



#Smash
TheHate

SMASH!



Report of pilot workshops implementation with youth

IN FRANCE, ITALY, LITHUANIA
AND SPAIN

Sužinok daugiau: smashproject.eu

la xixa
CREATIVE SOCIAL INNOVATION

XAMFRÀ
MUSICA/ESCIENA/INCLUSIO SOCIAL

Panevėžio teatras
Menasi



THE
JACITIRO

RESEARCH
& DESIGN

CENTRO SVILUPPO
CREATIVO
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 ABOUT SMASH

The SMASH project – **Journalistic Theatre for Social Media Action against Online Hate Speech** – aims to empower young people and youth workers to recognise, analyse and counter online hate speech through creative, participatory, and artistic approaches.

By combining theatre-based methodologies, digital media competences, and ethical reflection, SMASH seeks to foster critical awareness, empathy, and responsible engagement in digital environments. The project promotes social inclusion and digital citizenship by addressing online hate speech not only as a digital phenomenon, but also as a social and emotional experience that affects real communities.

The project involves a consortium of six organisations from France, Italy, Lithuania and Spain, bringing together complementary expertise – theatre of the oppressed, digital rights and ethics, youth work, social inclusion, and critical media education – to create a shared pedagogical method that connects theatre and online communication.

Within **Work Package 2 (SMASHING Hate Speech Online I & II)**, each partner tested and validated the SMASH methodology at local level through a series of workshops and creative laboratories. These pilots served to explore how artistic and digital practices can be used to understand mechanisms of online hate, deconstruct stereotypes, and generate counter-narratives for positive online participation.



1.2 PARTNER ORGANISATION AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO SMASH METHODOLOGY



RESPECT ZONE (FRANCE)

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“**Respect Zone**” is a non-profit association governed by the French law of 1901. Founded in 2014, it works to promote responsible **freedom of expression** and youth protection. The organisation uses law and education as tools to address societal issues, clarifying the limits of individuals’ actions and safeguarding peaceful coexistence in the digital world.

Their team, composed of both employees and volunteers, collaborates with various stakeholders, including the Ministry of National Education, the school system, youth centres, digitally connected social centres, and businesses. Together, they initiate dialogue on the use of **digital tools** and raise awareness about **cyber-violence, cyberbullying, and online hate**.

With extensive experience in **youth education and digital citizenship**, the organisation’s pedagogical approach is centred on **dialogue, non-moralising facilitation, embodied practice** (portrait, mirror, image theatre, energisers), and **attentive listening**. Facilitators create a discussion environment that encourages peer-to-peer responses and draws from participants’ lived experiences, rather than imposing top-down solutions. This makes their work especially relevant in fostering critical thinking, self-expression, and responsible behaviour in digital spaces.

“Respect Zone” played a central role in **developing the SMASH methodology**. They were responsible for creating the WP2 guidelines, drawing from the input of all project partners. Their expertise in digital citizenship, online safety, and non-moralising facilitation was pivotal in shaping the framework. The organisation incorporated embodied practices such as image theatre and energisers, ensuring that participants could engage with complex topics like online hate in a creative, safe, and interactive way. Additionally, their focus on peer-to-peer communication and attention to language and context ensured that the methodology was accessible, culturally relevant, and adaptable across different communities.



CSC DANILO DOLCI (ITALY)

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The pilot training in Italy was carried out by the “**Centro per lo Sviluppo Creativo Danilo Dolci**”, a non-profit organization based in Palermo. The association originates from the social and educational work of Danilo Dolci, a well-known activist who began working in Sicily in 1952 with the aim of **creating creative spaces for critical awareness and bottom-up planning**, laying the foundations for real and lasting change in the territory.

Today, the organization continues this commitment through local, national, and international projects and initiatives, fostering synergies and opportunities for cooperation with individuals, schools, universities, institutions, organizations, and the wider community.

With over 20 years of experience in managing national, European, and international funding programmes, the Centre relies on a team of 15 permanent staff members, supported by more than 40 volunteers, external experts, and collaborators. It works in close cooperation with a network of over 25 schools, universities, and local associations, as well as more than 300 partner organizations in 50 different countries.

Within the framework of the SMASH project, the Centre primarily focused on deepening and applying the “**Critical Incidents Methodology**” developed by Margalit Cohen-Emerique. This approach is widely used in intercultural education and training, and is based on the analysis of real-life situations—so-called “critical incidents”—in which misunderstandings, conflicts, or tensions arise due to cultural differences, implicit norms, values, or power relations.



THE CRITICAL (LITHUANIA)

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THE
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The Lithuanian pilot was co-organised by **Panevėžys Theatre “Menas”** and **The Critical**, working as a joint local team.

Panevėžys Theatre “Menas” is a municipal theatre founded in 1991, combining a professional repertoire (around 11,000 spectators per year) with long-term educational work for children, teenagers and adults. Its youth studio offers a space for young people – including more vulnerable groups – to explore **acting, self-expression and empowerment** through theatre.

“The Critical” is a research, design and communication agency. It works with public institutions, NGOs and private actors on **evidence-based strategies, participatory processes and visual communication**, with strong experience in **culture, sustainability** and projects involving migrant and refugee youth (e.g. workshops on SDGs, art residencies, intercultural entrepreneurship).

Within SMASH, **Panevėžys Theatre “Menas”** contributed its expertise in applied and participatory theatre with young people – including dilemma theatre and other interactive formats – and hosted the pilot in the creativity centre “Pragiedruliai” in Panevėžys. **“The Critical”** focused on the methodological and digital/media side: co-designing the local pilot structure, linking activities to DigComp, and contributing experience in critical media analysis, social media literacy and communication. At project level, The Critical also supports the systematisation and layout of pilot reports.

In the Lithuanian context, this partnership links a strong **local cultural and youth-work anchor** in Panevėžys with **methodological and communication expertise** based in Vilnius.



LA XIXA (SPAIN)

www.laxixa.org

Instagram: @laxixat

Facebook: laxixateatre

Youtube: [youtube.com/user/laxixateatre](https://www.youtube.com/user/laxixateatre)



FUNDACIÓN ARC – XAMFRÀ (SPAIN)

<https://xamfra.net/>

IG: @xamfraartsbcn



The Spanish pilot was implemented jointly by **“La Xixa Teatre”** and **“Xamfrà”**, two organisations with experience in community arts and working with young people.

The SMASH pilot in Barcelona was **“La Xixa Teatre”** is a non-profit organisation based in Barcelona dedicated to **social transformation, inclusion and community empowerment** through participatory and theatrical methodologies. Its pedagogical approach is based on tools such as the **Theatre of the Oppressed, Forum Theatre, Image Theatre** and **Process Work**, integrating body, emotion and critical reflection to promote dialogue, social awareness and active participation.

“La Xixa” has extensive experience in training young people and socio-educational professionals in the use of applied theatre to address issues such as discrimination, coexistence, emotional well-being and digital citizenship.

“Xamfrà” is an initiative of the L’Arc Música foundation, which for more than 50 years has been working to contribute to the **holistic education** of individuals through music and the performing arts. L’Arc Música’s evolution has been evident in its management of various socio-educational initiatives, programmes and projects that use **music** and the **performing arts** as primary **educational tools**.

“Xamfrà” is understood as a metaphor for a meeting place for people who come to the region from different backgrounds, cultures, experiences, etc. Ephemeral artistic languages — music, dance, theatre, etc. — are the shared communication tools that facilitate the creation of safe environments and conditions, where participants collectively create artistic experiences through their own practice.

Within the SMASH project, **“La Xixa”** contributed its experience in participatory theatre dynamics, body facilitation and critical analysis of emotions and power relations associated with online hate speech. It also contributed to the joint pedagogical design and methodological support of the consortium.

“Xamfrà” has been part of the SMASH project, offering and creating spaces for reflection and reunion, sharing artistic languages—especially the language of performance—and mobilising the participation of individuals and groups at risk of exclusion together with people who were not affected by it, in order to engage in dialogue and generate debate about online hate. Not only have these spaces for dialogue been promoted, but artistic pieces have also been created that have allowed participants to express how they feel and have served as tools for learning and expression.



2.

**METHODOLOGICAL
FRAMEWORK &
LEARNING PATH**

2.1 THE SMASH METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The SMASH methodology combines critical media analysis and creative theatrical expression to address online hate speech. It encourages participants to explore how hate and empathy are constructed in digital environments, to reflect on their own online behaviours, and to create alternative, inclusive narratives.

The method is structured around two complementary phases:

- **SMASHING Hate Speech Online I – Critical Media Analysis:** observing, decoding and discussing online content to identify mechanisms of hate, stereotypes and power relations behind digital communication.
- **SMASHING Hate Speech Online II – Content Creation:** transforming these reflections into creative counter-narratives through memes, short videos or other digital formats, using humour, irony and artistic imagination to promote empathy and inclusion.

The process integrates theatrical tools inspired by **Theatre of the Oppressed, Forum Theatre, Image Theatre, Process Work, Critical Incident, and Journalistic Theatre**. These tools combine embodiment, emotional awareness, and collective reflection to explore real experiences of online interaction and connect them with digital citizenship, media ethics, and social responsibility.

2.2 LOCAL ADAPTATION & LEARNING JOURNEY IN PARTNER COUNTRIES

Following the shared SMASH framework, each partner translated the two-phase structure — Critical Media Analysis and Content Creation — into a practical local process. This section presents how the methodology came to life within the national pilot: its context, participants, and learning journey.

