



**COMMON
EUROPEAN
REPORT**

Focus Group



PARTNERS

ROMANIA



IRELAND

DENMARK



ITALY

GREECE



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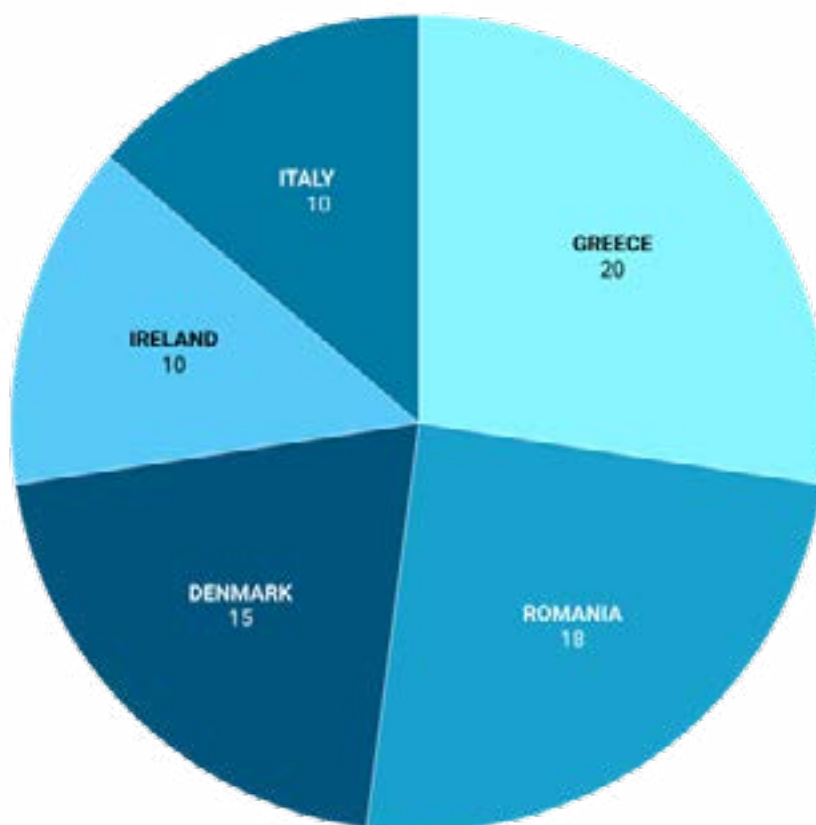
INTRODUCTION



Due to the different sanitary measures on Covid-19 in each country, the partners decided to conduct the focus group either online or face-to-face. Theoretical highschool "Grigore Moisil" and CPIP from Timsoara (Romania), CEIPES from Italy, along with Smart Umbrella and Directorate of Primary Education of Western Thessaloniki from Greece organized the focus group online. De La Salle College and I & F Education from Ireland, and BrainLog from Denmark did it face-to-face.

N° of participants in each country

GREECE ROMANIA DENMARK IRELAND ITALY



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Even if three of the events were held online, the participation was **active** and revealed as a valuable moment of **exchange** and **sharing**. The participants involved created a very heterogeneous group in each country.



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QUESTIONS POSED

1. To what extent do you agree with the final list of 12 traditional stories selected?

2. To what extent do you consider important the application of traditional values through the use of improvisation theatre techniques for students?

3. Will you modify the final list of stories?

4. Do you consider that students should develop these techniques to improve their personal skills and sense of inclusion?

5. Do you consider that teachers in general know how to advise/transmit these values through the means of improvisation techniques?

6. In your opinion what are the most common issues facing students in the classroom/school context?

7. Do you think that traditional values can help as a base for creativity in the cognitive, social and emotional development of students in the face of complex and traumatic life situations?



1.

To what extent do you agree with the final list of 12 traditional stories?



The experts concluded that the list of traditional or contemporary stories should contain, in a small amount, some **national traditional stories**, motivated by the fact that some of the stories listed are hardly known in our country. So the final stories must be well known in order to build instantly on a character and present it to the public.

