MOJ DOM

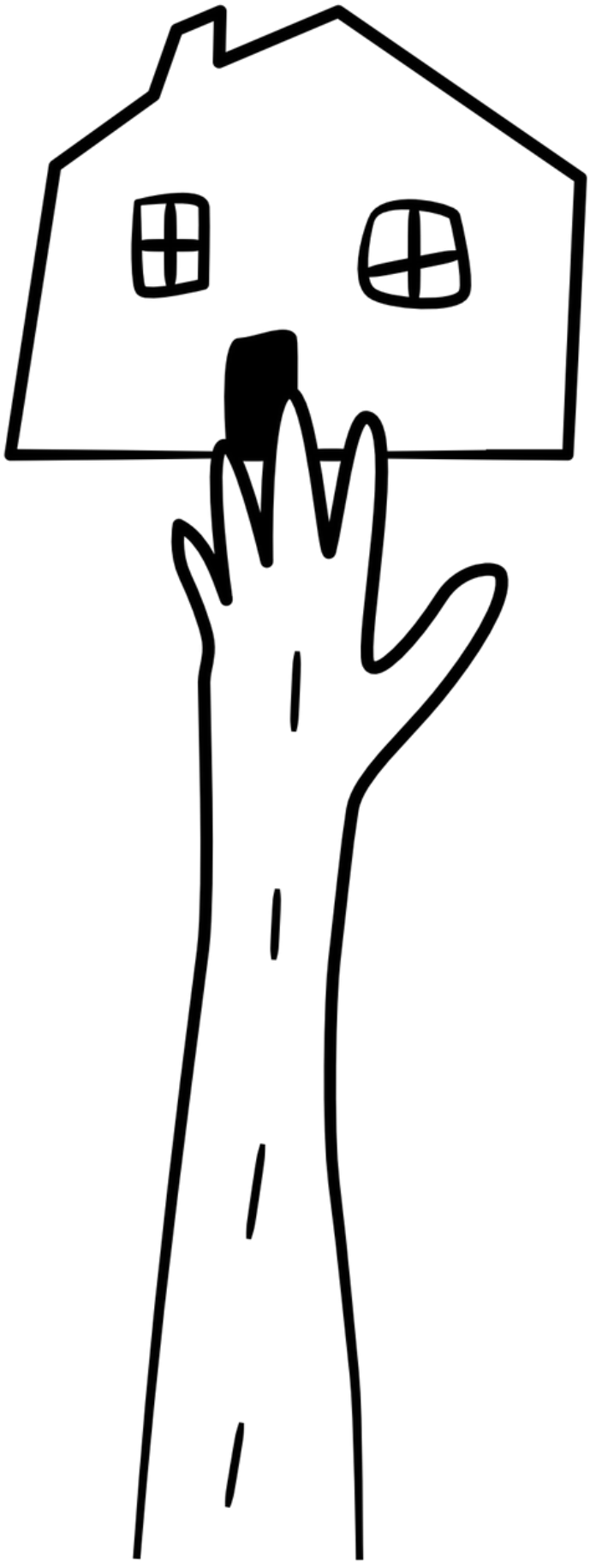
MEMORIES IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE YUGOSLAV WARS

Educational Toolkit

MOJ DOM

Funded by the European Union

CONTENT



1. ABOUT THE PROJECT "MOJ DOM"

"**Moj Dom: Refugees, migration and erased memories in the aftermath of Yugoslav wars**" is a European scale project financed by the CERV Remembrance program of EACEA. The project involves different entities based in Austria, Croatia, Germany, Italy, and Slovenia.

More than thirty years have passed since the beginning of the wars of dissolution of Yugoslavia, but that past continues to have a strong influence on today's Europe and on how people think and look at war events.

Migrations or subsequent experiences of uprooting continue to influence the cultural, educational, social, and urban policies and diplomacy in the countries of former Yugoslavia. Memories of the war continue even after peace, acting directly on the possibilities of reconciliation.

The project Moj Dom (*my home*) analyses the different interpretations of those conflicts. Moj Dom aims to be a public history project with a strong involvement of the young generations. It aims to broaden and make public narratives "from below", often silent counter-narratives, but also to open the debate intergenerationally and internationally.

The complex political, social and economic transition of the countries of former Yugoslavia can lead to a series of collective reflections on how war and the uprootings resulting from it influence the elaboration of the sense of home, the sense of inhabiting a territory, living together in a society in transition and actively participating in life.

During the project, new forms of art and public communication are explored that refer to the reflections emerging from the stories and forms of intergenerational and international re-elaboration: artistic forms capable of addressing complex social problems, reflecting on individual and collective traumas and bringing points of view on society's current gods and protagonists of the journey.

Project partners:

CODICI (IT) is an independent organisation based in Milan (Italy) that promotes research and transformation paths in the social sphere, working in synergy with national institutions and international networks. It provides training, consulting and project evaluation to help develop less unequal societies and systems capable of fostering well-being and citizenship. The actions it experiments with aim to understand and accompany the social changes taking place.

***Documenta* - Centre for dealing with the past** (HR) - is an NGO founded in 2004 to engage in the social process and dialogue on dealing with the past across different social structures. Documenta's work covers developing educational policies for youth involvement in social processes and dialogue about the past; developing non-formal and informal methods to involve youth in the practice of civic education and the study of history; cultivating the culture of memory among youth in Europe; promoting solidarity and nonviolence; contributing to the development of public policies on dialogue and dealing with the past; cooperating with European and regional organisations on promoting democratisation and human rights; collecting, archiving, and publishing historical documents; collecting data and publishing studies about human rights issues; monitoring judicial processes at local and regional levels.

APS Lapsus - Laboratory for the historical analysis of the contemporary world (IT) - is a non-profit organisation focused on contemporary history research, educational activities and public history projects. Lapsus has a long time experience in the educational field, developing projects with students and young people of any educational level, promoting an active-learning methodology, such as discussion workshops, and game-based and historical simulation didactics, which are significantly more effective on life-long learning for both younger generations and adults. In the field of public history, Lapsus has solid experience in public events, such as collection days, exhibitions, theatrical shows, documentaries, and oral history projects across Europe.

ISRZ - INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH IN ZAGREB (HR) - is a public research institute, established in 1964. ISRZ carries our fundamental, applied and developmental (policy) research in sociology and related social sciences and humanities (psychology, political science, anthropology, philosophy). ISRZ has a tradition of performing high-quality research in the mentioned fields, to advocate for the implementation of its research findings in public scientific, educational and social policies, by collaborating with competent ministries, agencies, governmental bodies, educational institutions and CSOs.

IEF - INSTITUTE FOR ETHNOLOGY AND FOLKLORE (HR) - is a centre for ethnological, cultural-anthropological, folkloristic, ethnomusicological and akin scientific research, with emphasis on interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary critical research of culture. It encompasses traditional, popular, every day and other cultural aspects and articulations. The institution has a strong research background in war ethnography, as a series of works on this topic has defined significantly the Institute's scientific production in the 1990s. More recently, the Institute's researchers have revived research interest in the 1990s through an interdisciplinary long-track program "Legacy of the Nineties: Discourses and EverydayLife", which is dedicated to both research and public dissemination of knowledge.

MASKA LJUBLJANA (SLO) - is a non-profit organisation for publishing, education, research and production. Maska is an internationally renowned producer of socially and politically engaged theatre. In its long history of art production, it has introduced documentary theatre into the local context to great national and international acclaim. Performing arts journal Maska is published bilingually in three double issues per year, each issue dedicated to a specific topic. The foundations of the Maska book publishing program are two series, TRANSformacije, profiled as a field of contemporary reflection on performing arts, including works by Slovene authors as well as translations of renowned titles in the field, and Mediakcije, profiled as a field of critical writings on media culture, social and political thought. With its educational and research program, Maska fosters new generations of writers, critics and thinkers in relevant fields.

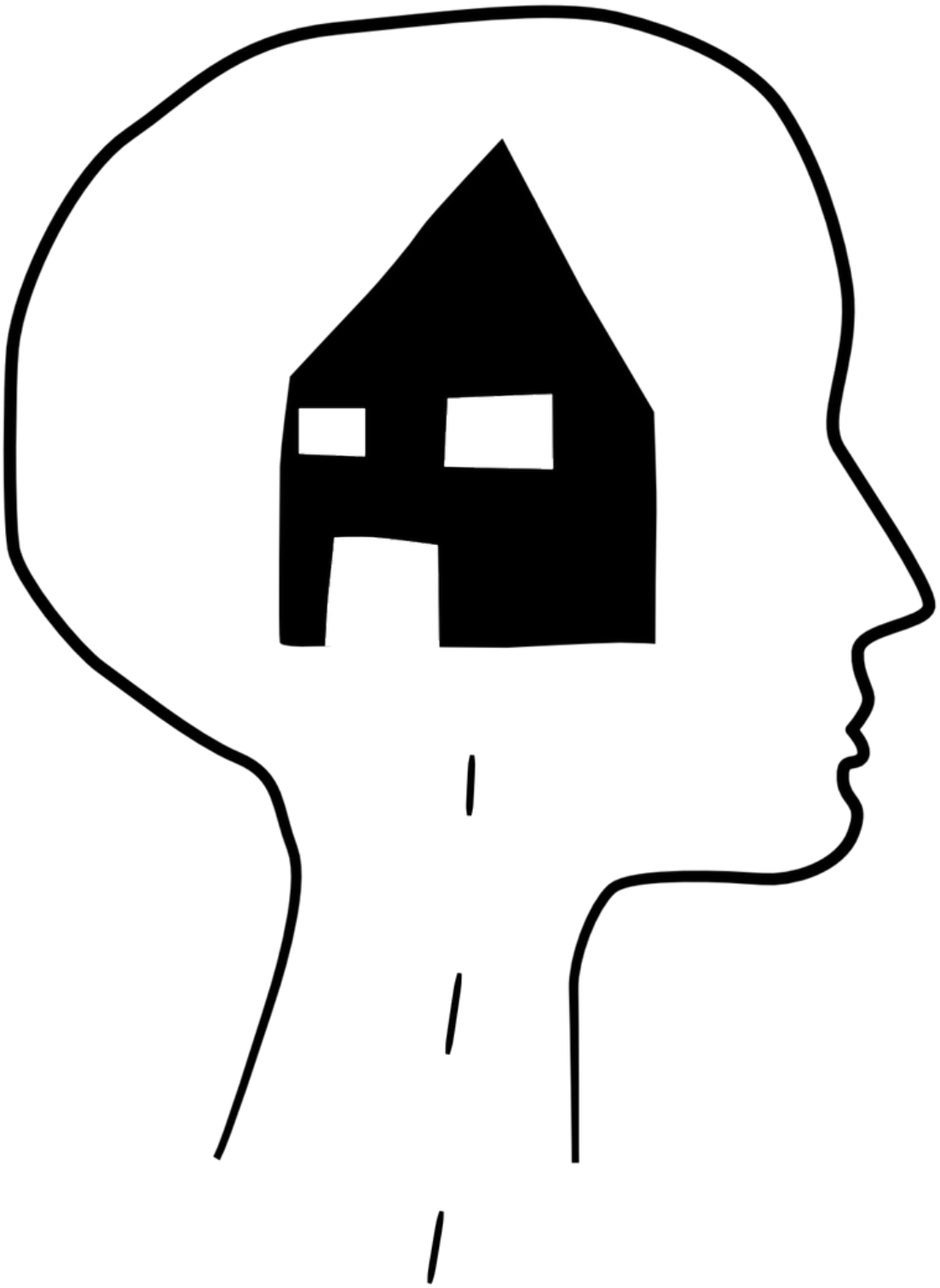
MI - Peace Institute (SLO) - founded in 1991, is an independent research institution, dedicated to contemporary social and political studies and interdisciplinary research in the fields of sociology, political science, anthropology and law. Its activities are not limited to the critical assessment of social phenomena but also include active intervention. The institute combines academic research with policy-oriented activities, practical education and advocacy. It is open to the wider public, students and NGO activists and carries out a series of public policy initiatives and various debates. Being one of the most distinguished research, non-profit and non-governmental organisations in Slovenia, the Peace Institute contributes to the project consortium with its research, education, awareness-raising and coordination capacities.

UNIVERSITY OF REGENSBURG (DE) - has a strong profile in area studies with a special focus on the area of East and Southeastern Europe. In 2017, the University established the Center for International and Transnational Area Studies (CITAS), which serves as a platform for bringing together various disciplines and area studies. The University especially values interdisciplinary research fields, bringing together historical, economic, and other social science expertise, which are oriented towards transnational and comparative perspectives.