OVERVIEW OF LOCAL ADAPTATIONS

While the core objectives remained consistent across the consortium, the implementation strategies were tailored to the specific profiles of the target groups and the expertise of the host organisations. The pilots varied significantly in format, ranging from intensive weekend blocks in **Lithuania** and consecutive daily sessions in **Italy**, to a structure of weekly sessions in **Spain** and a sequence of four workshops in **France**.

The pedagogical focus also shifted to maximise local impact. **France** ("Respect Zone") leveraged the existing video-production skills of a youth collective, focusing on a "theory-practice-reflection" cycle that connected theatrical embodiment with digital law and safety. Italy ("Danilo Dolci") emphasised the Critical Incidents Methodology, using the diversity of migration backgrounds within the group to explore cultural shock and intercultural awareness as a lens for online hate.

In **Lithuania** ("The Critical" & Theatre "Menas"), the approach was heavily influenced by the multilingual context of the participants (primarily Ukrainian war refugees), utilizing Long Table method, Dilemma Theatre and embodied games to navigate sensitive topics and language barriers. Finally, **Spain** ("La Xixa" & "Xamfrà") adopted a deeply experiential approach, prioritizing sensory and body-based work to decode digital violence, using the body as the primary gateway to critical analysis before moving to digital creation.

Despite these structural differences, all partners successfully guided participants from the deconstruction of online hate (Phase 1) to the production of creative counter-narratives (Phase 2), proving the flexibility of the SMASH methodology across different cultural and social contexts.

2.3 LEARNING JOURNEY IN PARTNER COUNTRIES

2.3.1 FRANCE

CONTEXT AND LOGISTICS

Location: Mantes-la-Jolie, France.

Dates and total duration: 20 hours of workshops organised on 21st, 24th, 27th and 28th of October 2025.

Venue description: The venue was a large indoor room (approx. 100 m²) equipped with two screens, one video projector, a stage, 50 chairs, and four tables.

Number of sessions: 4 main workshops.

Facilitators and support team: César Achard–Bonnet, Laura-Blu Mauss, and Patricia Sandanassamy, with youth worker support from the collective (Amadou Konaté).

Participants' profile: The group consisted of 14 young people (aged 15–19), predominantly second-generation migrants. They arrived with prior experience in smartphone video production and an existing group dynamic.

This strong internal cohesion was both an asset—providing high engagement and existing editorial practice—and a challenge, as it required facilitators to earn trust and open the group beyond existing cliques.

The recruitment and participation were organised in close partnership with the collective's coordinator, whose involvement was decisive in securing attendance and local buy-in.



LOCAL ADAPTATION AND LEARNING PATH (FRANCE)

For the French pilot, Respect Zone delivered a tightly sequenced 20-hour workshop across four face-to-face sessions. The team adapted the SMASH shared framework to a group that already practised smartphone video production and possessed a strong internal dynamic. The main pedagogical aim was therefore not to teach basic filming techniques, but to connect embodied theatrical reflection with ethical media practice. The goal was to help young content creators convert lived experience and emotion into responsible, context-aware counter-narratives.

The learning path was designed as a rhythm of short theory inputs followed immediately by practical theatrical application. This “theory → practice → reflection” micro-cycle was deliberately repeated to sustain attention and ensure abstract media concepts (such as virality or verification) were lived and felt before being discussed.

The progression of the learning journey unfolded as follows:

- **Day 1 - Building Safety and Context:** The process began with co-created safety rules and short corporeal exercises (such as the “Iceberg” or “Mirror” exercises) to lower resistance and build trust. This allowed participants to access emotional material safely and address the hidden cultural meanings behind online comments.
- **Day 2 - From Awareness to Analysis:** The group moved into sharper conceptual frames regarding hate, virality, and the “grey zones” of humour. Facilitators used dilemma theatre and image analysis to make these concepts tangible. A key adaptation here was the use of a “Violent / Not Violent” activity, which surfaced the participants’ habitual exposure to illegal content and motivated the co-design of safety protocols.
- **Day 3 - Ethical Authorship:** As the group transitioned to Phase 2 (Creation), the focus shifted to collective agency. Participants co-designed a Digital Safety Charter and negotiated group rules for publication. They practiced translating reflections into counter-speech (memes, collages) while discussing what respectful authorship looks like for their specific editorial voice.
- **Day 4 - Production and Responsibility:** The final stage centred on collective decision-making regarding roles, moderation, and accountability. Through roleplays like “The Invisible Person,” the group explored exclusion and visibility, directly shaping their final video campaigns.

Throughout the pilot, the team integrated explicit psychosocial safety scaffolding—including content warnings, opt-outs, and immediate debriefing—to manage the emotional intensity of the topics.



2.3.2 ITALY

CONTEXT AND LOGISTICS

Location: Palermo, Italy.

Dates and total duration: (3 sessions) organised on 10-12th December 2025.

Venue description: The course took place in the organization's training room, a large indoor space regularly used for training activities. It was spacious enough to allow movement and physical interaction during theatre-based exercises.

Number of sessions: 3 main workshops.

Facilitators and support team: Giulia D'Annibale (facilitator), Antonella Alessi (facilitator), and Rosalia Argano (content creator and facilitator).

Participants' profile: A total of 13 participants (10 women and 3 men) aged between 18 and 35 took part. The group included young women recently arrived in Italy (primarily from Nigeria) and young men who were either born in Italy or arrived at a very young age from Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire.

Participants were recruited through a local partnership with Edu Club, a community-based association whose members include young Nigerian women who meet regularly in a safe space. This collaboration was key to building trust and ensuring active engagement.

The diversity of the group—ranging from recent arrivals with linguistic barriers to second-generation migrants deeply familiar with the local context—proved to be a significant strength, allowing the group to reflect on discrimination through multiple lenses.



LOCAL ADAPTATION AND LEARNING PATH (ITALY)

In Italy, the training was structured as a three-day pilot delivered over consecutive days. The shared framework was interpreted through a strong emphasis on Theatre of the Oppressed, the Critical Incidents Methodology, and participatory media creation. This approach was specifically tailored to a diverse group comprising both recent arrivals with linguistic barriers and second-generation migrants, allowing participants to move progressively from awareness and analysis to expression and creation.

The learning path was designed to bridge critical analysis with embodied practice, utilizing the diversity of the group as a primary learning resource:

- **Day 1 - Exploration of Cultural Shock:** The first phase focused on building a shared understanding of online hate starting from participants' own experiences and perceptions and followed by the analysis of cultural shock and critical incidents. The group explored how cultural norms, misunderstandings, and implicit values escalate into discriminatory behaviours. A key moment involved analyzing images of Western culture, which revealed a sharp divide between those who found them familiar and those who experienced them as disorienting. This phase generated strong engagement, largely due to the diversity of the group, whose members brought different life experiences, cultural backgrounds, and personal narratives. The exchange of perspectives helped foster empathy, mutual recognition, and a heightened awareness of how cultural positioning influences interpretation and emotional reactions.

- **Day 2 - Transition to Authorship:** On the second day, the group shifted from analysis to creative production. Building on the reflections that emerged during the first day, participants were introduced to the idea of a digital awareness campaign, discussing the role of online content in countering hate speech and promoting more inclusive narratives. A collective reflection on social media use was carried out, including an informal survey on which platforms participants used most and why, encouraging critical thinking about visibility, responsibility, and ethics in digital communication. This phase involved translating abstract reflections into concrete messages, where participants worked in small groups to produce videos and memes, effectively experimenting with how irony and creative language can challenge hate speech.

- **Day 3 - Embodiment and Consolidation:** The final phase prioritized the body and non-verbal communication to consolidate learning. Facilitators used theatre-based exercises to reflect on listening, presence, and emotional responses to exclusion. This allowed participants to reconnect their analytical insights with lived emotions—such as discomfort, anger, or solidarity—ensuring that the digital outputs were grounded in genuine personal experience rather than just technical execution.



2.3.3 LITHUANIA

CONTEXT AND LOGISTICS

Location: Panevėžys, Lithuania.

Dates and total duration: approximately 21 hours of workshops organised on 27-28th September, and 4-5th October 2025.

Venue description: The workshops were held at the Creativity Center “Pragiedruliai,” located in a park setting. The venue offered a closed, spacious, and bright modern space with flexible furniture layouts and full-height windows, creating a connection with nature. A nearby theatre studio inside the same building provided additional props and materials.

Number of sessions: 4 sessions (organized as 2 weekend trainings).

Facilitators and support team: Irmantas Pilis (main facilitator), Ilona Doveiko (co-facilitator & translator), Yana Gavrilenko (facilitator), Evelina Lekešiūtė (co-facilitator & support), and Anupras Jucius (logistics).

Participants' profile: The group consisted of 14–16 participants aged 15 to 29 (majority aged 15–16), including 8 girls and 8 boys. The primary target group was Ukrainian war refugees currently living, learning, or working in Lithuania (14 participants), along with one participant from Belarus and one from Lithuania.

The overall atmosphere was warm and informal, aided by the “cosy” nature of the venue and details like shared meals and the presence of therapy dogs.

Recruitment was organized through local networks including the Ukrainian school in Panevėžys and local colleges. Two Ukrainian-speaking women (a teacher and a theatre practitioner) supported translation throughout to ensure deep participation despite language barriers.



LOCAL ADAPTATION AND LEARNING PATH (LITHUANIA)

In Lithuania, the SMASH framework was adapted into two intensive weekend blocks (4 full days), closely following the two phases—Critical Media Analysis and Content Creation. However, the local team tailored the approach to address a specific demographic reality: a multilingual group consisting primarily of Ukrainian war refugees. This context required a strong emphasis on embodied theatre work to bridge language gaps, storytelling to process sensitive experiences, and a specialized focus on social media ethics in a time of information warfare.

