

# TIMPO



## THE SOUND OF **MUSIC** FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

How 7 cities in Europe  
enable rights and cohesion  
through sweeping  
performing arts

*Sandra Rainero (Ed.)*

# ON STAGE



MUSIC SCHOOLS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

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URBACT.EU





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# A Rhapsody in Colors - ONSTAGE in Numbers



THE NUMBER OF **INHABITANTS** FROM THE SMALLEST TO THE LARGEST OF THE ONSTAGE CITIES (ADELFIA AND AARHUS)



THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ULG MEMBERS OF ONSTAGE: 6 THE SMALLEST GROUP IN AARHUS AND 27 THE LARGEST GROUP IN L'HOSPITALET



SMALL SCALE **TRANSFER "DEMO"**  
2 STUDIES/RESEARCH  
4 NEW PROGRAMMES FOR NURSERIES AND KINDERGARTEN AGE INFANTS /CHILDREN  
22 NEW PROGRAMMES FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN AND YOUTH  
5 REVISION/ADAPTATION OF MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS OFFER FOR SOCIAL CHANGE



**SCHOOLS** DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE TRANSFER



PERSONS **INVOLVED** IN THE DEMO ACTIONS: STUDENTS, FAMILIES, STAFF, TEACHERS, RESEARCHERS, EXPERTS, MUNICIPAL STAFF



IN L'HOSPITALET, THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN WILL BECOME A **STRUCTURAL PART** OF THE EMMCA.

**NEW FUNDING** FROM PRIVATE AND PUBLIC FUNDS ALREADY ENSURED FOR 6 CITIES.

**MAINSTREAMING** INTO LOCAL POLICIES FOR 3 CITIES DURING THE TRANSFER PROCESS: BRNO, AARHUS, GRIGNY AND AFTER ONSTAGE IN ADELFA, VALONGO AND KATOWICE, THROUGH REGIONAL AND NATIONAL FUNDS.

BRNO WILL LEAD THE **ONSTAGE NATIONAL TRANSFER NETWORK** WITH 4 CZECH AND 3 SLOVAKIAN CITIES.

## KEYWORDS





# All the world's a stage

*More often than not, during my childhood, I woke up at the sound of Liszt as my neighbor – a pianist who later became the director of the Benedetto Marcello Conservatory of Venice – practiced his concerts for long hours.*

I discovered rock'n'roll at the age of 6, dancing Tutti Frutti thanks to my parents' portable 45 vinyl player. My first kiss was at the movies watching Grease. I wrote my thesis on ethnic theatre listening to the Bird's saxophone and my daughter kicked inside my belly when she heard Violetta singing "Amami Alfredo" theme on TV.

Little did I realize how much music, theatre and performing arts have accompanied and shaped my personal and professional life until – one early morning in April 2018 – I opened my emails and discovered that I had been appointed Lead Expert of the URBACT Transfer Network "Music schools for social change" later known as **ONSTAGE**.

Three years later, countless hours spent with the partner cities of the **ONSTAGE** network, a year into the gravest health and human crisis of this millennium, which has shaken the foundations of production and enjoyment of performing arts and culture in general, after all this, today this realization about the power of music and theatre comes back to me stronger and clearer than ever.

## **Looking for a cohesive city and identity (ies): music and arts as agents of social change.**

Just by looking at the distance travelled by the European cities involved in their path for understanding, adapting, reusing and improving the original good practice from L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, I like to reminisce on the political, practical and idealistic enthusiasm of the people who – sometimes in doubt and faltering – never gave up with the peculiar appropriation of the EMMCA's approach to performing arts education as a citizenship's right.



Plenty of literature recognizes culture as a powerful agent of individual and social change. It is intrinsically related to the making of identity and it takes a fundamental role in urban contexts.

**EMMCA** is the municipality's operational arm for the implementation of music and arts as artistic and functional expressions that reflect the urban and human landscape of L'Hospitalet, appreciating its diverse composition. It exploits its potential and works for its cohesion. In this respect, it represents a **gestalt** of music education for the 6 other urban authorities part of the network.

It's a complex inspiration where its meaning goes beyond the sum of the different levels and policy realms that we have worked on together in the past three years.



It's because of the **ONSTAGE's** manifold implications on different urban fields - which span from education in the schools but also in the urban space, to youth empowerment and equal opportunities, to urban mobility and artistic practice, to social cohesion and innovation - that the process of transfer has been considered an authentic transformational experience by the cities .



# It's Because...

It's because the city council and some spirited teachers have invested in new ways to teach music in group in Roma-populated and segregated districts that the new concept of music as an instrument of social activation is taking shape in Brno, which will be leading the Czech/Slovakian national URBACT transfer network starting in the summer of 2021.

It's because the Music School has been working with the Children and Youth department of the city of Aarhus as URBACT Local Group (ULG) that now a codified and all-encompassing multi-sensory pedagogical approach overcoming barriers for all children is used at the Musikskole.

In Adelfia, it's because of the city's commitment to leveraging on the success of MusicaInGioco and making it viable as part of the territorial social policy strategy and funds that a scientific study on the positive impact on children with ADHD or other learning difficulties has been carried out as pilot to get other municipalities onboard.

It's because the revitalization of the Brass Band tradition supports community building and cohesion that the Katowice city of Garden institution works on an intergenerational project in two historic districts to foster a new sense of community, passing the baton to young generations as part of the cultural strategy of the city.

It's because the elected officials of the city have endorsed a participatory approach to identify youth at social risks and rethink the role of performing arts also in the public schools that now Valongo has sanctioned the

work of the ULG accepting its plan as a new tool in its cultural and educational urban strategy to leave no one behind.

It's because music is everywhere, in the plants, in the urban spaces and even in the science and fabrication labs that the Conservatoire of Grigny is part and parcel of the French initiative of the educational city and a good practice for municipal conservatories of the Grand Paris Sud areas.

Finally, it's because of EMMCA's transnational experience with a variety of cities and approaches to education that its responsibility and willingness to maintain and improve its practice in L'Hospitalet has been bolstered by this role, which has resulted in new and revised programs with schools and new students and community groups.

The stories and images in the next pages make up the content of this magazine, they create a rhapsody, a choral narrative (of ULG members and city coordinators) of how the idea of "cultural and artistic capability" as a citizenship's right - a way to create a democracy of culture - has been tailored-transferred to different cities as integrated urban policy and practice.

***With the candid contribution of the partners, we hope to offer insights for urban stakeholders not only on what has happened "onstage" during the transfer journey, but also and especially on what has happened "backstage" and during the dress rehearsals represented by the small-scale "demo" actions.***

*As the ONSTAGE declaration – the commitment that the 7 cities make at the end of these three years together - suggests, creativity and arts promote and connect wellbeing, physical and mental health, and social change in the communities. It integrates the aesthetic value into a political statement and deontological approach to performing arts education as instrumental to individual expression, community building and cohesion in the diverse urban contexts where the practice has been adapted.*

**Sandra Rainero**  
ONSTAGE Network Expert





# Let the Music Play

**THIS ARTICLE EXPLAINS THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF THE EMMCA GOOD PRACTICE AND THE ONSTAGE TRANSFER NETWORK. IT WAS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED ON THE URBACT WEBSITE IN OCTOBER 2018.**

**BY SANDRA RAINERO**

**I**magine to be at the RCDE Stadium on a late-spring Barcelonese afternoon.

Almost 10.000 people have queued for some time to be there. The players are on the field, they are over 5000. Among them, Nyah, a 15 year- old from Bolivia, is ready to play ... but don't be mistaken ... there's no referee whistling the kick-off tonight. The crowd has gathered for a musical performance in celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Catalan Association of Music Schools. Nyah has been playing bassoon for six years, she discovered her instrument at Ramon y Cajal primary school, then at the Escola Municipal de Música Centre de les Arts (EMMCA). Based in L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, the city where it was founded in 2005 as a municipal service for the arts, the school is the result of a clear integrated cultural, educational and social policy for the city. It represents the long-standing vision of the municipality about the transformational power of music and performing arts in the lives of people and the making of the city itself. You may say they are dreamers, but they are not the only one: this is tuning-up for the URBACT ONSTAGE Transfer Network (TN) performance.

## IT'S A KIND OF...MUSIC SCHOOL

With a population of over one-quarter million, the highest rate of population density in Europe and almost 30% of its population with a migrant background, L'Hospitalet faces several challenges and divides, in social, economic and physical terms. The main North-South train line cuts the city into two big blocks and many of the 12 neighborhoods are ethnically segregated with high poverty rates

In 2004, people are in the street, picketing the city hall and requesting a public music school. "They had in mind the traditional music school, like the Conservatory," recalls Nuria Sempere, one of the founders and former Director of the EMMCA, "but if we had to create a municipal service for music education, it had to be a unique model, one that is open and innovative." So, when the school opens in May 2005, the city council is not only cutting the ribbon to a new Performing Arts Center, but it is also inaugurating a steadfast policy of citizens' participation in the realm of cultural and artistic expressions.

In the Photo: Raul Brenchat Barbera rehearsing in one of the Tandem Programme's school



## SOME KEY FIGURES OF EMMCA

*Since its opening, over 50.000 people participated in school's activities.*

*This is also the yearly average audience of the performances.*

*An average of 4500 students take part to the EMMCA's activities each year.*

*Curricular artistic classes in 12 public primary schools*

*EMMCA employs about 50 staff, with permanent and fixed-time contracts.*

*Yearly budget of about 1.5M, resources coming from the Municipal budget, Regional and private funds (fees and donations).*

*Arts ensembles created:*

*9 Manouche Jazz Combos*

*19 Pop-rock combos*

*6 Big Bands*

*3 theatre groups*

*1 folk music orchestra*

*5 classical percussion ensembles*

*1 world music ensemble, 2 wind ensemble,*

*1 brass band*

*3 string ensemble,*

*1 ukulele orchestra,*

*1 symphonic orchestra*

*1 gospel choir.*

ESCOLA MUNICIPAL

**EMMCA**

DE MÚSICA  
CENTRE DE LES ARTS



## EBONY AND IVORY ...

The municipal music school or, as the EMMCA team eagerly refers to, the arts public service, has a multi-dimensional field of action that uses performing arts as a tool for inclusion and social change.

It has developed an innovative methodology engaging civil society and ensures equal opportunities to all inhabitants of L'Hospitalet for access to its courses.

It offers group classes to all citizens at its main building, it carries out curricular performing arts activities in primary schools, it borrows instruments to its students, grants special prices to those who cannot afford to pay full fees.

The EMMCA has the ambition to be a mirror of the diversity of the city, to represent – in cultural terms - the social and human fabric that dwells it.

The Symphony Orchestra of the EMMCA is one like many others in terms of performance skills, but it is the only one with 29% of performers with a migrant background, the same rate of people from non-EU origin living in the whole city.

It relies on proximity of space and people: the city becomes a playhouse in neighborhoods where the gigs build sense of community and sometimes audiences become the next performers.

## NOT JUST ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL

Students attending the EMMCA's activities "make music" rather than "know or learn music." The hands-on teaching techniques, adapted from established methods of non-formal education in the cultural field, are always in group sessions.

Musical and performing capabilities support basic competences, endowing students with life skills rather than "exclusive" technical skills. Out of the 59 primary schools in the city, the EMMCA has chosen to provide performing arts lessons in 12 public primary schools categorized as "High Complexity Schools", because of the high percentage of students coming from low-income households, most of them with refugee or migrant background, or other forms of social disadvantage.

Creating a curricular program of performing arts in public schools has not been easy. "There's a social issue here, we argued with the regional education board" states the EMMCA director, "we told them: these schools have lower school attainment grades ... we are losing these kids, as a public administration we should do something ...and they said, 'Go ahead!'"

A strenuous process of adaptation to the school's environment and regulations has been necessary to run these programs.

And indeed, the impact assessment demonstrates that EMMCA has made a big difference. According to the 2015-2016 data, students involved in the EMMCA program had better results in 7th grade exams than those in similar schools not participating in the programs. Higher grades were recorded in most statutory subjects, and especially math.



## FROM CATALONIA TO EUROPE WITH (GYPSY) SWING.

Thirteen years, over 50.000 participants and a lot of Manouche Jazz later, the EMMCA is now embarking in the URBACT adventure to share its policy and cohesion accomplishments, and to pick other cities' brains for improving its services. Says Nuria Sempere with a confident tone, "It is the first time that we have the opportunity to use EU funds not to increase our activities or users, but to think, exchange and learn... to improve our public service by means of cooperation with other cities in Europe."

Six other cities are now involved in the URBACT TN ONSTAGE. Adelfia's Music'n'play and Valongo's living library are also URBACT good practice cities, both leveraging on arts and culture for community building and equal opportunities, and enjoyment of cultural and artistic practice.

Three cities are small and medium- sized municipalities located – like L'Hospitalet – at the outskirts of larger metropolitan areas: Adelfia (pop. 17.200 c. in the metropolitan area of Bari in Italy), Grigny (pop. 27.000 c.

in Essonne on the Parisian belt) and Valongo (pop. 95.400 c., in the metropolitan area surrounding Porto, Portugal).

These cities, each with distinguishing characters, share the challenge of economic disparities, migrations and ethnic diversity, ageing, and less opportunities for employment. All factors leading to segregated communities.

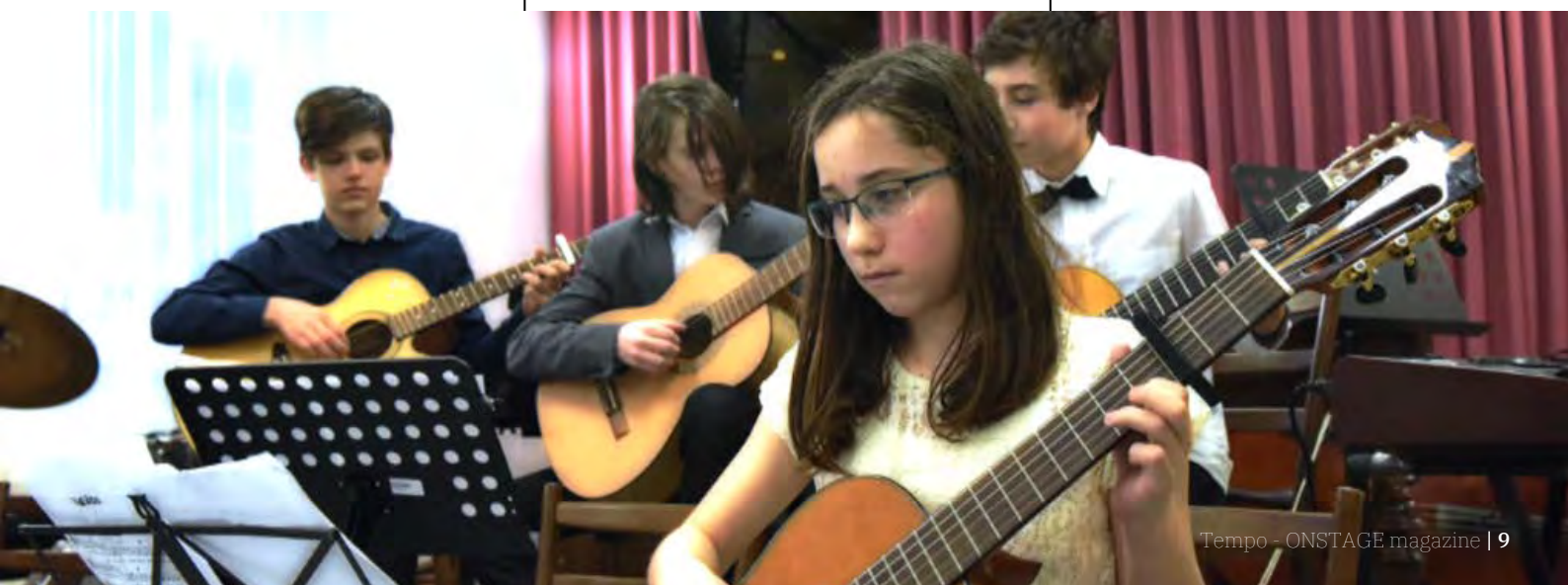
"We from the periphery of large cities deal with the issue of identity everyday" passionately maintains José Manuel Ribeiro, president of the city council of Valongo, "culture can help us counteract loss of identity, and create our identity as a city."

