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About “Looking at Learning KA2” Project

The project "Looking@Learning" aims to provide space and support for cross-sectorial cooperation of professionals in formal and non-formal education on innovation of education in order to create contemporary and successful learning environments for young people in their educational process.

Looking@Learning is an project developed within the Erasmus + Programme, as a Key Action 2: Strategic Partnerships. All the implementation plan is funded by European Commission.

This long term project will be developed between March 2015-February 2017 by 6 different promoters: 4 non-governmental organizations: Humana People to People from Latvia, Youth Exchange Service and Stichting Merakel from Netherlands, Asociación PROMESAS from Spain as well as 2 governmental entities involving Gulbene Municipality Council (Latvia) and Maracena Youth Center (Spain).

Besides coordinating organizations, we will work together with more than 10 entities from the 3 countries to develop all implementation plan.

“The first looking at learning” is the first intelectual output of mentioned project, and is aimed to bring an analysis of the use of learning environments in formal and non-formal education in Latvian, Netherlands and Spain.

More information about research, partners and project you can find at our webpage.

www.lookingatlearning.eu

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Promotora de Metodologías Educativas para una Sociedad Alternativa y Sostenible

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CHAPTER 0. INTRODUCTION

The goal of the project “Looking@Learning" is to create a place and support for the innovation-oriented cooperation between formal and non-formal intermediary sectors of education professionals in order to develop modern and successful learning environment for young people involved in learning process. In this project a broad range of stakeholders in the field of education in the Netherlands, Spain and Latvia are involved to explore creative learning environments together, share good practices and implement new developments and tools in existing structures, therefore bringing innovation to their own realities. Project is financed by the EU programme for young people “Erasmus+: Youth in Action” administrated by Latvian Agency for International Programs for Youth. One of the main aims of the programme is to improve skills and competences of people who work with young people - educators, youth workers, trainers, teachers, project managers - in order to improve the quality of youth work as well as to promote international cooperation of youth and youth workers. This projects aims to achieve above mentioned programme aims by working together with youth workers from formal and non-formal field from all 3 project countries.

The 1st phase of the project - research named “The First Looking at Learning” presents case studies and a collection of information that can be further used to develop methodology for promoting creative learning environment and for doing future studies on creative learning environment.



This study should be viewed as a pilot study inside the project since its goal is to gather initial information about creativity and creative learning environment in Latvia, Netherlands and Spain. The study outlines problems in the area of creative learning environment in Latvian, Dutch and Spanish education systems, simultaneously viewing education policy documents and inspecting the actual situation in educational establishments. This study focuses on the situation in establishments of formal education (vocational, secondary, regular and alternative primary and elementary schools), non-formal education (youth centres, youth initiatives and non-governmental youth organizations) and alternative education (Montessori pedagogy, democratic schools). In the Netherlands, the study has a special focus on learning environments for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities as most of the stakeholders work (mainly) with this target group.



CHAPTER 1. STUDY METHODOLOGY - STRUCTURE OF THE DOCUMENT

The study uses qualitative approach in order to understand the current situation in these three countries, problems linked to creativity, creative learning environment there. Following methods were used in it:

1) Analysis of theoretical literature in order to understand theoretical interpretation of creativity and creative learning environment (see Chapter 2);
2) Qualitative content analysis used to analyze national planning documents and education system documents (see Chapter 3);
3) Individual semi-structured interviews with representatives of different educational establishments. The selection of interviewees in Latvia was made according to principle of availability, purposefulness and link with the project - partners of the project were interviewed in order to understand current situation in their education establishments and initiatives. Interviewees selection in the Netherlands was made to have a broad picture of creative learning environment in the context of education in this country. As many of the partners of the project in the Netherlands work with young people with fewer opportunity or have stakeholders who do so, the research is also dominated by this target group. Interviewees selection in Spain as done similarly like in Latvia involving local project partners in order to learn about the current situation of creativity and creative learning environments in their education establishments and initiatives. Average duration of an interview was 50 minutes (see Chapter 4).
4) Case analysis in order to identify examples of creative learning. Individual interviews and document analysis is used for case analysis and includes both formal and non-formal education actors. (see Annex II).



CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL EXPLANATION OF CREATIVITY, CREATIVE LEARNING AND CREATIVE TEACHING/LEARNING ENVIRONMENT WITHIN THE PROJECT

2.1 Creativity

The importance of creativity and innovation in addressing the economic, environmental and social crises has been recognized in policy discussion in Europe. Recent policies call for the strengthening of Europe's innovative capacity and the development of a creative and knowledge-intensive economy and society through reinforcing the role of education and training in the knowledge triangle and focusing school curricula on creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. It has been recognized that schools and initial education play a key role in fostering and developing people's creative and innovative capacities for further learning and their working lives (Cachia, Ferrari, Ala-Mutka, Punie, 2010).

However, when we approach the concept of creativity we find a problem, the lack of consensus to define it. De Haan and Havighurst (1961) said that creativity was any activity that leads to the production of something new, whether it was a technical invention, a new scientific discovery or a new artistic performance. Later, Sternberg and Lubart (1997) will define it through the conditions that a creative people must have, so they will be creative if generate relatively new, but also appropriated and good-quality ideas. Already in this century, Goñi (2000) assures that creativity is an ideal behavior. Goñi focus her idea of creativity in people's capacity to significantly contribute as in society as in life itself. Monreal (2000) states that when he started to research about creativity, the most common word was genius, but also founded originality, productivity, inventiveness, discovery, fantasy and imagination. According to Monreal, the word creativity maintains a higher prevalence in the literature since 1950. Gardner (2001) supports that the creative one is a person who solve problems on a regular basis, develop products or define new enquiries in a field in such way that, at the beginning it's considered new, but at the end it becomes accepted in a concrete cultural context. Finishing, Corbalán, Martínez and Donolo (2003) speak about the difficulty that exists to differentiate creativity from other concepts as genius, giftedness or art. These authors advise us to be patient until we get to a consensual definition.





Furthermore, as Iglesias Casal (1999) describes, mistaken ideas regarding creativity are widespread, e.g. the relation between creativity and madness. No evidence is been founded for this to be true. Merely, as Josep Muñoz (1994) states, “the dialectic of imagination seems an eminently chaotic process and not easy to understand and express through linguistic resources”.

A second mistaken idea about creativity is to consider it innate and that cannot be taught. It can be seen as a quality some geniuses have or as a skill that anyone can develop (Cachia, Ferrari, Ala-Mutka, Punie, 2010). However, de Bono (1994) already explained that creativity is another ability that we can cultivate and develop. In fact, creativity is related with experimentation, and experimentation with observation. Bono explains that we do not see the world as it is, but as we perceive it. And our perception relies on our past experiences, motivations and attitudes. In that sense, if we develop our ability to broaden our perception, we will be developing our creativity. But creativity is also related to self-expression (Gámez, 1998). Therefore, we are also developing our creative aptitude by improving the knowledge about ourselves and the ability to communicate our emotions and ideas.

2.2 Creative Learning Environment

In any case, it is clear that creativity is not a rigid and stable-over-time aptitude. Depending on our learning experience, it could be improved or worsened. Creativity as a concept in the context of educational system can be attributed to person's character traits and skills, learning methods/content and learning environment. Besides, creativity can be viewed as a result of some activity – new, original product or idea. If creativity is viewed as a personality trait or a skill, then it is described by innovation, originality, unconventional solutions, anti-conformism, courage, productivity of innovation activities in various sectors, creative intuition, rich imagination, inspiration, psychic plasticity, viragoes activity (Bebre, 1997). Also creativity can be defined as ability for unusual thinking characterized by developed imagination, divergent thinking, psychic plasticity, subconscious and viragoes activity (Medne, 2014). Assuming that the goal of education system is to encourage creativity of youth as personality trait or a skill, education documentation has to provide for fostering of the mentioned qualities.

Creative learning is therefore any learning that involves understanding and new awareness, which allows the learner to go beyond notional acquisition, and focuses on thinking skills. It is based on learner empowerment and centeredness (Cachia, Ferrari, Ala-Mutka, Punie, 2010). According to Martínez-Salanova Sánchez, the creative-learning process entails the production of information or the development of new skills and, in a certain way, original to the learner. It could be comprised of these stages (even if he does not mark boundaries between them):

Firstly, the learner in class, at a particular time and due to personal characteristics or sensitivity to certain problems, detects weaknesses, inconsistencies and gaps in information creating in him/her a feeling that something is missing or not right.

Secondly, the learner feels a need and seeks the way to address it. We are facing a great learning opportunity; the pupil is uncomfortable because recognizes a need. The classroom; i.e. the teacher or the atmosphere; should enable the learner to find the answers to those questions or concerns that would arise.

Thirdly, a grown learner will try to find workarounds, avoiding clichés and obvious, mistaken or impracticable answers. For that purpose, students must learn how to deal with uncertainty, tolerate it and even use it as a drive to investigate.