The local adaptation was characterized by a “warm” and informal atmosphere designed to counter the potential tension of the topics (war, displacement, bullying). The organizers deliberately chose a venue surrounded by nature and included elements like shared meals, while some participants brought their dogs, helping to ease the atmosphere. This “soft” setting was important for encouraging participants to open up safely before tackling heavy subjects.

The learning path followed a clear progression from caution to creative agency, alternating between movement, analysis, and reflection:

- Weekend 1 - Building Common Ground:** The process began with theatre games and mirroring exercises to create safety and group cohesion. Participants moved from recognizing online hate as an external concept (“something out there”) to understanding how language and humour can hurt. A key tool used here was the Long Table method, where participants physically gathered around a table to answer questions on paper, transitioning from structured answers to chaotic, engaging debate. They also utilized the Critical Incident Technique adapted to journalistic theatre, analyzing images to understand how different captions can manipulate the meaning of the same photo, distinguishing between opinion, discrimination, and hate speech.
- Weekend 2 - From Analysis to Design:** The focus shifted to designing counter-narratives. Activities included storytelling exercises where participants built stories one word at a time to relax their critical filters. This was followed by analyzing inspiring examples of content creators who fight hate speech. A specific “Tips & Tricks” session on algorithms, content formats, and technical editing helped bridge the gap between theatrical expression and digital logic, ensuring participants understood why certain content goes viral.
- Creative Agency:** In the final stage, participants worked in small teams to negotiate scripts, experiment with positive or ironic responses, and produce digital content (memes and videos). The alternation between movement and digital work allowed them to move from an emotional recognition of hate to producing alternative narratives that reflected respect and solidarity. By the end, the group had transformed from cautious observers to active creators who felt safe enough to disagree with one another while still creating together.



2.3.4 SPAIN

CONTEXT AND LOGISTICS

Location: Barcelona, Spain.

Dates and total duration: 20 hours of workshops organised on 15th, 22nd, 29th September, 6th, 13th, 20th October, 10th, 17th, 24th November and 1st December 2025.

Venue description: The pilot took place at CESIRE, a large enclosed space with a stage, piano, spotlights, and microphones, provided for Xamfrà's activities. The versatility of the space allowed for diverse theatrical and recreational activities.

Number of sessions: 10 weekly sessions.

Facilitators and support team: Nadia Oñatibia, Ana Maria Stan, Andrea Navarro, and Marina Whitehouse Mutiñó.

Participants' profile: A total of 17 young people aged between 16 and 21 took part. The group was diverse in terms of gender and background, background and personal profiles, including both pre-existing friends and new members. Individual differences were evident in the styles of participation: some showed a natural inclination towards leadership and initiative, while others adopted more reserved or introspective attitudes, showing greater shyness. These differences were managed respectfully and carefully, promoting a balance between individual expression and active listening, thus fostering group cohesion and mutual trust.

The overall atmosphere was characterised by genuine collaboration and a willingness to learn collectively. The diversity of personalities and experiences proved enriching, generating compatible dynamics that enhanced creativity, reflection and empathy.

The selection of the group took into account both individual motivation and integration into the community dynamic, ensuring a safe, inclusive and pedagogically stimulating environment.



LOCAL ADAPTATION AND LEARNING PATH (LITHUANIA)

The SMASH pilot in Barcelona was co-facilitated by La Xixa Teatre and Xamfrà. The adaptation was based on a deeply experiential approach where the body, action, and artistic expression functioned as the central axes of the pedagogical process. Given the group's background with Xamfrà (an organization using performing arts for social inclusion) and their existing cohesion, the learning path was naturally oriented towards theatrical creativity. The facilitators utilized Theatre of the Oppressed, Process Work, and sensory exploration to navigate the curriculum.

The learning path unfolded as a continuous journey over 10 weekly sessions. Unlike other pilots that might separate theory and practice, here body language, critical analysis, and creation were intertwined throughout every session:

- Body as Gateway to Analysis:** The process began by creating a space of trust through play and sensory awareness. Rather than starting with cognitive theory, the group used the body to access critical analysis. By exploring symbolic dynamics and activating the senses (using soundscapes, lighting, and masks), participants established connections between personal emotions and digital behaviours. For example, exercises like the "blindfolded challenge" highlighted the reliance on others' voices, mirroring how we navigate information in digital spaces without seeing the full picture.
- Integrated Reflection:** During the analysis phase, the group combined theatrical practices with reflection on hate speech. Humour and improvisation allowed them to explore roles—such as the "hacker," "influencer," or "bully"—and the power dynamics inherent in digital environments. A key activity was the "Scrolling" exercise, where participants improvised the rapid, chaotic flow of social media feeds physically on stage, demonstrating how digital codes are reproduced in real life. Reflection was not approached as a theoretical pause but as an extension of the lived stage experience.
- Collective Creation and Empowerment:** In the second phase, the process oriented towards transforming these reflections into expressive materials. The group engaged in a "site-specific performance" and collective creation, using exaggeration and diverse theatrical languages to reinterpret situations of online hate. Strategies such as the 'infiltrator' (participants who energized activities from within) reinforced group autonomy and shared authorship.

The journey resulted in a progressive opening up of expression, where participants moved from confusion and play to deep sensory connection and, finally, to empowered artistic creation. The final output—a performance filmed in a single take—served not just as content, but as a documentation of their collective resilience and ability to translate complex digital emotions into art.





3. NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION FLOWS

While the partners shared the common SMASH objectives, the practical “learning journey” was unique to each pilot’s structure. The following tables provide a step-by-step breakdown of how the methodology was sequenced in each country. These overviews illustrate the specific order of methods used—from the initial building of trust to the final digital creations—highlighting the artistic tools and exercises that facilitated the transition from critical analysis to creative action.

3.1 FRANCE

Session 1

Main Focus	Exploring Online Hate & Safety
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<p>Image Theatre, Theatre of the Oppressed exercises; Critical Incidents Methodology; group discussions on online hatred.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portrait: A drawing exercise to create connection between participants. • The Mirror: A perspective-taking exercise to build focus and empathy. • The Iceberg Metaphor: An embodied practice to identify the hidden cultural values and emotions behind online posts. • Violent / Not Violent: An activity categorizing real online examples to identify hate speech and debate the limits of expression.
Learning and Reflections	<p>Participants identified mechanisms of hate, stereotypes, cultural layers behind online comments</p> <p>The “Iceberg” exercise allowed participants to name values and emotions behind online posts.</p> <p>The “Violent / Not Violent” activity was a turning point; it revealed that while participants were initially shocked by content, they had become desensitized. They began to identify the “grey zones” where opinion turns into harm.</p>

Session 2

Main Focus	Analysis, Law & Verification
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<p>Forum and Image Theatre exercises transforming stereotypes into inclusive narratives; Critical Incidents Methodology; group discussions and focus on the law, and limitation of the freedom of expression.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-2-3 Panevėžys: Movement and concentration exercises to activate the group. • Photo Crisis: Image analysis in small groups to creatively re-design headlines (Critical Incident technique). • Dilemma Theatre: Debating a story with two sides to practice argumentation. • Which face is real?: A media literacy game to detect AI-generated images and deepfakes.
Learning and Reflections	<p>Participants developed clearer criteria to judge content and detect manipulation.</p> <p>The verification games provided practical “self-defense” skills against fake news. They moved from emotional reaction to critical distance, discussing the legal limitations of freedom of expression.</p>

Session 3

Main Focus	Co-design & Counter-narratives
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<p>Collective presentation of creations; group reflection on digital responsibility and self-expression; evaluation activities.analysis of memes and online comments; group debate on humour and offence online co-creation of memes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention: A movement and reaction game. • The Invisible Person: Role-play to put participants in a victim's shoes and explore exclusion. • Transforming Hate: Exploration of the "grey zone" of hate speech. • Meme Creation: Co-creating memes to experiment with irony and positive humour as counter-narratives. • Digital Safety Charter: Co-designing a group response plan for online incidents.
Learning and Reflections	<p>The group transitioned to active digital citizenship.</p> <p>They experimented with how irony can be a shield against toxicity.</p> <p>By co-designing the Safety Charter, they increased their confidence in negotiating publication norms and understood that "using memes can be a fun way to respond to haters."</p>

Session 4

Main Focus	Production & Responsibility
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<p>Co-creation of short videos promoting respect and solidarity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Wolf and the Goats: A dynamic game on protection and risk. • Awareness Campaign: Analyzing media inspiration to define the group's message. • Content Creation: Scripting, filming, and editing short awareness videos against racism and misogyny. • Video Screening: Collective viewing and discussion to improve outputs.
Learning and Reflections	<p>Teams practiced role distribution (acting, filming, editing) and accountability.</p> <p>A strong sense of ownership emerged; participants recognized that content creators have an educational role regarding their community.</p> <p>They reported pride in their creations and a clear intent to share responsibly.</p>

A defining moment of the pilot occurred during the "Violent / Not Violent" activity. When participants were faced with concrete online examples, the abstract debate about the limits of freedom of expression quickly became practical and emotional. Examples that initially looked like a simple "opinion" often revealed, once placed in context, a capacity to harm, intimidate, or dehumanise.

In these moments, the legal distinction between protected speech and unlawful content became visibly ambiguous for the group. The line between what is merely expressing an opinion and what is harmful blurred depending on context, repetition, and audience. As a result, the activity not only improved participants' ability to analyse content critically but also underlined the need for nuanced moderation criteria and careful emotional support when working with violent material.