"Grigny has been notoriously popular on the press because of riots in its banlieues" acknowledges Edgar Solmi, director of the Conservatoire Communal of Grigny, "so elected representatives have been developing innovative cultural initiatives to change the city's negative image. It has been successful and reflects the inventive abilities of Grigny's inhabitants."

The three other network cities are vibrant mid-size cities in the Northern and Eastern European countries: Aarhus (pop. 341.500 c.) and Brno (pop. 386.000 c.) both second largest cities respectively in Denmark and Czechia, and Katowice in Poland (pop. 297.000 c.).

All have pulsating cultural and music life and economy. Both Brno and Katowice are UNESCO Creative cities and are planning to use the TN to improve the link between music and cohesion using the EMMCA's approach to create programs in primary schools with high number of socially disadvantaged students or foreigners.

Aarhus's municipal school inspired L'Hospitalet to start their own "The participation in this network is part of the framework narrative about Aarhus, a city with room for diversity where community is in focus" says director of the municipal school Lars-Ole Vestergaard. What swayed these cities into joining ONSTAGE has a three-fold nature.





A close-up photograph of a person's hands playing a violin. The focus is on the bow and the strings, with the violin's body visible in the background. The lighting is warm and soft.

1

**THE CONCEPT OF MUSIC AND ARTS SCHOOL AS A PUBLIC SERVICE TO NURTURE CULTURAL CAPABILITIES FOR ALL AND SOCIAL CHANGE TO CREATE A MORE EQUITABLE AND COHESIVE CITY**

2

**THE CAPABILITY TO “INFILTRATE” THE FORMAL EDUCATION SYSTEM AND BECOME PART OF IT, CONTRIBUTING TO SCHOOL ATTAINMENT USING NON-FORMAL MUSICAL AND ARTISTIC PRACTICE, TO EMPOWER AND DEVELOP BASIC LIFE SKILLS FROM AN EARLY AGE**

3

**THE USE OF A SOUND IMPACT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM THAT CAN MEASURE IN QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE TERMS THE SUCCESS OF THE SERVICE TOWARDS THIS POLICY VISION**

These three elements of the practice will be transferred through a methodology that is currently being developed in the network. With the first meeting planned in September, for the next 24 months the TN will work on finding strategies and methods to transfer a practice that is part and parcel of the New Urban Agenda. Culture and cultural diversity enrich and support the sustainable development of the city and – most importantly - of its citizens “empowering them to play an active and unique role in development initiatives” as the Quito Declaration on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements for All recites.



## ALL TOGETHER NOW

EMMCA changed Nyah's life. Not only does she play in the Band, she also speaks good Catalan, goes to school and has made new friends, she has become an active citizen and has a lot to look forward to in her life.

It is the many stories like Nyah's one that characterize EMMCA as a good practice for URBACT. Such vision sees music, performing arts and culture not purely as an 'end' that can be achieved by those who have power and talent, but rather as an instrumental 'tool' for social transformation, both personal and collective, to foster cohesion and democratic values for everyone in the city: women and men, from preschoolers to octogenarians from all walks of life.

**L'HOSPITALET AND THE SIX URBACT TN CITIES  
RECOGNIZE THAT PERFORMING ARTS AND  
CULTURAL ACTIVITIES DEFINE THE CITY ITSELF,  
ITS PEOPLE, ITS DISTINCT AND UNIQUE  
CULTURE WHILE BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER –  
ONSTAGE.**



# ONSTAGE





# *Look back to move on*

## Assessment and improvement in EMMCA

by Enric Aragonès Jové,  
EMMCA pedagogical coordinator and  
L'Hospitalet ULG Coordinator



Ajuntament de L'Hospitalet



## The most precious treasure

There's lots of things about working in EMMCA that I like. I like teaching in the crossroad of music, dance and drama. I love attending so many different concerts and performances every week.

I value very much learning from my colleagues, a huge and coordinated team.

I enjoy opening the doors of our institution to visitors and students that want to know it better. I'm proud of the continuous growth and improvement after 15 years up and running.

But if I have to say which characteristic of EMMCA is the most valuable there is no doubt: **EMMCA is a true reflection of its city.**

It's widely known and reported that arts practice and arts education opportunities are not distributed equally among social sectors.

Those with lower income, lower education levels and non-EU origins are less likely to practice arts regularly. These are some of the conclusions Eurostat published as part of the EU statistics on income and living conditions - many other sources related to cultural participation and arts education point at the same inequalities.



## A RELENTLESS DRIVE TO EXCEL

Almost two decades later the appeal for a public music school made by the people from L'Hospitalet, and fifteen years after the birth of the municipal strategy that led to the establishment of the EMMCA, the city and the staff of the arts' centre are keen to finding out how the policy that guides a public investment in such a service is holding up to the original goals.

The ULG of L'Hospitalet is made up of a diverse group of local and regional stakeholders that did not collaborate before in this configuration. The group has deemed that, since the EMMCA has received a lot of attention from other municipal schools at national and – after the participation in URBACT – international level, the only way forward to keep up to the EU- wide scrutiny and interest was to check if they “practice what they preach”. In other words, if the goals and objectives of the public service have been pursued, and to which extent they have been achieved, in quantitative and qualitative terms.

The research that has been carried out between 2020 and 2021 complements other empirical data and scientific studies on the positive impact of including music and performing arts in school curricula, as also Ann Bamford's seminal study “the Wow factor” shows.

Enric Aragones Jové leads us backstage and gives some sneak peeks on the results of this investigation, which is one the results of the improvement plan of the ONSTAGE URBACT Good Practice.





*Not just a school*

If these social sectors remain excluded from arts practice it's not because they coordinately decided not to participate, but because social, cultural and economic barriers exist. EMMCA works for breaking this inequality, not by offering segregated programmes with “social purposes”, but with the ultimate goal of mixing people from all backgrounds and origins practicing arts together.

Different devices and strategies are needed to overcome the mentioned barriers - programmes in primary schools, low prices, instruments for hire, social educators, connection with the social fabric, etc.

However, reaching the social sectors most likely to be excluded wouldn't be enough. The real achievement comes when these people meet and play together with those who enrolled on their own initiative.

The real achievement comes when these people meet and play together with those who enrolled on their own initiative. .

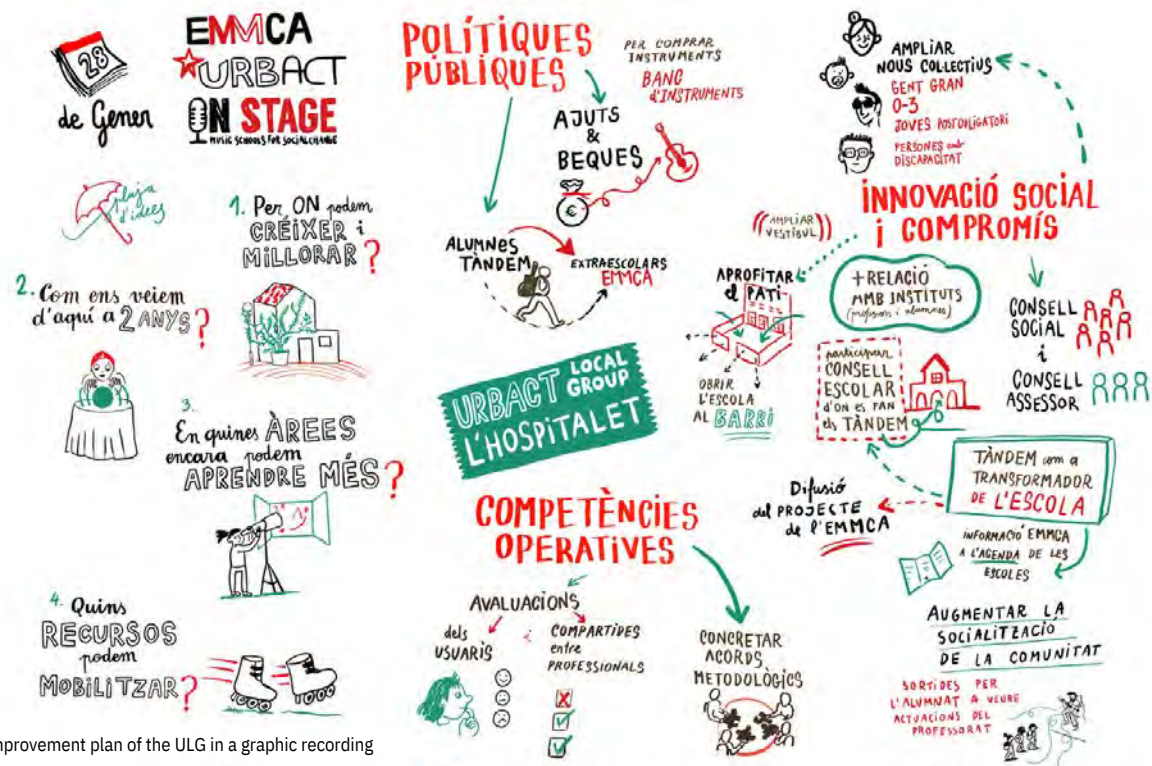
EMMCA is the Municipal Arts Centre and Music, Drama and Dance School of l'Hospitalet. It has teachers, classrooms, students, parents, subjects and schedules.

But this centre is much more than this. EMMCA is a tool for cultural, educational and social policies, in an integrated and equitable approach.

This public service was created in 2005 with an ambitious plan: to increase the number of people that practice arts, reaching all social sectors and using arts as a means to social cohesion and school attainment.

Such a policy-driven idea explains why our city has been leading and URBACT transfer network. This European programme is not specifically an education-oriented initiative, but aimed at sustainable growth through integrated urban policies. Consequently, the launch and leadership of ONSTAGE: Music Schools for Social Change has been an opportunity to strengthen and systematize the policy perspective of our school.





The improvement plan of the ULG in a graphic recording

## Assessment for and as improvement

The European journey has been oriented not only to transfer the Good Practice, EMMCA, to other cities, but also to improve it. One of the crucial elements of policy-making and policy development is assessment and, accordingly, monitoring and revision. One of the ONSTAGE meetings was fully devoted to this issue in 2019 in Brno (Czech Republic).

When that same year the URBACT Local Group in L'Hospitalet was asked to elaborate an improvement plan for EMMCA, this idea obtained a wide consensus: we should know better the actual impact of this policy.

It's been said that the main achievement of EMMCA is to be a true reflection of its city, and we have been repeating this idea for years. But do we really have all the information to declare that? Can we be more specific about this 'true reflection'?

To carry out a thorough revision of EMMCA's impact is a step forward for our institution. However, the Provincial Administration of Barcelona has been developing a benchmarking system called Intermunicipal Comparison Circles for ten years, with a specific module for music schools. L'Hospitalet has been participating in this module and its yearly editions since its creation, contributing not only with data but helping to shape new and better indicators for each edition.

This system, that allows interactive comparison with similar cities, displays indicators related to strategic, user, organizational and economic dimensions and

identifies strengths and potential improvements for each participant municipality.

L'Hospitalet stands out among cities with similar size on different aspects, such as the number of students in proportion with its population, the proportion of students with financial aid and instruments loan, the participation in instrumental ensembles, the activities open to the public and the collaboration with grassroots organisations. Assessment has been, of course, a tool for improvement on these and other aspects of EMMCA. Nevertheless, at this point EMMCA decided to face a deeper and more specific review. One that supposes an improvement of this kind of assessment.

An external participation in this new phase of self-assessment was needed and the URBACT Local Group decided to ask the ESMUC - Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya- Catalonia College of Music.

The current General Director of this institution, Núria Sempere, had been the Director of EMMCA for 13 years, leading its launch as well as the creation of ONSTAGE. She is now an active member of the URBACT Local Group.

Also, the ESMUC Department of Pedagogy and EMMCA have been collaborating for several years organizing and hosting pedagogy students' practicums.

ESMUC was, therefore, the perfect ally of this new challenge.



## Many questions to be answered

**TO ASK ABOUT THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THESE GOALS IS, ACTUALLY, TO ASK ONESELF A MORE PROFOUND QUESTION: WAS ALL THIS WORTH IT?**

The first step in the design of the impact study of EMMCA was the definition of the question to be answered: to what extent has EMMCA achieved its original goals? And to ask about the achievement of these goals is, actually, to ask oneself a more profound question: was all this worth it?

This interesting exercise requires to break down repeatedly the openness of these questions, in order to find available sources and information in each case. Consequently, the team in charge of the research process divided these mentioned goals into four elements.