Finally, while learners do not resolve their question, they will be motivated to continue trying to improve their response. This intrinsic motivation remains until they communicate the results to others. In this point, we should highlight two of the features that Betancourt Morejón, cited by Pueyo Agudo, considers that a creative learning space should have. On the one hand, achievement must be present. That is, learning experiences must be successful experiences. If learners cannot find the answer or it takes too long, intrinsic motivation disappears and with it, the curiosity and interest to learn. This does not mean that learners cannot ever fail. In fact it is healthy to learn how to manage frustration, but it must be a careful process and adjusted to each learner. On the other hand, the authority to validate the knowledge should not be the educators alone, but much more democratic. Learners need, as we stated before, present their results to others (i.e. teacher, peers or even relatives) who, after a process of dialogue, judge the results with them. Being that, students must overcome the fear of making mistakes and gain confidence in themselves and their ideas. Harter (1993) already explained this circular process in which the higher confidence of people in themselves, the higher ease to express their creative potential; just as people who express their creativity in greater proportion gain increasing security and confidence.

Creativity is conceptualized as a skill for all and it is argued that educational actors have the power to unlock the creative and innovative potential of the young. It is argued that creativity, in the educational context, should be conceptualized as a transversal and cross-curricular skill, which everyone can develop. Therefore it can be fostered but also inhibited.

By learning environment we understand an environment of a particular educational establishment characterized by social components, special objects and matters, as well as interpersonal relationships. These factors influence and complement each other and affect every person involved. Learning environment additionally specifies educational environment; it always implies organization process. It ensures correlation of material, communicative and social conditions in the learning process and beneficial circumstances for the development of student's creative potential. By using different sources of knowledge and various learning methods, a student constructs his/her knowledge, skills and dispositions on his/her own (Mežinska, 2011).

In order to develop creativity in the classroom it is essential to foster a different attitude to the teaching – learning process in both teachers and students. Teachers should accept uncertainty and recognize that it is more valuable working around a small amount of knowledge, but to do so trying to cover a lot in a superficial way. In the end, accumulation by rote of so many concepts is not important anymore. We must better value knowing how to select the right information at each moment, search, analyze, process, and how to create out of it. The adult must abandon the role of transmitter of information and become the creator of learning environments in which learners are accepted with their capabilities and limitations. They must provide a working and learning place in which learners feel safe to learn and develop their skills without the fear of being judged (Borrajo, 1998). Paul Delnooz developed an alternative: Creative Action Methodology. Finding innovative solution for practical problems, which are tested afterwards, is central in the educational approach '**learn to think** creatively'. It is an educational approach that is tested in practice and appears to be very successful: the academic level of students increased. Students found solutions for social issues as neighborhood renewal, information of aids and shoplifting.

The first Training Course of the project "Looking at Learning" brought together representatives from non-formal and formal education establishments from all 3 project countries - Spain, Netherlands and Latvia, they met in August 2015, in Gulbene (Latvia). After spending week learning, experiencing, sharing, discussing and reflecting on creative learning environments in non-formal education setting participants elaborated a comprehensive list of necessary conditions for a Creative Learning Environment:

2.2.1 What should be a Creative Learning Environment

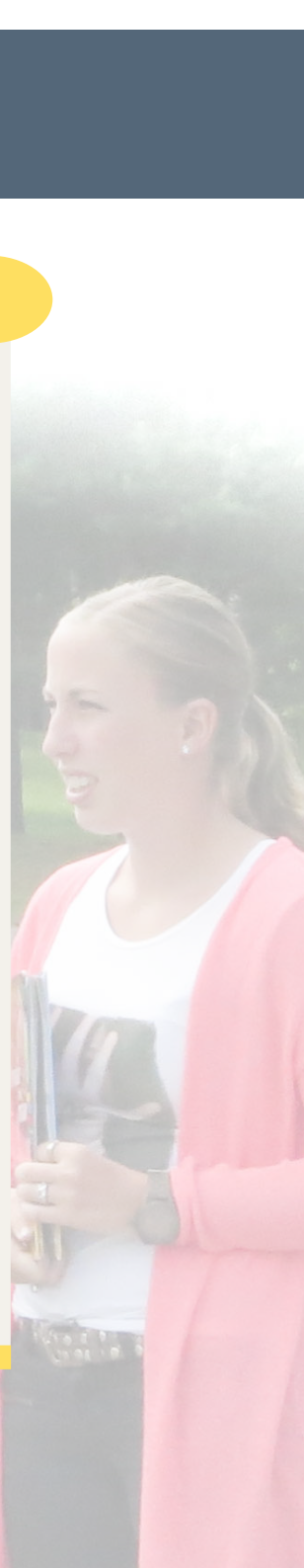


1. Freedom of space and time, being yourself, make choices.
2. Focused on learning processes both of learners and guides.
3. Permission and invitation to work together with community.
4. Genderless.
5. Trust. Supporting of leading learning and sharing but not directing.
6. Inspiration, motivation and functional, flexible and diverse space.
7. Use of natural and local resources, unique space.
8. Place where feel free to feel with all senses.
9. Allowed to fail / No fear to mistakes.
10. Playful learning and challenging, experimenting and learning by doing.
11. Solid base and sense of wonder.
12. Inspiring, researching and discovering.
13. No time pressure.
14. Safe place to go out of comfort zone.
15. Environment accepted, built by learning community and flexible to needs.
16. Learners responsible of their own learning process.
17. Development of creativity, imagination and fantasy.
18. Allowed to express thoughts and questions.
19. Space feelings, emotions and imagination where to use all senses.
20. Possibility to develop own ideas and procedures.

2.2.2 What should not be a Creative Learning Environment

1. Should not focus on learning results, decide what is good for someone else.
2. Need to get rid of fears of tailing and need to control processes.
3. Do not have external expectations (like final testings).
4. Should not put time pressure on the learners.
5. Stop working on a constant routine, thinking just in the box.
6. Do not want to teach the same to the whole group, but work individually according to interests and learning needs.
7. Do not try to mold learners in fix society, but help them to develop their best self.
8. Do not centre learning only on hearing or seeing.
9. Do not consider as groups of ages, but individuals.
10. Do not standardize support of learning, but focus on individual needs.
11. Do not push for learning or believe that people don't want to learn.
12. Do not think on free time and learning time, because both are equally useful for learning.
13. Do not prepare learners for test, but for life.
14. Do not create a space where the learners feel accepted, valued and respected.
15. Do not have a space where learners identify as theirs.





CHAPTER 3. ANALYSIS OF POLICY DOCUMENTS



3.1 Latvia

Creative environment and creative people are named in Latvian planning and normative documents as one of the goals that must be attained and developed in both the near and distant future. In the Strategy of Sustainable Development, Latvia in 2030 is described as a green, clean, easily accessible and also creative place. Thus, creativity is significant in connection with long-term goal of sustainable development of the nation along with the priorities of clean environment and optimal infrastructure. Besides this concept is not only attributed to individual characteristics and human resources, but also to Latvia as a whole and its environment.

Creativity as a priority interlaces main Latvian mid-term development planning document "National Development Plan 2014-2020"; and in it as well, the vision of Latvian future is seen through creativity and – in particular – through creative people. Courses of action and tasks highlighted in the National Development Plan (NDP) link creativity with two important aspects: development of business environment and human resilience. Thus it can be concluded that at least on the level of political planning in Latvia there is an understanding that ability to get and keep a decent job and ability to take care for the development of oneself and nation is not possible without a set of particular competencies, including creativity.

There are several instruments that can be used to develop the competency of creativity in the society, and all of them are linked to education: training and attracting highly qualified and creative general education teachers, implementation of innovative study content and work forms in basic education and general secondary education and provision of possibility for informal education in order to encourage creativity and entrepreneurial abilities. Based on NDP guidelines, it can be concluded that on political level creativity is viewed in the context of entrepreneurial abilities and creation of innovative, exportable product. The corresponding tasks are viewed only through education system using opportunities of both formal and informal education.

Whereas the document “The Guidelines of Education Development 2014-2020” names creativity among the main goals, among the course of action it is only mentioned secondarily. It often highlights modern methods and modern infrastructure, but it is hard to understand whether they are linked to creativity or not. The document points out necessity to improve education content to be oriented on the competencies, healthy lifestyle, creativity and promotion of innovation, that is in demand in knowledge society. In the other tasks, creativity is not particularly accentuated. But, when making development of individual skills one of the goals, it emphasizes the approach based in value education, which among others includes development of creativity.

In the context of value-oriented education, the meaning of informal education, which is mentioned in NDP, is emphasized as well. While putting forward the significant tasks, the necessity to support youth science centres, summer study camps, science seminars, competitions and science projects and other activities that are directed towards cultivation and development of children’s abilities.

Interestingly enough, other normative documents that regulate education system mention creativity as a part on goals and tasks, but fail to specify how it would be promoted. Generally speaking, policy-planning documents that relate to the education system present creativity as one of many political priorities. Such concepts as ‘creative personality’, ‘skill of creativity’ and ‘creative place’ are often mentioned among the goals and particular tasks, but most of all they are mentioned in goals and some of the tasks without specifying the ways in which creativity is defined from the standpoint of policy planning and how it will be promoted. The Council of Ministers Regulations attempt to specify what aspect of self-expression and creativity is, but this explanation only partially reveals creativity and its meaning is reduced to the areas of the development of artistic creativity and imagination.