3.2 ITALY

Session 1

Main Focus	Awareness & Analysis
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name & Motion: An ice-breaker connecting names to actions to strengthen cohesion. • The Hate Pyramid: Visual analysis of how bias escalates to hate crimes and legal implications. • Definition Mapping: Collaborative discussion using post-its to define "online hate" vs "freedom of speech." • Cultural Shock: An Critical Incidents Methodology exercise analysing images of Western culture to identify personal discomfort and cultural relativity.
Learning and Reflections	Participants developed a shared definition of online hate. The "Cultural Shock" exercise was a turning point: differences in age and length of stay in Italy emerged as key factors. Newer arrivals experienced the images as disorienting, while second-generation participants saw them as familiar, fostering deep empathy across the group.

Session 2

Main Focus	From Reflection to Creation
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media Mapping: Analysing the most used platforms and their specific risks. • Campaign Co-design: Brainstorming messages for a counter-hate campaign. • Content Creation: Working in small groups to produce memes and videos, including interview-style clips ("What is online hate?") and creative ironic responses.
Learning and Reflections	The group shifted from passive analysis to active authorship. They experimented with how creative and ironic languages can challenge hate speech. Participants reflected critically on their role as content producers and the responsibility involved in communicating online.

Session 3

Main Focus	Embodiment & Consolidation
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desert Island: A cumulative storytelling game to build listening skills. • Image Theatre: Sculpting abstract concepts (hate, exclusion, solidarity) using bodies to make them visible. • The Portrait: A deep connection sequence involving sustained eye contact, sharing vulnerable memories (childhood fears/joys), and drawing a “blind” contour portrait of the partner.
Learning and Reflections	Learning was consolidated through embodied practices that connected emotions to the digital topics. “The Portrait” exercise allowed participants to explore vulnerability and trust deeply. The group moved beyond verbal language to explore feelings of discomfort, anger, and solidarity through non-verbal expression.

A key turning point in the group dynamics occurred on the first day during the “Cultural Shock” exercise. Facilitators presented images strongly associated with Western culture and asked participants to choose one that made them feel uncomfortable. A clear distinction emerged between younger participants born or raised in Italy, who found the images familiar, and those who had arrived recently, who associated them with confusion and disorientation.

The resulting debate was rich and emotionally engaging, highlighting that “cultural shock” is shaped not just by origin, but by the length of residence and personal history. This moment helped the group build mutual trust and acknowledge multiple forms of vulnerability. It embodied the core principle of the SMASH methodology: transforming moments of discomfort into shared reflection and creating the conditions for meaningful dialogue.



3.3 LITHUANIA

Day 1: Morning

Main Focus	Introduction & Deconstructing Hate
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-in: "Ball Toss" (Name, mood colour, tiredness scale). • Warm-up: "Chair Switch" (finding commonalities like "anyone wearing black"). Later, the questions can vary, possibly including some experiences regarding hate speech. • The applied theater Long Table method: An interactive method where participants write/draw answers to hate speech questions on a long paper table, transitioning from silent reflection to chaotic debate.
Learning and Reflections	The "Long Table" was crucial for shy participants, allowing them to express opinions on paper before speaking. The group moved from formal introductions to vulnerability.

Day 1: Afternoon

Main Focus	Legal Context & Definitions
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energiser: "STOP and GO" (reactivating bodies/brains after lunch). • Expert Input: Session on legal definitions, mental well-being, and laws regulating hate speech. • Energiser: "Hip Hep Hop" (a rhythm and movement game to restore energy). • Reflection: One-sentence summary of the day.
Learning and Reflections	Participants realized that hate speech is not just "common sense" but has legal definitions. The specific energisers were necessary to handle the heavy cognitive load of the legal theory.

Day 2: Morning

Main Focus	Empathy & Connection
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<p>Body Warm-up: Rubbing/clapping the whole body.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name Game: Collecting letters from others' names using paper tape to mix the group. • The Mirror: A theatre exercise requiring precise imitation of a partner to build deep focus and eye contact.
Learning and Reflections	The "Mirror" exercise brought laughter and helped participants relax, forcing them to maintain eye contact and build non-verbal empathy.

Day 2: Afternoon

Main Focus	Critical Analysis & Dilemmas
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dilemma Theatre: Participants physically move to opposing sides to defend positions on complex ethical scenarios. • Energiser: "Ball Count" (throwing a ball in a circle while counting to 50 without errors). • Critical Incident Technique (Journalistic Theatre): Analyzing how different captions manipulate the meaning of the same photograph (creating positive vs. negative headlines).
Learning and Reflections	Dilemma theatre empowered participants to disagree respectfully. The Critical Incident analysis revealed how easily media captions manipulate perception, teaching them to question the "truth" of images.

Day 3: Morning

Main Focus	Social Media Habits
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Scale: Participants physically stand on a scale representing their energy and social media usage habits. • Creator Analysis: Reviewing "inspiring creators" to identify tactics that work. • Mapping Hate: Small groups identify 5 relevant online hate situations and vote on which to solve.
Learning and Reflections	The group identified that they consume vast amounts of content but rarely engage. Mapping exercises helped clarify which specific hate speech topics were most relevant to their lives.

Day 3: Afternoon

Main Focus	Rehearsing Responses
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theatre of the Oppressed: Re-enacting the chosen online hate situations physically to "rehearse" alternative responses. • Tips & Tricks: Presentation on algorithms, formats, and technical hooks. • Discussion: Reflecting on active citizenship (e.g., culture sector protests).
Learning and Reflections	Re-enacting online situations physically helped them switch off "overthinking" and react instinctively. They bridged the gap between passive scrolling and active creation.

Day 4: Morning

Main Focus	Storytelling & Scripting
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-in: Music and movement scale. • Storytelling Circle: Creating a story one word at a time to relax critical filters. • Production Brainstorming: Defining target audiences, scripting scenarios, and assigning roles for video production.
Learning and Reflections	Participants realized that content creation requires democratic listening. The storytelling games helped them relax their internal critics before filming.

Day 4: Afternoon

Main Focus	Production & Closure
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production Lab: Filming and editing 1 video and 1 meme per small group. • Suitcase Reflection: A closing ritual deciding what to “take with them” (learnings) and what to “leave behind” (fears/dislikes).
Learning and Reflections	The group moved from theoretical knowledge to practical agency. They produced content using humour and creativity, expressing a wish for the training to continue longer.

One important contextual aspect of the Lithuanian pilot was its multilingual character. As most participants spoke Ukrainian or Russian while the core team worked in Lithuanian, the presence of translators was crucial. This trade-off resulted in a slightly slower pace due to translation, but this was largely compensated by the depth and honesty of contributions.

Furthermore, the emotional intensity of the process provided a key insight. Although the workshops dealt with heavy topics—including bullying, displacement, and war-related experiences—participants repeatedly described the space as “safe” and “cosy.” The combination of a bright, nature-surrounded venue, shared meals, and informal interactions—including the occasional presence of participants’ dogs—helped lower tension. This atmosphere allowed participants to open up about sensitive experiences without feeling overwhelmed.

Finally, the transition from embodied activities to empowering content creation proved to be a powerful flow. Starting from body-based exercises and real stories, and only then moving to screens and content creation, helped participants anchor digital skills in lived experience. This sequence ensured that the digital outputs were not just technical exercises, but meaningful extensions of the participants’ personal narratives and resilience.



3.4 SPAIN

Session 1

Main Focus	Awareness & Cohesion
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blindfolded Challenge: Strategies for mutual support and orientation without sight. • The Thread: Exploring decision-making and group influence dynamics.
Learning and Reflections	The group experienced the risks of misinformation and the “fear of moving” against the crowd. They reflected on why people remain passive in digital spaces to maintain group balance.

Session 2

Main Focus	Analysis & Experimentation
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum & Image Theatre: Transforming stereotypes using body sculpting. • Digital Identity: Exploring how emotions are masked or amplified online.
Learning and Reflections	Participants connected body tension with online behavior, recognizing how physical emotions influence digital interactions.

Session 3

Main Focus	Roles & Power
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role-play: Enacting specific digital roles: the “hacker,” “influencer,” or “bully.” • Improvisation: Testing different power positions within a scene.
Learning and Reflections	Intense emotions emerged regarding hierarchies. Representing these roles helped participants understand the mechanisms of influence and positionality on social media.

Session 4

Main Focus	Digital Codes
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Scrolling Exercise: Improvising the rapid, chaotic flow of social media feeds physically on stage. • Mirroring: Training scenic complicity and reaction speed.
Learning and Reflections	The “Scrolling” exercise was a highlight. Off-stage “commenters” actively influenced the scene, demonstrating how audience reaction shapes content in real-time.

Session 5

Main Focus	Exploration
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Object Theatre: Scenography creation game using light, textures, and objects. • Non-verbal Communication: Exploring the “darker sides” of social networks without words.
Learning and Reflections	Objects activated implicit narratives. The lack of words allowed participants to explore the “unspoken” emotional layers of digital life.

Session 6

Main Focus	Analysis & Power
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power Dynamics: Improvisations on exclusion vs. empathy. • Gestures of Exclusion: Identifying mechanisms of hate and stereotypes through movement.
Learning and Reflections	Participants recognized how humour can function as an ambiguous tool that sometimes disguises discrimination.

Session 7

Main Focus	Research & Creation
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meme Co-creation: Analyzing humour and offense limits; creating ironic counter-narratives. • Debate: Analyzing real online comments.
Learning and Reflections	A generational difference emerged in how memes were interpreted. The group experimented with irony as a shield against toxicity.

Session 8

Main Focus	Immersive Creation
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site-specific Performance: “Falling into the void” using soundscapes, flashlights, and whispers. • The Infiltrator: Specific participants secretly energizing action from within.
Learning and Reflections	This revealed how “invisible influences” (like algorithms) shape collective action. Participants noted the tension between following instructions and personal intuition.

