

Activity 4.2 Transnational Piloting Training LTTA September Berlin: Activities' reporting

On the 17th to 19th of September, CRN hosted a Learning, Teaching and Training Activities (LTTA) in Berlin. COPE is a EU-funded project aiming to prepare non-formal education in Europe for traumatised learners. It gathers the following partner organisations : Comparative Research Network (CRN) from Germany, University of Zagreb in Croatia, UNAEDI (Ukraine), Stowarzyszenie Na Drodze Ekspresji (SNDE, Poland), and the Istituto dell'Approccio Centrato sulla Persona (IACP, Italy).

This training allowed the team partners to have the transnational piloting training with some testing of different methods regarding trauma awareness and a review to the progress of the ongoing tasks and deliverables.

More importantly the training aimed at defining and refining the online course and online platform of the project.

The main axes of the LTTA revolve around, first, testing the online course created for the project ; then, participating in an Instant Theater workshop curated by local activist Anna Krenz ; and finally, reviewing the online COPE platform. It was also further enriched by cultural visits linked to trauma in Berlin.

1. Online course

The first module of the training was focused around the online course created as part of the COPE project. This course aims to provide tools and knowledge on trauma and Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) to non-formal educators.

During the training, a team of experts, from psychotherapists to social workers coming from the partner organisations, reviewed this online course and provided insights on the materials that were presented to them.

The training course aims at giving knowledge for non-formal adult educators and volunteers, using situational simulations to equip them with the skills needed to handle critical situations.

Throughout the course, educators immerse themselves in interactive lessons, stimulating case studies and practical exercises designed to strengthen their understanding and application of key concepts. Upon completion, the goal is to be equipped not only with a solid theoretical understanding, but also with the confidence and ability to tackle real-world challenges.

The course is divided into five modules and three additional ones.

Module 1 : Concepts of trauma.

Module 2 : Signs and symptoms of trauma.

The first two modules serve as an introduction to trauma and Trauma-Informed Care by providing definitions and framework. They are also designed to provide resources and test their pre-existing knowledge on the topic.

Module 3 : Can we identify trauma in a session ?

According to the feedback received, the name of this module has been changed from “can we identify trauma in the classroom?” to the term “session”, thus recentring the target to more informal contexts.

Module 4 : Creating safe learning spaces.

Module 5 : Self-care for non-formal educators.

The modules three to five aim to identify and address trauma and traumatic responses. Through practice-based activities, the goal is to develop decision-making skills for recognizing and responding to trauma in a classroom setting. This involves creating safe-spaces for trauma survivors and trauma-informed organisations by embedding principles of safety, trust, transparency and empowerment in a systemic way, within the organisation. Additionally, module five highlights the equally important setting of boundaries for the educator through Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT).

Module 6 : Support.

Module 7 : Cooperation and reciprocity.

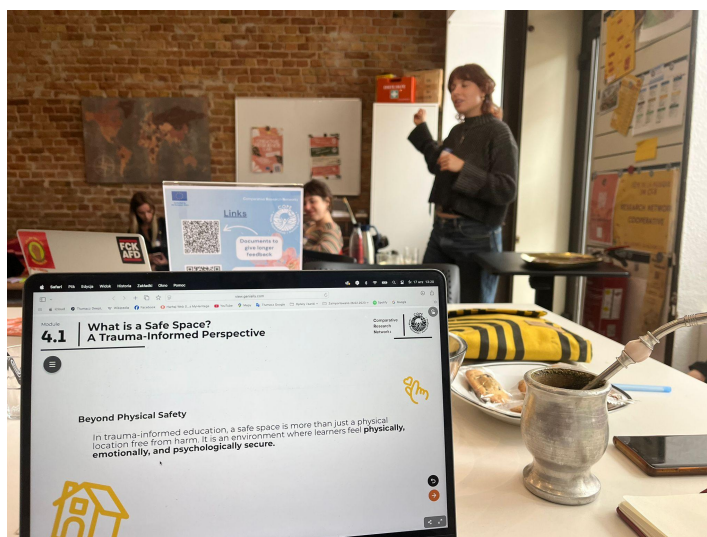
Module 8 : Empowerment and agency.

The last three additional modules serve as situation-based exercises to confirm what has been learned before and explore supplementary methods, such as trauma-aware means of communication.

The partners were divided in three different groups that each tested two or three of the modules. Each team had two hours to test and review the assigned module. The session was followed by a thirty minute exchange of feedback between the groups.

This allowed us to collect feedback on both the content and the format of the course. The main outputs highlighted the quality of the course's design and interactivity. Moreover, the content was deemed sufficiently educational and didactic.

