and Youth) and independent cultural scenes. The lack of recognition of the importance of having a strategic cultural program for young people that would benefit young people with attractive modern technologies and interactive content is in line with the lack of understanding of the importance of building cultural capital for young people, as well as the needs of their satisfaction for the consumption of cultural content. Youth culture, preferences and tastes are dynamic and institutional and infrastructural factors should follow their interests, develop the youth audience and ultimately create youth programs in collaboration with young people.

The available information and documents used in the conducted desk research showed that programs for young people in the Republic of Croatia in cultural institutions depend on individual engagements of galleries, museums, cultural centres, and so on. CYN analysed four (4) cultural programs that are focused on youth.

The Ministry of Culture financially supports the implementation of the "**Backpack (full) of Culture**"<sup>1</sup> program, which makes it possible to achieve a longer-term offer of interesting and interactive content for children and youth (up to 18 years) in educational institutions and cultural institutions by professional artists/experts in the field of culture and art, and by students of art academies. The program is part of the cultural policy of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and is a national supplementary curriculum support program that has been implemented continuously since 2014. The program uses different methods: 1)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://min-kulture.gov.hr/aktualno/ruksak-pun-kulture-16272/16272>



performing arts, 2) visual arts, 3) movie art, 4) literature, 5) cultural heritage and innovative cultural practices.

Cultural programs focused on youth are and „**Centre for Visitors Ivana's House of Fairytale**“<sup>2</sup> in city Ogulin, Croatia. The main vision of "Ivana's House of Fairy Tales" is to celebrate the work of Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić, a Croatian writer, to inspire with a fairy tale and arouse a love for reading, knowledge and creation. This public institution is a cultural, informative and educational cultural institution which, through various activities, provides the public with content from the life of the writer. Methods used in this cultural institution are audio-visual methods, tactile methods, experiential and interactive methods with 4 main parts of the setup: 1) exhibition, 2) performances and concerts, 3) educational program, 4) online Fairy tale database.

The goal of the program "**Concert Office Zadar - Kneževa unplugged**"<sup>3</sup> is to contribute to the affirmation of young musicians and young visual artists while bringing culture closer to young people. The method used by the program is to connect alternative expression (musical and visual) with classical (musical and visual/artistic). More specifically, the methods used by the program are: 1) music that combines classical music motifs with modern expressions and 2) visual art through which given themes from classical culture are presented in an alternative way. The overall program is conceived through the format of a competition of musicians and visual artists with an emphasis on the creativity of expression, which brings classical culture (through the tasks and venue of the event) closer to young people.

The youth programs run by the Museum of Contemporary Art are the **MSU Youth Club** and **Programs for schools and kindergartens**. The MSU Youth Club is a program through which young people are encouraged to participate in the design and implementation of individual programs from various fields of museum activities. The working methods used by the MSU Youth Club are: 1) talks with artists, 2) round tables, 3) the Toboggan podcast, 4) guides and other activities designed by young people for young people. Programs for school and kindergartens aim to bring different age groups through the art-educational program closer to different exhibitions in the Museum of Contemporary Art and art to the target group through different activities. Methods used for different age groups of young people (from 6 years onwards) are: 1) acquaintance, research and interpretation of art works, 2) recognizing different forms of fine and visual arts, 3) fine and visual expression through shaping their own visual message or fine/visual art work, 4) use of new media technologies.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ivaninakucabajke.hr/hr/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.kuzd.hr/hr/events/23/466/>



These programs implemented by cultural institutions are examples of positive long-term practices of cultural programs created for young people, individuals and in cooperation with young people, and serve as good opportunities to multiply content in other cultural institutions.

## 4.2. YOUTH PARTICIPATION & INFORMATION

According to the results obtained from the online questionnaire "Visibility of cultural programs and the needs of young people regarding cultural content" it is evident that young people believe that the vast majority of institutions/organizations/government bodies do not involve young people in the processes of designing programs related to cultural content in the local community, or in designing cultural-related youth policies (92.3%). A small part of the participants thinks that young people are involved through questionnaires, focus groups or workshop discussions, with associations, youth organizations, museum curators, independent cultural organizations and secondary schools.