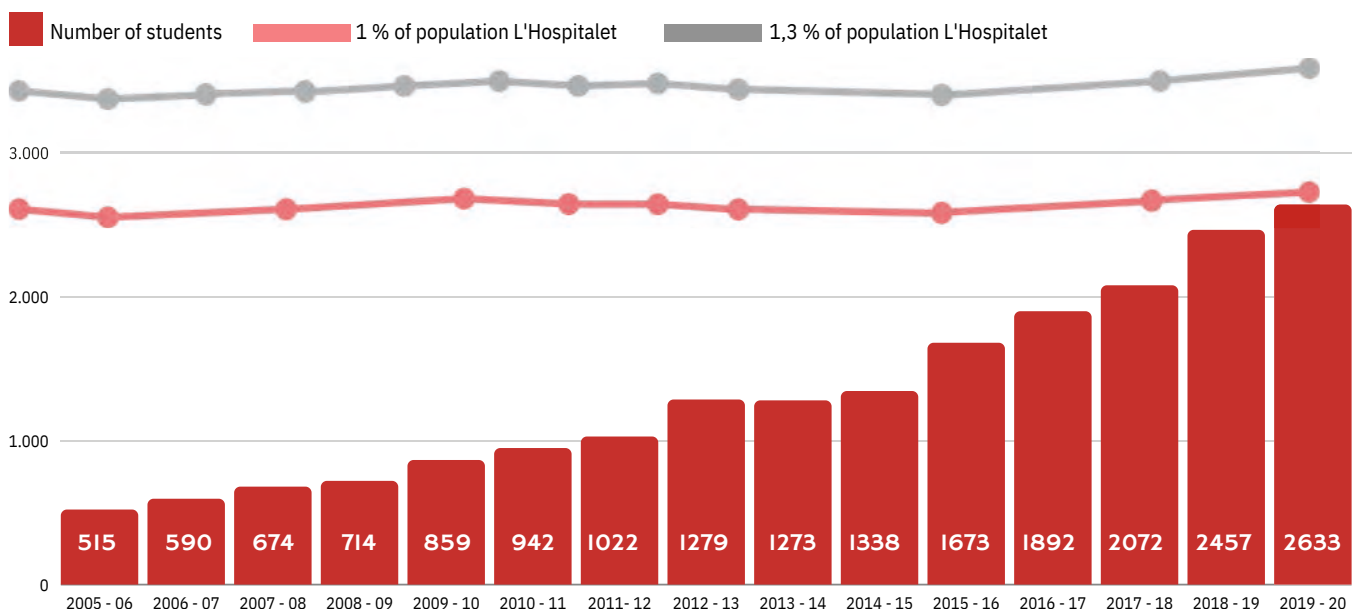
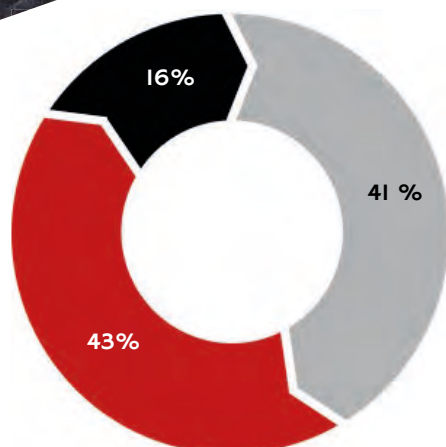
1. To increase the number of people that practice arts in L'Hospitalet.
2. To reach all social sectors, including those more likely to be excluded for arts practise.
3. To use arts as a means to social cohesion.
4. To use arts as a means to school attainment.

The first element on the list clearly relates to the continuous increase of the number of EMMCA students. Since 2005, in the plan leading to the creation of the service, the City Council indicated in 1.3% of the population - the average use of music schools in the countries of the European Union of Schools of Music (EMU)- the target of users of EMMCA.

The 1% threshold can be considered currently reached from the 2019-20 academic year, but not yet 1.3% taken as a reference. The latest modification of the service's creation report has reaffirmed this level as a horizon to be reached, also considering the increase of the local population.

**Q: Did you make any friends at EMMCA?**

- Yes, and our friendship lasts beyond EMMCA
- Yes, but just in the context of EMMCA
- No





The second element leads us to another question: which are these excluded sectors? A general overview on the available literature identifies three exclusion factors: income, education level and migrant origins.

This is why a survey on family situation was extended to all students at the beginning of the year. We need to know to which extent this idea of being a 'reflection of the city' is actually true. Still waiting for the conclusions of this part of the research, we celebrate the massive participation - more than 600 answers out of 1.000 students.

The same 'reflection of the city'-idea is linked to the concept of social cohesion, but additional dimensions can be considered here - not only the idea of gathering or mixing, but the actual construction of a united community. Is EMMCA a place where students make new friends? Do they feel respected, heard and helped? Another survey directly asked the students and former students about their perception on these topics.

The participation has been also important - 290 answers altogether - and the preliminary analysis of the answers suggests interesting results.

Regarding school attainment, we decided to analyse, by extension, the impact caused in the primary schools we work with. Discussion groups were organised with schools' principals, that shared the story of our alliances in terms of educational project and artistic activities, but also organisational challenges and live opportunities for students and families.

In different ways, the alliance with EMMCA helped the schools and brought stability to their projects. It is a stable programme, transversal with all school subjects and activities.

*"Our students have access to a kind of activities that, otherwise, wouldn't be even imagined by them and their families. This reduces school segregation and broadens students' and families' cultural horizons."*

*"One can breathe dance and music in the school at any time, you see more violins than balls moving around."*

*"No one had ever congratulated our school, but when we did the first concert the congratulations fell like rain. Other schools think: how lucky you are with EMMCA. "*

The whole report is expected to be published at the end of this school year, but the thoughts of these schools' principals are a sneak peek to what's to be unearthed. Both the report and the valuable testimonies obtained will be the best cover for future partnerships, transfers, improvements and all the steps that EMMCA will, for sure, venture in the future.





# Reaching out

Brno's two-year journey is about reaching out to people living on the margins of society through music.

by Andrea Barickmanová - Brno ULG coordinator



# to the margins

## DETERMINATION TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR THOSE LEFT ON THE MARGIN...

.. In case one wonders, this is the main reason why a city like Brno, a UNESCO's city of music with a deeply-rooted musical tradition, scores of *virtuoso* musicians and a public system of music schools (ZUŠ) took up the challenge to adapt the EMMCA Good Practice.

The centrality of the urban authority and its willingness to take a step further to give new meanings and depth to music education for social cohesion is represented by the human and financial investment that the city has made during the two years of the project ONSTAGE, all with promising results from the transfer.

The journey has been eventful and full of hurdles. Its end still uncertain. However this experience has also shown that- by taking small steps right inside the neighbourhoods -it is possible to create local alliances for urban social cohesion and related development. That's how it has been possible to create common ground for social change with plenty of opportunities to empower communities at risk of exclusion such as Roma children and youth, but not only.

The story of Brno shows – most of all – how such a huge cultural shift starts from the commitment of individuals – teachers and educators – to move beyond their traditional frame of reference and challenge the conventional meaning of cultural practice, to make it more inclusive and all-empowering.

In the Summer of 2021 the city of Brno will lead the URBACT Czech/Slovak national transfer network that will further transfer the Good Practice from L'Hospitalet.



If L'Hospitalet de Llobregat constitutes a quintessential multicultural space, compared to the Catalan city, Brno represents a fundamentally different urban environment.

The second largest city in the Czech Republic has been traditionally one of the main economic, scientific, educational and cultural centres, with extremely low unemployment and poverty rates, high school attainment, low early school leaving and a much more homogenous population. But nothing is ever black and white.

Despite the generally low poverty rate, Brno has identified 16 areas at risk of social exclusion for its inhabitants.

These areas are mostly located in the vicinity of the city centre, populated by 12 – 15.000 citizens who are mostly Roma people – the major ethnic minority in Brno.

A number of non-profit and other organisations in the area provide cultural and educational programmes for this community, partly funded by the city of Brno.

The local primary schools organise a plentiful array of afternoon activities for the students and with a strong network of state primary music schools (ZUŠ), featuring a school in every area of the city, all children have access to music education.

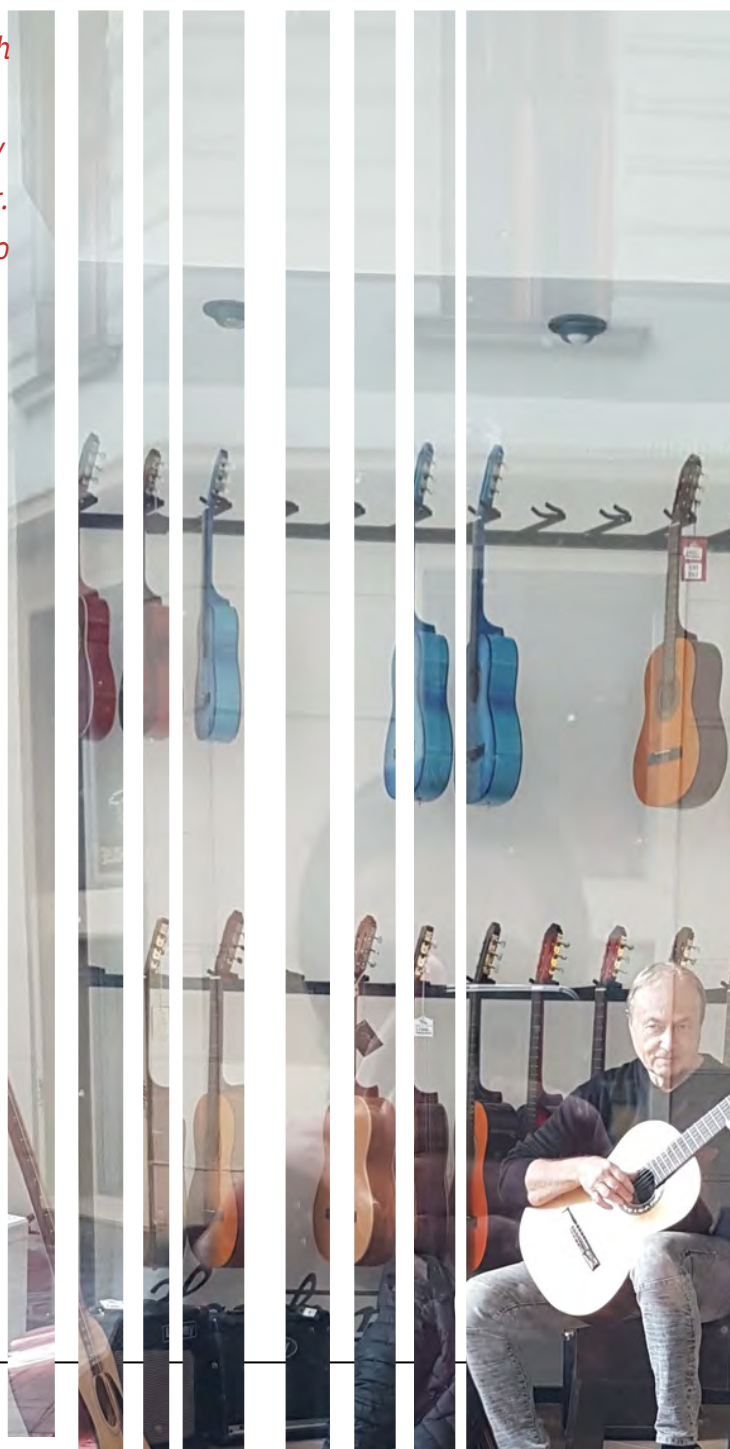
At first sight, these cultural and educational efforts should provide enough educational and cultural support for the local community, truth is that no music programmes such as those of EMMCA exist in Brno. It is a paradox, because the state basic school system (ZUŠ) offers high quality music education at affordable rates for any applicant, including people on social benefits (€ 80/semester, 90min/week). And yet, there is a group of children who are traditionally left behind – children from socially challenged backgrounds.

They don't usually enrol in music classes, perhaps because they simply don't see benefits for them or because they may be intimidated by the rigour that this version of music education that its institutions seem to demand.

The basic goal of music education is primarily designed to prepare students for the conservatory, which opens for them the opportunity to pursue a professional career in music. The philosophy of this approach is to reach mastery – to assess the individual needs of any student and efficiently develop their full musical potential. That is the prevailing opinion about how to teach music and why.

Teaching music to enhance social cohesion is a little-known concept throughout the Czech Republic and its potential has hardly been explored so far. ONSTAGE gave Brno a chance to change this.


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## *We are learning, thinking and planning*

The Urbact local group (ULG), created in 2019 has brought together a variety of stakeholders, including representatives from the municipality and the region, all local non-profit organisations and schools situated in the target areas of the city.

ONSTAGE coordinator Pavla Lukešová recalls “Gathering such an alliance was promising not only in support of the project during its official duration, but it could also become a crucial player for assuring the project’s sustainability after its official conclusion...”.



# *The main concern, the quintessential question of success for any project, remained the question of funding: even if we envisage a way to adapt Spanish Good Practice in Brno, could we put it into practice as well?* #

She continues “the diversity of the ULG ‘s members also meant we could gain insight into the specific problems of social exclusion and policies to counteract them from different perspectives.”

The ULG was enthusiastic about the project. People were convinced that Brno was prepared for such a challenge, as Marie Jílková, a member of the Brno-centre District Council concluded “In the beginning it seemed that Brno met all the external conditions for a structural change that the Good Practice from Spain offers.”

Of course, there were also serious doubts. Based on previous experience with projects, some stakeholders weren’t sure whether their efforts would get passed the planning stage.

Ondřej Fišer, Coordinator for National Minorities of the South Moravian Region said: “I have heard people outside the project saying that it would probably raise interest, but it would drop fast. That was my biggest concern, that yet another project is starting which won’t have any real impact on the target group.”

During the visit of the EMMCA and the activities of the network, the attention fell on the TANDEM programme. For Brno’s urban context TANDEM was of great interest because it carries out music and performing arts lessons directly in primary schools.

In Brno, 10 primary schools with a high number of socially disadvantaged students or coming from different ethnic backgrounds have been identified. According to a survey of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014) it is esteemed that at least 72% of Roma children leave compulsory school before completion in the Czech Republic, even if early school leaving is below 5% across the Brno region according to EUROSTAT data.

Working on the Transfer Plan had not been in vain. Brno’s municipality decided to fund the project with two additional million Czech crowns (about 38.000 €). With all the theoretical knowledge gained and the practical demonstrations of group music education, Brno was ready to start its own music programmes for social change, with enough finance for implementation in two primary schools located in deprived areas of the city.



## Starting the Demo action

Brno's first piloting programme began in September 2019 in the primary school ZŠ nám. 28. října. The school extended the morning curricular programme with an extra music lesson for 5th to 9th grade classes. These lessons gave students an opportunity to create a deeper connection with music and motivated them to participate in the main music programme – group violin and cello lesson - which became part of the voluntary afternoon school curriculum (3x2h/week).

The majority of the students in this school are Roma children, whose cultural tradition is deeply connected to playing music. The older generation of Roma people, especially, still own a musical instrument and can play it.

Nowadays, this rich tradition isn't as conspicuous as it used to be but the positive feeling for music is still present, as Alena Tomešová, the violin teacher, noted: *"Their incredible musicality surprised us, even though we had been expecting it. It is a gift whose value they probably don't even realize. They have such an obvious certainty of rhythm,*

*ability to intonate, and once holding the instrument they express such a confidence and easiness. The direct encounter with such talent amazed us."*

Alena leads the music lessons with her brother Jan Škrdlík, the cellist. They are both experienced teachers and yet this programme has been quite challenging for them, because figuring out ways to approach the children with music in a group requires a lot of insight, sensitivity and expertise. Luckily, at the very beginning of this programme Jan, with two music teachers from the morning classes, could participate in the first teachers' visit to Spain organised by EMMCA in L'Hospitalet. This experience on the ground proved invaluable not only because the teachers saw group teaching in practice, but also because they got a chance to exchange experience about working with Roma children.

As Jan recalls *"The common feature of all the lessons was a minimal stress on theoretical knowledge, learning skills by imitation, inventiveness and good planning of the lesson. Even though the level of students' performance was relatively low, all students apparently were enjoying the lessons, because we didn't see any bored faces."*

♪ *The common feature of all the lessons was a minimal stress on theoretical knowledge, learning skills by imitation, inventiveness and good planning of the lesson* ♪





### *Music for the youngest*

In one of the urban areas considered at risk of social exclusion, the Zábřdovice neighbourhood, a newly opened kindergarten, MŠ Sýpka, decided that one of the three classes would specialize in music education. In cooperation with the school, a weekly group music programme was set up and music instruments were bought. In September 2019 another ONSTAGE-inspired music programme was rolled out.