Relatively narrow understanding of creativity is revealed by standards of school subjects. As S. Medne concludes it, creative skills are mostly nurtured in subjects linked to artistic world (visual arts, music, literature). Relatively less promotion of creativity is connected to social studies and subjects related to health. Subject standards for general education do not provide for promotion of creative skills in science and maths and IT subjects (Medne, 2014).

The documents regulating youth policy refer to creativity secondarily or do not mention at all. In “Guidelines of Youth Policy 2009–2018”, creativity is not included in any of main guidelines or basic principles. Besides The Law of Youth does not mention creativity, but it accentuates necessity to provide support for youth initiatives that would create favorable circumstances for their intellectual and creative development. In essence, there is no connection between the priorities of education and youth, because in education, promotion of creativity is mentioned quite often, while in youth policy, it is mentioned in a very narrow sense - only in connection with youth education and creative self-expression.

Comparing to other member states of EU, Latvia is among those that rather often include ideas of creativity and innovativeness in their education programs. All the while teacher believe that creativity is sufficiently emphasized in education programs. Latvian teachers are among those in Europe that mostly agree with the notion of creativity playing an important role in study content (Cachia, 2010).



3.2 Netherlands

"The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is aiming for a smart, skilled and creative Netherlands". This is a quote on the website of the Ministry that implies the importance of the development of creativity in education. The art subjects have always contributed to that. But in the discussion of the 21st century skills, in which creativity is being mentioned, also other subjects seem more interested in their contribution to the development of creativity.

Moreover, SLO is an expertise centre for innovation in education in cooperation with the University of Twente, department of behavioral science Overview of innovation in education. Although the words creativity and creative are both mentioned only one time in their publication 'Learning environments and learning materials in innovative schools'; the words innovative and innovation could be interpreted as replacements for the word creative and creativity.

In this document we can find several educational methodologies that can help to foster creativity.

(i) Natural Learning: choosing and self-direction are their core elements.

(ii) Want to Learn – Challenging Education: getting out what is inside, never being bored; learning to use your brain, less is more, making learning meaningful, without relation no results; the learner learns; every learner learns differently, showing what you have learned, and the school is everyone's are their twelve essential elements.

(iii) Real Life Learning – Iederwijs (every wise): based on the idea that all children are wise and that this can flourish in a real life environment.

(iv) Meaningful Learning – Authentic Learning: based on the development of knowledge and its implementation it in realistic contexts by learning in strong real life environments.

(v) Autonomous Learning – Auto-responsible Learning: gives the learner as much responsibility as possible. The supporter/ teacher is a guide, provides relevant learning materials and organizes group-learning methods.

(vi) Cooperative Learning – Tailor-made Team education: educators and learners share responsibility for the learning process. Essential for his form of education is learning by modeling (i.e. showing example, cooperating and imitating).

(vii) Adaptive Education: adapts education to the opportunities and needs of individual learners. By differentiating, the educator can take into account relevant differences between learners.

(viii) Experience based Education: based on Learning by doing. Teachers take care for good learning environments and create space for initiatives of learners.

(ix) Development oriented Education: according to this model, learners don't develop by themselves from their surroundings and their participation in social-cultural world. Educators are partners, who support learners in preparing meaningful activities, which learners can not yet do or understand.

There are many initiatives of innovations in education that overlaps the previously mentioned concepts. Based on research of innovation in education in primary and secondary schools, the Inspection of Education has come to four common characteristics:

- Learning environments are authentic, the context is meaningful
- Activating learning environments results in considerable self-directed learning of learners. In those environments learners can and may assess their own development and reflects on their own learning process.
- Learning is happening mostly in a social setting, as in ‘Learning together with Others’.
- ICT is an important tool to support innovation and change.

It seems that the words creativity and creative learning environments are not present in any publication or policy documents. Yet, if we take the word creative to be more than just artistic or expressive, we see another picture. Many forms of ‘creative’ learning environments appear as new and innovative ways to look at learning. Teachers and educators are not anymore focussed only on transmitting knowledge, but supporting learners to explore and find their own way of finding that knowledge themselves and providing good environments for that. In new concepts that are being developed, there is a change of role towards coaching and creating good learning environments for learners to develop themselves, giving more and more space for responsibility and self-direction.



3.3 Spain

Creativity is named in the different Spanish educational laws in many ways as we showed previously. However, it is not possible to find any mention about learning environments, let alone about creative learning environments.

The preamble of LOMCE already speaks of creativity as a competence to be acquired by students. However, the law rarely speaks of creativity. When it does, creativity appears as a goal or objective to be achieved by students throughout their education.

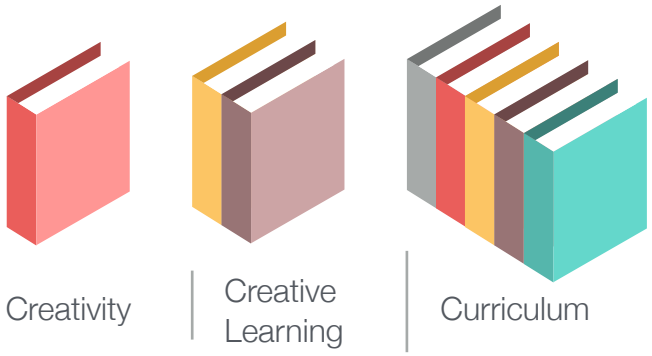
The decrees of the Autonomous Communities also allude to creativity. Such as in Andalucía's; which explains that the curriculum includes artistic and cultural training to encourage creative development and where is marked as one of the fundamental objectives of primary education to achieve "the entrepreneurial spirit from developing creativity, autonomy, initiative, teamwork, self-confidence and critical thinking."

Castilla y León goes a little further and emphasize the changing role that must be experienced by teachers:

> *The teacher assumes the role of creator of learning situations that stimulate and motivate the students to be able to achieve the appropriate development of skills that will be demanded at the end of the stage and that train him for active participation in the real life.* (ORDEN EDU/519/2014, of 17 June, which establishes the curriculum and regulates the implementation, evaluation and development of primary education in Castilla y León region.

It is the only time that the environment that should lead the teacher to promote learning among their students is indirectly referenced. The teacher ceases to be the centre of learning and becomes a facilitator, creating situations (i.e. environment, conditions and activities) that lead to learning.

On the other hand, the order of education of Castilla y León also speaks of creativity in specific subjects. For example, creativity is seen as a competence to foster in the subject English, the subject Art Education identifies recording in the classroom with a creative resource, or Language and Literature states in its criteria that students must recite texts using creatively oral communication strategies.





3.4 Conclusions

It seems that in The Netherlands the educational system and the national policy is open to change and seems to follow the needs of schools to make changes, in stead of forcing the educational institutes to conform to the national policy. The educational system gives space to schools to make changes and innovations in their education in a creative and meaningful way. Not only schools are changing towards self-directed learning, also the educational system is based on the self-direction of schools and other educational institutes.

Regarding to Latvia, it can be generally concluded that in political planning documents creativity is more revealed in the broadest sense (Latvia as a creative place), instead of mentioning of it in particular study standards (creative self-expression, artistic creativity). Although creativity as a concept permeates all planning documents and education regulations, one cannot find a precise definition of creativity; thus it has created a situation when different documents accentuated different aspects of creativity. Besides, promotion of creativity is mainly assigned to education system, and the role of other social institutes (family, economics) is not accessed and it can create problems in the area of implementation of creativity in the life of society.

In the same way, Spanish education laws take into account the importance of creativity, but do not do a good job in their treatment. The concretion of the meaning of creativity, the restriction of this aspect to very few subjects, or the absence of references to conditions that help develop creativity are problems to be addressed and amended.

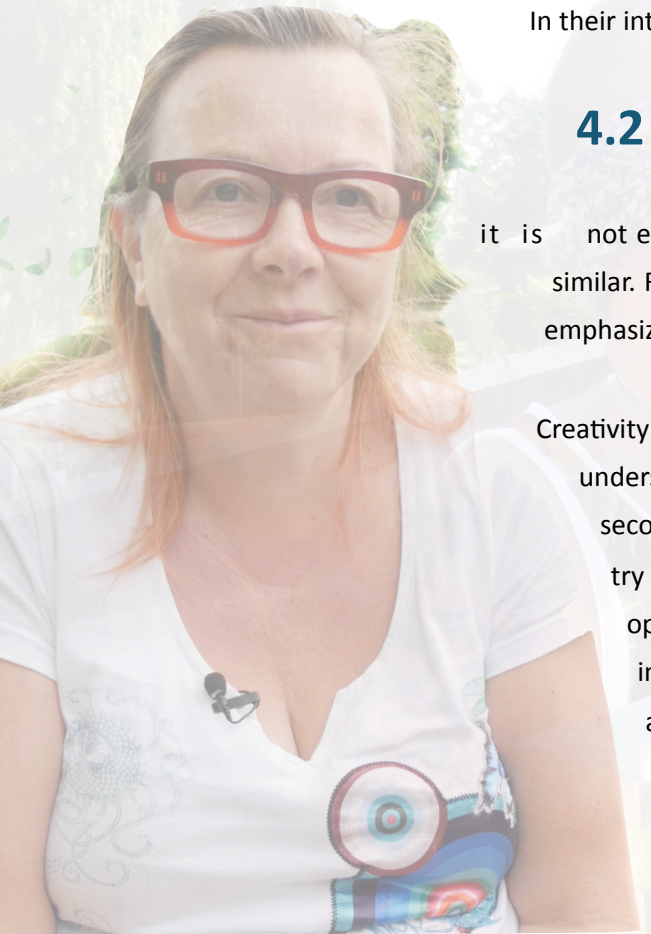
In the various Spanish laws, as in Latvia, creativity is a word devoid of meaning. Legislation does not specify anywhere what using resources creatively means, under what conditions its use is or not creative or, for example, what "creative experimentation" means. In fact, we have seen how creativity plays the role of "competence", "skill" or "resource" at the same time. Moreover, creativity is an almost exclusive ability of subjects related to the visual art, music or literature. Finally, we don't find in Spanish legislation, any paragraph in which they explain what conditions must be met in the classroom environment to develop creativity.