Focus group participants in Croatia state that they attend various cultural events and most of them are actively looking for them. However, on the other hand, young participants state that they have no special desire to get involved in the work of cultural spaces because half of the focus group participants express that they actively participate in organizing various events or are creators of cultural content. Those who want to be more involved would like to contribute creatively or through visual counselling and the development of a more youth-friendly program. Most of the focus group participants argued that cultural institutions are not open to youth proposals because they have predefined programs, are not affordable and do not want to do content outside of what is envisaged.

*"We tried to cooperate with some cultural institutions, but they were either uninterested because they already have a pre-defined program or it is not their priority to enter some projects that they do not have to. Secondly, we wanted to do a program in one cultural institution and then they gave us an enormous figure so we said no, thank you. By the way, we are interested and open for cooperation, but so far we have not received an invitation in our area. "*

Surveying the opinion of employees of various cultural institutions/organizations through the online questionnaire "Cultural institutions/organizations and the Youth" on their satisfaction with the arrival of young people at cultural events, almost every second respondent (46.15%) is somewhat satisfied with the interest and arrival of young people at events organized by their institution. In short, a total of 84.62% of people are very satisfied and somewhat



satisfied, which means that respondents do not see disinterest in young people, unlike themselves, for different cultural content.

Furthermore, the majority of respondents from cultural institutions/organizations (76.9%) claims that young people are involved in the planning of cultural content within their institutions. The main tool of including youth and/or identifying their needs is within close cooperation with public educational institutions and their staff. The other methods are: focus groups and questionnaires directed at young or even created by young; informal conversations with youth during other programs.

Culture and artistic expression are an important part of young people's lives, as expressed by participants in the online questionnaire (79.2%) and focus group participants. However, when it comes to the visibility of cultural programs and content, it is precisely the insufficient promotion of events that young people point out as the reason for not attending events in cultural institutions, citing insufficient promotion of events. Also among the 3 main proposals for changes that cultural institutions need to introduce in order to increase the interest of young people is the proposal for greater investment in youth-friendly promotion (72.4%). A similar proposal is aimed at the culturally independent scene, where the second major proposal for changes that culturally independent scenes need to make in order to increase youth interest also sees greater investment in youth-friendly promotion (69.3%).

*"The biggest problem for me is that I don't know which programs are intended for us teenagers, which are not, and maybe it could be shown in a different way to whom it is intended."*

*"They advertise the plays so that it is interesting to the older audience, and maybe if they presented it in a different way, we would come and maybe it would be good for us."*

Participants in the online survey state that the most used channels for informing young people about cultural events are Facebook (74.4%), friends and acquaintances (73.2%) and posters (61%). The finding of focus groups is also interesting, where it is pointed out that the older group of young people is most informed through Facebook, while younger youth use Instagram more and it is their main source of information. An important role for the focus group participants is information through posters, where the participants emphasize the importance of the visual appearance of the event.

*"(...) And I really like the posters, like the Summer Night of the Exit Theatre. That visual design of the event itself is very important to me. I think that many can be attracted by the interesting visual of an event. So, I think that first visual impression of an event is quite important. (...) "*





Participants of cultural institutions/organizations state that their main channels of communication/marketing through which they distribute information about their programs/events for young people and young audiences are: 1) social networks in general (69.23%), 2) Instagram and websites (30.77 %), 3) Facebook and posters (23.08%).

### **WHAT'S NEEDED...**

*In this part we are analysing the needs and the desired state.*

### **4.3. YOUTH NEEDS**

In order to know what to offer young people and how to create cultural programs for them and in cooperation with them, it is important to detect several key elements for the starting point, ie how young people spend their free time in general and in what activities, what they think about the offer of cultural content in their local communities and what they should be like, which cultural and entertainment content they visit the most.

Regarding the meaning of culture and cultural life, the vast majority of participants in the online questionnaire have their own meaning of the above and according to the answers for most of them it means attending various cultural events. In the first place (86.6%) it means visiting cinemas, museums, exhibitions and concerts, while in second place (70.3%) it means visiting other cultural events. Culture and cultural life for many young people (67.9%) involves the active expression of creative ideas, while for almost every other young (46.3%) it means fulfilling free time.

Furthermore, focus group participants state that they would participate in non - cultural programs in cultural institutions if they were interested in those programs. They add that if they often go to some cultural institutions, that does not mean that they would be more willing to go to something just because it happens in that space. They point out intercultural differences and digital technologies as topics that would be more interesting to them - but that they are presented in a way that is understandable and interesting for young people.