"Since its beginning the idea of music classes has been attracting a great deal of interest on the part of parents and it became very popular with the children," maintains Miriam Kolářová former ULG member and deputy mayor of the Brno-north district, "We hope that our programme will help to improve the reputation of the school in the minds of the broader public, so the kindergarten can become a space open to social cohesion for the youngest citizens in one of the most deprived areas of the city."





## *First small, big victories*

The project has started to find its tempo. The piloting programme for violin and cello met with an initial success. Only after two months of practising some of the students were able to play at Christmas school performances "The performances were successful, though the children were nervous to begin with, but after they were truly proud of themselves. After the performances, their attendance increased. We realized how much it motivates them to play more." affirms Jan Škrdlík, the cello teacher.



## *Reaching out to the community*

At the end of 2019, an ONSTAGE community choir was established. Free of tuition, the choir aimed to be open for anybody with or without any musical experience. A broad repertoire – popular song, gospels and traditional Roma songs and no age restriction (children from the age of six, teenagers and adults) was a promising concept for creating a community space where local people could meet and share the joy of making music together and get to know the richness of the Roma's musical culture.

Petra Borovičková, the choir master asserts: "We are creating our own methodology tailored to our needs. We don't use sheet-music, we are trying to build relationships! We believe in the attractiveness and vivacity of the Roma repertoire. We have Roma and non-Roma singers of all ages. We are growing and we enjoy it." The choir was a result of cooperation with the local non-profit organisation IQ Roma Servis and a partner primary school ZŠ Merhautova.



In the Photos: ONSTAGE community choir



## *First uncertainties*

The end of 2019 was also time for searching, looking for guitar teachers for the second music programme in the primary school ZŠ Merhautova and members for the community band to be established. In both cases, the difficulty of finding suitable people reflected very well how the mainstream music scenario and teachers' approach to music education operated in the city.

The fact that, for the first piloting programme, teachers were found so quickly seemed now more just luck. We knew that our ideal music teacher would be a person not only musical and pedagogical skills, but also somebody experienced in social work and psychology, and finally, somebody who can teach music to children in groups.

In the Czech Republic there is no theoretical or practical base for this way of teaching, the traditional Czech philosophy of music education doesn't include the concept of music lesson in group. Teachers tend to think in terms of individual needs and orientate their efforts towards the intensive one-to-one efficiency of the learning process and the desire for perfection on the part of the student.

Hence, our teachers had to jump into deep unknown waters and start teaching with a superficial knowledge of group music methodology, as did Rostislav Vintr, one of the guitar teachers. A former student of a basic music school (ZUŠ) and the conservatory, he had no experience with group education. He was worried that to keep discipline in a group would be difficult if not impossible. He did not even believe that it is possible to reach a good level of mastering the music instrument in a group lesson.

It was a conversation with the project co-ordinator Pavla Lukešová that changed his



mind: "I started to understand that the goal of this project is not 'to get children accepted to the conservatory', but to positively influence children from a specific social group to be integrated into society and also show them 'different values'. Still with mixed feelings, Rostislav accepted the teaching job offered.

The community choir ONSTAGE connected the primary school ZŠ Merhautova and NGO Roma servis, but there seemed to be one last piece to complete this puzzle for social change: the community band that would connect the primary music school ZUŠ Vranovská and primary school ZŠ Merhautova.

The band was meant to bring music not only to the students at the primary schools, but also to their parents or friends – to the broader community. Anybody with sufficient skills to play any instrument could come and with the help of two professional musicians would find a suitable repertoire. It was not an easy task.

In the photo, group lesson at primary school ZŠ Merhautova





## New year, new beginnings

When the second music programme in the primary school ZŠ Merhautova started, the two guitar teachers who were willing to try to teach in a new way could benefit by the mobility organised by the partner city Grigny.

This experience not only dispelled some doubts they still had about the new methodology, it also made them truly excited about the project. José del Castillo Blasco, guitar teacher recollects: *"The trip to France was all about learning! Firstly, learning with my own eyes how this whole concept of music for social change and better cities works. A concert with a full house, I had to sit on the ground for the lack of seats, a normal Thursday with all those kids and teenagers playing and singing beautiful music was the pure example - a beautiful one - of how it works, how ten years of music (and a professional approach) can change things; and seeing this changes people."*

During that visit, the teachers also learned how important to work with groups was to achieve this goal, and they brought home many ideas about how to teach guitar for groups.

At this moment, it is very difficult to predict whether the Demo will turn into a major release. Yet, in a very short period of time, we have proven that this project is meaningful for Brno and could make positive changes here. Brno's story is one of discovery of new ways of teaching and learning music and of rediscovering the amazing quality that music has – its ability to **connect people**.



The trip to France was all about learning! Firstly, learning with my own eyes how this whole concept of music for social change and better cities works.



In the photo: José del Castillo Blasco





In the Photos: children playing at the MŠ Sýpka kindergarten





# mambo!

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By Francesca Schiavone – ULG coordinator of Adelfia







#### **MENO PRESTO- BARRIERS DOWN WITH THE RETICULAR MUSIC DIDACTICS**

For over ten years, the Association “MusicaInGioco” has been enabling children with learning disabilities, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) syndrome, or diagnosed with autism using alternative methods of music and orchestras to bring them together in Adelfia and several other municipalities in the Puglia Region. Musician Andrea Gargiulo has codified this practice and multidisciplinary techniques into a methodological approach called “reticular” music didactics that the Italian Ministry of Education has recognized of national interest.

A strength of the inclusive approach of the reticular music education, which shares with the EMMCA and other ONSTAGE cities many features, is that it draws and adapts from non-formal, experiential and inductive education approaches. The method is more flexible and inclusive because it aims at personal and social empowerment rather than achievement, therefore it shows a profound social and therapeutic value. The study carried out among some children participating in the MusicaInGioco activities in Adelfia, which has denoted the ONSTAGE demo action, shows the attempt of the Municipality to go beyond the current cooperation agreement with the Association. It is the scientific data needed to make a social policy more permanent and, by proving its positive effects, streamline it in a wider and established territorial multidimensional social policy, such as the “piano di zona” in the Puglia region.

Francesca Schiavone, the ULG coordinator, talks with maestro Andrea Gargiulo and researcher/musician Maria Celeste Fasano to explain how Adelfia, inspired by the strong political commitment at the base of the EMMCA’s success, intends to level up the urban practice into a shared territorial policy of equal opportunities for children with learning and behavioural diversity.



## Like the notes...

Like the notes of a Bernstein Mambo that - on a hot South Italian afternoon - impetuously reverberate through the open shutters of Palazzo Conte Sabini - and resonate along Corso Vittorio Veneto and through the streets of the ancient township of Canneto.

That's how the ONSTAGE experience sounds for the city of Adelfia. An unexpected, engaging project that has surprised the municipality and the whole community alike, with a growing wave of curiosity and enthusiasm... just like a mambo!

Like in a Mambo, the opening of ONSTAGE draws on the vitality of the orchestras and the young musicians of MusicaInGioco (MusicInPlay), the association that has been teaching music to children and teenagers since 2010, through the "reticular didactics" method.

Two years after the start of ONSTAGE, I try to look back, take stock and explain the added value that reticular didactics has given to this journey. I talked about it with Maestro Andrea Gargiulo, teacher of choral education at the Niccolò Piccinni Conservatory in Bari and artistic director of the MusicaInGioco Association, and Maria Celeste Fasano, psychologist, musician, currently Post Doc Research Fellow at the Department of Psychology of the University of Aarhus in Denmark.

First of all, I pause to reflect on the term "to play" which refers to playful activities or games, but also musical instruments' practice, the verb is a captivating combination that we find in the name of the MusicaInGioco association, which has developed the reticular didactic method.

Indeed, maestro Andrea Gargiulo, mentioning Piaget, says "in this approach, play is a fundamental dimension, since it is the way in which the child relates to the world. 'Learning by playing' constitutes the driving force that leads the individual to learn. Therefore, through playing, the reticular didactics offers the child the opportunity to live an experience".

In such moments anyone, by playing and by having fun, is free to choose what to learn, based on their own interest. As Gargiulo puts it "children will decide what to remember and what to learn about all the musical activities: from reading a score to improvisation technique, passing through vocal activity and body percussion."



*Children will decide what to remember and what to learn about all the musical activities: from reading a score to improvisation technique, passing through vocal activity and body percussion*



In the Photo: Maestro Andrea Gargiulo

Indeed, through this educational approach, it is the entire learning process that becomes a reward in itself, regardless of the result or what has actually been learned. When children are having fun, they are inevitably learning, for the charm of the activities will stick to their memory.



In the Photo: Francesca Schiavone

But playing with others is even more fun. This is how the learning processes of reticular didactics go through collective practices in which the social dimension, expressed by the orchestra, plays a fundamental role. While playing, everyone enhances a part of the musical practice.

The “reticular teacher” will amplify individual strengths and roles within the group, so that it can act as a driving force for the companions of that specific activity.

As Andrea Gargiulo writes in his article *La didattica reticolare e l'educazione musicale inclusiva*, published in the *Nuova Secondaria*, “this is a way to heighten the social dimension of knowledge and the potential that the class as a group can express learning from others and with others.”

Reticular didactics is at the centre stage, not only for its indisputable innovation in music teaching, but above all, for its social and cultural value.

By offering the opportunity to “choose” what to learn based on one's own interest and personal inclinations, this approach enhances the child's ability to analyse and therefore the autonomy in thinking, well beyond mere musical notions.

“The key idea is that through reticular didactics we contribute to the growth of an active, aware citizen, capable of thinking independently” explains Gargiulo.

Reticular didactics is based on the scientific assumption that the learning process is not linear but articulated in different ways for each individual, then its social value is achieved in the learning times of each person.

It is for this reason that the differences between children disappear in the reticular orchestras, regardless of the individual skills, personal background, frailty or strengths of each member of the orchestra. Everyone is called to “get involved” and to experiment as a musician.

This means that a child diagnosed with autism, rather than the one with learning disabilities, will engage with music on the same level as those who are able to keep up with traditional notion-based learning processes.







Since the beginnings of MusicaInGioco in Adelfia in 2010, the Municipality has observed with growing interest the ability of this association to take roots in the local area and on a regional scale, by teaching music as a tool for individual growth and self-determination. Therefore in 2016 the Municipality of Adelfia signed an accord to grant MusicaInGioco the use of Palazzo Conte Sabini, a historical building of public property

as its operational headquarters, a place that has since become a real point of reference for the cultural growth of the local community.

As part of the ONSTAGE project, the Municipality of Adelfia has taken the opportunity to focus, from a scientific point of view, on the real outcomes that reticular teaching has produced in the lives of young musicians.

Before moving to Aarhus, psychologist Maria Celeste Fasano, already a graduate in opera singing, had been a teacher of MusicaInGioco.

This experience first, and later her PhD in neuroscience of music at the Centre for Music in the Brain at the University of Aarhus, played a fundamental role in the development of her research interests that led her to explore the effects of music, especially in children and adolescents.

 *The research focuses on how this practice can affect a range of children's cognitive, social, communication and musical skills as well as the quality of life of the families involved* 

For the Municipality of Adelfia - in collaboration with the University of Bari - and in the framework of ONSTAGE, Maria Celeste is conducting a pilot research on the effects of music practice using the reticular methods of MusicaInGioco on school-age children diagnosed with autism and / or hyperactivity. “The research focuses on how this practice can affect a range of children's cognitive, social, communication and musical skills as well as the quality of life of the families involved” she explains.

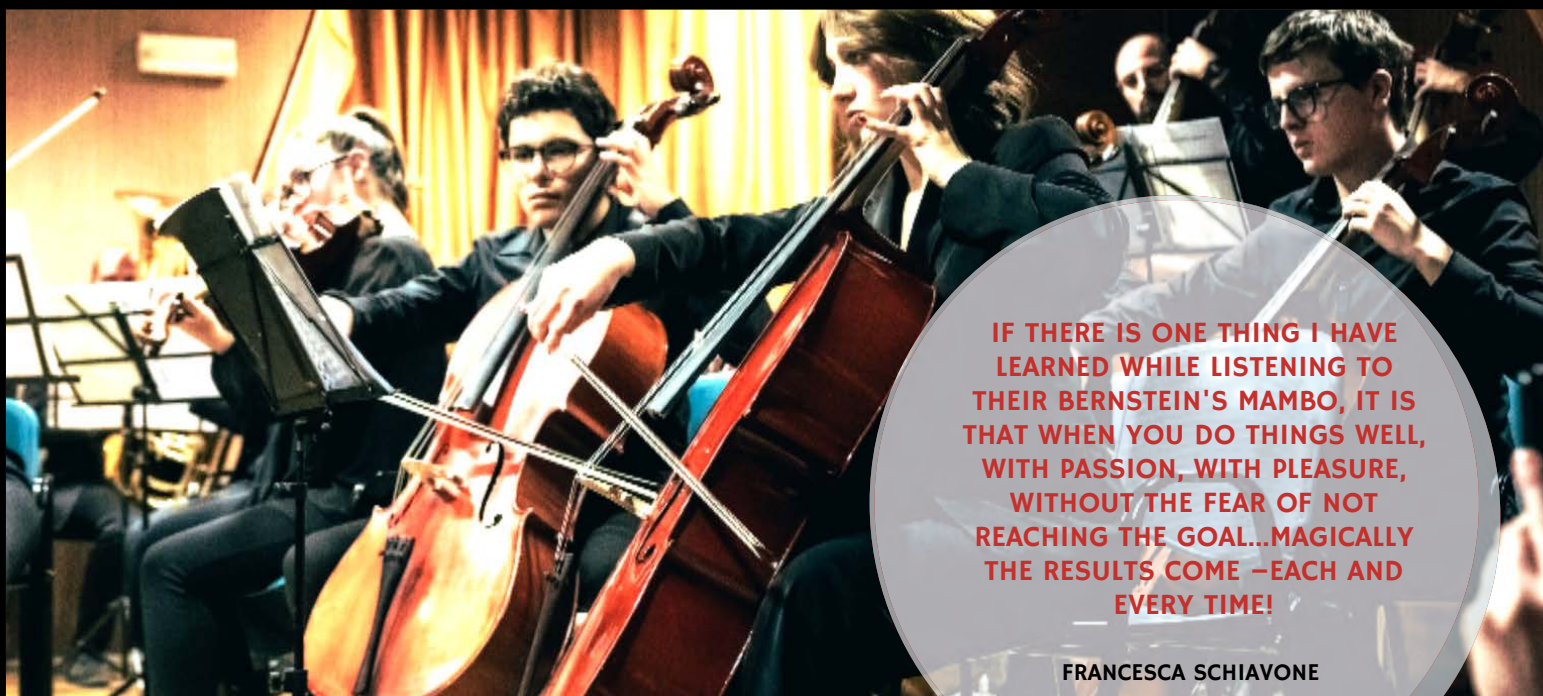
25 children have participated in the research, partly students of the I.C. Moro Falcone of Adelfia and partly members of the ASFA Puglia (Association in Support of Families with Autism).

During the research, carried out in the middle of the Covid 19 pandemic, about 10 children attended music practice with continuity.