Session 9

Main Focus	Synthesis
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective Assembly: Integrating scenes into a final piece. • Feedback Loop: Sharing creations and debating digital responsibility.
Learning and Reflections	Participants recognized their role as active digital citizens. The session highlighted the collective capacity to integrate multiple artistic languages.

Session 10

Main Focus	Documentation & Closure
Key Activities & Artistic Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-take Filming: Recording the performative journey in one continuous shot. • Creative Closure: Rehearsing and refining the final piece.
Learning and Reflections	Filming the process reinforced the sense of shared achievement. Participants reflected on the importance of time and collective listening required to sustain shared action.

A particularly revealing moment was the site-specific performance, where the group was invited to adopt an attitude of “falling into the void.” This dynamic required participants to trust the community fully as they made decisions in real-time within an uncertain environment. From the facilitators’ observation, the performance stood out for its internal coherence and the high level of listening, coordination, and group synchronisation achieved during the action.

Additionally, improvisations involving “opinionated characters” generated a notable impact. The ease with which the “audience” (other participants) intervened and modified the course of the improvisation enhanced spontaneity and collective creativity. These moments illustrated the ability of the SMASH methodology to generate trust and active participation, showing how individual decisions influence the collective outcome and how combining different theatrical languages amplifies the emotional dimension of the process.





4. ASSESSMENTS AND IMPACT

4.1 EVALUATION APPROACH

The evaluation of the SMASH pilots combined three complementary tools: individual feedback questionnaires for participants and youth workers, and a collective focus group. Both groups completed short evaluation forms at the end of the workshops using a 1–5 rating scale, followed by a group discussion to explore reflections and emotions in more depth.

The questionnaires provided quantitative tendencies and personal insights regarding the organisation of the workshops, the facilitation process, and the perceived learning outcomes. The youth worker questionnaire focused more specifically on the methodological and facilitation aspects of the SMASH approach, as well as its applicability in their professional contexts.

The focus groups, guided by the common WP2 questions, captured qualitative aspects such as freedom of expression, responsibility online, collaboration, and digital confidence. This section summarises the main outcomes observed at three levels: participants, facilitators/youth workers, and organisations.

4.2 IMPACT ON PARTICIPANTS

This section details the learning outcomes and personal shifts experienced by the young participants in each country. The data indicates that the combination of embodied theatre and digital analysis successfully moved participants from a passive understanding of online hate to an active, empowered stance.

FRANCE

The evaluation of the French pilot highlights a significant shift in how participants perceive the “grey zones” of digital communication. The group, which consisted predominantly of second-generation migrants with prior video production experience, reported a clearer ability to recognise the subtle mechanisms of online hate, increased empathy for victims, and an improved readiness to produce respectful counter-narratives.



AWARENESS AND CRITICAL ANALYSIS

One of the strongest impacts observed was the development of a nuanced critical eye. Most participants stated that they could now recognise mechanisms of hate that previously went unnoticed, specifically where humour, sarcasm, or “just joking” cultures mask discrimination.

- **Quantitative data:** 77.8% of participants reported an increased confidence in identifying hate speech (rating this capability at a score of 4 or higher).
- **Qualitative insight:** Several participants explicitly linked this new awareness to specific exercises, such as the Image Analysis and the Violent / Not Violent debate. One participant captured the process of desensitization and re-sensitization during the focus group, stating: “Initially shocked, then no”—signalling that while they had been numb to online violence, the workshop gave them the ability to name that numbness and critique it.

EMOTIONAL PROCESSING AND RESILIENCE

The pilot successfully utilised theatrical methods to address the emotional toll of digital life. Facilitators reported that the embodied work created safe conditions for participants to speak about the effects of violent content they encounter daily.

- **Safety:** 77.8% of participants rated feeling included and comfortable (score ≥ 4), validating the use of the “Iceberg” exercise and role-plays to build a safe container for heavy topics.
- **Resilience:** Participants practiced de-escalating responses in a safe environment, allowing them to move from a reactive state to a reflective one.

DIGITAL CONFIDENCE AND PRODUCTION

While many participants arrived with high technical skills in smartphone production, the pilot significantly impacted their ethical confidence. The focus shifted from “how to edit” to “how to publish responsibly.”

- **Outcome:** The group produced three memes and several short videos.
- **Shift in Perspective:** Participants reported increased confidence not just in technical editing, but in negotiating publication ethics—deciding collectively who posts, who moderates, and how to handle potential backlash.
- **Facilitation Satisfaction:** 88.9% were satisfied with the facilitation (score ≥ 4), particularly valuing the rhythm of short theory inputs followed by practice.

PARTICIPANT VOICES:

“We feel bad, angry because it’s a lie, it’s racism...” — (Reflecting on receiving online hate) “Using memes can be a fun way to respond to haters.” “It’s easier for us to copy and mirror the actions of someone than to think about the staging.”

ITALY

The impact in Italy was heavily influenced by the diverse composition of the group, which included young women recently arrived from Nigeria and second-generation men born in Italy. The evaluation revealed that the Critical Incidents Methodology and embodied theatre were essential for bridging these different life experiences.



GROUP ATMOSPHERE AND INCLUSION

The most highly rated aspect of the Italian pilot was the group dynamic. Participants consistently described the atmosphere as welcoming and supportive.

- **Emotional Safety:** Many highlighted the importance of “feeling listened to and respected,” which was crucial for a group facing language barriers.
- **Overcoming Barriers:** Some participants noted that language barriers occasionally made it difficult to follow rapid discussions. However, rather than causing disengagement, this challenge fostered solidarity. Participants expressed gratitude for the efforts of facilitators and peers to translate and explain, creating a caring environment where inclusion was an active practice, not just a concept.

AWARENESS AND COMPETENCE

The questionnaires showed that participants felt much more capable of recognizing the mechanisms of online hate after the workshop.

- **Knowledge Acquisition:** Participants reported increased awareness of how cultural norms and power relations shape perceptions of hate speech. The Cultural Shock exercise was pivotal here, helping them understand that what is “normal” for one person can be “violent” for another.
- **Confidence Gap:** While awareness increased, a distinction emerged regarding content creation. Not all participants felt fully confident in the production phase, often due to limited digital skills. This highlights that while the theatrical impact was high for everyone, the technical impact varied based on prior digital literacy.

EMBODIED LEARNING

The focus group confirmed that the non-formal, participatory methodologies were the key to the pilot's success.

• **Beyond Words:** Participants emphasised that engaging through movement, images, and emotional exploration allowed them to connect with the topic more deeply than verbal discussion alone would have permitted. This was particularly vital for those less fluent in the working language.

PARTICIPANT VOICES:

Participants described the process as “interesting and intense,” emphasizing that they felt emotionally comfortable within the environment. Reflecting on the cultural shock exercise, the group noted how “differences in age and length of stay in Italy” shaped their reactions to images, fostering deep empathy.

LITHUANIA

The Lithuanian pilot achieved a remarkably high level of impact regarding participant confidence. Feedback from the final circles and focus groups indicated a clear, measurable shift in how these young people—primarily Ukrainian war refugees—navigate the digital world.



SHARPER AWARENESS AND DEFINITIONS

Before the pilot, many participants viewed hate speech as a vague concept or “common sense.” The evaluation showed a shift toward precise understanding.

- **Self-Reflection:** Participants moved from assuming everyone understands hate speech in the same way to recognizing the need for clear definitions. They learned to distinguish between opinion, discrimination, and hate speech.
- **Overcoming Barriers:** The impact extended to their own behaviour. As one participant noted: “Maybe previously I used some usual word, but now I think whether this word will not hurt someone.”

CONCRETE SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE

When asked if they felt more confident using digital tools after the modules, the response was unanimous.

- **Quantitative Success:** 100% of participants answered “yes” when asked if they felt more confident using digital tools, specifically in critical analysis and online safety.
- **Practical Application:** Participants highlighted the value of learning concrete steps, such as how to use the e-police reporting tools, the necessity of saving evidence (screenshots), and technical “tips & tricks” for social media content.
- **Behaviour Change:** Some participants described a change in strategy, such as choosing to ignore a bully rather than engaging in a way that fuels the conflict, or intervening to support a peer.

EMPATHY AND DEMOCRATIC TEAMWORK

The group described the teamwork experience as deeply democratic.

- **Collaboration:** They spoke about learning to cooperate with people whose views they initially disagreed with, realising that “the world cannot be only black or white.”
- **Emotional Safety:** The “cosy” atmosphere—supported by the venue, shared meals, and the presence of dogs—was repeatedly cited as a factor that allowed them to open up about painful topics like war and displacement.
- **Teacher Observation:** A teacher participating as a support person noted that the process made her look at her students more sensitively, changing her own pedagogical approach.

PARTICIPANT VOICES:

“Before I didn’t even think about the line between hate speech and discrimination, it seemed that it is common sense... it was very useful to learn the theory.” “I developed my leadership skills, as well as acting and empathy.” “I can’t remember the last time I had such a great time somewhere. This is probably the best weekend of my life.” “Even though we are different, different ages, different ethnics... we have been free and accepting.”

SPAIN

In Barcelona, the evaluation revealed a profound impact on critical consciousness and the ability to take a public stand. The 10-session structure allowed for a deep dive into the mechanics of power and influence.



CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND RESPONSIBILITY

The results showed a significant increase in the group's understanding of how misinformation and toxic practices operate.

- **Taking a Stand:** Participants explicitly mentioned the importance of not tolerating online hate. A recurring theme in the open-ended responses was the shift from being a passive bystander to a responsible digital citizen.
- **Safety Scores:** The quantitative ratings for "feeling comfortable" and "included" were consistently high (4 and 5), confirming that the artistic approach successfully created a safe container for these difficult conversations.