CHAPTER 4. ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

4.1 Introduction

For the research “The First Looking at Learning” researchers in each country have done individual interviews with representatives of several stakeholders who are active in development of learning environments in different fields of education. The selection of interviewees was made to have a broad picture of creative learning environment in the context of education in Latvia, Netherlands and Spain. Interviews were gathered from different educators - youth workers, researchers, teachers, activists, trainers who are involved in formal and non-formal education field, educators who work with children in preschools and primary schools, youth in formal and non-formal environment as well as educators who work with children with special needs. A description of the respondents can be found in the Annex.

In their interpretations of creativity, creative learning environment and learning, respondents are fairly consistent. Sometimes it is not easy for respondents to define these terms. Depending on the country, the essence of explanation is more or less similar. Respondents refer to creativity as a skill necessary for educators and learners, as well as learning methods, equally emphasizing all three aspects.



4.2 Interpretation of Creativity, Learning and Creative Learning

Creativity is divergent thinking that implies ability to create new correlations between different ideas and ability to understand which idea is worth implementation, realization and sharing tells Sabīne Medne - teacher from Salacgrīva secondary school, Latvia. Respondents believe that creativity includes such important qualities as boldness, daring to try different things in life, finds those that suit the best and trust in own strength, the ability to create new opportunities and change situations or communication skills, including the expression of feelings and thoughts. It also implies making mistakes and learning from them, taking responsibility for our work and choices. It is a resource that allows individuals to adapt to different life cycles. Creativity implies connection to real life, learning by doing with focus on experiential and contextual learning.

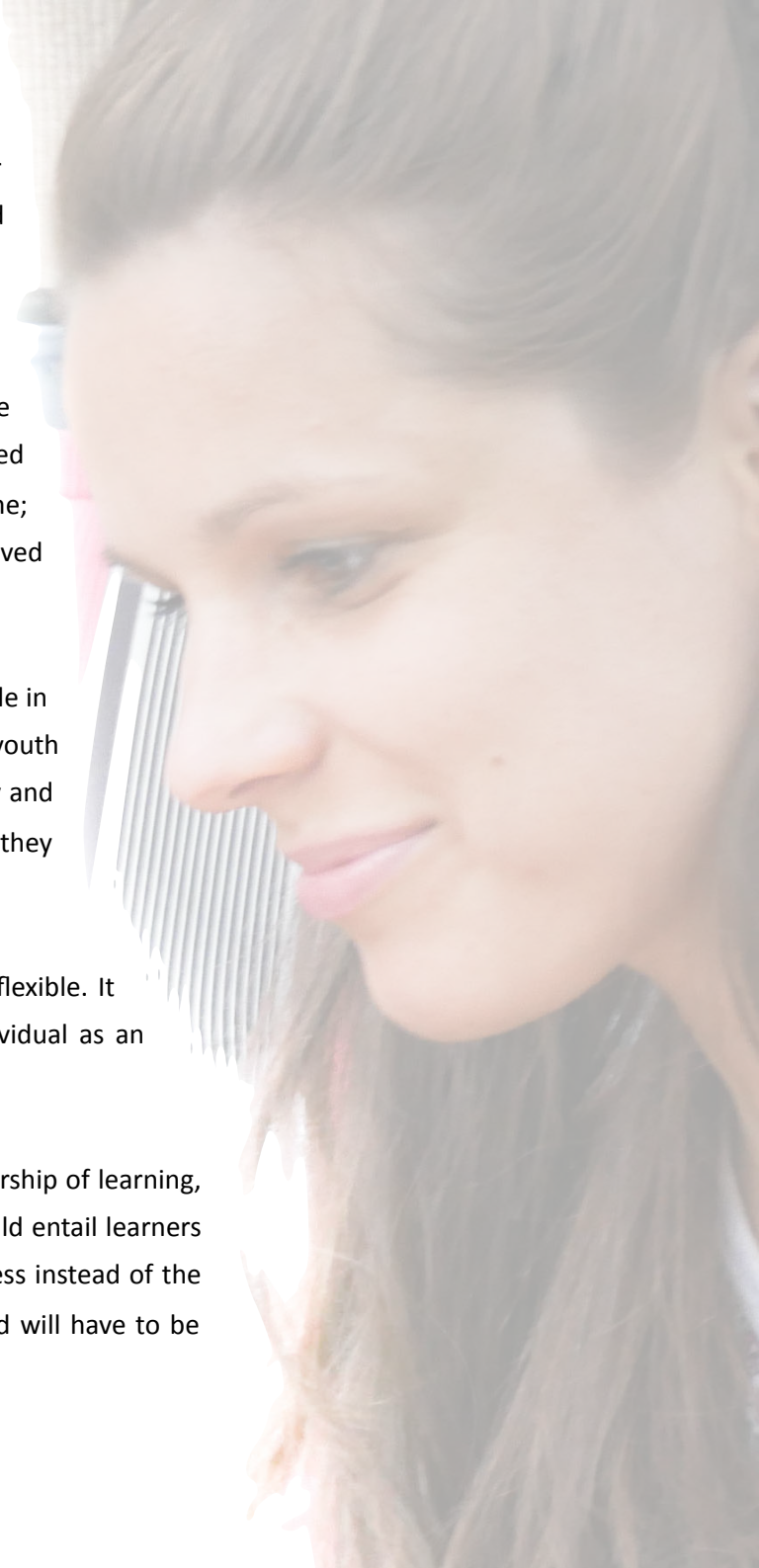
Teachers' creativity – their ability and skill to use environment and teaching methods to motivate and teach their pupils – is considered to be a vitally important condition, since everything else depends on teacher's personality and motivation.

According to respondents, creative learning environment is when learner's senses, attitude towards training content and understanding of the life around them is being nurtured. It is a set of supportive, interesting, favorable conditions (school, community, society) for the training. It gives the learners the motivation, stimulation, the required materials to promote their participation in the creation of an object, a project or an idea according to a theme; enhancing their ability of associating, selecting, organizing and transforming the experiences or the received information giving.

In the case of special needs children and youth the emphasis is placed on sensual experiences, and this very principle in the context of creative learning can be related to all learners. Creative learning allows seeing both gifted youth, youth with different disorders, helps to notice and nurture individual gifts and meet different needs, to increase diversity and tolerance towards one another, and to reduce uniformity in educational establishment. It allows learners to be who they are. Supporters of learning should support the social emotional state and development of the learners.

A creative learning environment must be adaptable – to all participants' attributes; i.e. age, or background and flexible. It should be an environment that one could always change according to the needs of the collective and the individual as an organic process.

Moreover, this kind of learning environment should encourage learners to work on their autonomy and take ownership of learning, e.g. getting the opportunity for active participation in decision making about the use of the learning space. It should entail learners the freedom to explore and provide the opportunity for learners and supporters of learning to focus on the process instead of the result. Students must have freedom in creating their opinion, although they will need to put it into context and will have to be meaningful.





A creative learning environment must offer many possibilities for social learning and space for reflection, whether it is a team-based or and individual process. Each individual should be able to decide when and how interaction between the different individual learning environments occurs. The learning space should be open to the world, not confined to the school or youth centre.

Having enough material available, i.e. musical instruments or materials for expression; is important. However, creativity involves knowing both the resources and the limitations; since the lack of resources may foster imagination and proactivity.

Finally, it is easier to nurture creativity through subjects linked to arts, respondents emphasize necessity to integrate creativity into all school subjects and social and cultural activities in school as well. At the same time creativity does not mean the lack of planning or anarchy, it implies planned learning process with expected results and known methods.