“This research is quite ambitious, it is a pilot study whose results, albeit in a context heavily penalized by the current pandemic, constitute the framework for future scientific research in increasingly defined directions.”

Maria Celeste emphasises and adds, “it is now, towards the end of the project, that we are already trying to imagine the development prospects that the study started, continuing for sure with the involvement of children with a clinical diagnosis, but also envisaging the possibility of working with children with other socio-cultural disadvantages.”





**IF THERE IS ONE THING I HAVE  
LEARNED WHILE LISTENING TO  
THEIR BERNSTEIN'S MAMBO, IT IS  
THAT WHEN YOU DO THINGS WELL,  
WITH PASSION, WITH PLEASURE,  
WITHOUT THE FEAR OF NOT  
REACHING THE GOAL...MAGICALLY  
THE RESULTS COME –EACH AND  
EVERY TIME!**

**FRANCESCA SCHIAVONE**



Soon the results of this research will be made available, as necessary evidence to validate the experience of MusicaInGioco within a broader institutional context, in which Adelfia intends to create solid foundations of economic as well as political support, even beyond the city limits. The Municipality of Adelfia, taking the EMMCA as a model, is in fact trying to frame the practice of reticular didactics of MusicaInGioco into a wider strategy of social policy, in which music becomes a real instrument of work with vulnerable minors.

Currently, orchestral rehearsals continue online due to the ugly pandemic, which we are all coping and bravely managing to keep up with. But as long as it has been possible, I have enjoyed tiptoeing into the halls of the Palazzo and silently observing the young musicians during rehearsals. It was always impossible for me to distinguish a boy with autism from the hyperactive one or a child without any kind of diagnosis: the concrete and constant impression was that of attending the performance of an orchestra made up of young musicians committed, together, to producing beauty.

Such a well-defined vision stems not only from the reticular didactic approach, but also from the instinctive courage that these kids show putting themselves on the game, serenely facing the fear of making mistakes and not thinking in the least about the possibility of not being able to. In that moment they are there, focused on... "playing"!



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FILM NEGATIVE

FILM NEGATIVE

FILM NEGATIVE





# Move your brass!

**MUSICAL TRADITION AS  
AN INSTRUMENT OF  
SOCIAL CHANGE**

By Dagmara Szastak - Local coordinator and  
Marlena Hermanowicz - ULG Coordinator  
Katowice City of Gardens  
Photos by Tomasz Makula





#### ON THE MUSICAL HERITAGE OF KATOWICE AND UPPER SILESIA

The European Union has recently launched the Just Transition Mechanism (JTM) as a key tool to ensure that the transition towards a climate-neutral economy happens in a fair way, leaving no one behind. In the words of Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission, the JTM ensures “solidarity with the most affected regions in Europe, such as coal mining regions and others, to make sure the Green Deal gets everyone’s full support and has a chance to become a reality.” As a centre of such a region, Katowice has - in the past decades - started this transition from an area with industrial and mining vocation to a post- fossil economy. With this transformation, much of the cultural heritage that supported sense of identity, cohesion and community has increasingly been at risk of being lost forever.

The Katowice City of Gardens institution has joined force with the ONSTAGE transfer network to preserve the social functions of the city brass bands, by rejuvenating them and adapting them to the city’s identity of the 21st century, in line with the EMMCA’s Good practice goals. The Kultura Dęta project has been revamped through the work of the ULG and has focused on community building, by involving different cohorts, playing with the young and old in the Murcki and Załęże districts where access to music activities continue to be limited by social and infrastructural obstacles.



Although Katowice has undergone a significant transformation in recent years, as a result of which it has become an important centre of culture and science in Poland, the city is still associated with the coal industry – an industry which is slowly coming to an end.

At a time when the last mines are being phased out and the local communities are looking for lasting values, musical traditions seem to generate enormous communication potential, enabling dialogue and allowing local communities to retain close ties in a period of great uncertainty.

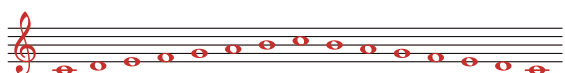
The revitalization of the brass band movement, the last link joining the two worlds – of before and after the city's transformation – is aimed at increasing the sense of cohesion in local communities, especially the Katowice districts of Murcki and Załęże, where brass bands have been deeply rooted in the local legacy and identity for a long time.

Maintaining the vitality of a tradition depends entirely on the capability to securing its successors, that is, children.

Music education of the youngest is consistent with the program assumptions of Katowice's membership in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (City of Music). The greatest challenge was the lack of a music education strategy which would cover public primary schools, constituting a significant element of the music ecosystem. In order to fill this gap, it was necessary to adapt and reuse proven and effective practices in the unique context of Katowice. The cooperation with the Transfer Network of URBACT Cities resulted in the possibility of exchanging knowledge with partners from Spain, Italy, Denmark, Portugal, the Czech Republic and France. Joint analysis of good practices and the support of URBACT experts have become a key element for the development and improvement of Katowice's own methodology.







**ONSTAGE, MUSIC SCHOOL  
FOR SOCIAL CHANGE AND  
THE KATOWICE BRASS  
CULTURE PROJECTS  
PROVIDED THE BASIC  
MATERIAL FOR CREATING  
KATOWICE'S OWN  
METHODOLOGY TO REVIVE  
THE BRASS BAND SOCIAL  
AND ARTISTIC TRADITION  
IN THE 21ST CENTURY.**

ONSTAGE and the Katowice Brass Culture projects provided the basic material for making it reality.

With the establishment of the URBACT Local Group in November 2018, the process of negotiation and dialogue began between educators, animators, artists, representatives of brass bands, NGOs and the local authorities of the city.

The effort of the ULG converged and merged with the project carried out by the Katowice City of Gardens entitled *Kultura Dęta* (Brass Band Culture) and together they have prepared the ground for the Music Education Strategy for the City of Katowice, while the work of the expert team will start in 2021. The expert team will include officials, KMO representatives, music pedagogues, local activists, teachers, local musicians and members of our ULG.





## Two very different districts with low access to music offer

In addition to increasing sensitivity to and competences in music, as well as improving discipline and academic performance, music can contribute to the integration of district communities and the promotion of citizenship.

After all, music is an important instrument for generating social transformation and counteracting exclusion. It creates a space for coming together, facilitating dialogue and transfer of values so that the identification with the local community, with its history and tradition, creates mutual understanding instead of escalating alienation.

Endeavours for restoring brass bands to their former social function and involving children and youth in the process were undertaken in primary schools in Murcki and Załęże in 2019, when educational and promotional activities including instructions to play instruments – trumpet and percussive instruments – were introduced.

Initially, they were carried out in the form of occasional guest activities, then as regular workshops, during school hours. This became possible thanks to the initiative of *Katowicki Orkiestrowy Uniwersytet Ludowy* (Orchestra of Folk University of Katowice), which received funding from the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage.

The choice of these schools was not fortuitous. A great problem in both districts remains the significant limitations to the cultural and educational offer.

This exclusion takes on various forms and degrees of severity, depending on the district. In Załęże, it is related to the poor condition of the infrastructure of places and institutions offering such access.

The community centre does not have its own seat and has been operating in one of the schools for several years. This affects the scale of the possible music education activities and impact on the students.

Murcki, on the other hand, is located at the outskirts of the city. Surrounded by a forest and a natural reserve, it is a small green enclave in which access to the cultural offer is confined to the community centre and the efforts of local activists, which doubtlessly reflect the potential of the district. The community centre does not have rooms to organise major events of cultural or other nature. Both the primary schools and the house of culture operate in districts struggling with social and economic problems affecting the quality of education children receive at and outside schools. Therefore, music has a chance to become a real answer to the difficulties faced by the children and their families.

Brass bands, which have been performing this function for many years in the past, seem a well-designed space for such encounters, with the potential for building mutual relations, dialogue, forging identity consensus and creating a new multi-generational community open to cooperation and mutual respect, responsible for its immediate environment.

Both in Załęże and in Murcki, there are many people – grandparents, parents, relatives – who used to play in coal mine company brass bands.

The hope is that, as persons endowed with knowledge, skills or simply positive reminiscences of their experience with brass bands, they will be willing and able to pass their passion on to children and will want to become involved in the establishment of school bands.

Załęże district Katowice - Wikipedia



Murcki District - Katowice - CC license







## THE HERITAGE OF BRASS BANDS: SOME HISTORY BACKGROUND

Brass bands have always cultivated values important to the locals, becoming their embodiment and representation. They united the community around the cause and accompanied the locals on a daily basis, as well as on special occasions. Invariably, they have greeted and bid farewells – to this day. Behind the festive presence and marches of brass bands, however, there's always been a consistent work at grassroots level, persistence, passion, organisation, interpersonal relations, politics and – finally, but perhaps most importantly – the values which held this multi-level structure together.

The first brass bands operating in Upper Silesia were of military origin. Army discipline and distinguished style have remained the characteristics of many bands to this day. Having completed military service, musicians often formed amateur bands gathered around local parishes or volunteer fire brigades.

It was the development of heavy industry – incidentally, associated with the military industry – which treated the society to a real flourish of brass bands. Almost every mine, steel or power plant had its own company band. Companies competed with each other, displaying their emblems on stages and streets. The better the band, the stronger the brand of the company was.

Employees of mines or steel mills played in these bands, amateur musicians who simply found joy and sense of community in performing. They were distinguished by their uniforms, banners, specially decorated instrument straps and stands, as well as by their sound. This features attracted professional musicians to appear in the bands, in order to raise the profile of the band. In the times of prosperity of the 1970s, nearly 200 bands were active in Upper Silesia, using both brass and woodwind instruments.

The amateur nature of the brass bands began to disappear in the 1980s, as a result of increased competition, which resulted in the professionalisation of the bands. Raising the technical level of performance came at the cost of the authenticity and the emotional bond between the musicians and the place where the band operated. Musicians who did not identify themselves with a particular community, occasionally clothed in a miner's or smelter's festive uniform and paraded, depending on what their commission was, during *Barbórka* (miner's holiday) or funeral celebrations. As a result, the vast majority of currently operating bands avail themselves of the services of professional musicians who, like actors, put on costumes and participate in musical performances. Few intergenerational bands today are still meaningful for their local community and carry out the functions assigned to them.

Together with the crisis of heavy industry in the 21st century, industrial plants and their emblems have begun to disappear. As a result, a relatively small number of surviving bands operate on a commercial or semi-commercial basis, coping with varying degree of success in today's market. Bands are forced to solicit commissions on their own, while the cost of maintaining the band (rehearsal room, uniforms, instruments, musicians' remuneration) often exceeds the organisers' capabilities.

There is also a shortage of young staff who would alleviate the burden resting on ageing bandmasters, forced to deal with all aspects of their band's activity. The bands cease to be viable as there are fewer and fewer enthusiasts who can play and can afford to do it for free. When there are no successors and interpreters to a tradition, ossification and final disappearance seem inevitable.



# Kultura Dęta (Brass Culture) as a catalyst of change

An important question arises here - what can we rescue today of the brass band tradition so as to preserve the element of authenticity, in order to maintain the community and values characterising the bands? That is where the project Kultura Dęta comes in. In 2018, the Katowice City of Gardens Cultural Institution decided to address the crisis of brass bands and develop solutions helping to preserve the vitality of this musical phenomenon. The Kultura Dęta project has become a genuine answer to the problems and needs of a waning brass-band culture as agents of identity and ultimately social cohesion in the city. The process of devising an international strategy for the band development is starting to take shape, to foster the progressive integration of communities living in some districts of Katowice.

The revitalisation of the brass band movement goes well above and beyond its musical value and intends to help strengthen the sense of community in the residents. This is why this initiative has been the perfect context in which Katowice has been able to adapt and reuse the main tenets of the EMMCA approach to music for social change. Among the activities undertaken are research studies, study visits to local bands, networking meetings with band representatives (BrassNet), meetings with international experts (European Brass Band Association), as well as national ones (Polish Brass Band Association). Other projects integrate local musicians and other musical genres (Brass Album), numerous workshops for children and young people with the participation of international partners, workshops for musicians writing for brass bands, for managers of brass bands, for musicians and bands developing their musical and stage skills. Concerts in city streets aimed at increasing the attractiveness of brass bands, music marathons, festivals (Move Your Brass) and, finally, long-term educational programs provide orchestras with natural successors to the region's musical heritage.

√ We have changed the way the bands are perceived by children and youth: bands do not have to be associated with an artistic “old hat”, a nostalgia for the communist period or a funeral procession

Through the international cooperation with L'Hospitalet and ONSTAGE partnering cities the concept of social cohesion – and change – have increasingly taken new shape and meaning in the Kultura Dęta program evolution, in spite of many recent drawbacks in the musical and cultural policy of the city of Katowice.

Kultura Dęta remains a unique project on the Polish national scale, held up by national and European experts as a model solution of safeguarding the musical heritage of Upper Silesia, ensuring its survival.

At the same time the project also provides for the renaissance of the brass bands' social and identity-making functions in society within a new urban / cultural framework which can make such heritage viable for sustainable urban development of the 21st century Katowice.

During the three short years of implementation, the project has reintroduced - in an electrifying way - the brass band value into the public debate.

“Through dozens of consistent actions, it was possible to convince the inhabitants of Upper Silesia that bands do not have to be associated with an artistic “old hat”, a nostalgia for the communist period or a funeral procession claims Marlena Hermanowicz- the curator of Kultura Dęta project.

“We have changed the way the bands are perceived by children and youth, who, having come into touch with the instruments, felt encouraged to learn to play them. We have developed a fashion for brass bands - a phenomenon unprecedented on such a scale in Poland for nearly 30 years.” – adds Marlena.

Thus, we go back to the roots – to the times when the amateur music movement responded to the problems of local communities, allowing to eliminate them and uphold the values important to the inhabitants.

**We act, we educate, we play! We come back to people...**



→ 13



FILM NEGATIVE

→ 13 A

→ 14



FILM NEGATIVE

→ 14 A



# The Melody

## Genomics, plants and

By Pierre Germoux  
Deputy Director Conservatory of Grigny

### THE VINEYARDS OF GRIGNY

*Before the construction of the large housing projects between 1967 and 1969, Grigny was a village. Vines were grown there (up to 50 hectares). The city intended to preserve a few plots of public vines to bear witness to this era, but did not have the means to maintain them, much to the displeasure of the association l'Orme du bout, whose mission was to preserve this local heritage. The Demo Action allows this living heritage, in its own way, to be active part of the social and ecological transitions of the city.*



# of the Proteins

music for social change

## **A-wop-bop-a-pea-mop-a-lop-bam-grapes! When music meets science**

With its own unique approach, the city of Grigny has been using music and performing arts to overcome the structural social, economic and cultural divisions that this town of about 30.000 inhabitants has been experiencing since the 1970s, when two large social housing projects, *la Grand Borne* and *Grigny 2* have transformed a tranquil rural village of 7000 into a crossroad of different cultures, oftentimes creating new social challenges, poverty and segregation. In the past ten years, the Municipality has been strongly focused on finding new strategies for tackling poverty, low educational attainment and social-economic hardship. The new programmes that the Conservatoire has been designing and offering to the local youth represent one of the tools of this long-term strategy against the so-called educational poverty where the whole urban environment, in all shapes and forms, becomes an open space of learning opportunity.