UNIVERSITY OF GRAZ (AU) - The Department of Southeast European History and Anthropology is Austria's primary academic hub for studying the Balkan region's history and culture. Established in 1970, its focus on Southeast Europe is justified by the university's historical importance and its strong Balkan academic traditions: research areas include historical anthropology of the Balkans, intercultural comparisons, and the social dynamics of gender. Additionally, it investigates themes such as tradition versus modernity, social structures, migration, and the origins of ethno-nationalism in the former Yugoslavia.

Visual identity: Ivana Ognjanovac and Mare Šuljak

Photos: Marco Carmignan; Lana Zdravković, Peace Institute



2. HOW TO USE THE EDUCATIONAL TOOLKIT

The Educational toolkit "Moj Dom: memories in the aftermath of the Yugoslav Wars" is the result of the work of different organisations and institutions from Austria, Croatia, Italy, Germany, and Slovenia, and was developed in the context of the project "Moj Dom".

This Educational toolkit was created starting from interviews, collection days, and workshops organized in 2023 and 2024, by the project partners. Each interview and workshop is connected with the primary or secondary experience of the wars that brought to the dissolution of former Yugoslavia. They include people from former Yugoslavia, including economic migrants, second generations, refugees and people who moved because of the wars; as well as time-witnesses, who worked in hospitality, refugee centres, non-governmental organisations and city committees.

The partners created this Educational toolkit because they believe that dealing with and understanding the wars of the 1990s in former Yugoslavia is not merely an academic exercise for today's youth and students. It is a necessary step towards understanding complex historical, social, and political processes, fostering inclusive identities, and ensuring that young people better understand the importance of peace and living together. By learning from past conflicts and engaging in comprehensive memory work, young people can build a future where diversity is celebrated, and mutual understanding prevails.

The Edukit include the following sections:

The methods developed starting from the interviews can be used both in formal and non-formal education.

The extracts of the interviews included in the workshops follow the original speech transcription of the time witnesses. For their translations, the partners decide to keep as close as possible to the original, also considering common sayings and idioms in the national languages. The interviews were conducted in the native language of the speakers, the translations were sometimes adapted for comprehension necessities.

– Building Bridges; Your Home, My Home; The Challenges of Activism; Childhood Trauma; Choices in the Conflict – aim to foster a deeper understanding of these topics through personal experiences shared by time-witnesses in the included interview extracts. The proposed methodology involves group work, critical discussion and comparison. We recommend using these methods in formal education settings.

These workshops have been designed by Lapsus, an organisation based in Milan that deals with history and testimonies. After participating in the research and collection of interviews, Lapsus selected transcripts of oral sources to better understand and delve deeply into the topics covered in the workshops. Lapsus aims to integrate research, teaching, and dissemination of contemporary history through public history methods, generating awareness and making historical knowledge accessible.

The workshops – Memoryscape; Museum Curators: personal objects; Opinion-metre; (In)Equality; Racing Board Game; Membership – aim to include young people in actively reflecting on their interpretations and thoughts on identity, belonging, processes of home-making, and privileges. The methods involve critical approaches and learning-by-doing. We recommend using these methods in non-formal education settings, in which young people can share their experiences with groups of peers.

These workshops are developed by Documenta, a civic society organisation based in Zagreb, Croatia. Since its establishment, Documenta aims to encourage the process of dealing with the past and establishing factual truth about the war, through three main programmes: 1) Public dialogue and public policies, which covers the educational efforts of the organisation; 2) Documenting, which includes documentation of human losses and recording of personal memories; 3) improvement of court standards and practices, which entail the monitoring and reporting of war crime trials.

The methods were developed for high school students (14 - 19 years old); however, they can be used with different age groups as well, keeping in mind the complexity of the historical context (see historical introduction page 15).

The workshops:

Building Bridges (p. 26):

starting with an introduction to hospitality and displacement, a group discussion and an empathy exercise take place based on interview extracts, with reflections on promoting hospitality and inclusion.

duration: 2 hours
target group: youth, formal/informal education, age 15-20, maximum 20 people

Your home, my home (p. 41):

after a group discussion on a common glossary of the concept of "home," participants interview each other about their experiences and visual representations of what home means to better understand the challenges faced by those rebuilding their lives after war or displacement.

duration: 2 hours
target group: youth, formal/informal education, age 14-20, maximum 25 people

The challenges of activism (p. 46):

through the testimonies of those who actively supported displaced people within the former Yugoslavia and in other countries, the workshop aims to delve deep into volunteering and activism.

duration: 2 hours
target group: max 25 people, 15-25 years old, formal education

Childhood Trauma (p. 62):

by reading a selection of testimonies and other sources, this activity aims to create a safe and supportive space for young people to explore a challenging and sensitive topic, foster empathy, and promote awareness of the long-term effects of war on children.

duration: 2 hours
target group: 15-20 years old, max 25 people

Choices in the Conflict (p. 85):

this workshop explores the complex choices during the Yugoslav wars, focusing on decisions to fight or desert. Through personal testimonies, discussions, and reflections, young participants will gain insights into the human experiences behind historical events, fostering empathy and critical thinking about wartime decision-making.

duration: 2 hours
target group: the workshop is designed for young people aged 15 to 20 years old, with a maximum of 25 participants.

Memoryscape (p. 101):

starting from extracts from the interviews with time witnesses, the participants discuss their perspectives on the meaning of home, family, and identity. They discuss together how different life experiences shape differently others' perspectives on these themes.

duration: 90 minutes
target group: high school students, no previous knowledge is needed for the workshop

Museum curators: personal objects (p. 106):

by reflecting in groups on photos of personal objects and biographies - based on the interviews conducted during the project, youth experience the importance of multiperspectivity, individuality, and the role that personal stories have in better understanding historical events.

duration: 90 minutes
target group: high school students, no previous knowledge is requested. For younger students, it is suggested to spend more time on the introduction.

Opinion-metre (p. 129):

young people explore their interpretations of home, identity, and belonging, and how these categories are fluid and can change as a consequence of different life experiences and as a

consequence of traumatic events such as wars and forced migrations.

duration: 90 minutes
target group: high school students, youth

(In)Equality (p. 134):

based on non-formal education methods, the workshop supports young people in actively engaging in discussing inequality, stereotypes, exclusion, and other issues that are relevant today in their societies.

duration: 45 minutes
target group: all ages

Racing Board Game (p. 141):

the workshop aims to engage young people in discussing privileges and inequalities through role play and board games. The workshop seeks to draw a comparison among historical events connected to the wars in former Yugoslavia, and the rights of refugees today.

duration: 30 minutes
target group: all ages, 6-9 people

Membership (p. 149):

the workshop enables young people to explore group dynamics, and in particular to experience situations of exclusions and "feeling like a stranger" among groups of people.

duration: 40 minutes
target group: all ages, 10 people

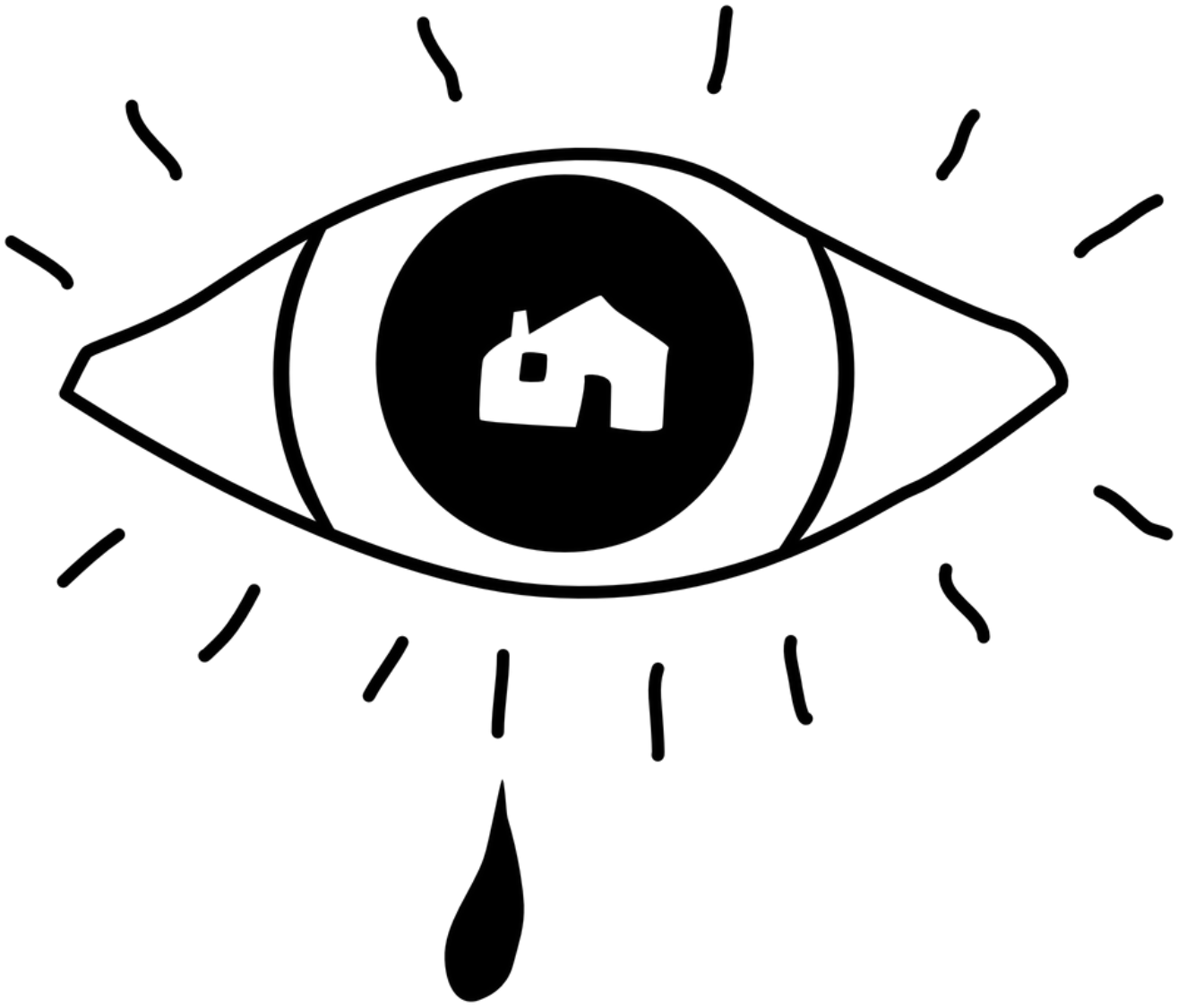
Historical introduction

Questions to guide the activity

Annex

Annex

Trigger warning



3. HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

THE DISSOLUTION OF YUGOSLAVIA AND THE WARS FOR ITS LEGACY,
Author: dr. sc. Hrvoje Klasić

Introduction – Yugoslavia on the Eve of the War

We know the exact date of the creation of the "first," monarchist Yugoslavia (December 1, 1918) and the exact date of the creation of the "second," socialist Yugoslavia (November 29, 1943). However, no one can definitively determine the date of the dissolution of this common state of the South Slavs. Unlike Czechoslovakia whose politicians agreed on the date their state would cease to exist and from which two independent states (the Czech Republic and Slovakia) would emerge on its territory, or East Germany (GDR) for which we also know when it ceased to exist as an independent state and merged into a new state union with West Germany (FRG), and even the Soviet Union whose highest legislative body declared the cessation of the state, the scenario of the breakup of Yugoslavia was significantly different. The state did not disappear through a single decision but its dissolution was a long and ultimately very tragic process.

Socialist Yugoslavia was a federation composed of six republics – Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, and Macedonia – and two autonomous provinces – Vojvodina and Kosovo, which were officially part of the Republic of Serbia. The only permitted political party was the League of Communists. The party's president, Josip Broz Tito, was also the president of the country and he was not elected through elections but was declared a lifetime president by the constitution.

The breakup of Yugoslavia was influenced by numerous factors such as disagreements over the model for the functioning of the common federation, intractable economic problems, and increasingly pronounced inter-ethnic antagonisms. All of these factors were present in Yugoslav society from the mid-1960s escalating in the 1980s. One of the key moments indicating the severity of the crisis in which Yugoslavia found itself was the death of President Josip Broz Tito. It would be demonstrated on multiple levels that one man had simultaneously been both a guarantor and a threat to the state's stability. The absence of Tito who was a supranational and supra-republic authority, unquestionably trusted and unreservedly respected exacerbated the already strained relations between the Yugoslav republics and peoples.