*"I would be most interested in intercultural differences because I would never go to the Internet to search and I have nowhere to find out, and I'm really interested in how other people live and that. And to present it in a way that is understandable and interesting to us young people."*

Looking at how young people, participants in the online questionnaire, spend their free time and which activities are their priority, it is pointed out that young people spend most of their



free time listening to music ( $\bar{x} = 4.27$ ), on social networks ( $\bar{x} = 4.22$ ) and socializing with friends ( $\bar{x} = 3.88$ ) and family ( $\bar{x} = 3.64$ ). Cultural values are moderately represented to the participants, i.e. they sometimes spend their free time reading books ( $\bar{x} = 3.23$ ), watching educational content on television ( $\bar{x} = 3.28$ ) and in creative work (writing, painting, playing) ( $\bar{x} = 2.96$ ). Furthermore, participants visit more cultural events on the independent cultural scene ( $\bar{x} = 3.03$ ) than in cultural institutions (theatre, opera, exhibitions, museums) ( $\bar{x} = 2.78$ ) - the difference between these two answers is significant in this sample of respondents.

Furthermore, expressing satisfaction with the quality of the offer of cultural, sports, entertainment, education and other offers in their local community, the participants in the online questionnaire are generally neither satisfied nor satisfied with the offered choices. They are most satisfied with the offer of sports and recreational facilities ( $\bar{x} = 3.27$ ), and least satisfied with the employment perspective in the place where they live ( $\bar{x} = 2.48$ ). They are moderately satisfied with the cultural offer and the contents ( $\bar{x} = 3.15$ ) and the possibilities of continuing education ( $\bar{x} = 3.12$ ).

Although the above results give the impression that young people are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the offer in their local community, it should be noted that about 52% of respondents live in cities and that most respondents come from the Croatian capital - Zagreb. Considering that a large part of the sample comes from the urban environment, it is somewhat disappointing that the participants are not generally satisfied with any of the mentioned aspects of the offers from the questionnaire.

Regarding the answers of the participants to the question about going to cultural events before the COVID-19 pandemic, young people spend most of their time on film screenings ( $\bar{x} = 3.28$ ), exhibitions/art installations in museums and galleries ( $\bar{x} = 3.04$ ), trips to the city library ( $\bar{x} = 3.03$ ), and theatre performances ( $\bar{x} = 3.01$ ). It is interesting that young people pointed out listening to music as the activity in which they spend most of their time, but going to concerts and music events is not so interesting to them (average results are around 2.1). Also, young people were asked how they spend their free time and in which activities - they have stated that they visit more contents on the independent cultural scene, but they also pointed out that they go more to exhibitions/art installations in museums and galleries ( $\bar{x} = 3.04$ ) compared to exhibitions/art installations in the spaces of the independent cultural scene ( $\bar{x} = 2.56$ ). Further comparisons of leisure time show that although reading books is quite a highly positioned activity within the domain of leisure time, young people are not equally interested in going to book promotions ( $\bar{x} = 2.00$ ). The least interesting events for young people are performances of contemporary dance ( $\bar{x} = 1.61$ ), performances of contemporary circus ( $\bar{x} = 1.38$ ), artistic performances ( $\bar{x} = 1.98$ ) and concerts of demo bands ( $\bar{x} = 1.76$ ). These findings were expected since they are specific cultural forms.