Some teachers mentioned that some of the stories were a bit childish for the age group they deal with in secondary school. However, up to age 12 it seemed fine. Suggestions were made along the lines of grabbing teenagers' attention by perhaps using other type of media, such as **computer games and consoles**.



The participants found that it might benefit from improvement because of the high number of fairy tales, and especially fairy tales that had been homogenized in films by Disney. Therefore, the suggestions proposed by the focus group were more **modern or diverse sources** to be included.

Most of the participants agreed on the great potential represented by J.K. Rowling's novel: **Harry Potter**. The story, as it is a modern story with which the young people are familiar, it could arouse more interest. In addition, the figure of Hermione triggered a fruitful debate to represent the heroine who carries out her ideas in a male world.



Participants expressed the view that some of the stories included in the final list do not display the **expected values** in a clear way. So, they thought it would be difficult for children to perceive some values through these stories. Analyzing the list, they expressed their opinion to remove some of them and add stories that are more child friendly.



2.

To what extent do you consider important the application of traditional values through the use of improvisation theatre techniques for students?



The experts considered it **very important**. Indeed, many of them used theatrical techniques as teaching method. Also, they pointed out that the theatre helps developing a lot of skills, such as better speaking, good vocabulary, respect for others and collaboration skills.



The participants leaned towards that it is or could be **important**, as a tool for working with traditional “Human values” or other kinds of values.



Teachers thought that it was **key** and an **innovative** way to convey values that are positive and reachable for students and are looking forward to implementing the list of values and getting students to come up with stories using their imagination and creativity.



Teachers answered unanimously **positive**. They specifically mentioned that daily lessons is an improvisation in Greece and teachers often use this technique to create a more enjoyable and effective learning environment skills.



Participants considered it **fundamental** to the students. Indeed, the general opinion emerged was that the list of 20 values can and should be applied and assimilated both through the dramatisation of the stories and group work.



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3.

Will you modify the final list of stories selected?



The experts advise us to consider the number of characters in the story, so that as many children as possible will participate in a play. Experts also think that we could add a traditional story from every partner's country, because along with the **national traditional story** comes a cultural context and background.

The teachers mentioned that any stories will actually do the job, as the idea is to show how **universal stories** wished to convey positive and powerful messages not only for children but for everyone regardless of age.



The Danish experts suggest that it would be more efficient if there is room for modification before implementation to account for the local place, grade, or potential inclusion of **indigenous myths**.

Some of the participants expressed doubts about Cinderella and suggested a feminist remodeling of it. They also underlined the importance of the value of the **respect of the environment** and suggested to include in the list also "Pocahontas".

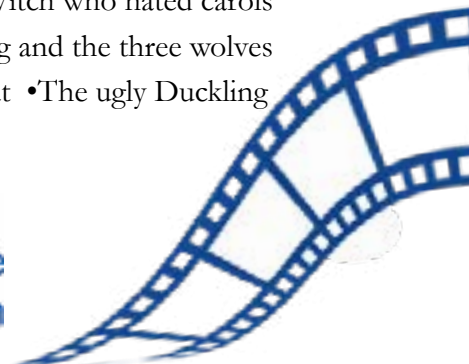


While they largely agreed with the final list, made proposals for changes. The stories suggested by the teachers were the following:

- Notre Dame
- The myths of Aesop
- The lord of Egypt
- The Witch who hated carols
- The scarecrow's dream
- The pig and the three wolves
- The last black Cat
- The ugly Duckling



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4.

Do you consider that students should develop these techniques to improve their personal skills and sense of inclusion?



Absolutely yes. As teenage is a difficult process, with many ups and downs, theatre could be a form of **discovering yourself**. They will feel useful, for some of them the theatre could represent a real future career, since we can discover real talents and artists.



The respondents leaned towards being **critical** and needing **further information** about whether it had the intended effects. While role playing and play in another's reality can be beneficial for some students' experience of sympathy, theater and improvisation can be restricting for others.



The answer was yes. It was also made clear that teachers and moderators will still have to do a bit of work to make sure that they help inclusion of students. I thought that perhaps girls will take to these techniques better and boys will need a bit more **encouragement**.