TOOLS FOR SELF-PROTECTION

Participants highlighted that they acquired practical strategies to protect themselves emotionally from digital harassment.

- **Emotional Defense:** Several people mentioned learning how to manage hateful comments or gather evidence, reinforcing the applied dimension of the training.
- **Humour as a Shield:** The group valued theatre and humour not just as entertainment, but as tools for inclusion. They discovered that irony and creativity could serve as a shield against the toxicity of online environments.

GENERATIONAL INSIGHTS

The focus group revealed interesting generational dynamics regarding content creation.

- **Memes as Language:** A clear difference emerged in how memes were interpreted. For the young participants, memes were a legitimate, everyday language of expression. The pilot allowed them to use this "native" language for critical purposes, validating their cultural knowledge while sharpening their analytical skills.

PARTICIPANT VOICES:

"Now I think twice before commenting on social media." "I learned how to protect myself from hateful comments on social media and how hate works within social media." "Detecting toxic online practices that may seem harmless at first glance." "Sometimes the audio voice told me something, but I decided to follow the crowd and ignore it." (Reflecting on the pressure of conformity during the site-specific performance).

4.3 IMPACT ON YOUTH WORKERS AND FACILITATORS

The SMASH pilots were designed as mutual learning processes. Facilitators and youth workers not only delivered content but also tested and refined the methodology, experiencing significant professional growth and encountering specific challenges that will inform future iterations.

FRANCE

METHODOLOGICAL GROWTH

The French team gained practical experience in the delicate art of blending theatre-based methods with concrete digital literacies.

- **Rhythm is Key:** They learned that the most effective pedagogical rhythm involved short theoretical inputs followed immediately by practical tasks. This “micro-cycle” was essential to maintain engagement with a group that had varying attention spans.
- **Translating Embodiment:** Facilitators improved their skills in translating embodied work (like the Iceberg exercise) into digital outputs, bridging the gap between physical theatre and screen-based media.

CHALLENGES AND LEARNINGS

The pilot highlighted the critical need for safety when dealing with violent content.

- **Psychosocial Safety:** The team acknowledged that simply discussing hate speech is not enough; explicit protocols are needed. They identified the necessity of content warnings, opt-out mechanisms, and immediate debriefing (grounding exercises) as a non-negotiable standard for future runs.
- **Managing Heterogeneity:** Facilitators highlighted the challenge of adapting the pace for a group with diverse digital competencies and language levels, requiring constant ad-hoc scaffolding.

ITALY

CAPACITY BUILDING

For the Italian facilitation team, this experience was a direct transfer of innovation.

- **Transnational Transfer:** Two trainers who had attended the transnational training in Lithuania were able to successfully apply and further develop the skills they acquired there.
- **Adapting to Complexity:** The pilot was a valuable learning opportunity in applying non-formal methodologies to the complex, layered context of migration and digital life. It required constant adaptation and reflection, moving beyond standard “lesson plans” to responsive facilitation.

FACILITATION CHALLENGES

The specific composition of the group presented unique challenges that became learning opportunities.

- **Language & Speed:** Facilitators noted that language barriers and different skill levels occasionally slowed the process. Maintaining a continuous flow in discussions was difficult when translation was required.
- **Turning Challenge into Care:** However, facilitators observed that these difficulties fostered a “caring group dynamic” where participants actively supported one another. The lesson learned was that efficiency (speed) is less important than cohesion; the slower pace allowed for deeper solidarity.

LITHUANIA

MUTUAL CAPACITY BUILDING

The Lithuanian pilot was a clear case of cross-pollination between two very different organisations, where competencies were shared, tested, and expanded.

- **“The Critical”:** (Digital Experts): Experienced in international projects and digital communication, the team’s main learning edge was the theatrical methodology. Working closely with Theatre “Menas” exposed them to a wider repertoire of embodied tools (games, image work, dilemma theatre) and the specific pacing required to bring emotional depth to sensitive topics.
- **Theatre “Menas”:** (Arts Experts): The pilot pushed them to connect their theatrical expertise with a more explicitly digital and rights-based perspective. They learned how to move from staging conflict to talking about algorithms, memes, and comment sections. Facilitators reported feeling more confident in naming key legal terms (e.g., distinguishing opinion vs. discrimination) thanks to the collaboration with external experts.

FACILITATION INSIGHTS AND CHALLENGES

- **Managing Energy:** A key lesson was noting how quickly energy dropped during theoretical inputs. This reinforced the need to keep explanations anchored in participants’ own examples and strictly limit “lecture” time.
- **Navigating High Sensitivity:** Working with war-displaced Ukrainian youth required high sensitivity. Facilitators learned to adjust plans on the spot, allowing more time for debriefing or lighter activities when the emotional weight of a story became too heavy.
- **Scaffolding for Diversity:** The diversity in age, digital skills, and theatre experience made it clear that future editions should include even clearer scaffolding for tasks to ensure everyone can follow.

SPAIN

PEDAGOGICAL RELEVANCE AND IMPACT

Facilitators evaluated the pilot as pedagogically relevant and transformative.

- **Effectiveness:** They observed concrete improvements in participants' ability to analyse hateful behaviour, confirming that the activities were meaningful and motivating for the group.
- **Methodological Acquisition:** The responses highlight that participants acquired more tools and greater awareness of the methodologies used, proving the group was able to use the digital tools to produce creative content.

STRUCTURAL REFLECTIONS AND CHALLENGES

The team provided critical reflection on the structure of the pilot, identifying areas for refinement.

- **Structure vs. Freedom:** Some facilitators noted that the sessions sometimes felt "too open" or unstructured relative to the project timeline. They suggested a need for a more organised framework with clearer objectives per session to guide the creative process more firmly.
- **Time Constraints:** A major recommendation was that the limited time constrained the depth of the creative process. Facilitators stated that having more sessions or greater continuity would allow for better consolidation of learning.
- **Managing Attendance:** The irregular attendance of some participants was a challenge for group dynamics. Facilitators learned the importance of designing sessions that allow for smooth reincorporation (e.g., using brief summaries or "body bridges") so that those who missed a session could still integrate without disrupting the pedagogical flow.

4.4 IMPACT ON THE ORGANISATION

The implementation of the SMASH pilots had a ripple effect beyond the immediate participants, influencing the strategies, networks, and pedagogical repertoires of the partner organisations.

FRANCE

BROADENING THE OFFER

"Respect Zone" significantly broadened its pedagogical repertoire.

- **Hybrid Approach:** The organisation integrated SMASH's hybrid theatre-and-media approach into its standard offer. This moves them beyond legal/educational workshops into more creative, embodied interventions.
- **Resource Validation:** The pilot validated methods and materials that will directly feed into the WP4 youth-worker handbook, ensuring future outputs are field-tested.

PARTNERSHIP AND CAPACITY

The pilot highlighted the critical need for safety when dealing with violent content.

- **Local Anchoring:** The pilot strengthened local partnerships, specifically with the youth collective in Mantes-la-Jolie.
- **Diversity Competence:** It specifically improved the organisation's capacity to deliver emotionally attentive digital education to diverse groups, enhancing their ability to support groups with migration backgrounds.

ITALY

ORGANISATIONAL GROWTH

The pilot represented a valuable opportunity for organisational capacity building.

- **New Methodologies:** The organisation acquired and tested new tools—specifically the Critical Incidents Methodology applied to digital hate—which can now be adapted and reused in future educational initiatives.
- **Transferability:** The methodologies tested proved to be highly flexible, making them suitable for the organisation's broader work with diverse beneficiaries across different social contexts.

TERRITORIAL CONNECTION

- **New Alliances:** The pilot created a meaningful connection with a new local actor, Edu Club. This encounter set the basis for future collaborations in community-based initiatives, expanding the organisation's local network.

LITHUANIA

FOR THEATRE “MENAS”

- **New Content Areas:** The pilot provided a tested structure for linking applied theatre with explicitly digital topics (algorithms, social media). This is a significant expansion of their traditional theatre education scope, allowing them to adapt these formats for future youth projects on discrimination or civic engagement.
- **Network Deepening:** It deepened their cooperation with local schools, youth centres, and the Women's Information Centre, creating a solid local network around hate speech prevention and youth wellbeing in Panevėžys.

FOR “THE CRITICAL”

- **New Formats:** The pilot consolidated a practice-based, long-term educational format alongside their usual research and design work.
- **Strategic Validation:** Organisationally, it confirmed that combining research, communication strategy, and creative education is a valuable direction. The insights gained are already informing how they plan future projects dealing with online culture and democratic participation.

SPAIN

FOR “XAMFRÀ”

- **Methodological Review:** Participation was a particularly enriching experience that allowed for the review of common practices and the strengthening of theatrical, digital, and social skills.
- **Cohesion and Listening:** Sustained work with the group reinforced active listening, empathy, and collective creation—central elements of their pedagogical mission. The pilot allowed them to explore new avenues for pedagogical intervention and expand collaboration networks.

FOR “LA XIXA TEATRE”

- **Deepening Frameworks:** The pilot represented a significant opportunity to deepen and update their methodological framework. Integrating online hate speech analysis into theatrical processes expanded their use of theatre into new pedagogical territories.
- **Design Capacity:** It strengthened their capacity to design hybrid educational processes that connect body, emotion, and digital citizenship. The joint work helped refine facilitation strategies, especially regarding emotional support and managing group intensity, refining their approach for future community projects.

4.5 OVERALL REFLECTIONS

This section synthesises the broader lessons regarding the validity and potential of the SMASH methodology as observed across the four countries.

FRANCE

The Power of Hybridity The French pilot confirmed that the combination of embodiment and media analysis is highly effective. Theatre opened emotional access and trust, while media tasks channelled this trust into public-facing creative work. The progression from awareness to authorship was successfully achieved.

CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS

- **Safety First:** The pilot highlighted that working with violent material requires robust psychosocial safety nets.
- **Intensity:** The 20-hour consecutive format proved intensive. Future iterations might benefit from spreading sessions out to allow for digestion of the material.
- **Transferability:** The method is highly transferable to similar suburban contexts but requires flexible scheduling and ad-hoc scaffolding for heterogeneous groups.

ITALY

The Italian experience offered a clear picture of why the SMASH approach is effective: by moving beyond discussion alone, it made complex topics accessible to a linguistically diverse group.

- **Inclusion Tool:** The pilot proved that embodied methods are not just “warm-ups” but essential accessibility tools for mixed-ability groups, allowing engagement through movement, images, and emotion.

FLEXIBILITY AND SKILLS

Facilitation Demands: It highlighted that working with embodied methods in a digital context demands strong facilitation skills and intercultural sensitivity.

- **Long-term Impact:** Rather than producing only short-term learning, the pilot fostered sustained engagement, suggesting that the methodology is best suited for longer-term educational interventions rather than one-off workshops.

LITHUANIA

URGENCY AND RELEVANCE

The pilot confirmed that the SMASH methodology is urgently needed in the Lithuanian context, where online hate, propaganda, and disinformation are prevalent.

- **Beyond “Anti-Bullying”:** The theatrical and critical media analysis methods allowed participants to go much deeper than standard “anti-bullying” weeks in schools.

- **Empowerment:** Social media content creation gave participants a voice in their own “native” digital language, making the experience feel empowering rather than purely educational.

THE AMBITION TENSION

- **Scope vs. Time:** The pilot highlighted a built-in tension in the method’s ambition. Trying to cover emotional, legal, technical, and creative skills within 20 hours proved challenging. At moments, the programme felt dense, and facilitators had to cut meaningful exercises.

- **Future Direction:** This suggests two complementary directions: accepting SMASH as a longer-term learning pathway or developing modular, shorter applications that can still leave a positive impact.

- **Transferability:** Methodologically, the pilot showed that theatre, humour, and digital creativity are powerful, complementary tools. This points to good transferability to other topics where emotions and identity intersect, such as gender equality or climate anxiety.

SPAIN

BONDS OF TRUST

The pilot demonstrated the methodology's ability to foster creativity while generating meaningful relationships based on empathy and trust.

- **Collective Care:** One of the most notable aspects was the creation of bonds that allowed the group to address complex issues from a collective and caring perspective. Shared reflections often gave rise to dynamics of listening, support, and mutual accompaniment.

THE AMBITION TENSION

- **Relevance:** The experience confirmed the potential of SMASH as a relevant pedagogical tool that can be transferred to other contexts seeking to combine artistic languages with critical reflection.

- **The Importance of Facilitation:** It also emphasised that success depends on facilitators remaining attentive to the emotional intensity of the process. The ability to "read the room" and adapt rhythms, times, and structures to the group's characteristics was identified as a critical success factor.



5. KEY LEARNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section synthesises the methodological discoveries, strategic recommendations, and practical facilitation tips that emerged from the four national pilots. It shifts focus from what the participants learned to what the partner organisations learned about the SMASH methodology itself.

*These insights are designed **to guide future facilitators**, youth workers, and organisations who wish to replicate or adapt the SMASH framework. The learnings below reflect the reality of implementing a hybrid methodology—combining theatre and digital media—across diverse cultural, linguistic, and social contexts.*

5.1 FRANCE – “RESPECT ZONE”

METHODOLOGICAL LEARNINGS

The French pilot, implemented with a pre-existing youth collective in Mantes-la-Jolie, provided critical insights into how to structure attention and safety for a group already familiar with digital production but new to theatrical introspection.

The “Micro-Cycle” of Engagement

The team discovered that the most effective pedagogical rhythm was not separating “theory days” from “practice days,” but rather implementing a rapid cycle within each session. Participants remained significantly more attentive when conceptual inputs were kept short (20–30 minutes) and were immediately followed by practical theatrical application. This “Theory → Practice → Reflection” micro-cycle proved essential to maintain focus and strengthen the translation of abstract analysis into concrete creation.

Embodiment as a Prerequisite for Trust

Starting with short corporeal and embodied exercises (such as “Portrait,” “Mirror,” or “Iceberg”) was not merely an ice-breaker but a methodological necessity. These exercises lowered resistance and allowed participants to link lived emotions to digital dynamics. The team observed that when theory followed physical practice, the subsequent reflection was deeper, and the creative outputs were richer.

Psychosocial Safety Scaffolding

Given the participants’ frequent exposure to violent and illegal content, the pilot highlighted that simply discussing hate speech is insufficient; explicit safety protocols are required. The need for content warnings, opt-out mechanisms, brief grounding exercises, and immediate debriefs became a non-negotiable part of the methodology. Emotional load must be anticipated, and protocols established before the first image is shown.

Scaffolding Argumentation

A key learning was that young people, despite being digitally fluent, initially struggled to develop structured arguments regarding complex topics like freedom of expression. Facilitators found that simple scaffolds—such as pro/con rounds, “argue the other side” exercises, and time-limited turns—significantly improved the quality of debate. Furthermore, dilemma scenarios need to be pre-tested for cultural relevance to ensure they provoke genuine division and discussion rather than consensus.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE IMPLEMENTATIONS

Based on the pilot experience, Respect Zone proposes the following structural adjustments to improve the replicability of the SMASH methodology:

Planning and Sequencing

- **Shorter, Spaced Sessions:** The 20-hour consecutive format was intense. Future iterations should prefer shorter sessions (3–4 hours) spread across several days or a maximum of two weeks. This allows for better digestion of the material.
- **Budget for Conviviality:** Including a small budget for snacks and drinks is not trivial; it supports the informal moments where trust is built.

- **Expert Intervention:** Allocating budget for an external expert or testimony intervention could deepen the educational impact.

Balancing Reflection and Creation

- **Strict Timing for Inputs:** Plan 30–45 minute concept inputs followed immediately by practical/theatrical application (or vice versa) to avoid losing group energy.
- **Protected Production Time:** Reserve a minimum of 60–90 minutes specifically for production and editing. Rushed outputs can lead to frustration and diminish the sense of pride in the work.

Ensuring Inclusion and Safety

- **Small Group Work:** Do not hesitate to break the plenary into small groups. This allows the facilitator to observe and discuss with each participant individually, which is often the only way to include shyer and quieter participants effectively.
- **Safety Protocols:** Always provide a content warning before heavy media exposure. Keep a psychosocial safety sheet at hand (containing grounding exercises and local referral contacts) and include a short “decompression slot” (5–10 minutes) after intense analysis activities.

PRACTICAL TIPS

- **Resource Handouts:** Handing out physical documentation dealing with the main topics (definitions of hate speech, law) and helpline contacts is a good way to keep in touch with participants and ensure something tangible stays with them after the session.
- **Simple Technology:** Use lightweight mobile apps and short tech tutorials (10–15 minutes). When technology is kept simple and collaborative, creativity remains central, and technical frustration decreases.



5.2 ITALY – “CENTRO PER LO SVILUPPO CREATIVO DANILO DOLCI”

METHODOLOGICAL LEARNINGS

The Italian pilot offered a clear picture of how the SMASH approach functions within a highly diverse group, particularly when bridging the gap between recent migrants and second-generation citizens.

Multi-modal Expression as Inclusion

One of the most evident learnings was the value of working through multiple forms of expression. By moving beyond verbal discussion alone and allowing participants to engage through movement, images, and emotional exploration, the approach became accessible to a linguistically diverse group. Theatre-based activities helped set the basis for digital work, creating trust and emotional safety before moving into content creation.

Facilitation Flexibility

The process highlighted that the SMASH methodology works best with attentive, responsive facilitation, where group needs guide the flow more than a fixed structure. Facilitators needed to remain highly flexible, adapting to different levels of language proficiency, confidence, and digital skills. The pilot showed that rigid adherence to a lesson plan is less effective than adapting the pace to the group’s “breathing”.

The Asset of Diversity

Group diversity enriched the experience significantly. Differences in age and length of stay in Italy emerged as key factors in shaping cultural shocks. While these differences required extra time and support from facilitators, they fostered a “caring group dynamic” where participants actively supported one another.

Linguistic Challenges

Language barriers occasionally slowed the process, demonstrating the value of having additional linguistic or cultural mediation. Clearer explanations at the start would improve future sessions, especially for participants unfamiliar with non-formal learning contexts.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE IMPLEMENTATIONS

Group Composition and Support

- **Differentiated Groups:** When possible, consider working with groups differentiated by skill level or language proficiency. This allows facilitators to better adapt content and pace. However, retaining moments of exchange between these groups is valuable for mutual learning.
- **Mediation Roles:** Consider involving complementary professional roles, such as cultural mediators or digital facilitators. This supports inclusion and eases the workload of the main facilitators when working with complex, heterogeneous groups.

Structure and Timing

- **Spaced Learning:** Adjust timing to the group's needs, favouring shorter sessions spread over more days rather than long, intensive ones. This improves concentration and reduces fatigue, particularly when language translation is involved.
- **Clear Orientation:** Provide a clearer orientation at the beginning of the training. Explaining what participants will experience, how the process is structured, and why certain methods (like theatre) are used helps manage expectations and increases trust.

Safety and Space

- **Explicit Safe Space:** Intentionally create and maintain a safe space where diversity is recognized as a resource. Explicitly acknowledging differences and setting shared agreements supports openness and mutual respect.