No doubts that the conservatoire of Grigny shares a lot in common with the EMMCA good practice, its values and educational and artistic approach. What has characterized the transfer journey of Grigny in the framework of ONSTAGE, is its thinking outside the box with the concept of melodies. It is a bold step, that of moving the art of music to the stage wings – at least in the case of the Proteodies workshops – just to place science at CenterStage. It takes some courage, especially for artists and musicians, to give up to the aesthetic pleasure of playing real instruments and listen to the odd sound artificially created by plant proteins. But there is a deeper meaning to this odd match, it's an innovative way to use the music metaphor to create a path of empowerment, passion for much needed STEM competences through creativity and artistic skills, the so-called STEAM approach. It's looking at urban sustainable development as the future wellbeing of the city and its inhabitants.





## **Grigny's urban policy: encouraging structural projects for the city and its citizens.**

When the city of Grigny, through its conservatory of music and dance, has joined the URBACT ONSTAGE transfer network in the summer of 2018, it had already come a long way in using its Music School for Social Change.

Edgar Solmi has been directing the conservatory of Grigny since 2013. He has been recruited by the city of Grigny because of his predisposition to carry out and implement cultural actions with a social and social vocation. Grigny, the poorest city in France, has about 30.000 inhabitants coming from nearly 90 nationalities on its urban area, demographically and historically it is also one of the youngest cities in France. These features are important to shape cultural activities that serve the general interest, build cohesion and respond to the challenges of this city.

In Grigny, nearly 50% of students leave the school system before the age of entry into high school and often without having obtained any diploma. Only 20% manage to obtain the Baccalauréat. This early dropout rate has an impact on the unemployment rate among 18-25 year olds, reaching up to 45%.

To address this situation, the city administration has developed a social policy aimed at its youth. This youth urban policy was affirmed in 2013, during the Grigny Education Conference, it has led to the implementation of the Great Educational Project of Grigny, which has served as a model for what, in 2018, has become the French "Educational City" label.

Within this framework, the city has implemented a cultural policy with a social and socializing added value, to raise awareness and get closer to different professional fields by using the arts as a support. And within this general policy, the Conservatory of Grigny has developed new, more inclusive, cohesive and innovative music and dance programmes. The ONSTAGE Transfer Network has offered the timely opportunity for the Conservatory of Grigny to try new approaches, inspired by the good practice of L'Hospitalet and the other partner cities, and facilitated by European Cooperation.

The Network has provided food for thought to boost the programme l'Ose à l'Ecole.



The “Tandem” programmes of EMMCA have inspired the Conservatoire to transpose, during school time, the socializing collective artistic classes already practiced as extracurricular activities.

Furthermore, as Edgar Solmi states, *“the participation in the teachers’ mobilities to L’Hospitalet and Aarhus have opened up to the possibility of transnational exchanges among the teachers of the cities of the network, thus allowing the exchange and the discovery of original practices.”*

Since 2017, the conservatory has been home to a FabLab (the FabricoLab) to raise awareness on woodcraft and electronics professions among young people.

A violin maker, recruited by the conservatory, and teachers from different disciplines run the innovation centre inside the Conservatory.

This innovation-minded part of the Conservatory had the ambition to develop a project mixing plants and music, taking advantage of the multiple skills of its staff in order to make young people aware of the professions of biology, ecology, environment and research, using music as a drawing power.

Like in the case of EMMCA, Grigny relies on an urban-gone-national policy with a social

cohesion aim embodied in the facility of “La Cité éducative.”

This strategic policy framework has allowed Grigny to implement the demo action of ONSTAGE - the project “Influencing the growth of plants through music” - as a curricular activity in collaboration with local schools.

The idea is that music as a concept can facilitate learning of STEM - biology, science and ecology - providing pupils with specific notions and vocabulary that can be reused throughout their school career.

The aim and the hope of the action is that - by using music as a socio-educational tool facilitating learning – children become more aware of these critical topics, and the method applied will nourish their ambition for vocational guidance, by becoming more open, at least mentally, to the field “of the possible”.

Furthermore, this action also aims to extend the outreach of the Conservatory in the city, since the project is implemented in a district of the city where the music school has not previously operated.



Under the “Educational City” label, Grigny has implemented a cultural policy with a social and socializing added value, to raise awareness raising and get closer to different professional fields by using the arts as a support





## At the crossroads of local history, education and research

The health crisis of 2020 pushed the conservatory to rethink the implementation of the transfer actions. The following pages reflect the implementation of the action mixing plants and music but also contribute to share the applied educational methodology and research.

Next, we look back at this action, from its genesis to its realization which - due to the health crisis - has taken place in two moments that have paradoxically contributed to its amplification.

The project had several components, notably epigenetic regulation of protein biosynthesis by scale resonance, or more simply put, the regulation of protein formation thanks to the sound of the proteins or *Proteodies*- the melody of the proteins.

In order to start the initiative, the conservatory contacted a local structure La Maison des Enfants et de la Nature.

### Finding real, sustainable solutions, to solve and not to shuffle problems

In 2018, the initial decision to implement the *Proteodies* initiative was made during a meeting of the local partnership, with the participation of elected officials of the city and stakeholders involved in it. The *Proteodies* – it was decided then - would work in two directions: the first was to be the consolidation of a pedagogical approach based on a scientific experiment on water stress resistance conducted on peas at the University of Cergy-Pontoise since 2015, and the second was the maintenance of municipal public vineyards, giving Grigny an impetus to become a "zero pesticides" city.

### An exploratory season for our demo action

Over the 2018-19 school year, the actions to raise awareness of themes linking music, nature, environment and science through the multifaceted concept of genomics have reached more than 300 people.

During this period, two 8th grade classes of the Pablo Neruda middle school had been involved in the project. The whole project was presented in October 2018 and was created by two educators, Frédéric Leleu, a teacher at the Pablo Neruda school and Pierre Gernioux of the Conservatory of Grigny.

This educational duo recalls the good practice of the Tandem of L'Hospitalet de Llobregat. Victor Prévost, a researcher in *Proteodies*, completed the project's team.

"In order to prepare the demo action, Nicholas, the FabricoLab's luthier, has been asked to realize the acoustic boxes allowing to phonically isolate the peas in the seeding bowls during the experiment," explained Pierre Gernioux, the Conservatory teacher, during one of the Transnational Meetings of ONSTAGE in 2019, "These boxes have been made in some workshops open to young unemployed and trainees of the sociolinguistic groups (PIAL), French as a foreign language, of the local Vocational Training Centre.

Some students of the violin maker joined these workshops, making this experience a real crossroad of encounters and amplifying socialization."





# Urban Engineering

During the summer 2019, more than thirty educational activities have been developed within this framework. These actions have been developed with limited means, with the support of local stakeholders, the living assets of Grigny. Since the first semester of 2019, several services and public structures have been involved in these small-scale initiatives.

Among them, the municipal cine-theatre service and the Sidney Bechet Cultural Centre, for documentary screenings, the Maison de Quartier, the District House of the historical centre of Grigny, to carry out outdoor environmental awareness raising actions, within the framework of "Festivillage".

The House of Children and Nature, *Maison des Enfants et de la Nature*, has been one the central places for the co-design of the project and hosting the workshops, both outside for the activities around the vineyards and on its premise for the re-designed demo action and for the replication of the experiment with the *Proteodies*.

Cecile Hussonnois, the ULG coordinator, explains "We adopted a distinct ULG strategy, meeting bilaterally or trilaterally in small groups and mobilizing only some of the actors of the URBACT Local Group at the time in order to prepare our demo action at best." Cecile also exemplifies the type of members involved in this "atomised" ULG strategy "We worked on its [the Demo] content with the District Pedagogical Advisor and the teachers at the Jean Moulin Elementary School of Grigny during 3 ULG meetings, from November 2019 to February 2020."

The initial demo action was about to start in May 2020. The health situation decided otherwise. This action was then rethought, and a facilitator has been trained in June 2020. In its initial version, it had concerned 4th and 5th grade mixed classes, in total 48 pupils. The re-designed version allowed 70 more children to benefit from it, spread over 8 sessions of 4 workshops over the whole summer period. The Demo has finally taken place in the framework of the summer plan of the city of Grigny and the national facilities "*Vacances and Colonies Apprenantes*," together with other actions proposed by the city, the conservatory and their partners. These measures, correlated to the *Cités Educatives*, have been developed to promote learning and acquisition of knowledge by pupils, to compensate for some of the effects of the pandemic."

## What is a « proteody »?

A proteody is a particular melody that stimulates or inhibits the production of a protein.

## How do we find the melody

### corresponding to a given protein?

For each protein, there are two proteodies: one for stimulation, the other for inhibition. Proteins are created in our cells and are made up of dozens and sometimes hundreds of amino acids put together. They are found in all living things (fauna, flora, humans).

Each amino acid has its own mass and frequency, according to the mathematical formula of Louis De Broglie.

It is sufficient to play these frequencies in the right order to obtain the stimulation or inhibition of a protein.

## What kind of knowledge does this discipline involve?

It is a discipline involving multidisciplinary knowledge in physics, biology and music. The process used is based on an equation of Louis De Broglie, Nobel Prize of physics in 1929 and is based on the wave-particle duality. Joel Sternheimer, the scientist who discovered the non-random organization of matter at the subatomic level is the inventor of this discipline called Genodics.







### The redesigned Demo action: Using music and (peas) culture for scientific knowledge and concepts!

#### **Objectives:**

- Acquire understanding of scientific (and musical!) vocabulary and notions that can be mobilized throughout the school career;
- To stimulate curiosity and interest in direct experimentation following a scientific protocol;
- To make children aware of the professions related to nature and sciences, using a scientific process and music as support;
- Meeting scientists and/or professionals.

#### **Creating an attractive framework for learning**

To devise a fun activity for the acquisition of knowledge during a vacation period means to rethink the preparation of each learning period. It is indeed a question of raising interest and enthusiasm, to compete with the leisure activities usually favoured by children.

#### **Placemaking ...**

Even before defining the content of such an action, it is necessary to create a place for it. In Grigny, the choice fell on the Maison des Enfants et de la Nature, a public municipal structure hosting leisure activities during the summer, but whose main activity consists of raising awareness on contemporary environmental issues among different audiences.

#### **... and timemaking**

In order to guarantee an optimal roll-out of the activities, the management of the conservatory and the Maison des Enfants et de la Nature decided to opt for short term formats, held during the mornings of the same week, shaping in this way a full pedagogical curriculum.

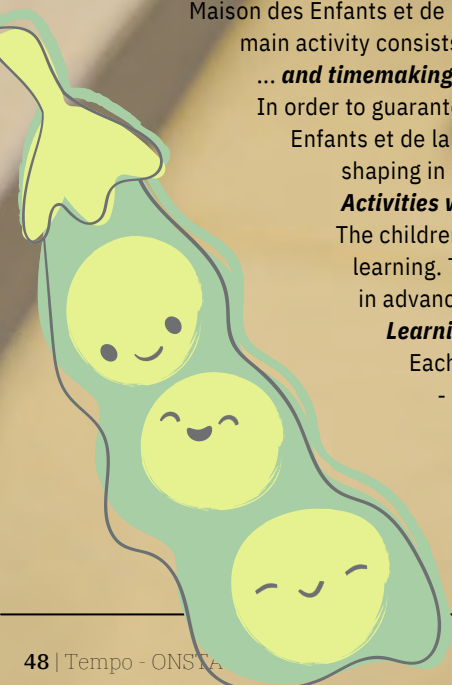
#### **Activities with a spatial and temporal framing**

The children benefited from 4 sessions of 2 hours made up of diversified pedagogical activities that facilitate learning. The activities took place in different spaces, both indoors and outdoors. Each activity was timed in advance, allowing the 8 hours of activities to be divided into 30 sessions, about 15 minutes per activity.

#### **Learning by doing**

Each two-hour session has been designed so that one or two periods of action, practice or reflection

- based on a variety of teaching aids can follow a session where children are taught the basics of science. Roll up, experience journals, cardboards, videos, time-laps, semi-cups which are small individual containers for planting seeds, acoustic boxes, interview of professionals researchers, visit of the public vineyards, personal boards/slates, alphabetical beads... no less than 23 activities and 25 educational techniques are used in sequence during the sessions.





## *Musical peas in a pod...*

**More than an innovative action, an integrated pedagogical approach with links to research, the national and international scene**

The project is both fun and concrete. For over one year it has been replicating the experiment carried out at the University of Cergy-Pontoise, which in September 2020 has been the subject of a scientific publication. The research was conducted by Victor Prévost and Pedro Ferrandiz of Génodics, Mathilde Hindié and Karine David of the ERRMECe laboratory of the University of Cergy-Pontoise, under the supervision of Professor Olivier Gallet (ERRMECe).

The activity has also had a strong local impact since it has been visited by the Prefect for Equal Opportunities of Essonne Alain Bucquet, accompanied by the Mayor of Grigny, Philippe Rio, the Regional Councillor Lamine Camara and several local elected officials and has received extensive press coverage. In order to promote the action beyond the city of Grigny, Edgar Solmi, Claudio Jara and Pierre Gernioux have also shared the experience as a good pedagogical practice during the training week dedicated to arts teachers, in September 2020,

at the Conservatoire à Rayonnement Départemental d'Evry-Courcouronnes. Later the same year, an article on the demo action has been published on the national portal of the Cité Educative, part of the Ville de Grigny.

The project is also mentioned in the context of an Escape Game created by the International Relations Department of Grand Paris Sud to promote the practice of foreign languages by the employees of the agglomeration community of Grand Paris Sud.

### **And finally...**

In spite of health restrictions, the Demo has been also replicated in January 2021, in its re-designed version, at the Jean Moulin elementary school, in the two classes with the teachers contacted before the pandemic.

This experience has been enriching for the participants, the citizens of Grigny and the students. Children, through a mix of music and science, have been able to acquire a basic understanding and reference points to address scientific subjects in school more serenely.

It is our hope that these workshops will make talents emerge, both scientific and musical ones, but only the future will tell us...!







# Starting (almost) from scratch

By Marta Costa  
Municipality of Valongo - ONSTAGE coordinator

Valongo, a small city in the outskirts of Porto, has been rebuilding its identity and sense of belonging for some time. The importance of culture in the city has been recognized as an important vehicle to this purpose. Traditional cultural expressions are, in fact, part of the personality of Valongo, together with important investments on sports.

Valongo features a vivacious cultural and recreational life sparked by volunteering NGOs. A growing focus on fostering new cultural expressions has emerged and the need for an integrated urban policy in this respect has

been surfacing in recent years. The ONSTAGE challenge has come at the right time. Using culture to promote school achievement of youngsters at risk of school failure or NEETs and their inclusion as well as their families has been proven to be a powerful approach. But when access to performing arts education is made more accessible and democratic, the whole community benefits from it. Our Mayor's motto "no children or youngster left behind" is well reflected in this project and strong political support has been present from the start.





## The engagement strategy...



Since the first moment, the Valongo team recognized the importance of a strong participatory process to define the Valongo journey in the ONSTAGE project. Not only did the URBACT method strongly require the Urbact Local Group (ULG) as a building block of the whole process, but the presence of different perspectives (educational, social, cultural) was considered fundamental for the project's success.