Politicians began advocating for completely opposite approaches to the further development of the federation. While some insisted on greater autonomy and independence for the Yugoslav republics in making political and economic decisions, others believed that even greater independence for the republics would lead to the end of Yugoslavia as a unified state. In addition to the economic crisis caused by large international debts and an unprofitable way of doing business, there was also the issue of the handling of money in the common state treasury. The wealthier republics (Slovenia and Croatia) emphasised the disparity between the amount of money they contributed to the treasury and the amount they received from it. The less developed republics complained that they were falling too far behind the more developed ones thus justifying the need for even greater financial assistance. Accordingly, the differences in the standard of living of citizens in various republics which had been growing over the years also contributed to a sense of dissatisfaction. For example, the standard of living in Kosovo in 1947 was 52% of the Yugoslav average, but by 1980 it was only 28%; Slovenes were almost nine times wealthier than Albanians in Kosovo; in Slovenia in the 1980s, less than 1% of the population was illiterate, while in Kosovo, over 17% were illiterate.

The discontent of the Albanians in Kosovo would lead to a crisis that many consider the beginning of the breakup of Yugoslavia. During 1981, massive demonstrations by the Albanian population erupted in that province demanding that Kosovo be granted the status of a republic and thus become equal with the other republics. The state leadership responded by declaring a state of emergency and bringing in strong police forces from all over the country. After clashes with the demonstrators several hundred were arrested, many were injured and there were fatalities.

The national and nationalist demands heard in Kosovo would trigger the escalation of Serbian nationalism in Serbia. Alongside intellectuals insisting on the oppressed position of Serbs in Yugoslavia and the need for the unity of all Yugoslav Serbs Slobodan Milošević the president of the League of Communists of Serbia began to position himself as a national leader. Religious organisations started to exploit the situation in society especially the decline in trust in interethnic solidarity and communist ideology presenting themselves as the saviours of both religious and national identity - the Catholic Church for Croats and Slovenes, the Orthodox Church for Serbs, Montenegrins, and Macedonians, and the Islamic community for Bosnian Muslims and Albanians.

By early 1990 the unified League of Communists of Yugoslavia had disintegrated and the republican communist leaderships increasingly behaved like the leadership of separate states. Given the state of the country and the changes occurring in Eastern Europe particularly the collapse of communist regimes the establishment of other political parties was allowed and decisions were made to hold multiparty democratic elections. In the elections in Slovenia and Croatia, parties advocating for a gradual exit from Yugoslavia and the declaration of state independence won. This development would prove to be a direct trigger for the onset of the war in Yugoslavia.

THE WAR(S)

1. The War in Slovenia

After the first multiparty elections (1990), Slovenia held a referendum on independence which was supported by the majority of Slovenians. In June 1991 this republic declared its secession from Yugoslavia and state independence and placed Slovenian police and military forces on its borders. The Yugoslav political and military leadership did not agree with this considering Slovenia's move to be a unilateral act. The Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) decided to take control of the border which it still regarded as national (Yugoslav) and thus began an armed conflict with the Slovenian armed forces. In this conflict, a little over 50 people on both sides lost their lives. Under pressure from Slobodan Milošević then the most powerful politician in Yugoslavia the JNA withdrew from Slovenia ending this brief war. One reason the war did not continue was that Slovenia was ethnically very homogeneous and unlike neighbouring Croatia did not have a significant Serbian community. Since at that time, a rebellion by the Serbian population against the new Croatian authorities had already begun and Milošević was considered the leader and saviour of all Serbs in the former Yugoslavia his goal was to relocate JNA units from Slovenia to Croatia to assist the Serbs there.

After the ten-day war, there were no more military conflicts in Slovenia. In 2004 Slovenia became a member of the European Union and NATO.

THE WAR(S)

2. The War in Croatia

After the first multiparty elections, the new Croatian authorities began the process of seceding from Yugoslavia. Unlike the vast majority of Croats who supported this some Serbs living in areas where they were the majority decided to rebel against such a scenario. Supported politically by Slobodan Milošević and other Serbian politicians from Serbia and militarily by the JNA leadership they refused to show loyalty to the new Croatian authorities. Serbian nationalism which had been building a narrative of the Serbian people's endangerment and the necessity for all Serbs to live in one state coupled with the rising instances of Croatian nationalism influenced the Serbian population in Croatia to rebel. In response to the Croatian desire to secede, Serbs established their own political institutions and declared territorial autonomy. The goal of these autonomous regions with a Serbian majority was to merge with the Serbian autonomous regions being established in Bosnia and Herzegovina ultimately uniting with Serbia in a single state.

The attempt to create a (Serbian) state within a (Croatian) state escalated into an armed conflict between the legal Croatian authorities and the rebelling Serbs with the JNA providing military support to the Serbs. Occasional armed incidents in late 1990 and early 1991 escalated into an open war in the summer of 1991. On one side were Croatian soldiers and police and on the other the rebelling Serbs, the JNA and numerous paramilitary formations from Serbia. The greatest destruction was suffered by Croatian towns along the border with the self-proclaimed Serbian state with particular tragedies befalling the residents of Vukovar and Dubrovnik. After the fall of Vukovar Serbian forces killed over 200 Croatian prisoners and several hundred were tortured and taken to camps.

Thanks to the efforts of the UN the war in Croatia was halted at the beginning of 1992. At that time the Republic of Serbian Krajina, a parastate under Serbian control, occupied one-third of Croatian territory. Most Croats were either expelled from this territory or fled just as some Serbs who did not live in Krajina decided or were forced to leave Croatia during the war. In the meantime, Croatia was internationally recognized as an independent state in 1992 and was admitted to the UN. After a series of unsuccessful negotiations to reintegrate the occupied areas within the internationally recognized Croatian borders, the Croatian leadership decided on a military liberation operation. Thus in the summer of 1995 Operation "Storm" was carried out in which the army of the rebelling Serbs was defeated in just a few days. During and after the operation most of the Serbian population from Krajina left their homes and went to Serbia. During this time a large number of Serbian houses

were burned and some Serbs who did not want to leave were killed by members of the Croatian army and police.

At that point, the only part of Croatia that remained occupied under the control of local Serbs was the area in the east of the country along the border with Serbia. This so-called Croatian Danube region was peacefully reintegrated into Croatia in 1999 after several years of political negotiations.

Since 2009 Croatia has been a member of NATO and since 2013 a member of the European Union.

The total number of war casualties in Croatia is between 20,000 and 22,000.

THE WAR(S)

3. The War in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The most complicated and tragic phase of the breakup of Yugoslavia occurred in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The reason was that unlike other republics no single ethnic group held a majority there. Muslims (Bosniaks) made up 44%, Serbs 32%, Croats 17% and the rest were other national minorities. After the first elections in 1990 newly formed national parties won: the Muslim SDA (Party of Democratic Action), the Serbian SDS (Serbian Democratic Party), and the Croatian HDZ-BiH (Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina). While Muslims and Croats favoured the scenario of Bosnian independence following the examples of Slovenia and Croatia the Serbs in Bosnia followed the same path as the Serbs in Croatia. They rejected any state independence for Bosnia and Herzegovina and began establishing their own autonomous political regions which would eventually unite with Serbia and had the support of Slobodan Milošević and the JNA.

In early 1992 the Serbs proclaimed the establishment of the Republic of the Serbian People of Bosnia and Herzegovina later named Republika Srpska. After a referendum which the Serbs boycotted where Muslims and Croats voted for Bosnian independence the Serbian leadership declared the independence of their republic. The war began in the spring of 1992 with joint actions by the Bosnian Serb army, the JNA, and paramilitary formations from Serbia aiming to capture parts of Bosnia necessary to establish territorial connectivity with Serbia. Since in many of these areas Serbs were not the majority they began expelling the non-Serb population engaging in ethnic cleansing accompanied by mass atrocities. By the summer of 1992, the Serbs controlled two-thirds of Bosnia and Herzegovina and laid siege to the capital, Sarajevo for 44 months launching hundreds of shells daily.

The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was further complicated by the relationship between Croats and Muslims. After initial cooperation, the Croats influenced by Croatian politicians in Zagreb declared their own independent state within Bosnia, the so-called Croatian Community of Herzeg-Bosnia, which aimed to unite with Croatia in the future. From this territory, Croats began expelling Muslims leading to armed conflict between the former allies in 1993 which lasted until 1994.

Alongside ethnic cleansing, numerous mass atrocities were committed against civilians and captured soldiers during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The most notorious example is the mass killing of over eight thousand Muslims in Srebrenica in 1995 by Serbian soldiers which was declared genocide by the International Court in The Hague. This massacre along with the shelling of a Sarajevo market which killed around forty civilians prompted NATO to intervene in the war to prevent further Serbian

aggression. After several days of bombing military targets across Republika Srpska, the Bosnian Serb leaders with the consent of Slobodan Milošević agreed to a ceasefire. The definitive end of the war was marked by the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement at the end of 1995 which created the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, divided into two entities: the Muslim-Croat Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (51% of the territory) and Republika Srpska (49%).

The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina resulted in approximately 100,000 deaths.

THE WAR(S)

4. The War in Kosovo

During the conflicts in Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina the atmosphere in Kosovo also indicated an imminent war. Slobodan Milošević had revoked the special autonomous status of this province where all power was held by the Serbian minority. International organisations reported systematic human rights violations against Albanians, strong repression by the Serbian army and police against the Albanian population, mass expulsions, and increasingly frequent killings of Albanians. This environment led to the radicalization of Albanians and the formation of the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). During 1997 and 1998 KLA fighters intensified attacks on Serbian police and soldiers which further increased the repression of the Albanian population. Violence escalated into open war in 1998. To prevent scenarios similar to those in Croatia and Bosnia the international community invited representatives from Serbia and Kosovo to negotiations in Rambouillet near Paris in early 1999. Since Slobodan Milošević rejected the proposed conditions and Serbian forces continued killing civilians and mass expulsion of the Albanian population NATO decided to intervene similarly to Bosnia. Airstrikes on military targets across Serbia lasted for 78 days until mid-1999 when an agreement was signed ending the war in Kosovo. A UN Security Council resolution gave Kosovo the status of a UN protectorate and in 2008 the Kosovo Assembly unilaterally declared state independence. More than a hundred countries worldwide including most EU members and the USA recognized Kosovo as an independent state. Serbia still considers Kosovo its territory.

Around 13,500 people were killed in the Kosovo war.

THE WAR(S)

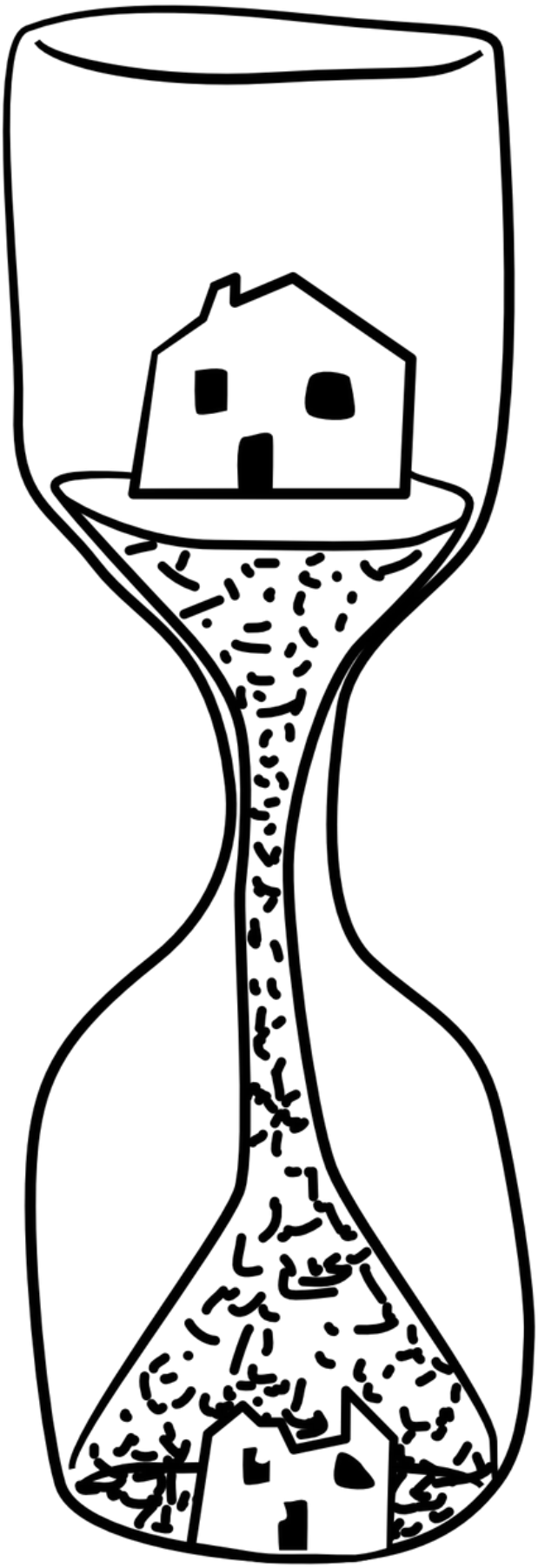
5. The Conflict in Macedonia

In the 1991 referendum Macedonians voted for the independence of their state. At the time of Yugoslavia's breakup, the majority of Macedonia's population were ethnic Macedonians with Albanians making up about 25%. Relations between Albanians and Macedonians became increasingly tense during the 1990s as Macedonian nationalists opposed greater autonomy for the Albanian population. The situation worsened when several hundred thousand Albanians crossed into Macedonia due to the conflict in Kosovo. Following the example of Kosovo Macedonian Albanians formed their own Liberation Army and conflicts with the Macedonian army began in the spring of 2001. Further escalation of the war was prevented by NATO which invited both sides to the negotiating table. In the summer of 2001 with the presence of representatives from the USA and the EU Macedonians and Albanians signed the Ohrid Agreement which ended the war and significantly increased the political rights of Albanians in Macedonia.