However, criticism arose regarding the use of certain vocabulary in the course in some occasions, misadapted to the topics or



against therapeutic recommendations (e.g. traumatized person). Additionally, the targeted context has to be clarified : it is sometimes too focused on a formal educational setting which is not the initial goal of the course, aimed towards non-formal education.

In that regard, the course is currently being adapted according to the critics it has received, furthermore enriched by the collaboration with psychotherapists.



2. Instant Theater Workshop

On the first day of the training, we welcomed Anna Krenz, Polish artist, architect and activist based in Berlin, for her Instant Theater workshop.

She introduced this exercise first by sharing her experience as a feminist activist. Anna Krenz is heavily influenced by her status as both a woman and a Polish person, juggling between patriarchy and cultural/national/historical trauma.

During a protest, she imagined that the demonstration resembled a stage. Therefore it inspired her to bring more art into her own activism and to demonstrations in Berlin, and she has since then created numerous political performances that took place during protests, in the streets or in public spaces. These theater-like performances involved other activists and left room for improvisation while carrying a strong political message towards social equity and building community.

For the COPE training workshop, Anna Krenz adapted her theatrical methods in order for the team to experience simulation-based situations linked to trauma.

She prepared different settings, each having a beginning pitch and defined roles, which team members undertook at first and then continued by improvising. These situations were designed to



create a context in which certain characters trigger a trauma survivor, thus exhibiting different types of traumatic reactions. Another participant acts as an educator and reacts to the situation as they would have done in real-life.

These different situations allowed valuable insights to emerge from the following discussions, involving opinions from the diverse professional backgrounds of the COPE team.

Overall, Anna Krenz's Instant Theater was about stimulating conversation around trauma, reactions, and discussing practices, allowing professionals to walk in an educator's shoes for the time of the workshop.

3. Online platform

The COPE project aims both to provide knowledge on trauma and to allow this knowledge to be participative, shared and discussed. Therefore after discussing the training modules, the partners reviewed the collaborative website created specifically for COPE¹. This website is built around four main branches : Know, Learn, Explore, and the Forum.

The first branch is a form of Knowledge vault in which the registered visitors of the website can upload resources that address the topics of the project. The visitor can select a category and a language, making it easier to navigate the resources. To this day, thanks to the partners, it is possible to find resources in six different languages, tackling topics such as non-formal education, trauma awareness or empowerment.

The Learn part corresponds to the online training discussed earlier : it is fully and freely available on the platform that therefore acts as a dissemination tool for the resources created.

The Forum is the part of the platform that allows registered members to interact with each other, providing resources, insights, or just chatting. The partners tested it and reported slight bugs and ideas to improve the Forum.

The Explore part is an interactive map on which registered members can indicate a resourceful organisation and pin it. Thus, the partner organizations are now indicated on the map, as well as a few other organisations that the participants added during their review.

4. Cultural visits around trauma

The training left space for cultural tours, particularly relevant in a city such as Berlin, strongly marked by various historical traumas.

On the first day of the training, the partners met in the evening for a guided tour of the East Side Gallery. The famous remains of the Berlin Wall, transformed in an open-air gallery in 1990, display artworks from several artists representing numerous countries around the world. The

¹ <https://cope4hope.org/cope/>

gallery is a powerful symbol of peace, hope and freedom while serving as a reminder of the trauma caused by the decades-long separation of Germany. It is still today nurturing collective memory and remembrance.

The following day, the training continued with a visit to the Neuenationalgalerie of Berlin for a guided tour of the exhibition “Extreme Tension. Art between Politics and Society”. It presents postwar art from 1945 to 2000, reflecting on a period marked by division, rupture, and transformation. It features key works from Western Europe, the US, and former Socialist countries, exploring themes like realism, abstraction, politics, feminism, identity, and ecology. The artworks respond to major historical traumas such as the Holocaust and the Cold War, showing how artists engaged with the tensions of their times. This exhibition links to trauma by portraying the personal and collective scars of these events through diverse artistic expressions that embody resilience and the search of meaning.

These cultural experiences enhanced the training by providing a deeper, more substantial understanding of how trauma shapes collective memory and the healing process, reinforcing the importance of trauma awareness in both personal and societal contexts.

Finally, as the COPE project concludes, the recent training in Berlin successfully brought partners together to review and improve the trauma awareness tools, including the online course and platform, before they will be made available to the public. The training also offered cultural visits that helped deepen the understanding of trauma’s impact on collectives - highlighting the project's goal to better equip non-formal educators in supporting traumatised learners across Europe.