Júlia Mendes, responsible for the Educational Unit of the Municipality and ULG member, states: "The creation of the ULG was our first big task. An open invitation was sent to all local

NGOs, schools, and organisms with potential interest in the NEET topic."

Importantly, different departments of the Municipality were also invited. While the Education Department bears the overall responsibility for the project, the Departments of Culture, Social Affairs, and Youth also participate.

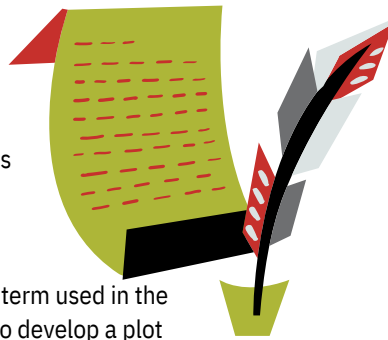
Julia recalls "An intense public meeting took place. People were careful to expose their opinions, surprise and sometimes confusion were the dominant emotions among local actors. Nevertheless, a positive atmosphere was felt in the room."

### VALONGO'S CANOVACCIO

Well before Design Thinking and other sophisticated forms of ideation, theatre used canvases and participatory methods to go... onstage.

Il *Canovaccio* (canvas) is the term used in the *Commedia Dell'Arte* theatre to develop a plot according to a basic outline and the characters of the story. When Valongo joined the ONSTAGE network, the city had just become part of the URBACT community, with its Good Practice of the "Living Library". Its urban "canovaccio" had some key words: inclusion, education, participation and youth, but the journey to transferring EMMCA's good practice would need a lot of collective thinking and action.

Valongo is one of the ONSTAGE cities that do not have a municipal music school, but rather works with several lively civil society organizations that deliver performing arts education. In this context, the adaptation of the



experience of L'Hospitalet has required to think back to 2005, when EMMCA was being designed and shaped to become a "mirror" of the city, after all Valongo has been reshaping its identity following structural changes in its economy for quite some time.

The URBACT participatory method- with its bottom-up and participatory approach – has provided a tool that EMMCA could not count on at the time of its establishment. The intense work of the ULG, with a lot of drama and mixed emotions narrated in this article, has painted this canovaccio with its characters - the cultural NGOs and the youth at risk of exclusion - or of becoming NEETs.

The transfer plan has rendered its scenes - the public school, the outdoor spaces of the city, other premises where arts are performed- and designed a plot. Finally, thanks to the vertical integration of the plan with the reform of the public education system in Portugal and to the political/financial endorsement of the Municipality, two schools in Valongo will see performing arts as curricular activities in the fall of 2021.





# The Transfer plan

Most of the stakeholders continued to come, news ones joined. Over time, a strong, engaged ULG, composed by the relevant local stakeholders related to the chosen policy challenge materialized.

The first and most challenging task was to produce a transfer plan, the great challenge of developing a roadmap for the next two years and the starting point of a new local urban development policy.

The Transfer Plan was a three-month task, strongly supported by the experience and know-how of ULG members. Non-formal education methodologies were selected because they provided participants an opportunity to clarify expectations, objectives, and even start to decide on final goals. A very motivated ULG group met on a regular basis (sometimes more than once a week), actively participating in every step of the way.

Alexandra Pacheco, representative of children and Youth at Risk services maintains “Our learning process started here:



**Our learning  
process started  
here:  
understanding the  
enormous amount  
of resources we  
had at hand and  
could be mobilized  
for the project.**



understanding the enormous amount of resources we had at hand and could be mobilized for the project.”

Nine intense meetings took place in that period. A sense of relief and job well done was established in the group but... What next? A sense of excitement and willingness to move along to something more practical emerged.

It was frequent to listen Arnaldo Costa, one of the ULG members say “We should move along and make things happen”.

Susana Bilber often commented about “the need to make a concrete project come out as soon as possible”.

It was indeed an intense phase and some apprehension about the capacity to move beyond the planning stage was evident.

Susana Constante Pereira, Valongo external expert and ULG coordinator, did a fantastic job of managing expectations and frustrations in many occasions.





## The search for answers...

The URBACT method is a very specific one: it gives time to think, plan, learn. It gives time to understand what we want to do and find tailor-made answers

The group had decided to work with youngsters at risk of becoming NEETs. This target group was not well known at local level; national indicators exist but local numbers of potential or likely to be NEETs and their profile was not known. For this reason, a needs assessment was carried out. It involved finding out the numbers, characteristics and needs of youngsters between 12 and 25 years old, living or studying in Valongo and that did not complete compulsory education. At the same time, they had to have at least one of the following characteristics have one or more school failures, be at risk of school failure due to absenteeism or learning difficulties, have a disciplinary action in school or legal action because of family reasons, be a school dropout not participating in alternative training or employment paths.

Schools and institutions that work with families of youngsters with such characteristics were contacted and 8 of them answered. A total of 27 social workers, psychologists and other professionals that work with these families were also involved.

The results of this investigation shed light on who these youngsters are in the area, and what are their needs. At the same time, the findings were discussed with a selected group of youngsters at risk of becoming NEETs, further lessons were learned, especially because of the interaction that was created.

Concurrently, a mapping of local cultural and sports NGOs took place. The goal was to identify the existing activities regarding theatre, dance, new circus, and music that targeted youngsters.

Visits to the ULG organizations and others working on NEETs related issues have been organized. Stakeholders could discuss the most relevant aspects of the activities and understand what each other were doing and how it was done.

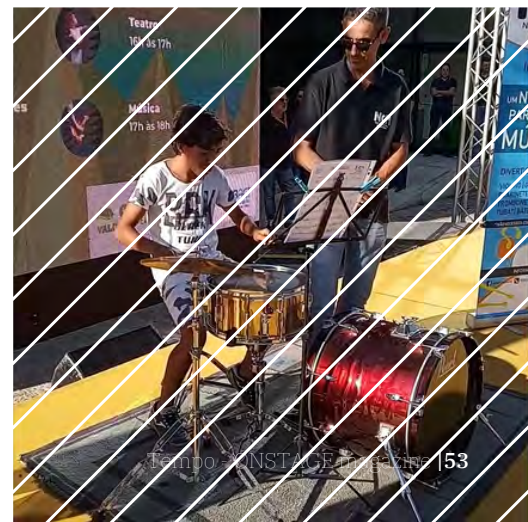
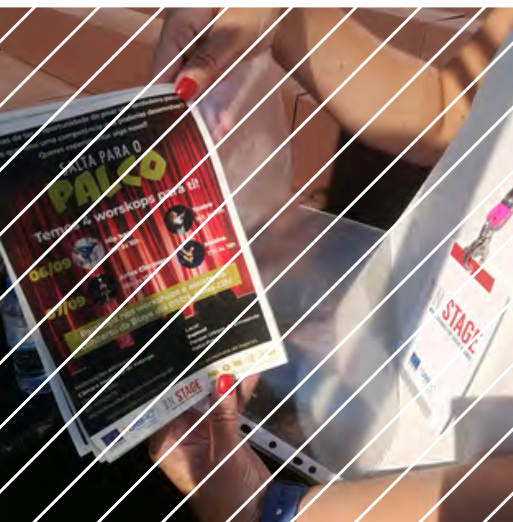
A demo action was also implemented. In the summer of 2019, Valongo organized experimental workshops in theatre, hip hop dance, circus performances, and classic music, organized by cultural organizations part of the ULG.

Open to participation of all sorts of youngsters, those at risk of becoming NEETs were also involved. This event was extremely useful for understanding what is more appealing to youth and what does not work at all. Different methodologies involving performing arts were tested. It was also possible to get feedback regarding the way the activities were implemented and what guidelines needed to be followed.

One of the youngsters, after being able to walk in stilts for the first time said: "When I decide to do something, I make it happen". A powerful insight from a youngster seemingly doomed to school failure and not enough recognition.

Other important aspects that came into view relate to the profile of practitioners working with this group and their needs. They stressed the need for extra support, for transport and negotiation skills with parents to foster autonomy of these children and youngsters, which can only be achieved by someone trustworthy.

Furthermore, the need to find external motivation to engage them in the activities, at least at an early stage, was also referred to as important. Many dimensions have become more obvious.





## ... (Continues)

### Experts have their say...

Four thematic public sessions were implemented. Experts from the academia, good practices of other territories and practitioners were invited to discuss with the ULG and whoever wanted to join the events.



Many questions were answered in this context, including the legal possibility of a solution to implement the ONSTAGE political proposal within the new “curricular flexibility” of schools, something that was part of the education national reform in 2019, and that not many people had heard about at the time.

During the pandemic, these activities continued, and the ULG could meet with national and international experts on how to use artistic practices to discuss methodologies and educational approaches. Enric d’Aragones, ULG coordinator and pedagogical coordinator of EMMCA also participated.

### The political proposal

A draft political proposal taking stock of all the information gathered in the process was discussed by the ULG and further elaborated by a small team, according to the group’s indications. This has represented the final and most important step in the transfer process from L’Hospitalet to Valongo. The proposal was submitted to the mayor in early 2021, “We are pleased to announce that a local, idiosyncratic, curricular response to students at risk will be implemented in the next school year.” reveals Susana Constante Pereira, ULG coordinator.

EMMCA’s support and experience have been fundamental at this stage. Although Valongo has little in common with L’Hospitalet, the challenges that the city faced in the past seemed very similar to the one’s Valongo is dealing with in this phase of the transfer process.

 **VALONGO CAN COUNT ON A ULG, WHICH, ONCE AGAIN, IS A FUNDAMENTAL RESOURCE FOR THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE FUTURE RESPONSE: A COMMUNITY BASED, TAILOR-MADE PROJECT BECOMES A STRONG ASSET.** 







*How did it go?*

**LOOKING BACK, IT SEEMS  
A SMOOTH PROCESS.  
IT WASN'T.**

First, despite the willingness of the local government to consult on this (and other urban issues), an overwhelming sense of powerlessness is still felt by many citizens about influencing or changing anything.

People are not apathetic, they do care about issues, but they understand that caring is not enough to change things, and they do not have faith in the existing participatory structures as sufficient to make a difference. Statements such as “This is all very beautiful, but nothing ever changes. We are just wasting our time.” were not infrequent.

Second, consultation fatigue erodes enthusiasm. The transfer started in 2019. We are now in 2021 and the results will be evident only during the 2021-2022 school year. The enormous investment in time made by the ULG members has become more and more apparent as time passed by. The ability to motivate, involve, encourage were challenged by frustration, pandemic setting, tight schedules, other priorities, and – according to

some - unnecessary discussion

The choice of an open, inclusive participatory process, where anyone who wanted could join at any moment of the process, and the continuous integration of new elements demanded a continuous rethinking about what the transfer was about, of the rules, of the target audience, objectives... Tiredness was palpable in the members that participated from the beginning and even at the end - for some of them - the process does not look like fully owned.

But, in the end, the final outcome is much more ambitious than any of us could have imagined over two years ago! We are aiming at an integrated educational, cultural, and inclusive curricular policy that targets youth at risk living in a run-down urban area, wanting to promote change in individuals, communities, and urban settings. This transfer approach is embedded in local traditions of various active performing arts activities run by NGOs, but it also intends to transform the city and its identity.



IT'S A TALE ABOUT GETTING  
LOST FROM YOURSELF,  
CONNECTIONS AND THE  
WORLD,  
BUT IT'S ALSO A TALE OF  
HOW WE CAN THROW OUT A  
LIFELINE TO THE ONES IN  
NEED  
AND TOGETHER CREATE  
COMMON STORY, TO  
REASSEMBLE AGAIN.



**MUST BE ... AN AESTHETIC TALE  
OF MODERNITY AT THE TIME OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.**

It all starts with the classic sighting of a bottle in the middle of a rough sea, containing a message.

The sea is the one painted with artistic strokes at the Musikskole of Aarhus, the story is the multisensorial one plotted by a team of educators and artists, among them, the ULG of ONSTAGE.

Inspired by the EMMCA's continuous determination to reflect the diversity of the city, the Demo action installed and performed in Aarhus as part of its transfer journey is the result of an intricate interconnection between vertical and horizontal axes of urban policy making for inclusion and open cultural capabilities.

In a developing urban context such as the city of Aarhus, which has been European Capital of Culture in 2017 and grows every year of about 5.000 inhabitants coming from all over the world and walks of life, music plays its part- and not a soloist one - in urban policy for integrated and sustainable development.

The story in the story narrated by Gunnild De Ridder shows how cooperation with other municipal departments and creative mindsets can help children appreciate their feelings, support each other, create sense of belonging and empowerment by mixing arts and pedagogical approaches on the storyline.

It is of course a "sneak peek" of the education offered by the Music School, so it may convince more kids from the public schools involved in the MUST program to enroll in the regular music classes, but by far it remains an outreach program rather than anything else. It shows how performing arts play a far deeper meaning in life – they help us to live better.

This approach – again inspired by the EMMCA functional use of performing arts for social cohesion – uses the artistic means and music education to support identity -making and develop resilience in urban diverse younger generations.



# Aarhus' Message to the Future

by Gunnild De Ridder - Aarhus Music School

## An innovative approach to music for social change

The ONSTAGE project inspired the Aarhus Music School to develop a team-based playful interaction, focusing on giving children a positive and inclusive first encounter with music, when starting school. Music that activates children's awareness of sound and music by focusing on 5- to 6-year-old children's playful approach to learning.

We also wanted to integrate the activities with the most important tasks and priorities of the schoolteachers, and therefore decided to shorten the music course to support instead the creation of a strong and safe learning community. After some research, we decided to build a demo action based on storytelling and gamification, with an open task that the children in the group were to explore and solve together. So, we created a storyline about helping each other when someone feels lost and troubled. This storyline has become the foundation of our 5-week intercultural music course, that is about to take place in all schools, with the first graders as primary recipients.

We named the story '**Message to the future**' and decided to name the course '**Learning to live.**'

The story starts with the arrival of a message in a bottle. An SOS. And the task for the school children together is to find out who the plea for help comes from, and how they can help.