4.3 Formal requirements for creative learning environments

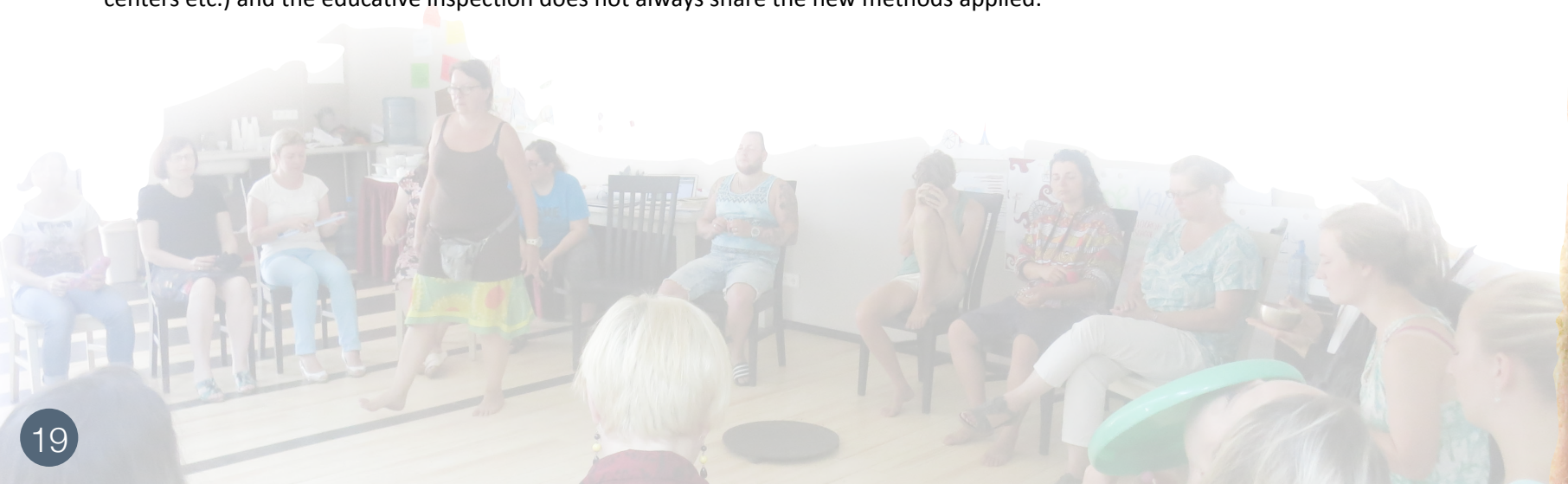
Even if respondents theoretically know that there are some formal requirements in relation to promotion of creativity in various learning environments (schools, youth centers etc), in their work they are governed by other principles – by the particular situation, problems, finances and other factors.

The teachers who are creative and use creative methods in their work do it in accordance with their personal understanding. And the teachers who use traditional, teacher-centered methods feel no need to change anything, since creativity is not a mandatory requirement. However, teachers who have experienced creativity think that it is 'addictive'. Good practices slowly, but surely spread wider and wider.

The gap between theory and practice is maintained because of vague, indefinite definition of creativity. The fear of change experienced by educators and the complex evaluation of creativity play also a key role in preventing the change needed.

Regarding the students' families; they have sometimes opposed the new methods, as well as some students. There is resistance to cooperative work since they believe that individualization of the educational process is lost, when in fact it is the opposite. Some parents are very positive, but others think that contents are lost by the failure to study the traditional way.

Finally, education policy at the national level is quite far removed from the real situation in education establishments (schools, youth centers etc.) and the educative inspection does not always share the new methods applied.





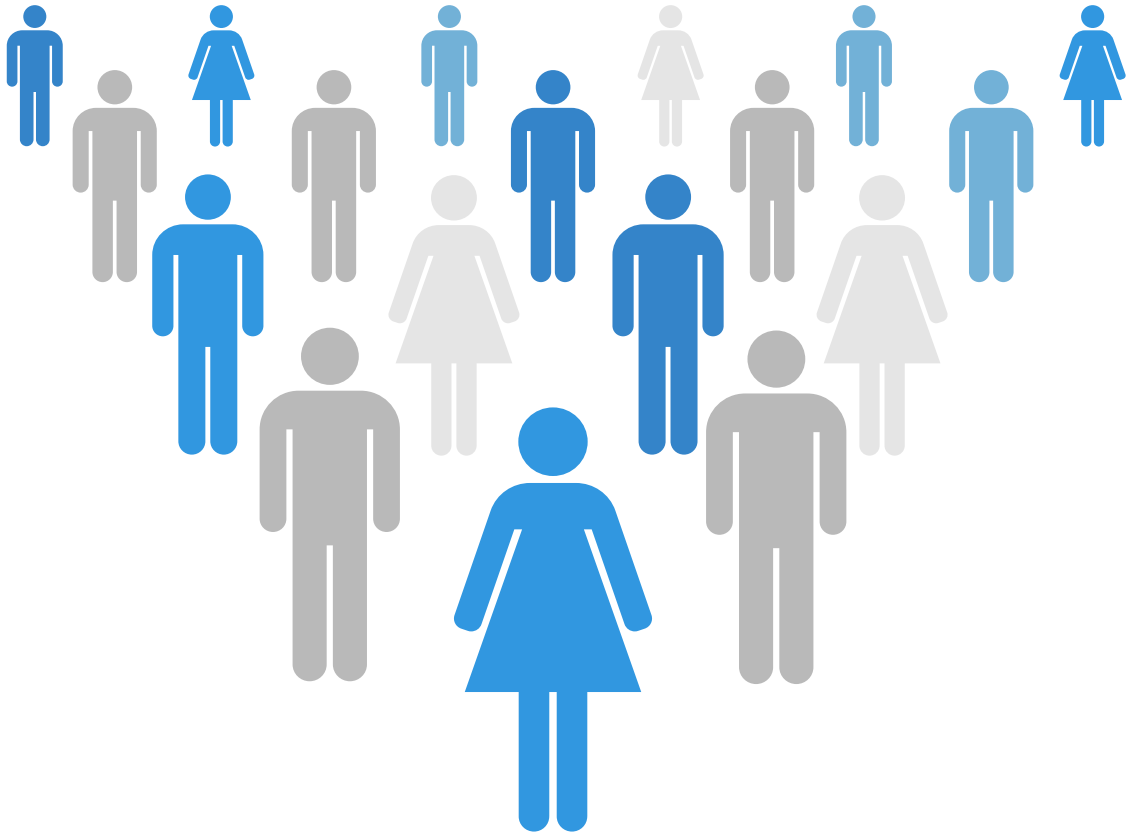
4.4 How is creativity affected by materials available and technical facilities?

Space and materials allow youth people to express, explore and develop their skills; therefore it is very important to make a good choice about them. Anyway, a creative learning environment should not be fixed but open to changes. The changes should be organic according to the needs of learners or supporters of learning.

Respondents referred to materials, space and technical facilities in a broad way, depending on the target group they work with. This is a comprehensive list that includes the most significant elements:

- Nature and outdoor spaces. On the one hand, we could take advantage of the natural environment, so learners can decide and find the required materials. On the other hand, we could work in an artificial space, offering those materials.
- Arts and crafts, e.g. musical instruments, artistic materials or material to develop kinesthetic skills.
- Record learning: learning booklets, pens paper, use of personal symbolic objects, portfolios.
- Architecture:
    - Provide an ateliers or a large creative working room.
    - Nurse decoration, e.g. corners, unexpected use of materials or chill out spaces.
    - Arrange several spaces where students can work and learn, enough space to suite both interaction and seclusion.
- Technology: Novelty contributes to increase motivation. Providing technological means to express emotions or ideas is important.
- The lack of material: sometimes, need fosters creativity. So we must consider sometimes the lack of material as a possible way to nurture creativity.

4.5 Methods that work and do not



Respondents use a large variety of methods according to the type, age, skills and abilities of learners. One interviewee mentioned that there are no good or wrong methods. May methods work or don't work, but we always have to adapt it to the group and the environment. So finally, no methods work or don't work, there is people and space that work or do not work. Regarding to this issue, some general characteristics are present in many interviews, and will be discussed in section 4.7. "Factors that promote and hinder a creative learning environment".



Methods that work

Games & role-plays.	Orientation, expeditions (field trips)
Discussions	Green living
Brainstorms	Creative workshops
“Spiders of ideas”	Freedom to choose activities
Live poem	Drama improvisation
Double diary	Free writing, composition of fairy tales.
Creation of comics, booklets, presentations and collages	Different festivals, for example, language festival, Latvian traditions etc.
methods that does not give one clear answers, so provoke exploration and discovery	Opportunities provided by modern technologies and the Internet like computers with touché screen
Forecasting, prognostication	The use of unusual new materials
Reading in pairs	Research work
Sharing of personal experiences	Bono’s thinking hats
Thinking-based Learning	arts and crafts to develop competences
Solo time in nature (introspective),	Visualization by using artistic methods,
Hybrid environment	Pictures and pictograms
Own coach, and making personal learning plans based on their personal interests and skills. But the creative learning context needs to be rich so children will take what they need in practice.	Scientific method: To understand the posed problem, To define difficulties, To gather valid and reliable information, To formulate hypothesis, To look for answers, To modify, check and improve, To communicate results
DIRKT instruction model: clear instructions to learn in small steps. Starting with what do you already know/ do? And what would you need to know/do to take the next step?	DMG Coaching method to stimulate Thinking. It help student to figure out the answers themselves.
Interactive learning (Henk Pijning): Exploring Aware Learning: Plan phase (red) + Try out phase (orange) + Doing/ executing (Green)	Customized transport like wheelchair bicycles and duo-cycles, a wheelchair swing
Feedback	Peer assessment
Multiple intelligences framework	Design Thinking
Group activities, associative methods, cooperative learning, and teambuilding.	Experiential learning, Project-based learning, learning-by-doing.