Fewer than 100 people were killed in the war in Macedonia.

MIGRATIONS AS A CONSEQUENCE OF WARS

Before the wars of the 1990s Yugoslavia had about 24 million inhabitants. During the wars due to fear for their lives or by force around 3.7 million people or 15% of the total population left their homes. Some moved to other parts of (former) Yugoslavia while others went abroad mainly to Western European countries (Germany, Austria, Italy, and Scandinavian countries). The largest number of people left the countries where the war was fought namely Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo. Every third resident of these countries became a refugee or displaced person. Many of them never returned for various reasons. Some decided to continue their lives elsewhere while others found returning to their homeland impossible or difficult (e.g. slow and lengthy demining processes, lack of political will to repatriate refugees, unresolved property issues, unpaid war damages, etc.). The war and the breakup of the country also resulted in an increase in poverty which proved to be an important factor in emigration. For this reason people also left the countries where no war operations took place such as Montenegro, and Macedonia. This process continues to this day.



Building Bridges

Aim:

By the end of the workshop, participants should have a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by displaced people during the post-Yugoslav wars (1991-1996) and feel empowered to take action towards creating more welcoming and inclusive environments.

Time:

2 hours

Target group:

Youth, formal/informal education, age 15-20, maximum 20 people

Format:

In situ

Key words:

Displacement - Hospitality - Empathy

Materials:

- Large space for group activities and discussions
- Paper and markers for brainstorming and note-taking
- Cardboard
- Interviews extracts

Description:

- Introduction (10 minutes)

Start by discussing the concept of hospitality and its importance in different cultures. Then, introduce the topic of migration and displacement in the post-Yugoslav wars (1991-1996), highlighting the challenges faced by displaced populations. Emphasise the role of youth and activists in creating welcoming communities and fostering understanding.

- Icebreaker (15 minutes)

Facilitate a brief icebreaker activity to help participants get to know each other and feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and experiences. Sitting in a roundtable, ask each participant to write down on a piece of paper a keyword associated with the concept of hospitality, then collect all the thoughts on cardboard.

- From their voices (20 minutes)

Divide participants into small groups (5 people max per group). In the Annex you'll find some extracts from the interviews taken for the Moj Dom project. Assign N.1 group of sources to each group and invite each group to read the statements and discuss them.

- Empathy Exercise (20 minutes)

Facilitate a role-playing or storytelling activity where participants from each group share with others their extract of the interviews. Invite to put themselves in the shoes of the displaced people or the volunteers experiencing the challenges they face in seeking refuge or welcoming people. Encourage reflection on their own privileges and biases.

- Brainstorming: lessons from the past (20 minutes)

Reunite all the groups and provide them with prompts to brainstorm ideas on how to make displaced people feel welcome in their communities and abroad. Encourage creativity and inclusivity in their suggestions.

Approaches and questions for the facilitator to guide the activity:

- What actions can we take to support displaced people in our society?
- How can we challenge stereotypes and promote empathy towards marginalised groups? (To facilitate, focus on small and everyday things)

- **Conclusion/reflection or evaluation (10 minutes)**

End the workshop with a group activity or reflection exercise, such as writing down personal commitments to promote hospitality and inclusion in their communities.

Approaches and questions for the facilitator to guide the activity:

- What did you learn about the experiences of the testimonies?
- How can we apply the concept of hospitality in our own communities?

ANNEX:

Group 1 - Welcoming families

Roberto Bertoli began working in refugee accommodation from the former Yugoslavia and in the reconstruction of local communities in central Bosnia in 1992. An activist for the Greens and for Peace in Bergamo before the Yugoslav crisis, he founded the Bergamo Committee for Kakanj and subsequently Bergamo for Kosovo. He is currently engaged in battles for human rights and refugee reception.

"The first initiative was to find families, naturally, in Bergamo or to select families. We had a significant number of both families and parishes available for hosting, so as the first group that we brought, if I remember correctly, 42, arrived in Bergamo, they were welcomed. The families were already there, shared according to their availability to host mothers with children, mothers with multiple children, parents, and elderly individuals, and they were thus divided and spread out throughout the province. The committee provided support. Each reality was built, each family, each place they went to build around itself a network of assistance so that no single family was left alone, and we supported them with interpreters, with the possibility of having telephone interviews to communicate at the beginning, of course, it was very difficult from this point of view, and all the bureaucratic part of welcoming permanent permits, etc. We managed centrally all the parts concerning the arrival and reception, the regulations, and the accompaniment, and they were welcomed in many, many, many towns in the province, some in the city but many in various towns, and around this coordination of support for the families grew."

Group 1 - Welcoming families

Sante Bressan was the president of the IPAB of Vicenza from 1990 to 1997. IPAB is a public entity providing assistance services, mainly for the elderly and minors. He founded the association "Insieme per Sarajevo" which continued the cooperative experience initially promoted by IPAB.

"It all started by chance, in the sense that my wife and I had already expressed our willingness to take in a child in this welcoming experience organised by some families of employees of the IPAB of Vicenza. Being the president of the IPAB, I thought of setting an example. However, in the end, when the welcoming experience was activated, we realised that two siblings, a boy and a girl, aged 4 and 5, were entrusted to two different Italian families. So we decided to welcome them both into our home. It was a fortunate coincidence because they grew up in our home. The girl wasn't in good health, and to care for her, we not only had to host her in Vicenza for longer but also accommodate her mother for long periods. We became so attached that when the mother had a third child, we went to Bosnia and followed her. Now this family lives here, not so much because of this welcoming experience, but for work reasons. They are still very close to us. The girl often calls me... that's how it went."

Group 2 - From Bosnia to Brescia

Elvira Mujčić, born in 1980 in Loznica, a Serbian town. She moved to Srebrenica, Bosnia, and lived there until the start of the war. She fled from there in 1992, taking refuge first in Croatia and then in Italy. In 2007 she published her first novel, Al di là del caos. Cosa rimane dopo Srebrenica (Infinito Edizioni, 2007) and in 2023 the latest, La buona condotta (Crocetti, 2023), set in the aftermath of Kosovo's independence. She is a writer and translator, an expert on the Balkans and Eastern Europe, recognized in academic and literary circles.

"I lived in Srebrenica until I was 12 years old, which corresponds to the year when the war in Bosnia began in 1992. From '92, my family–well, mainly, not my father or the adult male part–my family, my siblings, and my mother, we began our wandering as refugees, leaving Srebrenica for another part of central Bosnia, then Croatia, and finally Italy, where we arrived as refugees. In '94, we were hosted, as it happens today for some refugees, not all, by a municipality in the province of Brescia, which had decided to offer to take care of a Bosnian refugee family for a certain period. This period was supposed to be fairly short, around six months, because during wartime, one always thinks that the war won't last much longer. People always assume they are quick wars, and it was thought that the war in Bosnia would end soon. However, this was not the case, especially for us. Coming from Srebrenica, we found ourselves living toward the end of the war, just a few months before the genocide in Srebrenica in July '95, resulting in the loss of our family members and the actual loss of the possibility of returning to Srebrenica. At that point, the end of the war decreed with the Dayton Agreement assigned Srebrenica to Republika Srpska. It may not seem relevant now, but I remember the first times we returned to Bosnia, around '97-'98, to go to Srebrenica. For a Bosnian, "Muslim family" - in quotes, even though, well, there's much to say about my family in that regard - it wasn't easy to return to Srebrenica freely. You couldn't just go; you had to be escorted by the UN. So, we remained living in Italy, what was supposed to be a temporary situation, a temporary arrangement, instead, became our actual life. So, you see, my relationship with Bosnia is one that deals with origins, with exile, with a lot of pain, but also with a lot of affection. The further some things drift away, the more I manage to return to this country with a different mindset, with different feelings. [...] At a certain point, when Tuđman, by the end of '93, beginning of '94, had decided that all Bosnian refugees not of the Catholic faith who were on Croatian soil had to leave because the conflict had further escalated, it was these friends, precisely, from Dalmatia with Italian origins, who helped us

Group 2 - From Bosnia to Brescia / Elvira Mujčić

embark on a project, of which Agostino Zanotti was one of the coordinators, and they let us know, because we wouldn't have been able to intercept it ourselves due to not knowing the language, and so they roped us into this project that ultimately brought us to Italy. And it all happened like that. We departed for Italy, to give you an idea of the organisation, with this friend of ours from Dalmatia who said, "Oh, you have to go and look for Mario," and he gave us a surname which I can't recall now... "at the port of Split," he said, "you go around the port of Split calling out his name and surname, and he'll do the same." And that's how we found each other because people were walking around calling out... I said, "Oh, okay! It's us." And we left with this guy. I mean, when you see it from a rational perspective, from someone who's safe and chooses everything carefully, reads every review beforehand, to think that you're leaving with someone called So-and-so and you found them at the port seems unbelievable! But when you're a refugee, this kind of thing happens a bit. When you're at the lowest, let's say, of possibilities, everything is a possibility, so you don't really bother to understand if you're safe or not. And there we arrived in this village in the province of Brescia, in Valle Camonica, where we lived, and where my mom still lives to this day."

Group 3 - Biases and Cultural Bridges

Agostino Zanotti, after participating in environmental movements in the 1980s and those against the First Gulf War, in 1992, during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Agostino Zanotti provided aid and assistance with the pacifists of the Brescia Coordination for Solidarity Initiatives.

"So, the experience of welcoming refugees in Italy during the conflict clarified well, let's say, how it should work, namely small nuclei within welcoming communities that dialogued on an equal footing, in quotation marks, but engaged with the person welcomed by the family: the man, the deserter, etc., and bringing together, even the local authorities, this worked even after the conflict. Because many families remained, the children grew up, the welcomed individuals became part of the Community and in some ways, In some situations, even that, let's say, a guiding light that made the community say. [...] That welcome produced young people who went to university, became writers, or came to work in factories, producing, let's say, a positive coexistence.
[...] We need, let's say, to confront the concept of colonialism even here with the Yugoslav refugees. We thought they were people who didn't even know how to use the washing machine, who didn't know what a hairdryer was. I saw when they arrived, the homeowners, the landladies, would take the Bosnian lady and show her the washing machine, how it spins clothes, the clothes, the hair dryer dries hair; this is the television, etc... After they spoke Italian, they would look at me and say: 'We had washing machines, we had them. I mean, why did you think about us during the war, you thought of us as brutes, as barbarians, etc.?' In other words, you have to understand that the other person is still a person, a subject, it's a humanity that progresses just like you: it's not like they waged war because they were primitive and had a cudgel."

Group 3 - Biases and Cultural Bridges

Roberto Bertoli began working in refugee accommodation from the former Yugoslavia and in the reconstruction of local communities in central Bosnia in 1992. An activist for the Greens and for Peace in Bergamo before the Yugoslav crisis, he founded the Bergamo Committee for Kakanj and subsequently Bergamo for Kosovo. He is currently engaged in battles for human rights and refugee reception.