They believe improvisation techniques work beneficially for the development of children's personal skills but the issue of integration was addressed as the teachers stated that **inclusion** as a concept is not understandable for children as well as the ways in which it is achieved in each country.



The participants considered those techniques to be fundamental tools for the personal, **cognitive and emotional development** of the students. .



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5.

Do you consider that teachers in general know how to advise/transmit these values through the means of improvisation techniques?



Usually, in schools, teachers know the method and use it, but we all could use good advice regarding the theatrical improvisation, so a **helping guide** is necessary in order to achieve the goal of transmitting the traditional value.

Not all teachers saw themselves as taking an active role in promoting and using these techniques. However, they remarked on the **openness to learning** these techniques as they see the real value behind what the techniques want to achieve with students.



The participants believed that there was a large portion of teachers that did not have the knowledge and skills required. So teachers would need **courses** or another kind of proper introduction to the material.

From one side, some affirmed the necessity to calibrate the workshops according to the students' personalities, assigning roles that reflected their personalities. From the other side, others stated that it would be more beneficial to **assign roles within the stories** that were different to the students' personalities, to experience empathy.



Greek teachers love theatre very much and are knowledgeable about it. They know how to transfer these techniques into the classroom as well as how to pass it on to children.



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6.

In your opinion what are the most common issues facing students in the classroom/school context?



**INCLUSIVE
iMPRO THEATRE**



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7.

Do you think that traditional values can help as a base for creativity in the cognitive, social and emotional development of students in the face of complex and traumatic life situations?



Reminding the traditional values will help in the cognitive, social and emotional development of students, especially in teenage when students face difficulties such as depression, violence, peer pressure, academic problems. Talking openly with the students about the traditional values listed is one of the actions suggested.



Danish teachers had a positive discussion towards this inclusion, but also felt it was already being through different means in the education system in Denmark



Traditional values are a great vehicle that can help the complex and traumatic situations of children through creativity in theatre. Some teachers mentioned that making the stories themselves is a great way for children to internalise the values and make them their own.



It is obvious that both the technique of improvisation and the traditional values that are projected can help children overcome difficult experiences. Through these values children will be helped to overcome the issues that may arise in the various phases of his personal life and not only.

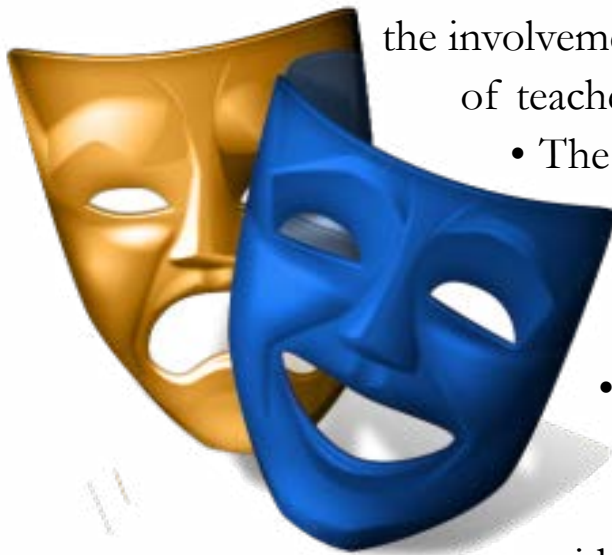


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CONCLUSIONS



- Theatrical improvisation used as method in classroom will be very helpful for the student's development.
- The method will make students discover new skills, as they will participate as actors, as costume makers, directors or simply as audience, and the new roles will help them elevate their self-esteem and accept who they are.



- The discussion was very constructive and the involvement of teachers very active.
- The stories portray and possess key values that are worth sharing and passing on to our young people.
- The focus group generated value among the participants, who accepted the project's ideas well and entered into the dimension of implementation.
- Teachers suggested the removal of some stories
- The improvisation techniques seem to be an innovative and valid method for the personal, emotional and cognitive development of students, taking into close consideration their personalities, age groups and the values intended to convey, arousing their interest and ensuring their well-being, while also providing them with the essential tools to deal with everyday problems.