Methods that “do not work”

Reading seminars	Writing seminars
Tests with the closed questions	Focus only on cognitive results
Passive (no influence of participants), extensive theoretical inputs	Any method that is repeated too much until it gets routine
Methods that are too competitive	Examples for children to copy them
Studying/ learning out of context, just focused on the subject and not on how it can be integrated in their whole study	Methods that do not match age, season, class composition

4.6 A new role for the educator and the learner

Interviewees see the role of the educator as a supporter of learning, a coach who guides the learning process of the learners involved. They give space and opportunity for dialogue, and offer help and suggestions only if the learner gets stuck. They can step back and give the stage to learners, trusting them. Educators need a democratic style; the relationship between them and learners must be based on mutual respect, cooperation and reciprocal duties.



They do not only guide cognitive processes but also, and more important, social-emotional ones. Being that, they are supporting learners in their decisions and their process, so their capacity to motivate and to empathize is deeply important. They must keep and attitude of looking at abilities instead of disabilities of the learner. They also need more and more training in conflict resolution, as new methodologies have an increasing social component.

Educators can lead by example, being curious, observant, listening, looking and asking question. Empathic. The staff must be patient but also creative in doing and thinking.

Learners have to accept their responsibility, participate make decisions in their own learning process. It is also very important their participation in the final evaluation of the project or activity undertaken. They need to ask for help if they need it, but also want to find the answers to their problems by themselves. We cannot forget that young people are exploring what they can and want to do. They are owners of the process of discovering themselves.

4.7 Factors that promote and hinder a Creative Learning Environment

The analysis of interviews indicates different **factors that promote a Creative Learning Environment:**

1) Physically accessible, positive, emotionally supportive environment and work atmosphere where the chosen methods correspond with abilities, age, group size etc. of children and youth. A poor organization influences negatively in the creative process. Children must feel safe and comfortable. They should be encouraged to work together, but respecting that some children need to work individually.
2) Methods should be diverse, consistent and process oriented, with a focus in learning-by-doing, cooperation, self-directed learning and reflection times and spaces. They should involve using creative tools and linking experiences with real life situations. Assessment is key in the process. Having a clear structure, deadlines, assignments, and explaining how and who will assess the product helps students to self-regulate their work. Positive experience and feedback helps to initiate new ideas, practices and cooperation at different levels and between different social agents.
3) Small groups and individual approach encourages creativity since it allows to create cosy atmosphere, to know one another, to see each other's needs and highlight best abilities of children
   and youth. Sometimes threats of school closure, small number of pupils and other difficulties are grounds for creative ideas and successful solutions.
4) Educator's desire and ability to develop individual talents of learners, encouragement, empathy, emotionally supportive environment and creation of new opportunities. Activities must be challenging and in their development, individual ideas must be given importance. The main goal must be the development of individual potential.
5) Human factor is mention in interviews as something that can both encourage and hinder creativity. Personality, activity, attitude and willingness of a teacher and educators to use different methods. If the educator can't hinder creativity, further training and individual growth can change this situation. Creativity helps to stay *'on fire in profession'* and reduces the burn-out risks for teachers and experts.
6) Available financial resources and technical support. Although the respondents see creativity as a way to 'manage' with available means, all of the interviewees point out that technical support is important as it allows to get better results, faster and often more effectively.



Factors that hinder a Creative Learning Environment

1) Lack of common understanding and teamwork between parts involved. School subjects, topics and training programs have no connection with real life. Teachers fail to share their experience or to cooperate with teachers of different subjects. This is due to unwillingness to accept someone else's experience since they underestimate each other's creative expressions.
2) Personal qualities of teachers, school staff and experts that can be observed by children and youth, including superficiality, inaccuracy or indecisiveness. A negligent behavior by the educator inhibits the development of creativity by learners. One of the most essential hindrances is educators' poor language skills; because of it they are unable to read international studies, publications, or to exchange experiences with other educators internationally.
3) Communication barriers and lack of cooperation. There is a triangle of cooperation, teacher / educator, pupil and parents; that requires active communication to avoid conflicts.
4) High weekly workload and existing wage model. Creative learning sometimes requires educators to sacrifice their free time and draw on financial and moral support of their families.
5) Learners' resistance and disinterest in the learning process, since students play the main part in a creative-learning approach. Revealing the opportunities provided by this type of learning can solve this problem.
6) The lack of sufficient, budgeted finances. Insufficient number of educators in areas that are interesting for boys (robotics, technology). The issue of aid for special needs children.
7) Social environment, attitude of society and various decision-makers towards educators. Issues of teacher's prestige, wage policy and social accountability.
8) Uniform teaching methods and standardized evaluation. Not challenging, results-oriented, not enough participative or competitive activities. The problem usually is the unwillingness to learn and use new methods and to grow spiritually.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS

The current situation in the three countries studied, Latvia, the Netherlands and Spain is different. However, it is interesting noticing that the main core of problems to face, solutions proposed and ideas and conclusions regarding Creative Learning Environments are, in essence, the same.

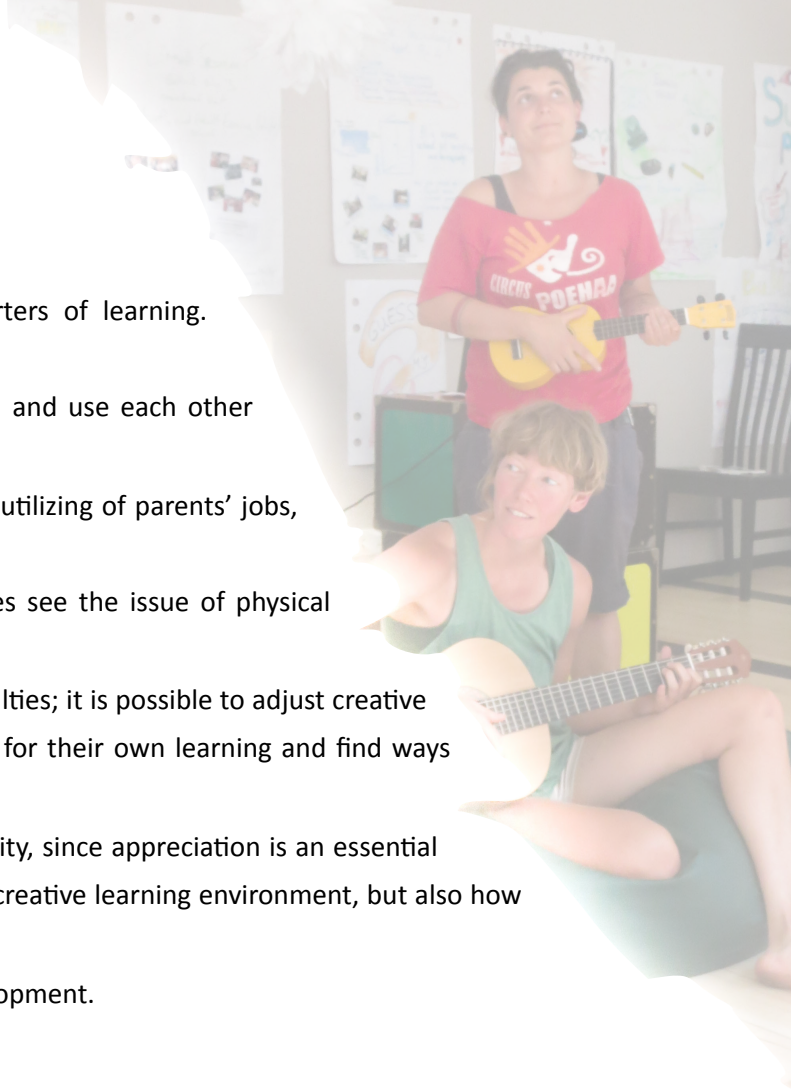
While describing current situation in relation to creative learning, respondents admit that the potential of creative learning is not used sufficiently. Not all of them have a clear definition of a creative learning environment, nor are thinking about it in a conscious and conceptual way in their work with learners. One of the respondents believes that only about 20% of teachers are creative in their work, and the percentage is smaller when working with special need children and youth. It can be helped, to start with, by agreeing on a common platform for the concept of creativity. It means creating empirically understandable, clear definition of creativity, creative learning and creative teaching environment.