"Keep in mind that the refugees we are referring to are those who had left Bosnia and had arrived in Croatia because it was clear that the references were those with the possibility of then coming to Italy, and a good part of them we had agreed with the Ministry of Refugees of Croatia. Then we also had relationships, particularly with the refugee office in Istria, and thanks to the head of the refugee office in Istria, who was also a friend, an acquaintance, we managed to do the first form of selection of people who were arriving, guaranteed by the reference from these contacts that were then in Zagreb: the first bus left from Zagreb. They were welcomed... the refugees were taken to a place where then with the bus we left for Italy, and we had a Croatian interpreter, a Croatian friend who lives in Zagreb, who helped us with that. So, we actually didn't know who would arrive; this was... we weren't able to know, and also with some surprises that had struck us a lot at that moment, that is, we thought to find as the majority of refugees who arrived the most difficult conditions, understood from the point of view of social belonging, of social classes of origin, so that they were the ones who were most in difficulty, in reality, we realised then directly on the bus with the first interviews, the first chats, that those who had fled, who had managed, who had... who had come away, who had then chosen to ask to be able to leave abroad, not to stay in Croatia were a not small part of middle-class social, people who thought that for their children it was more important to ensure them school and therefore a quality school. From this point of view, I remember that perhaps the first interview I had done on the bus was with a woman who was on the bus with two children, quite young, around 7-8 years old, and the son perhaps a bit older than her, on the motivations, we asked 'But why? where are you from? Where have you been during this period?' She was from Sarajevo, she had left Sarajevo, she had gone to Dalmatia, to one of the islands of Dalmatia where she probably had a rented house, and I don't know if it was her own, in reality, I found out later, and as essential motivations, she says: 'no, because my son played tennis very well in Sarajevo and I want him to continue playing tennis, and there was no tennis court where we were, and so I wanted him to continue then to study.' In reality, the first shock was perhaps it's not exactly the image that we had of refugees, a vision of a life condition that was particularly difficult and instead this lady... then afterwards, gradually over time, some reflections that I make in a moment the story of this family

Group 3 - Biases and Cultural Bridges / Roberto Bertoli

where there is the father a university professor, she remained throughout the whole period of the war in Sarajevo, the mother is an engineer, the two children are now highly educated around the world, they came to Italy she for the first years worked as a domestic helper, a caregiver for the elderly and so on until she managed, an engineer, to find a job as an engineer and start working again. And so there were... other people who were on that bus came from those in particular from Sarajevo came from middle-upper-class because perhaps they had perceived even before the situation of the conflict, so they fled and then imagined for their family for a future that was not linked to Croatia in particularly difficult living conditions, therefore."

Group 4 - What is "home"

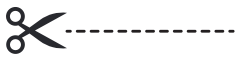
Božidar Stanisić, was born in 1956 in Visoko, Bosnia. He is a graduate of the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Sarajevo in the Department of Yugoslav History and Literature. Since 1992, together with his family, he has lived in Friuli in Zugliano in the province of Udine following his refusal to take up arms and wear a uniform as a result of the outbreak of the Yugoslav wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

"When we wanted to buy a house in Italy, after 11 years of staying in a friend's house, my wife proposed the solution of an apartment. And my response was: "If you want to kill me, ok, put me in an apartment!" Finally, we didn't go for an apartment, but that's because, in my concept of childhood, I had the idea of a home with an orchard, a vegetable garden, and a courtyard. For me, home is a place of freedom. A man should have a home as a free person.
Instead, I am still a witness, as in living memory, that between 1991 and 2000, 5 million people in the former Yugoslavia changed their address. It wasn't just ethnic cleansing but a standardisation within the succeeding nations. People migrated where they had never lived before. This phenomenon has been reworked more in the cinema of this region than in literature.
Imagine someone born Slovenian in Macedonia; they're there, in Macedonia, their first memories.
Imagine someone born Croat in Belgrade, it's in Belgrade where they took their first steps.
Sometimes, in the so-called emotional concept, we also forget what historical mechanisms function around us, and very often, these mechanisms don't have a human face.
[...] Because if I start from my own experience, I have to say, well, I repeat, even though my friend Rumiz always gets angry, he welcomed me when I was expelled from Slovenia, Paolo Rumiz welcomed me after 15 minutes of meeting him, and he took me to his house. I stayed at the house of a Slovenian student, then with the son of a woman who had been fighting for peace in Friuli Venezia Giulia for many years. Then, I was welcomed by my family who came from Croatia in November 1992 by Don Pierluigi di Piazza and his centre [Balducci Center in Zugliano]. He had found us a house with a family where I lived for 11 years. Now I live in my own home."

Group 4 - What is "home"

Vesna Šćepanović was born in Montenegro in 1965. She attended university in Belgrade. Over the years, she has worked as a journalist in various cities in the former Yugoslavia. In 1993, she arrived in Italy, and today she lives in Turin. Vesna is an activist, artist, writer, theatre actress, cultural operator, writer, and translator.

"There is my mom's house with poppy seed strudel, with Hurmasice, with Šnenokle, with Knedle, with plums, and there is this world that surrounds us with conflicts, with wars, with armament, and with the awareness that our democratic and libertarian governments allocate an indescribable percentage for armament, this is unbearable. [...] Theater immediately allowed me something that journalism did not allow me. Because the Italian language was not yet strong, it was not... not... Now there may still be many, perhaps, inconsistencies in writing, especially many linguistic and spelling errors, but somehow I feel that I dominate the language, the language no longer dominates me, not as it has been for many years, I think a decade, but I am aware that anyway I, not only do I speak from the margin and live this border, I always live this border. I also have the linguistic aspect that is always a bit strong, but it also has weaknesses. I mean, learning to walk always with a crutch. As much as maybe today I threw away the crutch, but this is very strong for me: losing the language, losing the language and also losing the house. When you talk about the house: the house is the mom, the house is friends, the house is work, it is... I can say in a sense I had to make a clean break with everything, but it is also the language that you no longer live in this language of yours because the strongest disorientation is not living in another city but disorientation and uprooting is starting to live in another language at 30, as if you were one year old, and having to reposition everything, and having to crumble the old to be able to build new. With so many alphabets, so many languages, and so many things; theatre and art allow these transformations. They give you space, you can seek unusual paths, shortcuts, you can use your voice, you can use singing."



Group 5 - A glimpse of the reception system in Italy at that time

Gianfranco Schiavone, President of the Italian Consortium of Solidarity (ICS), former Vice President of the Association for Legal Studies on Immigration. He is the author of numerous studies on immigration and asylum law.

"Public contributions were unavailable, and there were no places in barracks either. Unfortunately, since there was no obligation in Law 390 of 1992 to assist every displaced person, there was a lot of private accommodation, and many people received nothing from anyone. In some private accommodation experiences, many people were left to fend for themselves. We decided it was necessary to establish local committees, namely groups more sensitive composed exclusively of volunteers. Groups that would network to develop guidelines. The goal was not to send people adrift: a room or a vacant house was fine, but it wasn't enough. Local accommodation needed to have a public logic. And I remember we drafted guidelines for setting up welcome committees. These guidelines were a few pages long, with operational instructions (what must be done to build a committee with a certain robustness). So, things went in this way: an association would call the landline, I would answer, and we would discuss the availability of accommodation facilities (rooms or houses). On one hand, we tried not to dampen people's enthusiasm. Still, on the other hand, we had to restrain it by saying that accommodation is a complex matter. We recommended reading some operational guidelines before developing a territorial project. We sent the guidelines via fax. Upon closer inspection, the essential points present in the guidelines later constituted the PNA (National Asylum Plan) and then the National reception system (SPRAR), with the only difference being that we also envisaged initiatives that did not necessarily pass through the local authority, although collaboration with the local authority in terms of providing material resources or funding was often hoped for. Sometimes, however, there was no relationship with the local authority, sometimes there were indirect aids or sponsorships. Then, the subsequent model of the SPRAR (Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees, n.d.r.) was imposed, with many limitations and opportunities, and project ownership became exclusively that of the local authority. The first local authorities, the most robust compared to the accommodation organisation, were different. I remember that the most active committee from this point of view was the Municipality of Bergamo, which operated as a Municipality; that is, it coordinated the committee. The committee became very geographically oriented and, over time, adopted a specific territory in Bosnia: the territory of Kakanj. There was a

Group 5 - A glimpse of the reception system in Italy at that time / Gianfranco Schiavone

twinning that still exists today. It would be interesting to understand today how the dispersed reception project in Bosnia of the Municipality of Bergamo is going in the current situation, that is, regarding the current migrations in Bosnia. I also went to see the house they had helped open. There is an incredible thread running through all these events! Then there is Brescia, they too did important and structured work over time. In Friuli Venezia Giulia, on the other hand, the situation was not at all satisfactory. During the Kosovo War, the Municipality of Trieste only started a minimum of activation in 1998. As ICS, we had good collaboration with the Municipality, but the administrations of the time were very closed and indifferent. They were often right-leaning. They only provided a warehouse for aid. Then there was a welcoming committee in the earthquake-stricken areas in Carnia, in Gemona and Venzone. Perhaps there were some initiatives in Udine, but there wasn't much compared to the number of flows. As you know, in Friuli Venezia Giulia, there were two state barracks in Purgessimo di Cividale and Cervignano del Friuli. The Municipality of Cervignano started some insertion projects with the people in the barracks, but not another type of reception. The Pasubio barracks, now a heap of ruins, was already semi-ruined and housed over 1000 people. [...] In addition to forms of assistance in this type of reception, which were housing-related (accommodation, meals, clothing), we tried to organise... since the people who arrived were directed to these committees, our main concern was to make these people independent as soon as possible. Each of them had the right to access work. There was a certain social openness towards these people, not today's hostility towards refugees. Moreover, these individuals came from a European-style education system, and it wasn't difficult to recover language skills and, therefore, job opportunities. There weren't too many legal orientation activities: there weren't the problems of waiting in police headquarters, Commissions, appeals, etc... The focus was all on the integration path (as we would say today). In State reception, however, there was only the concept of providing accommodation, a roof, and material reception. Perhaps some healthcare assistance, that's it... I remember there was a Red Cross in the centres... sometimes even for show, here too the large structures repeat in history: they are always poor structures that however put something here and there to recover a bit of an image and sometimes, a bit of quality. But nothing else was planned. The purpose of local welcoming committees was to ask people who wanted to host: "Do you have the organisation to host for about a year? Can you do it together with others? If you don't have an organisation, come back later." And there were thousands of phone calls, which testified to a strong solidarity push, much more significant than today (also because it was perhaps a push more concentrated on this one category of people, refugees from the former Yugoslavia). Certainly, many did not respond if they did not have a strong structure behind them, that is, if they only had a room

Group 5 - A glimpse of the reception system in Italy at that time / Gianfranco Schiavone

and that's it. You can't send people adrift like that. Individuals had to become creators of a local project, then there were those who managed to create an embryo of a local project by activating networks like Arci or Caritas. But many proposals ended up in nothing."

Your home, my home

Aim:

By the end of the workshop, participants should have a deeper understanding of the multifaceted concept of home and the challenges faced by those rebuilding their lives after war or displacement.

Time:

2 hours

Target group:

Youth, formal/informal education, age 14-20, maximum 25 people

Format:

In situ

Key words:

Home - Share - Nostalgia

Materials:

- Large table or workspace for drawing materials
- Paper, pencils, markers, and coloured pencils for each participant
- Printed glossary with words related to home and displacement (Annex 1)

Your home, my home

Description:

- **Contextualization and warm-up (10 minutes)**

The activity begins with an exploration of the multifaceted concept of "home."
To give a suggestion you could start with the testimony of Vesna Scepanovic, an activist, artist, writer, theatre actress, cultural operator, writer, and translator, born in Montenegro.

"What is home? What is it like? Home is also Riace, home is Oulx, home is Lampedusa, but also Melilla [...] Homes are many small houses, theatrically. I can make my stage with many small houses, boxes, and I hop from one box to another and tell stories."

Participants will delve into what "home" signifies to individuals, particularly those who have had to redefine their sense of home in a new place or country due to migration or conflict. Home extends beyond physical spaces, encompassing a complex network of relationships and emotions. It holds significant importance in the lives of individuals and is often subject to political discourse.

- **Phase 1: Glossary (30 minutes)**

Participants will engage in a discussion and reflection on words related to "home" from a provided glossary (Annex 1). Each participant will select a word that resonates with them and share their rationale for choosing it.

- **Phase 2: Storytelling and Interviewing (30 minutes)**

Pairs of participants will interview each other about their experiences with home and displacement. They will take notes and create a visual representation of their life journey through various residences.

Suggestions to guide the activity:

- What do you see from your favourite room's window?
- Share memories of their childhood home.
- What makes you feel at home?

- **Phase 3: Drawing and Sharing (30 minutes)**

Participants will create drawings or verbally describe their partner's story and life journey through different homes. Subsequently, they will share their representations with the group during circle time.

- **Conclusion: Wrap-Up Discussion (30 minutes)**

After the storytelling session, participants will reflect on the significance of "home" in their lives.