How often did you use to attend these cultural contents before the Covid-19 pandemic? * min = 1, max = 5	$\bar{x}$	Rank	$\bar{x}$	To what extent would you like to see the following activities/events present in the cultural life of the place where you live? * min= 0, max= 3
Cinema /movie projections	3,28	I	2,41	Theatre plays
Art exhibitions/installations in museums and art galleries	3,04	II	2,36	Cinema /movie projections
Town library	3,03	III	2,26	Creative workshops (workshops for creative writing, DJ-ing, fine arts, dance, etc)
Theatre plays	3,01	IV	2,26	Movie festivals
Concerts of domestic alternative music	2,59	V	2,25	Concerts of foreign alternative music
Art exhibitions/installations in spaces of the independent cultural scene	2,56	VI	2,22	Art exhibitions/installations in museums and art galleries
Opera, ballet or classical music concerts	2,32	VII	2,19	Art exhibitions/installations in spaces of the independent cultural scene
Concerts of domestic mainstream music	2,29	VIII	2,18	International music festivals
Concerts of foreign alternative music	2,28	IX	2,12	Town library
Movie festivals	2,26	X	2,09	Concerts of domestic alternative music
Creative workshops (workshops for creative writing, DJ-ing, fine arts, dance, etc)	2,12	XI	2,09	National music festivals
Parties with different electronic music	2,06	XII	2,07	Concerts of foreign mainstream music
Concerts of foreign mainstream music	2,03	XIII	2,06	Opera, ballet or classical music concerts
National music festivals	2,01	XIV	2,02	Book launching events, talks with writers and poets,



				literature readings etc.
Book launching events, talks with writers and poets, literature readings etc.	2,00	XV	1,95	Artistic performances
International music festivals	2,00	XVI	1,82	Contemporary dance performances
Artistic performances	1,98	XVII	1,79	Parties with different electronic music
Concerts of demo-bands	1,77	XVIII	1,75	Concerts of domestic mainstream music
Contemporary dance performances	1,62	XIX	1,74	Contemporary circus performances
Contemporary circus performances	1,38	XX	1,69	Concerts of demo-bands

Following the needs of young people, i.e. the contents that the participants of the online questionnaire pointed out as important for their local community, more or less it is about the contents in the event that they like to go to the most. In their local community, they would like to see in same or higher measure more theatre performances ( $\bar{x} = 2.41$ ), film screenings ( $\bar{x} = 2.36$ ), film festivals ( $\bar{x} = 2.26$ ), concerts of foreign alternative music ( $\bar{x} = 2.25$ ) and exhibitions/art installations in museums and galleries ( $\bar{x} = 2.22$ ). High on the scale of young people's needs for content is the desire for various workshops ( $\bar{x} = 2.62$ ) in which young people would participate in the creation of cultural content and artistic expression. It is important to point out that young people propose these proposals in the range of answers from "to the same extent as before" (1) to "to a greater extent" (4) they want to see in their local community. The contents that young least want to see in their community are related to contemporary circus performances, contemporary dance performances, demo band concerts and artistic performances.

#### 4.4. INSTITUTIONS' NEEDS

In order to gain insight into institutional needs with the aim of developing or adapting cultural programs for young people, the first step was to determine the reasons why participants believe that young people do not go to events in cultural institutions. On the continuum of the scale from 1 "completely no" to 5 "completely yes", the participants of the online questionnaire whose task was to choose the reasons for the lower number of young people



going to cultural institutions (museums, theatres, galleries), the average score was 3.53. This result shows that the respondents believe that all the above reasons cause some lack of interest of young people in visiting cultural institutions.

The most prominent reasons are insufficient promotion of events ( $\bar{x} = 3.96$ ), lack of interest of young people ( $\bar{x} = 3.81$ ), insufficient number of events in the place of residence ( $\bar{x} = 3.75$ ), not attractive to young people ( $\bar{x} = 3.72$ ), and inadequacy of promotion to young people ( $\bar{x} = 3.67$ ). It is worrying to see that one of the main problems is the lack of interest of young people in this type of content, but it is possible that lack of interest is the result of inappropriate promotion and general lack of interest of institutions to involve young people in cultural programs.

As additional reasons for not going to cultural institutions, the respondents stated:

- Non-education through the system of education for culture and non-development of habits
- Lack of understanding of the needs and interests of young people
- Elitist understanding of culture by young people
- Stereotypical perception of art and culture as boring and uninteresting
- Lack or complete lack of interactivity in cultural programs and content
- Giving up young people as a target audience
- Lack of youth-friendly promotion and non-use of current communication channels

In short, the participants believe that the biggest problem is that young people are not sufficiently exposed to cultural content during school and growing up, and therefore do not create affinities towards it. According to them, there is a stereotype in society that art is only for eccentric people. They believe that art events themselves are often created only for a certain class of people and can reject young people because they are indirectly sending a message that they are not up to the understanding of an art event. Institutions themselves often have a prejudice that young people will not understand their content or do not want to make an effort to attract young people to their own events because young people are sometimes a hard-to-reach target group. Young people who participated in online questionnaires and focus groups themselves noticed that it is often evident that the programs were not created in cooperation with young people and therefore they are not adapted or attractive for participation.