1) Creativity is defined as individual self-expression, ability to create new opportunities. Creativity is mostly developed by linking theory with practical activities, with everyday processes.
2) Creativity is believed to be a mandatory skill necessary for every cycle of human life. Creativity is related to all individuals as attainable and developed skill.
3) Creativity is mentioned in goals and objectives of all levels of policy-making in Latvia, but there are no clear directions on how it can be promoted. School leadership and teachers have no clear understanding how creativity should be conceptualized. Promotion of creativity is insufficiently institutionalized and structured which is often an obstacle to achieving the aims and cooperation between the parties involved.
4) Spain has to face the same problem. The word creativity is present in official documents and educational legislation, but its meaning is far from clear.
5) However, the Dutch educational system gives schools and non-formal education the freedom to innovate education and learning according to a variety of new concepts of learner-centered education. The variety of both conceptual as practical ways of creating good learning environments are showing how open-minded educators can work with their learning environment.

6) Some local governments and education establishments implement creative learning methods independently of policy documents, mostly based on individual initiative. There are many good examples that testify of presence of creativity in the education process.
7) Creativity, creative learning and creative learning environment encourage communication, emotional and physical development, thus causing changes not only in individual children or youth, but also in classes, groups and families.
8) The main stimuli and initiators of creativity are different social agents in the environment of formal and non-formal education, local government, and projects, etc. that promote cooperation as essential prerequisite of creativity. These few 'key' people are essential, since they initiate and develop different activities, and different understanding of parties involved, acknowledgment and implementation of their opportunities and competencies are very important for the reaching of common goals.
9) The main obstructing factors are related to the lack of common understanding, goals and cooperation between parties involved. The need of training in new methods and educational approaches in conjunction with the lack of resources and, sometimes, the educators' unwillingness to learn and use those new methods is another problem to be faced. Finally, involving young people with learning difficulties or physical, intellectual and behavioral disabilities is also a challenge. In this case, the Netherlands seem to be a good country to research and explore the possibilities as there is a strong learning system for them.



Suggestions



1) Finding agreement on common understanding, platform and conceptualization of creativity.
2) Improving the use of artistic methods to improve creativity in learning environments
3) Add or renew learning methods and concepts focussing on the role of learner and educators as supporters of learning. Popularization of creative practices, describing and sharing of new methods on social networks.
4) Improving the use of unconventional methods, to make new links between formal and non-formal education and use each other methods.
5) Promotion of teacher-parent cooperation that is insufficiently used for development of creativity; for example, utilizing of parents' jobs, professions, hobbies demonstrating the link with real life.
6) Online course for pupils and families that allow to solve problems and to study at home, since some families see the issue of physical distance as a hindrance.
7) Paying of more attention to young people with fewer opportunities, especially young people with learning difficulties; it is possible to adjust creative methods to different life situations. We can provide learning environments where they can take responsibility for their own learning and find ways towards a more Self-Directed Learning.
8) Local governments and school leadership should give support to teachers and field experts that practice creativity, since appreciation is an essential part of one's work. It is essential to help teachers and other educators not only to know the characteristics of a creative learning environment, but also how to generate them.
9) Legislation must accept that creativity belongs to every subject area and every subject can contribute to its development.
10) Undertaking of research and inspecting the utilization of technical support.
11) Studies of how to measure creativity and whether the creativity of lerners has increased. Gaining of understanding whether there is need for special reforms. Need to inquire if what we do is useful.
12) The project "Looking at Learning" is taking into consideration existing situations regarding creativity and creative learning environments in involved project countries (Spain, Netherlands, Latvia) and is capable to take a role in promoting the cross-sectorial work and find ways to promote creativity and emphasize the importance of environment in creative learning process. Project partners will implement local workshops in communities, schools, youth centers, centers for people with disabilities, university according creative learning environments conditions identified in the first Training Course of the project and research "The First Looking at Learning".

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ANNEX I - DESCRIPTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Latvia

Name	Institution	Position	Date	Notes on the interview
Linda Feldmane	Lielplatone branch of Eleja Preschool and Primary school, Jelgava district	Manager	June 27th, 2015	Held in Jelgava, in casual environment
Irēna Domniece	Iespēja izaugsmei. Ltd" uses new pedagogical approaches to children and youth, and special need children; organization of camps for these children	Manager	June 29th, 2015	Held in Jelgava, in respondent's workplace
Ieva Zāgmane	Project, activity – „Fashion Bee"	Project promoter and manager in schools and events	June 29th, 2015	Held in Riga, in casual environment
Gunta Auza	Jelgava Education Governance	Head	June 26th, 2015	Held in Jelgava, in respondent's workplace
Dace Ekša	Jelgava 1st boarding school	Social pedagogue and pshychology teacher	June 29th, 2015	Held in Jelgava, in respondents's workplace
Sabīne Medne	Salacgrīva secondary school	Teacher of Latvian and culturology, participant of Possible Mission program	June 26th, 2015	Held in Riga, in casual environment

ANNEX I - DESCRIPTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Netherlands

Name	Institution	Position	Date	Notes on the interview
Angela Slagter	Merakel Lutjebroek Care centre for young people with disabilities	Founder & President (also parent)	June 2015	Held in Lutjebroek, in respondent's workplace
Marieke Wehnes	Praktijkschool West-Friesland, Grootebroek Secondary school for young people with learning difficulties	School coach for children with internalizing problems	June 2015	Held in Grootebroek in respondent's workplace
Melanie Morath	Circus Blixem Amsterdam Social Circus and (street) theatre for Young People.	Founder and trainer	June 2015	Held in Amsterdam, in casual environment
Wiel van Ginekken	VSO De Stormvogel Hoorn Secondary school for young people with severe learning difficulties	School principle, Director	July 2015	Held in Hoorn, in respondent's workplace
Astrid Steinprinz	MBO Albeda college, Rotterdam, Secondary level vocational education.	Teacher, Mentor 1st year students, Language coordinator	July 2015	Held in Venhuizen, in interviewers workplace
Dani Korai	Youth Exchange Service Venhuizen NGO supporting youth initiatives and learning	Active member, Trainer non-formal education & project manager	July 2015	Held in Arnhem, casual environment
Fineke de Jong	De Vallei, Democratic Elementary school	Intern- teacher	July 2015	Held in Arnhem, casual environment

ANNEX I - DESCRIPTION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Spain

Name	Institution	Position	Date	Notes on the interview
Juan Díaz Garcia	Espacio Joven of Maracena	Director in the Espacio Joven of Maracena	June 2015	Held in respondent's workplace
Carlos Pezzi Picklesimer	Environmental Center "La Alpujarra"	Director of Environmental Center "La Alpujarra"	June 2015	Held in Berchules, in respondent's workplace
Germán Medina Talero	Escuela infantil municipal "El Bosque de Darwin"	Pedagogical Director "El Bosque de Darwin"	June 2015	Held in respondent's workplace
Alvaro Pascual Sanz	Colegio Nuestra Señora de la Fuencisla	Agente de Cambio, responsable de cambios metodológicos (comunidad escolar de Maristas Compostela)	July 2015	Held in respondent's workplace
Carmen Elena Bolado	Colegio Nuestra Señora de la Fuencisla	Coordinadora de bilinguismo y (provincial escolar de MAristas Compostela)	July 2015	Held in respondent's workplace
Juan Carlos Tejedor	Colegio Nuestra Señora de la Fuencisla	Profesor de ingles y coordinador de lenguas extranjeras y bilinguismo secundaria	July 2015	Held in respondent's workplace
Isabel, Maite, Eva y Esther	Fundación Simón Ruiz Envito (Centro de día de educación especial para discapacitados)	Educadoras del centro	July 2015	Held in respondent's workplace
Juan Piñeiroa	Grupo Scout Laguna 589 – ASDE CyL	Educador de jóvenes scouts y gestor de comunicación del Grupo Scout Laguna 589	July 2015	Held in respondent's workplace
Iván Prieto	Cursos de formación a desempleados y trabajadores	Formador freelance	July 2015	Held in casual environment

ANNEX II - GOOD PRACTICES

Sustainable Fashion doTalk – through Clothing Transformation to Discovering of Creativity in Me. LATVIA

Sustainable fashion doTalk is an initiative that has existed for 4 years; it is an opportunity for designers to share their ideas with people that want to have their clothes transformed and re-designed. A significant aspect of sustainable fashion doTalk is environment and understanding of its maintenance; it encourages people to not follow brands and buy new clothes, but instead to give new life to old clothing. Transforming old outfits creates new ones.

Any person can become a participant of doTalk (fashion clean-up), but it interesting for the *„fashion addicts*" – mostly lovers of fashion and young people. Fashion doTalk also includes special workshops in schools where special guest speakers talk about clothing, environment, fashion; they ask young people questions like, "Why it is important to you to follow fashion?" and "Would you appreciate your clothes more if you had made it yourselves, instead of copying ideas from magazines and other media?" Sustainable Fashion doTalks help people totally change their thinking.

More information:

Website of association "Humana People to People in Latvia" http://hpplatvia.com/index.php/modes-talka/

Facebook.com: https://www.facebook.com/modesTalka-335982383090328/timeline/

Municipality of Gulbene – a Platform for Creative Expressions. LATVIA.