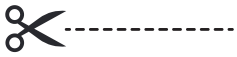
Approaches and questions for the facilitator to guide the activity:

- How did hearing about your partner's experiences with home affect you?
- What common themes or emotions did you notice in the stories?
- How can understanding different perspectives on home help build empathy and solidarity?
- What actions can we take to support those who have experienced displacement or loss of home?

- **Closing Activity (10 minutes)**

The workshop will conclude with a debriefing session, allowing participants to share their thoughts and feelings about the activity and any insights gained.

ANNEX 1:



Displacement: The involuntary removal or relocation of individuals or communities from their homes due to factors such as conflict, persecution, or environmental disasters. Displacement disrupts individuals' sense of security and belonging, often leading to profound emotional and psychological impacts.

Belonging: The feeling of being accepted, valued, and included within a community or social group. Belonging is closely linked to one's sense of home and plays a significant role in shaping identity and well-being.

Rootlessness: The state of feeling disconnected or detached from a specific place or community, often resulting from repeated experiences of displacement or migration. Rootlessness can lead to feelings of alienation and a lack of stability or identity.

Memory: The recollection of past experiences, emotions, and events associated with home and displacement. Memories shape individuals' understanding of their identity and inform their sense of attachment to specific places and communities.

Community: A group of individuals sharing common interests, values, or experiences and forming social connections within a specific geographical area or cultural context. Communities provide support, solidarity, and a sense of belonging for individuals, particularly those affected by displacement.

Identity: The distinct characteristics, beliefs, and values that define an individual or group and shape their sense of self. Identity is influenced by factors such as culture, ethnicity, nationality, and experiences of displacement, contributing to a multifaceted understanding of home.

Adaptation: The process of adjusting to new environments, cultures, or circumstances following displacement or migration. Adaptation involves developing coping strategies, forging new social connections, and renegotiating one's sense of home in unfamiliar contexts.

Resilience: The ability to overcome adversity, challenges, or trauma and maintain a sense of well-being and purpose. Resilience is cultivated through personal strengths, social support networks, and the capacity to adapt to changing circumstances, including experiences of displacement.

Transience: The state of impermanence or temporary residence experienced by individuals living in transitional or temporary housing situations. Transience reflects the fluidity and uncertainty associated with displacement, highlighting the challenges of establishing a stable sense of home in transient environments.

The challenges of activism

Aim:

Engage in understanding the role of activism, volunteering and humanitarian work during the dissolution of Yugoslavia through testimonies and discussions, fostering empathy, critical thinking, and historical awareness.

Time:

2 hours

Target group:

Max 25 people, 15-25 years old, formal education

Format:

In situ

Key words:

Activism, volunteering, humanitarian work, solidarity

Materials:

- Testimonies (transcripts)
- Flipchart paper or whiteboard
- Markers
- Pens and paper for participants
- Timer or stopwatch

Description:

- **Introduction (15 minutes):**

The workshop starts by welcoming the participants, initiating an exploration into the theme of activism during the dissolution of Yugoslavia. This era, marked by significant political upheaval in the former Yugoslavia, witnessed the emergence of grassroots movements advocating for change, thereby shaping the region's historical trajectory.

The objectives of the activity are outlined, emphasising its relevance in comprehending the historical context of activism and its impact on societal developments during the turbulent period. By delving into the narratives of activists and their endeavours to navigate through adversity, participants are poised to gain valuable insights into the dynamics of social change.

To initiate engagement, an icebreaker activity prompts participants to briefly share their perspectives or existing knowledge regarding the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the associated activism. This initial exchange serves to gauge collective understanding and set the stage for in-depth discussions throughout the workshop.

- **Testimony Session (45 minutes):**

In presenting testimonies (Annex 1) from activists, volunteers and humanitarian workers who were there during the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the workshop offers participants a firsthand glimpse into the experiences and perspectives of key figures from that tumultuous period. Each testimony serves as a poignant reminder of the challenges faced and the resilience displayed by individuals amidst political upheaval.

Trigger warning: The testimonies address sensitive topics that may be difficult for some individuals to confront. Please create a space to manage the emotions that may arise from reading the testimonies.

Divide participants into a maximum of five small groups (3-5 members per group) and assign each group a collection of testimonies. Participants are given space to engage in introspection, allowing them to process the content on a personal level. This reflective pause encourages participants to connect with the narratives on a deeper level, fostering empathy and understanding.

- **Group Discussion (20 minutes)**:

Subsequently, a facilitated discussion ensues after each testimony, providing an opportunity for participants to openly share their thoughts, emotions, and inquiries prompted by the testimonies. This interactive exchange not only allows for the exploration of diverse perspectives but also facilitates a collective sense of learning and discovery as participants navigate through the complexities of historical narratives.

Provide guiding questions such as:

- What common themes or challenges do you notice among the testimonies?
- How did activism contribute to shaping events during the dissolution of Yugoslavia?
- What were the risks and sacrifices faced by activists?
- How do these testimonies inspire or inform contemporary activism?

Each group should select a spokesperson to summarise their discussion points.

- **Reflection and Conclusion (30 minutes)**:

Bring the whole group back together. Let each group report back the thoughts shared in the small group session and stimulate a discussion to establish a connection among the testimonies. Annotate on a whiteboard the keywords of the discussion.
Facilitate a reflective discussion:

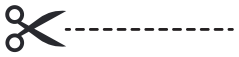
- How do the experiences of activists during the dissolution of Yugoslavia relate to activism today?
- What lessons can we learn from their actions and struggles?

Conclude by emphasising the importance of empathy, understanding, and active engagement in shaping a just and equitable society.

- **Feedback and Closing (10 minutes)**:

Invite participants to share their feedback on the activity.
Guide the closing activity by asking: What insights did you gain from today's activity?
Thank everyone for their participation and contributions.

ANNEX:



Group 1 - Life at risk

Agostino Zanotti. After participating in environmental movements in the 1980s and those against the First Gulf War, in 1992, during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Agostino Zanotti provided aid and assistance with the pacifist activist of the Brescia Coordination for Solidarity Initiatives. On May 29, 1993, near Gornji Vakuf, the humanitarian aid convoy was attacked by a military gang that killed Sergio Lana, Guido Puletti, and Fabio Moreni. Zanotti and Christian Penocchio managed to escape into the woods.

"Zavidovici had long been isolated, and we had made contacts with the citizens and authorities to carry out this mission. We set out on May 29th, 1993, from Split around 8:30 - 9:00 in the morning. [...] The entire route we travelled was along a road called the Diamond Route, named so because the UNPROFOR, the United Nations peacekeeping contingent, had the habit of assigning special names to the roads through which they transported humanitarian aid: the Diamond Route, because it penetrated like a diamond tip into the heart of Bosnia until reaching Tuzla. The presence of peacekeepers in one of the most difficult areas has been reported. [...] To reach Vitez, one had to pass through Gornji Vakuf, and the road from Gornji Vakuf to Vitez ran right through the woods: it was a dirt trail flanked by a stream, and it was a place that had caused some concern on previous missions as well: it was a location prone to ambushes, where one could imagine someone suddenly emerging from the trees or the stream banks to check and stop you. The possibility of being robbed during the mission was something we had considered; we knew there were bands of more or less regular soldiers who sometimes stole goods from humanitarian convoys and then let the drivers and passengers go. So, we had anticipated the possibility of an ambush along this stretch. However, everything was proceeding smoothly. We were a bit behind schedule because the load had shifted due to the curves, but we had adjusted it, so we entered the Diamond Route around 3:30 in the afternoon. Just before entering the Diamond Route, about an hour and a half after requesting permission from the peacekeepers to proceed, we encountered a mission observer from the UNSC, the European Union monitoring body, on the dirt road: he asked where we were going, we said we were going to Vitez to receive new information, and then he let us go without any problem. From this

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last encounter, we gradually entered this dirt road: the truck ahead with Sergio and Fabio, and us behind with the jeep. The road was full of curves, hairpin bends, some dark, and in one dark bend, we lost sight of Fabio with the truck for a few seconds, and then we caught up with him. In reality, we saw Fabio and Sergio's truck stuck in the middle of the road, with them down from the truck, surrounded by six soldiers aiming their rifles at Fabio and Sergio's heads. At that point, we stopped, and another six soldiers approached us and aimed their rifles at our heads. We realised something was wrong because although we had passed many checkpoints, it was more of a bargaining at those checkpoints: we would give them chocolate, sugar, salt, a t-shirt, and exchange some banter, but no one had ever pointed a rifle at us. We understood it was an ambush. The soldiers escorted us to a side road off the main road, Fabio moved the truck, and the jeep where we were taken by a soldier was moved. I turned around and saw that while they were moving us, there was a soldier at the end of the convoy using branches and leaves to clean up the tyre marks left by the vehicles. It wasn't a good sign; something was amiss. Then, we were placed a little further from the main road; at that point, we saw Hanefija Prijic descending from the hill on another path, a character whom we later learned was Hanefija Prijic, codenamed Paraga, and he was the commander of all these soldiers: he asked us for information, lined us up against a wall, and I saw that we were against the wall and moved because I didn't want it to be the execution site; I didn't like that position. We handed over our documents and explained where we needed to go. At that point, Hanefija Prijic took control of the vehicle, everything in our car, my bag with all the documents of the women in triplicate, etc.; and along with the only woman in the group, they moved to another path, and Fabio, along with one of the soldiers, had to drive the truck to the base camp. We were loaded onto a tractor. More soldiers, all very well-equipped, began to arrive, in addition to the 12 soldiers who were there initially, then 15 with Hanefija Prijic and the others. We realised it was a combat group holding the front line. Since they stopped us, Guido hadn't said a word; he observed everything, was silent, and looked very worried. Fabio arrived with the truck at the base camp. At the base camp, we found other soldiers who began unloading the material we had on the truck. Fabio, speaking a bit of German, got off the truck and said, "Guys, look. I talked to this soldier, and they assured us they'll let us escape, they'll set us free." Hanefija Prijic, the commander, called some of his subordinates, including the one who was with Fabio on the truck, and then they took us and brought us with a tractor-trailer, all five of us with two soldiers, the tractor driver, and then in front of us, Hanefija Prijic and his woman, and they took us to a slightly more isolated place on a hill, much more isolated than that base camp, and they had us get off the tractor. There, on the tractor, something happened that I want to mention: Sergio

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was very worried about what was happening; he was starting to panic a bit because the two soldiers escorting us were really shady characters, etc., so he turned to Fabio and said, "Fabio, what should we do because the situation seems difficult here," more or less those were the words, and Fabio said to him, "Look, pray because only God can help us." As an atheist, or someone searching for another truth as I am, those words stuck with me because indeed, Sergio calmed down, and I understood that, in some way, the sense of faith is right in those words. That is, in the belief that there is a God who can save you, maybe not physically but can save you spiritually, and for both Fabio and Sergio, this was the moment in which they then faced everything that followed with a certain serenity. This happened on the tractor. Then there was a singer, there was a soldier humming the songs sung by some, let's say, Islamic extremists when they have to carry out an execution. I didn't know at the time that there was this custom, but I understand today that that was the meaning of that song. Anyway, we get to this point. Hanefija Prijic looks at me, addresses me, and points to a path saying, "From there, go to Zavidovici." We asked for clothes, to let us keep the car, to let us go. In reality, Hanefija Prijic calls the two soldiers who were on the tractor and says something to them. In our opinion, this is the moment when Hanefija Prijic gives the order. The two soldiers who previously had their jackets loose, their daggers a bit like this, and their rifles loose, actually adopt a martial attitude, that is, just like those who have to execute an order. The two soldiers escort us along another very small path: one soldier in front, the five of us behind, and one soldier bringing up the rear; we stop not far from that point, and the soldiers still take some money from us, tear off the chains with crosses from Fabio and Sergio, and we stay there because we understand that this is the dramatic moment. At that moment, Fabio shouts, "Why?" Everything happens in an instant. I recount the reconstruction, not just what happens to me because this describes what happened. First of all, I had it in my head that by looking at a soldier, the soldier right in front of me, looking him in the eyes, I would understand the moment when he would start shooting, and that's true, I saw that moment, that split second, after which everything began, let's say, all the shots and the execution. I run. Guido stays exactly where he is. We believe he acted as a shield between the first soldier who shot, who was at the front of the queue because we were in single file, one soldier here and one soldier in front. The soldier at the front of the line shoots in Guido's direction. Here Guido is hit with three Kalashnikov shots: he dies on the spot, exactly where he is. We believe, given his position and what happened, that Guido tried to give us time to escape. The second person next to Guido was Christian, who throws himself down the slope and hides behind a bush: he stays there the whole time. Fabio, actually, goes in the same direction as Christian down the slope, he reaches the bottom, and at the bottom, there are two soldiers who then kill him with bursts of submachine guns. 18 bullets will be