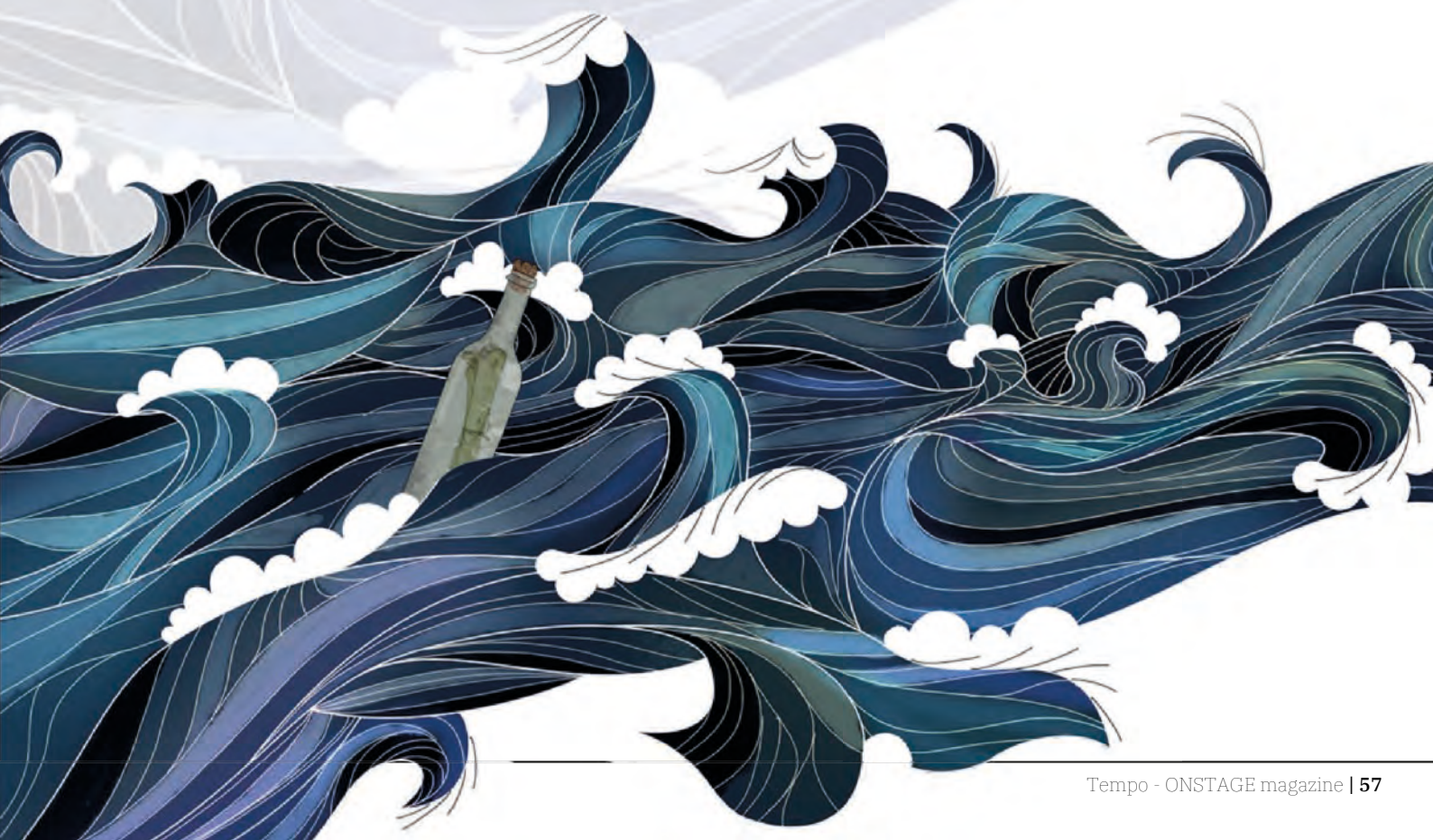
The course starts with the school children visiting the music school, followed by weekly visits at the school, for 4 weeks.

The course is facilitated by two musicians from the music school, that also take up the role of storytellers, because the story gives life to all the musical tasks with which the children interact.

It's built in *three steps*.

First, at the Music School the children participate in a 3-hour session where they create the sound, the music and sing the song that expresses the story. As a first step we understand our task: helping the fictional children that are suffering from loneliness and abandonment.

The next step is to watch how they accept our help and help them moving on. As a last step, we support the two children, on their travel towards taking part in life and the community again.





The course starts at the music school where the children get to experience and explore the entire story, played out as an interactive performance staged by scenery, puppetry, lights, projections, and different instruments from all over the world.

The week after the visit at the music school, the musicians visit the children in the classroom. We do so, once a week, for 4 weeks.

During these four weeks we chronologically dive into the different parts of the story, for further exploration of the themes and the related music and songs.

Our goal with this new approach is to make music relevant and accessible for all children.

With this journey, we also wish to contribute to all the children's experience of a safe start at school, where they feel enabled to express themselves in the new community, and capable of reaching out and helping each other.

Our hope is also that this safe and joyful experience with music, singing and dance will open the door for them to our after-school music activities.

This short music course for all school starters is therefore also an invitation to join in music activities at their local school in their spare time.

Music activities that require no registration or payment.

#### **Message to the future and the course**

In the development of this activity, a focus has been on accessibility and creating coherence in the music activities. We have therefore developed a set of key principles for the methods, materials and approach together with Aarhus Municipal Children and Youth department.

**OUR GOAL WITH THIS NEW  
APPROACH IS TO MAKE  
MUSIC RELEVANT AND  
ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL  
CHILDREN.**



**Learning to live also serve as a  
community resource, as the whole  
school, its neighborhood and city  
of Aarhus, are offered a common  
story, about helping and  
supporting each other, and a  
shared treasure box of  
intercultural songs and easily  
accessible music.**





# Music + Nest = Must



The MUST principles are the foundation for our *Learning to live* course, which has been developed as a Demo action in the framework of ONSTAGE.

We visualize each step. We chronologically follow the storyline, and each activity is connected to the place and the characters in the story. Each place and all characters have their own identity, based on a feeling visualized by distinct color, geometric shape, and texture, as key element for inclusion is also the ability to communicate to all senses. Therefore, all instruments are also chosen to give a sensory tactile experience, as well as a relevant sound in relation to the story.

Rather than focusing on performance, the essence of the course is creativity.

We express the story together. Together we explore how the fictional boy and girl feel in different situations.

Their feelings become visible and understandable, as they are coming to life as different puppet characters. The puppets are built upon an instrument that has a relevant sound.

The schoolchildren are helping the two fictional children to deal with their feelings, by helping to express them in a way that helps them go forward, instead of holding them back, on their travel back to the community.

Another key principle is that all activities take place with the children forming a circle.

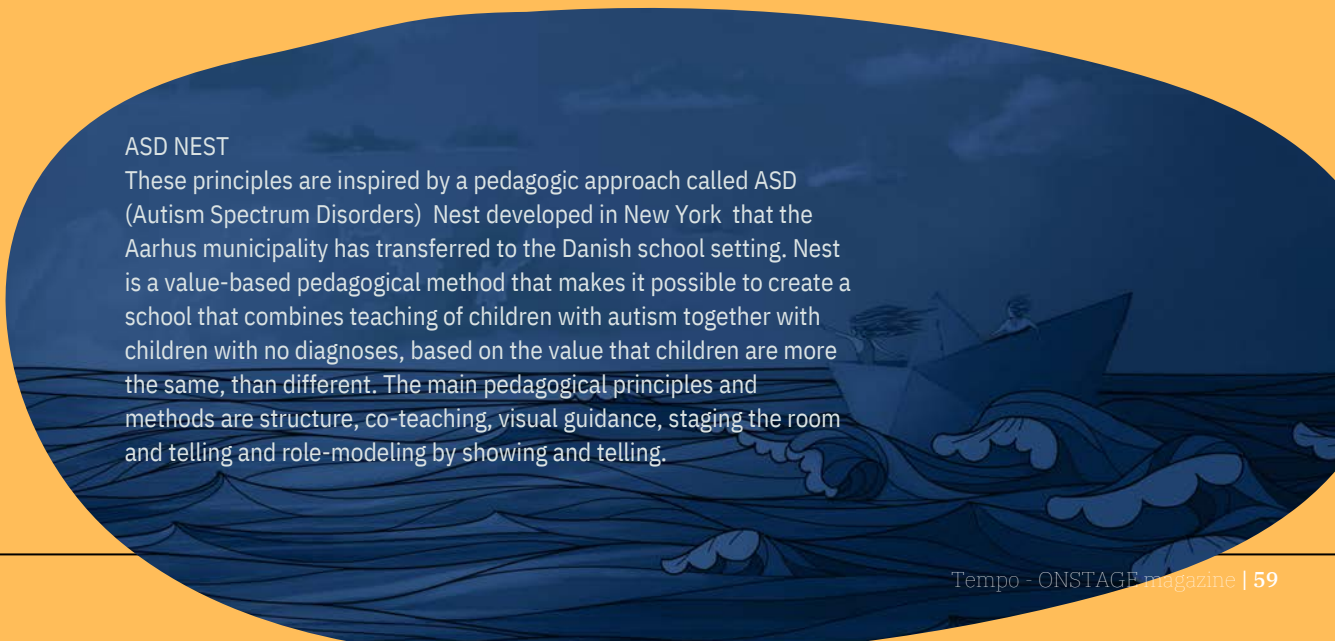
The circle creates a space where the key storytelling objects can be placed in the center of attention. The circle also provides the space for children to see each other and therefore to interact as a group.

To make sure that teachers, children and their parents have the chance to keep exploring the story, sing the songs and remember the dance steps, we are making everything available on the website:

**[Flaskeposttilfremtiden.dk](http://Flaskeposttilfremtiden.dk)**

## ASD NEST

These principles are inspired by a pedagogic approach called ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorders) Nest developed in New York that the Aarhus municipality has transferred to the Danish school setting. Nest is a value-based pedagogical method that makes it possible to create a school that combines teaching of children with autism together with children with no diagnoses, based on the value that children are more the same, than different. The main pedagogical principles and methods are structure, co-teaching, visual guidance, staging the room and telling and role-modeling by showing and telling.





# Moments of the Demo Action

The course is a multi-artistic experience. The movement in the body, our voices, the staging, and the story everything contributes to set the scene for self-expression.

We sense the mood in the calm movements of the Lullaby, the song of Abandonment, and the joy when we dance the celebration dance, as the two fictional children, finally arrive at our place.

We feel the ocean,  
as we make waves to the  
Song of the sea.

It's both serious and playful, sometimes new nuances are added, and depths directly connected to life are revealed.

Like when, during one of the sessions, a boy, just immigrated to Denmark from Syria, sat holding out the sea drum. With his movements, he controlled the waves of the sea on which the two children steered their little paper boat. Without a word, everybody in the room understood the importance of this moment. That this journey, at that exact moment, was his journey.

Never before has a sea drum created such small ripples on the surface of the sea, as with this boy's gentle moves, and never before has the paper-boat with the two porcelain dolls on board, sailed so carefully ashore. This caution persisted and filled the room with a deep, warm feeling, activated by the intuitive care of this responsive group.

But the magic feeling of cohesion almost always appears when we carefully sneak towards the boat, together with the main characters Luck and Fortuna, to avoid waking up Fear.



Everyone walking as quiet and small as mice.

An intense and serious moment of common understanding of how overwhelming Fear can be, if awakened from its sleep.

At the opposite end of this quiet task, the rhythmical stomping and shouting is the energetic contrast to express the feeling of Anger.

Anger is an expression that sets free of all frustration, BUT without hitting or kicking, just expressing the power of this feeling as a partway for change. And then Anger turns into Willpower, and together with Luck and Fortuna and Willpower we all shout:

**We want life back!**

And so, what seemed to be a fate of loneliness and despair, has turned into a new possibility to feel safe and at home.

Body expressions, dance and movements, are as well as the music and the songs, and everything else in the concept, are inspired by cultural expressions from different parts of the world.

We integrate both classical traditions, and various folk dances, as well as elements inspired by popular culture.

**The goal is, for all children, regardless of cultural or social background, to feel “seen and represented”.**

Also, it means for us all to experience that the global cultural heritage can offer everyone a sea of possibilities to express who we are. At the same time, we intuitively understand, that all expressions were created for reaching out to each other, to confirm shared experiences, feelings and thoughts.





**THE COVID  
HAS ALSO MADE  
THE STORY.  
IT ALSO HAS SHOWN  
HOW TO HELP PEOPLE  
ELABORATE ON THE  
FEELINGS OF FEAR AND  
LONELINESS THAT WE  
ALL HAVE EXPERIENCED  
DURING THE  
LOCKDOWN.**



For an activity whose goal is to connect through music, this has been a challenging time. We were forced to adapt in many ways, shifting towards a digital and virtual online reality.

This, however, has given one more reason for working more as a team. We have produced a lot of digital learning materials, with access to each other's approaches on how to work with different music connected to the Message to the future story.

Online, we shared ideas on how to work with the story, and we have developed a positive environment giving feedback and ideas and creating together the different steps of the story.

It's a story on how to rekindle hope when it's lost. To rediscover the feeling of coherence, despite a long time of isolation and distance. It's therefore also a story of increased relevance.

A story that is now a framework for children and young people to express themselves about the separations and insecurity that the COVID causes, and together reexplore and rediscover dreams and joys.

We fully believe that the course "Learning to live" can become a relevant new approach to make music and singing a part of all children's way to express themselves on the things that matter to them in life. Daring to include in this experience all the different nuances of life: worries, grief, difficulties as well as the aspects that bring joy and hope.

The approach will be further developed, supported by both the Danish Ministry of Culture and Aarhus' Local Authority. This will involve multiple courses and bigger performances made and performed by the children at the Music school and other Art schools.

We also wish to keep cooperating and developing this method with our new URBACT colleagues, as well as former European partners and we are therefore applying Erasmus+ funding for further European development.

**This is our message to the future.**



# ON STAGE

MUSIC SCHOOLS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE





# Curtain call

By Sandra Rainero  
ONSTAGE Transfer Network Expert

(Enters)

In cities around Europe, we've all become familiar with the Zeitgeist of Agenda 2030's Sustainable Development Goals as interconnected social, economic and environmental domains of sustainability toward which – among other policy levels – the European Urban Agenda also contributes. More and more, while finding avenues for the achievement of the UN Goals in urban strategies, another dimension appears as crucial (and transversal) as all the others: the cultural one.

When cities design and apply measures for integrated and sustainable urban development, they sometimes underestimate the structural force of the invisible blocks our cities are built upon: the cultural manifestations, the arts and all other forms of self and collective expression that create identity and shape communities as much as roads, buildings and squares do.

During the long year of pandemic, we all have seen how fragile these unnoticed beams and bricks are, we all pine for and build our lives around these elements, we have painfully missed the “insubstantial”.

All the world's a stage and – with diversified narratives and a variety of transfer approaches and strategies – each ONSTAGE city has recognized music and performing arts as aesthetic tools that bring people together and echo the genius loci of each city.

Maybe, for the EMMCA's of L'Hospitalet, the road taken by some of the cities to adapt and transfer their Good Practice has unexpectedly turned into something very different. The way the other ONSTAGE cities have interpreted and transferred this 15-year old public education service, picking up specific elements and reshaping the original practice – and the underpinning urban policy that propelled it – has probably differed from L'Hospitalet's transfer vision.

It's safe to say, however, that the sense-making process reached through the ONSTAGE transnational and local transfer activities, the values, the rights-based approach and the principles of inclusive arts education have been brought to new levels and meanings by the transfer journey, with good prospects to become structural in most of the involved cities.

After all, without surprising moments and deeds, what good of a show would it have been?  
(Deep Bow and out)





# ON STAGE

MUSIC SCHOOLS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

ESCOLA MUNICIPAL  
**EMMCA**  
DE MÚSICA  
CENTRE DE LES ARTS



Ajuntament de L'Hospitalet



KATOWICE  
Miasto Ogrodów  
International City of Gardens



VILLE POUR LA PAIX



Grand Paris Sud  
Grand Sud de la Région Île-de-France



European Union  
European Regional Development Fund



COMUNE DI  
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