Regarding the reasons participants perceive as important factors why young people do not go to cultural events on the independent scene, the most prominent is the lack of recognition of this type of content by cultural institutions and importance for young people ( $\bar{x} = 3.99$ ), insufficient promotion of events ( $\bar{x} = 3.87$ ), unfamiliarity of young people with the offer on the



independent scene ( $\bar{x} = 3.78$ ) and insufficient number of events in the place of residence ( $\bar{x} = 3.69$ ). Comparing these answers with the answers given for the reasons for not coming to cultural institutions, it can be seen that more or less the reasons coincide - except for the main reason for the independent scene, which is that cultural institutions do not sufficiently recognize the importance of events on the independent scene.

Regarding the least accepted and perceived reasons for not attending cultural events in cultural institutions and on the independent scene, it is common rejection to some extent for poor transport connections to the place of the cultural institution/independent scene and not having enough time.

For the field of independent cultural scene, young people state similar reasons as for going to cultural events in cultural institutions. It seems that in this field there is an even greater burden of closedness and elitism, due to which some young people do not feel that such a form of content is accessible and intended for them. They feel that such content requires prior knowledge that they do not gain through classical education and that events are often an end in themselves without a desire to attract a wider circle of people. In smaller communities, young people point out that there is not enough such content and that the offer is generally too small and insufficiently diverse.

Respondents of cultural institutions / organizations state that the following are important elements in defining youth programs or programs for youth in their institution:

- to make culture approachable to young people
- to change the perception of culture as something elitist, old-fashioned and uninteresting
- to make youth the co-creators of programs and teach them about the process during the process
- developing youth as the institution's audience
- development of critical thinking and independence in approaching art

These elements show the connection with the responses of young people who equally believe that culture must be inclusive and inclusive for young people, not traditionalist and elitist. There is also an overlap in the understanding that programs for youth or youth programs need to be created in close cooperation with youth.

Employees of cultural institutions/organizations state that they have implemented youth programs (84.61%) and the described share points programs. The programs are based on using new tools to approach youth - promotional tools are beginning to be integrated into the programs - the use of social media and other online tools. The existing programs seek to



introduce youth to the functioning of the institutions and lack programs that build on the existing exhibitions.

The programs are done within educational departments, however most of the educational departments are predominantly focused on children and the programs for youth are often guided tours. Some programs lasted from 2017 to 2019. The program coordinators accentuate as important the element of interdisciplinarity and involvement of you in the entire process. Another important section of the programs is a DIY approach.

Based on research with employees of cultural institutions/organizations, we can conclude that the main needs for creating developing and maintaining youth programs in cultural institutions are corporation with youth organizations and youth workers (qualified people to work with youth), greater financial support by the local/national authorities, greater budget allocated for marketing/distributing information. What also resurfaced as a need is cooperation with the non-institutional and developing youth work skills and training for the already existing staff of the institution.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Young people from the research (focus groups) recommends:

- Better promotion of cultural events and programs adapted to young people, using the language of young people and current communication channels (Instagram, street interventions, direct invitations to people)
- Create interactive and interesting cultural programs for young people in direct cooperation with young people
- Bring classical and high art closer to young people in an interactive way (eg by digitization)
- Make the contents of independent culture clear to young people and bring them closer to young people
- Develop cultural habits and cultural capital of young people through the educational system
- Reduce the formality of events in cultural institutions
- Better recognition of informal youth associations by cultural institutions as important participants in content creation

Young people from the online questionnaire believe that in order to increase young people's interest in cultural content, the following should be done:

- Introduce a discount on tickets





- Ensure greater availability of such content to young people
- Invest more in youth-friendly promotion
- Adapt activities and accompanying program of cultural events to young people

Finally, when asked what the independent cultural scene should do to increase the interest of young people, young state the following:

- Increase the availability of such content to young people
- Invest more in the visibility of youth programs
- Discounts on tickets
- Adapting activities and accompanying programs to young people

## 6. ANNEXES

- Analysis of survey questionnaire for youth
- Analysis of questionnaire for institutions/organizations
- Focus Groups Report
- Desk research report