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found in Fabio's body. Sergio and I run in the opposite direction from the others. I hear the Kalashnikov shots in my ears, in the air... My eyes dilated with adrenaline, I run as fast as possible, and for a moment, I find Sergio, who was injured, and at that moment, I didn't realise that he was maybe injured by a gunshot; I thought he had been injured by a branch, I really... Clearly, it was the first time, everything was confusing, chaotic, indecipherable, and Sergio says to me, "Madonna, they're going to kill us." And I say, "Sergio, run because it's the only thing we can do." Sergio runs in the same direction where Fabio went; there he finds other soldiers who also kill him with bursts of submachine guns, actually, on him, we find many more bullets, over 23 bullets in Sergio's body. This means they really went after him quite significantly. I actually run, I keep being targeted by this soldier. I run frantically, my entire life flashes before my eyes, I repeat to myself, "Why? How come?" In reality, what gives you the energy is the desire to survive. That is, you think you can make it. You become a wild animal, that is, you bring out everything you have inside you for survival. Dilated eyes, heightened perception of everything around you until I reach the end of another path, and one of the shots from this soldier who targeted me grazes me, catches my jeans, and I dive into a stream nearby, giving the impression that I was shot and killed. I stay in this path, in this stream, I hide under the leaves, with mud, a bit like Rambo, those things, I don't know why I did them, but they all came quite naturally, and then they came looking for me. I heard and saw their footsteps above me, but they didn't find me. The stream flowed, they probably thought they would find the body further downstream. In reality, they didn't find me. While I was hiding, I heard the screams, I heard something, but at that moment, I didn't realise what was happening, that someone would lose their life. In reality, those screams were the screams of Fabio and Sergio being killed, but only much later did I realise that this sound, these screams were theirs, I don't know why, that is, I was so convinced that... so focused on saving myself and so convinced that they would make it too."

Group 2 - The urge to go

Silvio Ziliotto was president of Ipsia Milano - Active Volunteering for Peace and Development. He has been a volunteer in Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina since 1993.

"So we end up in this project, me and other people like Silvia and others, but there are many of us in... doing a mission the Minister of Foreign Affairs requests, the Italian-Slovenian Minister of Foreign Affairs, because there was a need to do animation in the refugee camps in Slovenia. It's the second half of '93. I made this trip, I'm among the first to go in November '93. [...] And it was the first time I went, so the first moment was in the second half of '93. We would like to understand what's happening in the camps, to get an idea, so we're a delegation of young people from various associations. We went to discover an unknown world. There was really a barrier, even by train, during parts of the night. You travelled for a day and a half on these endless trains that never arrived. I remember that we travelled a whole day, and a whole night, we arrived at the camps and each of us was placed in a different camp where we try, always around Ljubljana or inside Ljubljana, to understand the dynamics, and the difficulties. In the evening, we usually met and discussed, and spent about a week in that way. Then we started to return to Italy and tell what we do, we started to raise awareness and organise this network of camps and associations, each dedicated to a camp, and we found out that there are about thirty with which we twin. We made these twinings and I continued, then I was one of the responsible ones in Milan for raising awareness and I was in charge of coordinating the refugee camps because we meet once a week to have meetings that never end to discuss what's right, what's wrong to do and that's the weekly meeting. Then we each had the meeting of our camp where there was the awareness group, the aid collection group, the group that was giving testimonies, the warehouse group, in short, all these things. In this way, we then moved from the Vice camp to the Novo Mesto camp. I stayed for two years, '94 '95, then the camp closed, in those years of study but at the same time I started working because I would have learned the language. I needed it for work. In '95 this experience ended because once the war was over there was no reason for the camps to exist and they were closed fairly quickly."

Group 2 - The urge to go

Simona Berardi, participated in solidarity initiatives with the association "Il Cerchio" in Modena and later with her own organisation, "I Care." She volunteered at an institute in Split that welcomed disabled people displaced from Vrilika; subsequently, she provided material aid and activities to families in Mostar. She was active from 1995 to 1996-97.

"In around 1993, yes, more or less, I saw an advertisement in the newspaper "Il Manifesto" seeking volunteer personnel to provide assistance at a facility for handicapped youth in Split, refugees from Vrlika, which is a place in Croatia. So, I tried to contact them, and we met, I think (I'm not so sure about this in my memory, I wouldn't stake my life on it), but then I either contacted them and we had a meeting among volunteers in Modena, or maybe not even that, because later I found out that when they called, my mom answered and said, "But this one isn't even of age! Are you crazy?" So, I contacted them again the following year, and fortunately, we had that blessed meeting in Modena. I don't know if it was the second or the first, I can't remember, and I decided to go. I decided to go, and by then it was already 1995. I left in August 1995 to go to Split to volunteer at this place called Bonači, which was the facility in Vrlika [...] In reality, there weren't just people with disabilities there, [...] there were people with various disabilities, cognitive, sensory disabilities, but also people who had been orphaned as children and placed in that facility, and then what happened, happened. [...] it was a necessity, it was unthinkable to do anything else. It's like it seemed to me that the whole world was there, in Sarajevo, and then instead, maybe later on, reading more in-depth, maybe you would find articles, books, and stories about what was happening in Bosnia. Simply in Bosnia, we can say, I mean for me the focus was Bosnia, there was no Croatia: those bombings on the Croatian coast, okay, they were there, but they were very different from what was happening in Bosnia. I mean, Vukovar, what was really happening in Bosnia was unthinkable, for me there was no possibility of not intervening and not doing something, even if it was just in my small way, but in reality, it was a possibility that existed, because actually, if you wanted to, everyone was going: some were bringing fruit, some were bringing vegetables, some were bringing clothes, some were going to do something specific. But it was there. If you wanted to do something, if you wanted to get involved, if you wanted to see anything with your own eyes, you could because it was widespread throughout Italy, everywhere, everywhere."

Group 3 - Helping on the ground

Gianni Amaini, engages in voluntary activities within the Association "Beati Costruttori di Pace" (Blessed Peacebuilders). After the early 2000s, upon retirement, he founded the "Vita-Virtus Onlus" Association of which he is President, focusing particularly on the reception, assistance, and integration of immigrants. Currently, he addresses the issues of refugees travelling the Balkan Route to reach Europe, along with other associations.

"Not only did we open an office [in Sarajevo], but we equipped the office with a radio, a radio transmitter, so from Italy, since the phones weren't working, the internet then... I'm talking about '93 so it's not like now when I read that, well, it's being talked about now, you know... And so, near Scandiano, in the province of Modena, we set up a radio bridge and so we could speak from here to Sarajevo and sometimes refugees in various cities, when they heard about this, they would get in touch and could talk through the radio. [...] Normally it was women and children outside, well, men couldn't go out. [...] men had to serve to fight [...] And then it was done, and in my opinion, this is the most interesting service that went on for the other three years that the war lasted, the postal service. How did it work? I know because I also participated in this. So the city was closed, so there was no way to communicate, there was no possibility of radio or phones, cell towers... and so, as they say, what did we think? Albino and this Austrian and also Lisa Clark, to spread the word around Italy that you could send a letter to Padua with the address of the family we then wanted to bring to Sarajevo... and it wasn't just about communicating where they were and what they were doing, but at the same time they could then write "we're alive, we're here, we're doing..." the postal service both in and out, so I remember because then during the holidays or on Saturdays, or like that, I got myself, but not only me, also at least fifteen other people connected with the Blessed Peacebuilders, we got a card from the refugee office in Zagreb that allowed us for humanitarian reasons to enter so we went to Falconara, near Ancona, there was a military plane, a C130, that carried humanitarian aid there so food, canned goods, and at the same time took journalists and humanitarian workers. I remember, there I met Toni Capuozzo, I met Adriano Sofri: people who went there as journalists; and what did we bring not food, we brought letters in our backpacks. In the sense that... because then the letters weren't just communication, then the people there said "but put in not just greetings but also some marks!", because during the war the only currency that circulated were marks and certain products were sold on the black market, so people needed it so later people also put in money so

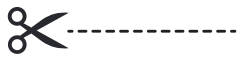
Group 3 - Helping on the ground / Gianni Amaini

then since it was complicated well we took out the money, wrote the name... the letters only had... to not, to be sure that nothing would be taken away by the checks at the checkpoints and so this postal service was done which was very much appreciated because people also needed money inside: so letters and money. This postal service for me was the fundamental one, so in some way, the siege wall was broken. Two years later they managed to make a tunnel and then there it decreased, thank God, the effort because then from the tunnel then they could also go out and things started to move; then in '94 '95 the Dayton agreements, the war ends. So this is the, let's say, the activity as Blessed Peacebuilders on Sarajevo at the same time, then we have the refugees. [...] we would go by car to Falconara, we would unload, we would go to the airport, there was no need for a ticket... it wasn't free, eh! A couple of times the plane didn't land, it went back, because not always the Serbs, well, I don't know why that time they didn't... but, well, normally it landed and we went through the checkpoint, that is, the airport was in the hands of the UN, but then from the airport to the city there was a Serbian checkpoint because the airport was in territory beyond the blockade, so it was in Serbian territory, if you will, right? So... And there they would check you, well, we had to have a bulletproof vest, a helmet, etc. Then we would enter the city and there was the office, the office was protected, in a tavern downstairs, and we would unload the stuff and the backpacks with the letters. I only took care of this. And then the locals, the local people, knew where the places were and at night they would go around delivering the mail."

Group 4 - Volunteering with young people

Drago Lelas, one of the first volunteers to work with refugees in Split (Croatia) at the beginning of the 1990s, today works with NGO MOST, which is primarily focused on programs concerning homeless people.

"The beginning was... The first arrivals were related to the people from Vukovar, I remember that exactly. I know we had a group of children and our first trip somewhere for summer holiday was with that group, I think it was in 1992. So, with a group of children who were the children of fallen defenders in Vukovar. That was our first vacation in 1992. And simultaneously, we were working in Split at that time, so, the war events weren't that intense yet, those war events weren't started in Bosnia yet. So, mostly we worked with our (Croatian) displaced persons from the Dalmatian hinterland and we had a big engagement when the children from the Vrlika centre arrived. The Vrlika centre was relocated due to the war events, and the Vrlika centre is an institution that deals with children and young people with the most severe forms of disability and mental retardation, who are in stationary institutions where they are permanently accommodated 24 hours a day.
And it was necessary to accommodate all those children in the hall of the Juraj Bonači Centre, in the sports hall. So, children with various deformities, the most severe form of mental retardation, need 24-hour care. They were all accommodated in the sports hall of Juraj Bonačić in Split, and it was one of the worst experiences in life. We, as young people, entered into that. We took turns every 3-4 days. It was literally survival. Children with multiple deformities, retardations, assistance during relocation, getting out of the truck and setting up mats in Juraj Bonači. Care literally, basic care, just to make sure they weren't hungry, or thirsty. All piled up. It was terrifying. Luckily, it didn't last long. It lasted about 15 days. And then they slowly started to relocate the children and young people to different locations to take better care of them."



Group 5 - Reflections from the past to the present

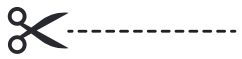
Claudio was an Italian humanitarian worker who worked in the field, during the dissolution conflict of the former Yugoslavia. He contributed to providing medical assistance to people besieged in Sarajevo and Srebrenica.

"The trauma arises from a situation, but if you don't remember it, you don't heal. And it should never be forgotten. The fact that memory is so crucial in healing historical traumas makes this historical period even more painful because knowing that memory has lost its organising function, speaking clinically, makes it impossible to heal the traumas that Jung would call social and collective. Because I believe there is a personal trauma of Claudio, which is within a larger trauma of Mostar, which is within a larger trauma of Yugoslavia, which is within a larger trauma of a system. We are like nesting dolls, one within the other. And the loss of the organising function of memory these days... That's also why I'm here, besides love, remember that, because things are done out of love."

Group 5 - Reflections from the past to the present

Simona Berardi, participated in solidarity initiatives with the Italian association "Il Cerchio" in Modena and later with her own organisation, "I Care." She volunteered at an institute in Split that welcomed disabled people displaced from Vrilika (Croatia); subsequently, she provided material aid and activities to families in Mostar (Bosnia Herzegovina). She was active from 1995 to 1996-97.