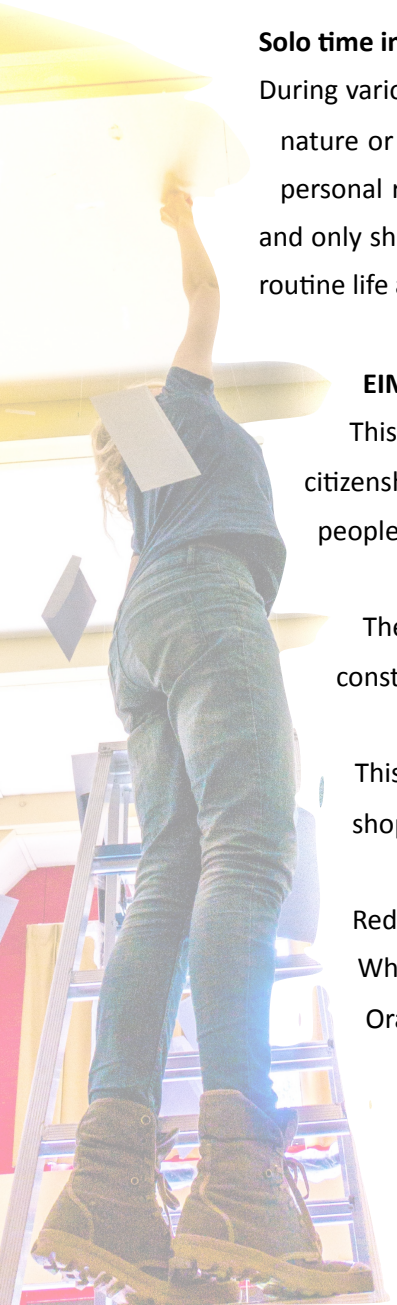
There are both formal and non - formal educational institutions in the municipality of Gulbene for students ages 7 to 25 and that function as creative centres for the advancement of various creative expressions for children and youth

Participating in different international projects, educational institutions draw young volunteers from Europe, carry out the approach of global education, and simultaneously emphasize preservation of Latvian identity. Some educational institutions function also as craft skills acquisition centres: pottery, weaving, wicker weaving, woodworking and musical instrument making, jewellery making and painting.

In order to integrate different young people into society, special education programs are implemented in two municipal educational institutions: one for students with mental disorders and another - Youth guarantee project – for young unemployed people that allows them to obtain profession. In order to encourage young people's initiative, Gulbene municipality annually announces "Gulbene County Youth Initiative Competition" where youth centres, associations and informal groups can obtain funding to implement their ideas, developing an active lifestyle and love for their native land.



ANNEX II - GOOD PRACTICES



Solo time in nature (introspective). NETHERLANDS.

During various trainings and exchanges, Youth Exchange Service uses introspective sessions, where participants are invited to spend time on their own in nature or in a good space. Participants take some tasks/ questions with them and in a special order think and work on that topic. Questions around personal roles, personal space, connecting to the hero in yourself are being expressed in various ways, writing letters, automatic writing, singing etc. and only shared with one other person (the learning buddy). People find it very refreshing and useful to de-connect from people around them and their routine life and take time to think about themselves. Important answers are found, and important decisions are often being made during this session.

EIM: Eigen Initiatief Model (Own Initiative Model). NETHERLANDS.

This model focuses on strengthening the skills of people with intellectual disabilities on every possible area of life. There is a direct link with a citizenship vision. When people are more aware and think more deeply about what they do, they will also develop a greater ability to act. That way, people with intellectual disabilities have more opportunities to develop themselves.

The model turns against the traditional dependency position of people with disabilities, and vice-versa also against the 'caretaker syndrome' (the constantly incline to grant care). It explicitly appeals to the skills to find and apply autonomous solutions.

This is being stimulated by specific tasks, which are set up as work goals. But it is not about running the concrete task, e.g. making coffee or shopping, but supporting the youngster to reflect about what is necessary to achieve those tasks. The model uses a traffic light:

Red: stop before you start, the process of thinking should begin. Concrete support questions are used: what am I going to do & what do I want? What is needed & how do I do it? What do I already know?

Orange: checking. Is it still good? There is still something to be done? Do I miss something?

Green: it's ready, but. How did it go? Do I have what I wanted & did it go as I had thought? Is it good? What would I do next time?

ANNEX II - GOOD PRACTICES

Maracena's Young Space –Creative Workshops. SPAIN.

With children between 0 and 3 years old: The first contact with the painting.

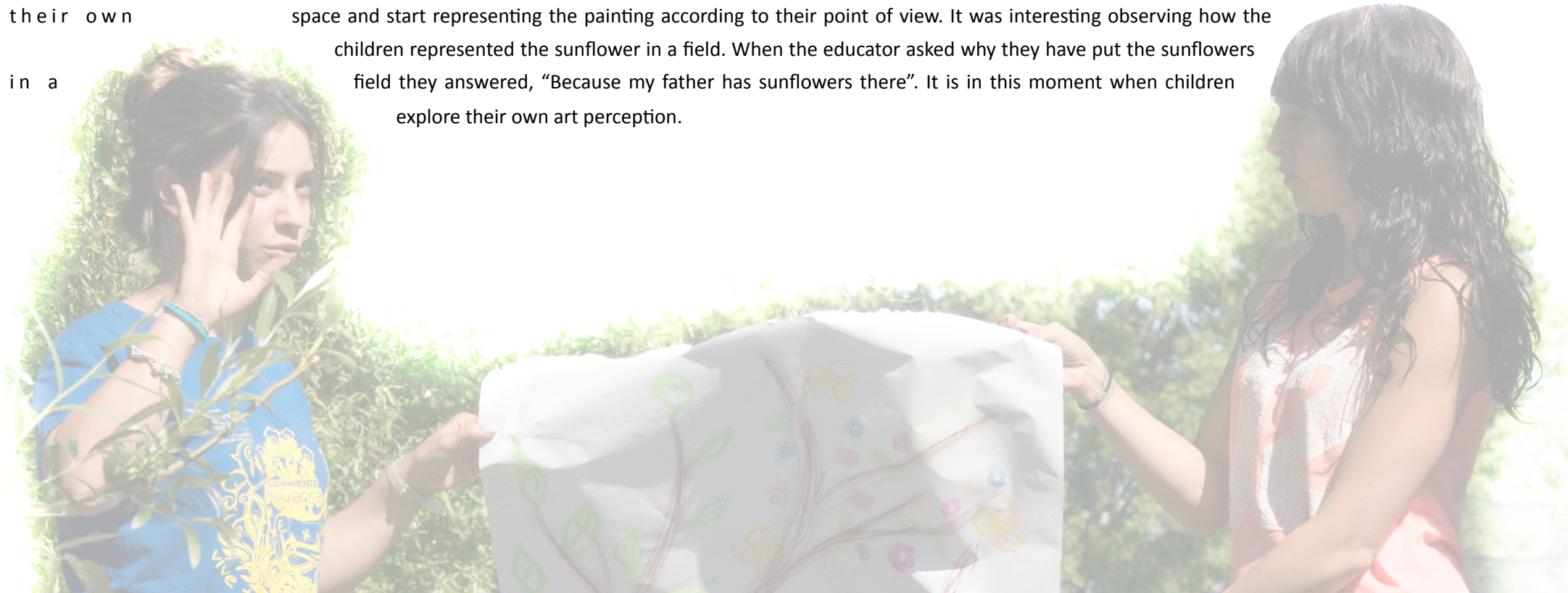
The educator offers some recipients with different colours and a paper on the floor. Children start to discover and experiment new feelings, e.g. touching the paintings for the first time, observing his/her hand plenty of colour, painting his/her own leg or putting painting on the paper.

With children between 1 and 2 years old: Chocolate workshop.

Children are offered some recipients with liquid and cold chocolate. Their first reaction is to try some, then paint with it on their own body, on their friends' body, on the educator's body, to put the recipients as hats… children are happy with what they do and develop their creativity using the chocolate as any other material and not only as food.

With children between 2 and 3 years old: Art workshop.

The educator shows the painting "The sunflowers" and explains what is in the painting. After the classroom is covered with paper, participants take their own space and start representing the painting according to their point of view. It was interesting observing how the children represented the sunflower in a field. When the educator asked why they have put the sunflowers in a field they answered, "Because my father has sunflowers there". It is in this moment when children explore their own art perception.



ANNEX II - GOOD PRACTICES



Maristas Segovia School – Cultural Week "Opening Books". SPAIN.

This Spanish school organises every year a Cultural Week. Last year they choose "Opening Books" as the main theme. In Primary section, they worked about comics, and decorated the doors of classrooms with different comic strips, e.g. a great forest or Mafalda; always performed by the students. In Secondary section, each class selected a literary work. They analysed it and created a workshop regarding the book. They also decorated their doors with elements of each of the books.

Finally, decoration plays a key role so the used big books, traditional tales figures, names of streets and squares based on stories and other literary pieces, a large fountain hanging from the ceiling of the hall or some phrases of great authors on open windows.

It is a very experiential week for students. They work through a project-based learning approach to prepare the activities for this Cultural Week, and they expect to extend this methodology to the rest of the scholar year.



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