PRACTICAL TIPS

- **Balance Reflection and Creation:** Ensure participants have enough time to process discussions and emotions before rushing into digital production. If the transition is too fast, creative outputs can feel forced rather than meaningful.
- **Visual Supports:** Use images and visual aids during theoretical explanations to bridge language gaps and ensure everyone is on the same page regarding key concepts like "hate speech" vs. "freedom of speech."



5.3 LITHUANIA – “THE CRITICAL” & PANEVĖŽYS THEATRE “MENAS”

METHODOLOGICAL LEARNINGS

The Lithuanian pilot provided deep insights into the tension between the ambitious scope of the SMASH curriculum and the realities of working with a vulnerable, multilingual target group (Ukrainian refugees).

Ambition vs. Time

The team learned that the SMASH method is ambitious in scope, expecting to cover emotions, legal aspects, media literacy, social media logic, and content creation within a short time. Theoretical input proved necessary and appreciated, but it worked best when very focused, concrete, and time-limited. Otherwise, there was a risk of tiredness and reduced capacity for deeper reflection.

Recruitment Strategy: Show, Don't Tell

The team realised that it is difficult to promote the workshops clearly using only text. Because the process is multi-layered and experiential, a short description cannot fully convey the experience. Many young people only understood what SMASH was once they experienced the first activities. Future recruitment should rely on short videos or visual materials showing the atmosphere (movement, group work) rather than flyers.

Theatre as the Backbone

One of the strongest learnings was how well theatrical methods worked as a “backbone” of the process. Methods like the Long Table, Dilemma Theatre, and Critical Incident Technique were consistently met with high energy. These methods helped the group to loosen up and move into a creative mode, making it possible to approach sensitive content (bullying, war-related trauma) in an indirect and safer way.

Sequence Matters: Embody, then Digitise: The interaction between theatrical and digital components worked best when the process followed a clear sequence: first embody and explore the situation through theatre, then analyse it together, and only after that move towards digital content creation. In this order, theatre served as a “preparation of the ground”—giving language, emotions, and images—and the content creation became a natural extension.

Gradual Opening: Building a safe space and approaching sensitive topics gradually was not optional, but central. Starting with lighter games and low-risk sharing before moving towards sensitive stories was essential. When this gradual opening was respected, participants were willing to bring in their own stories and link them to broader themes.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE IMPLEMENTATIONS

Focus the Scope

- **Narrow Down Topics:** Instead of trying to cover every aspect of the SMASH method, narrow down the most important topics for the specific group. Use these as main examples to avoid overload and ensure smoother transitions.
- **Co-created Topics:** Leave space for participants to bring in their own situations and to co-shape which aspects are explored.

Reflections and Support

- **Layered Reflections:** Reflections should not only happen at the very end but also after key methods and bigger exercises. Short check-ins or debrief circles help to fix the main takeaways and give facilitators an early signal if something is not working in the group dynamic.
- **Translation Support:** In multilingual groups, plan for translation support and make space for different comfort levels (some speaking more, others contributing through acting or visuals).

Expert Involvement

- **Involve Topic Experts:** It is valuable to invite external experts on areas where the facilitation team feels less confident—for example, a specialist on hate speech/cyberviolence who can explain legal distinctions, or a psychologist. Their inputs anchor the creative work in clear concepts.

PRACTICAL TIPS

- **Cosy Environment:** Choose a welcoming, non-school-like space (soft seating, tea/coffee, natural light). In the Lithuanian pilot, the presence of friendly dogs (agreed by the group) helped to soften tension and make people smile even during serious discussions.
- **Toolbox of Energisers:** Prepare several short activities (ice-breakers, energisers) that can be used at any moment to fit the group's energy.
- **Analyze Before Creating:** Before asking participants to create videos, spend time analysing inspiring, positive content creators. Discussing why their content works reduces anxiety ("I don't know what to do") and stimulates creativity.



5.4 SPAIN – “LA XIXA TEATRE” & “XAMFRÀ”

METHODOLOGICAL LEARNINGS

The Spanish pilot, characterized by a long duration (10 sessions) and a highly artistic focus, provided critical insights into how to sustain a creative process over time and integrate deep reflection without breaking the “magic” of the scene.

Body Work as a Catalyst

One of the most significant lessons was that initial body work was crucial in opening the group’s willingness to participate. Dynamics of play, movement, and image facilitated the creation of a climate of trust and allowed young people to access complex issues—such as vulnerability or exposure on social media—from a less defensive place. The transition between body, emotion, and digital analysis proved particularly effective when it was fluid and without marked breaks.

Integrated Reflection

The group responded positively to the combination of media analysis and theatrical dynamics when reflection was presented not as an isolated theoretical exercise, but as a natural extension of the stage experience. This integration facilitated a critical reading of digital content that emerged from bodily and emotional perception, encouraging greater depth and spontaneity.

Managing Heterogeneity and Attendance

Practice showed that maintaining sustained attention in heterogeneous groups with irregular attendance requires a high degree of adaptability. The facilitators learned that “body bridges” and brief summaries at the start of sessions were essential to re-integrate participants who had missed a previous session, ensuring they didn’t feel lost.

Gradual Tech Integration: Although digital creation is essential to SMASH, the team learned that technical tools should be introduced gradually, respecting the group’s confidence curve. When digital integration was sustained through play, humour, or scenic work first, the transition to using phones and cameras was organic. Introducing tech too early or too technically can disrupt the group connection.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE IMPLEMENTATIONS

Process Sequencing

- **Physical to Digital:** Sequence the process strictly from physical to digital. Ensure sufficient time to build group trust before moving to critical analysis and creation. Emotional preparation is essential for young people to address hate speech openly.
- **Ample Creation Time:** Ensure ample time for the creation phase. Compressing this phase can limit the depth of the process and the appropriation of learning.

Balancing Dynamics

- **Reflection vs. Play:** Maintain a clear balance between reflection and play. Lighter theatrical dynamics allow sensitive issues to be addressed without emotional overload; alternating them with analytical moments sustains attention.
- **Emotional Accessibility:** Ensure emotional accessibility by offering different levels of involvement. Do not assume all young people feel comfortable working from personal trauma. Allow participants to observe, participate physically, or verbalise according to their individual disposition.

Structural Management

- **Strategies for Irregular Attendance:** Plan specific strategies to manage drops in attendance, such as dynamics that do not strictly depend on having participated in previous meetings, or using “recap” rituals to bring everyone up to speed.

PRACTICAL TIPS

- **The “Body Bridge”:** Always start with a “body bridge,” even in more analytical sessions. Brief breathing, rhythm, or movement exercises help activate the group’s presence and facilitate the transition to digital/reflective content.
- **Humour as Regulator:** Use humour as an emotional regulator. Dynamics based on role exaggeration, parody, or role-play allow harsh contents to be addressed without generating emotional blockages.
- **Simple Digital Tools:** Keep digital creation tools simple, visual, and collaborative. Reducing technical complexity places creativity and the collective process at the centre, preventing technology from becoming a barrier.
- **Closing Rituals:** Close each session with a brief physical or emotional reflection. This allows for the integration of learning and the closure of sensitive topics without leaving the group “open” or vulnerable





6. CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

6.1 CONCLUSION

The implementation of the SMASH pilots across France, Italy, Lithuania, and Spain has provided a robust validation of the project's core hypothesis: that the combination of **embodied theatrical practice and critical digital literacy** is a powerful engine for youth empowerment.

Across four very different national contexts—ranging from a pre-existing youth collective in France to war-displaced refugees in Lithuania, and from a diverse migration group in Italy to an artistic community in Spain—the methodology proved to be highly adaptable and relevant. Despite the differences in language, age, and cultural background, a common “red thread” emerged from all four pilots: **the body is the gateway to the screen.**

The pilots demonstrated that young people cannot effectively deconstruct online hate speech through cognitive analysis alone. By first using Theatre of the Oppressed, Critical Incident Methodology, and Process Work to build emotional safety and physical trust, participants were able to access the “grey zones” of digital communication without becoming overwhelmed. This emotional scaffolding was the prerequisite for the second phase: transforming them from passive consumers of content into active, ethical creators.

Key Validated Principles:

- **Safety First:** In every country, the creation of a “safe space” (through rules, rituals, and non-verbal games) was identified not as a warm-up, but as the essential foundation for discussing digital violence.
- **From Reaction to Creation:** The methodology successfully moved participants from an emotional reaction to hate speech (anger, fear, silence) to a creative response (memes, videos, counter-narratives).
- **The Power of Hybridity:** The pilots confirmed that digital education is more effective when it is physical. The transition from Image Theatre to Instagram, or from Forum Theatre to TikTok, allowed youth to rehearse their digital courage in the physical world first.

6.2 NEXT STEPS

The insights gathered from these 80+ hours of pilot testing and the feedback from over 60 participants and youth workers will now directly inform the next phases of the SMASH project:

- 1. The SMASH Handbook (WP4):** The specific exercises, timeframes, and safety protocols tested in these pilots will be refined and compiled into a comprehensive Handbook for Youth Workers. The recommendations regarding “micro-cycles” of attention and psychosocial safety will be central to this resource.
- 2. Transnational Mobility (WP3):** The pilots have prepared the ground for the upcoming international exchange in Lithuania. Having tested the methodology locally, the partnership is now prepared to adapt these tools for a multilingual, intercultural group of young people.
- 3. Dissemination (WP5):** The digital content created during these pilots—memes, videos, and campaigns—will be polished and disseminated to demonstrate that young people are not just victims of algorithms, but agents of culture capable of rewriting the digital narrative.

In conclusion, the SMASH pilots have proven that while online hate is a global phenomenon, the resistance to it begins with local, embodied, and creative connection.



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