"It seems to me today, as it did then, that there is a lack of willingness to address the need to welcome the people who are here, and this remains, it seems to me even now, as much as one can say, in fact, the need is not being addressed, and the right of these people fleeing from various things to be welcomed in a dignified manner, not with charity, but with affirmations of rights, this, in my opinion, was not there, is not there. Now I can say with more certainty, and I tell you this here, and in my opinion, no, this conception is not there. Now then, the idea that this was absent, and however, maybe this was just my perception, but in fact, even the State alone is ineffective. In the quantity and manner of reception, in recognizing a right, we are simply not there. [...] Instead, the recognition of this right exists, and that, indeed, yes, in civil society, it has carved out a path, it is a part of civil society that recognizes this; perhaps I learned there to welcome those fleeing from conflict and then to welcome people who choose to leave for any reason from their country of origin, but it is an increasingly smaller slice, a slice that I think is always shrinking."



Group 6 - Transnational networks

Igor Longo, is one of the pioneers of NGO (Non-Governmental Organisation) activities in Dalmatia. He is a psychologist by profession and, as a significant part of the activist scene in Split. He actively engaged in working with socially deprived members of society, primarily minors. In the early 1990s, Longo, along with a few colleagues who were psychologists and social workers by profession, visited Modena in northern Italy. Inspired by the volunteer work they witnessed there, they founded the association MOST (Modena - Split).

"Associations are formed. We open our eyes, we follow what's happening in the world. In 1995, a group of us, who were familiar with each other, went to Modena, Italy. Modena, a city that at that time had about 180,000 people. We went there, a group of us from healthcare, social welfare, school, and also.
How many of us were there? About 15 or so. We were led by the late Dr. Donadini, a doyen of school medicine here in Split, the late Dr. Donadini. He took us to Modena and there they ensured us a really thorough introduction to their programs in Modena and its surroundings.
We visited homes, re-socialization centres, for addicts, everything. And then we saw that in Modena, a city with 180,000 people, every sixth resident, from toddlers in daycare doing activities to retirees playing chess with children with special needs or doing something else.
So, every sixth resident is involved in some kind of assistance program. That was fascinating to us. Every sixth person, meaning 30,000 people, was an additional input for us.
Who are we? Less capable than someone else? And that was then an additional strong impulse for us to wake up in Split. And Split woke up.
Probably the awakening of Split had an impact on the surroundings, but Split especially after that... We spread out, so to speak, in various directions. We transmitted our experiences and stories much more enthusiastically. We spoke with enthusiasm, and encouragement.
And then groups of young people began to appear in high schools that needed to be educated, directed, instructed on how they could contribute and so on. Not only to their peers but generally. And today, Split, I believe, is the first in Croatia.
I believe it can be measured more broadly. A city that, when you remove those associations that serve only their purpose, to make some money, without ultimately producing any social benefit. That Split can be a truly excellent example. A city where there is a whole range of different associations

that are willing and actively working to help various categories of citizens and people.
About a month ago, yes. And those experiences from Modena over time turned into an exemplary association today, the Most association. The Most association.
What is MOST? Modena-Split. An acronym. And it became that for a while. In our enthusiasm, we formed this association, after all those associations that may not have been formalised, you know, statutes, all that stuff.
But you have a team that... from one part of that team I worked with, MOSTemerged, which is now an excellent association. I don't know, you'll take a look if you're not on Google. You know what they're dynamic, they work with the homeless, they work with young people."

Childhood Trauma

Aim:

This activity aims to create a safe and supportive space for young people to explore a challenging and sensitive topic, foster empathy, and promote awareness of the long-term effects of war on children.

Time:

2 hours

Target group:

15-20 years old, max 25 people

Format:

In situ

Key words:

Childhood, (intergenerational) trauma, war, home, identity, memory

Materials:

- Testimonies (transcripts)
- paper, markers, crayons, or paint,
- newspapers, magazines, comics of different types

Description:

- **Introduction (10 minutes):**

A brief overview of the 1990s war in Yugoslavia, focusing on the impact on children and families. Explanation of the purpose of the activity: to understand the experiences of children during the war through real-life testimonies. See page 15 and the following bibliography (page 152).

- **Testimony Sharing (30 minutes):**

Present the two groups of testimonies:

- testimonies of those who have worked with families and children as aid workers, psychologists, therapists and activists for the protection of human rights and the psychological well-being of children and adolescents (Annex 1 - Group 1).

- testimonies from individuals who experienced childhood trauma during the Yugoslav War (Annex 1 - Group 2).

Randomly assign two transcripts, one from each group (Appendix 1), to participants individually, or divided into pairs based on the number of participants (note that you will likely need to distribute multiple copies of the same testimonies from group 1). Encourage them to actively read the transcripts and reflect on the stories shared, focusing not only on the single event but also on the consequences in later life.

- **Group Discussion (20 minutes):**

Divide participants into small groups (max 5 people per group).
Facilitate a discussion about the emotions, challenges, and lasting effects highlighted in the testimonies. Encourage participants to share their thoughts, reactions, and any personal connections they may have to the stories. Exploring how memory works, also focusing on the repression of traumatic experiences.

- **Creative Expression Activity (30 minutes)**:

Provide newspapers, magazines, and comics, of different types, from daily newspapers to children's texts. Instruct participants to express their feelings and thoughts about childhood trauma during the Yugoslav Wars through art, tearing words and images from the material provided, without using scissors. Then invite them to tidy up, reconstruct and create collages. Underline that trauma is like a tear, which marks a clear separation between before and after, and therefore invite the participants to focus on these two dimensions.
Art supplies such as paper, markers, crayons, or paint could be used.
Emphasise that there are no right or wrong ways to express themselves and encourage them to let their emotions guide their creative process.

- **Reflection and Sharing (15 minutes)**:

Ask participants to reflect on their artwork and the stories they heard during the activity.
Provide an opportunity for volunteers to share their creations and insights with the larger group.
Facilitate a brief discussion on how learning about childhood trauma during wartime can foster empathy, understanding, and support for those affected by similar experiences.

- **Conclusion (10 minutes)**:

Summarise key takeaways from the activity.
Encourage participants to continue learning about and advocating for individuals impacted by childhood trauma and war, for example, reading Unicef reports.
Provide resources for further reading, support services, or organisations working in this field.

Bibliography to deepen the topic and compare with other experiences and war contexts:

- BBC Future: The article "Many children must live with the trauma of war. Here's how to help them" explores the effects of conflict on children, including those who experienced the Bosnian war in the 1990s. It discusses both resilience and long-term impacts, emphasising the importance of early intervention to prevent conditions like PTSD, anxiety, and depression https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20240220-ukraine-and-gaza-the-hidden-effects-of-war-trauma-on-children

- Balkan Insight: "Inheriting Trauma: How Bosnia's War Still Torments the Country's Youth" delves into the intergenerational transmission of trauma in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It highlights how young people inherit emotional experiences from parents and grandparents who lived through the war, impacting their mental health and behaviour https://balkaninsight.com/2023/10/30/inheriting-trauma-how-bosnias-war-still-torments-the-countrys-youth/

- Save the Children. (2017). *The impact of six years of war on the mental health of Syria's children*. Retrieved from https://www.savethechildren.org/content/dam/global/reports/emergency-humanitarian-response/invisible-wounds.pdf. The report focuses on the impact of six years of war on the mental health of Syria's children. It highlights the trauma, stress, and distress experienced by children due to bombings, shelling, and violence. The loss of education, family separation, and economic struggles further exacerbate their suffering. Children face significant challenges, including bedwetting, speech impediments, and aggression. The report emphasises the urgent need for mental health support and education to mitigate the long-term consequences of this crisis.

- Dr Amir Khan, *How is the Ukraine war affecting children's mental health?*, Al Jazeera, 31 Mar 2022, https://aje.io/mypzzv. This article discusses the impact of war trauma on children, particularly in the context of recent conflicts such as the Russia-Ukraine war. It highlights the devastating consequences experienced by children living in war zones, including the constant threat of violence, loss of loved ones, and disruption of basic necessities like food and healthcare.

ANNEX 1: TRANSCRIPTS

Group 1 - An external look: the perspective of humanitarian workers, volunteers, and activists

Igor Longo. Longo is one of the pioneers of NGO (Non-Governmental Organisation) activities in Dalmatia. He is a psychologist by profession and, as a significant part of the activist scene in Split (Croatia) from the period that we interviewed before the war, he actively engaged in working with socially deprived members of society, primarily minors. In the early 1990s, Longo, along with a few colleagues who were psychologists and social workers by profession, visited Modena in northern Italy. Inspired by the volunteer work they witnessed there, they founded the association MOST (Modena - Split).

"So, it wasn't as noticeable with children, maybe, although our focus was more on working with adults, but I can speak only from the level of experience, children didn't have as many traumatic consequences as adults. Adults most likely transferred part of their tension, their trauma, onto the younger generation. [...]
During World War II, when the Germans bombed London, and people hid down in the basements, underground, Mothers who were okay, who had self-control, who didn't grumble, didn't cry, didn't whimper, didn't tear their hair out, they had children whose level of trauma was significantly lower than those mothers who were tearing their hair out, who were crying, who were saying they had... Who were sending a message to the child that they don't have, not control of the situation, but self-control. When children see that their parents lack self-control, not control of the situation, but self-control, they're lost[...]
Of course, it depends on the age of the child, it depends on the level of quality, and the connection between the child and the parent. If the child is strongly connected, if it's a younger child, if it's dependent on the parent, so to speak, and the parent shows by their overall behaviour that they are not coping, that they are lost. It's one thing when a parent cries, when they are sad, which is a normal reaction, but when a parent shows that they have lost self-control, that's actually an additional traumatising factor.
[...]The traces were fresh. I can't really say how much time has passed since we intervened. Probably: time is a factor. I don't know how much time elapsed from their arrival to our involvement. But in any case, it was intense. They still experienced it as fresh."

Group 1 - An external look: the perspective of humanitarian workers, volunteers, and activists

Sanja Kavajin. Former activist and retired defectologist who used to work in the post-Yugoslav war context as a youth expert with a municipal court in Croatia.

"We would then gather downstairs in the lobby, smoke, chit-chat, and so on, we wouldn't work at that moment, I don't know, whatever. So, in that sense, Split, in truth, I think, did not have such general traumas as certain regions of Croatia did. I have to say that.
That's my perception. On the other hand, how did we even get to that turning point in MIRTA to work with children victims of violence. Because when I talked about aetiology, behaviour disorders, I would try to find an answer to the question "why," I always go back to the beginning of the story.
And I always came to at least one part, one segment that would correspond to either abuse or neglect within the family. When I talk about abuse, it doesn't have to be gross or sexual abuse or physical abuse. Psychological abuse, witnessing abuse, or parental relationship pathology - that's abuse, also of the child even though indirect, that's aggression, it doesn't have to be directed at the child.
And the mere fact that a child is exposed to the abusive relationship of their parents is already psychological abuse of the child. Secondary. That has a criminal norm, it's a criminal offence.
When it comes to neglect, it's also a criminal offence. When it comes to neglect, not only material neglect, like not taking them to the doctor or sending them to school or not buying them a winter jacket when it's freezing outside or not buying them shoes - that's neglect of maintenance, but neglect of upbringing is also a criminal offence. When you don't set those basic boundaries and frameworks. And regularly, working with the young people we had in the process, I would regularly come into contact with such etiological sources. In addition, in later years, even far after, and even now before I retire, even now when I go as an expert witness to court, I always receive the case files a few days before so I can prepare, when I receive those files, I often encounter perpetrators diagnosed with PTSD. With perpetrators, I don't mean children or young people diagnosed with PTSD. But those who have these combat pensions, as it's called. These parents are 35-40 years old, they don't do anything at all.
[...] Man is the most adaptable creature. I vividly remember when I started working before I started driving, but okay, that was in the 90s. I would get on the bus, and in front of me or behind me, or with me, there would be a man in uniform with an automatic rifle at the bus stop. The first time I saw that, I was stressed. But as it became part of everyday life, I adapted to it. I adjusted to that circumstance, and I bit my tongue. He has no business with a damn rifle in a bus packed like sardines. It's absurd, but it was part of everyday life. So what you're saying - you're right - definitely Split was marked by

Group 1 - An external look: the perspective of humanitarian workers, volunteers, and activists / Sanja Kavajin

the war in that sense. But when I talked about Split in terms of experiencing warfare - the experience of fear that something would happen, except for that one day - specifically if my memory serves me right - except for that one day. Specifically, I'm talking about Split, so about a direct, immediate feeling of personal life-threatening. And that there was war and an awareness of war."

Group 1 - An external look: the perspective of humanitarian workers, volunteers, and activists

Sanja Lelas. Former volunteer currently employed in Split (Croatia) in the NGO MOST (Modena - Split), whose focus is homeless people in the post-war context in Yugoslavia.

"I've been in it since 1992 when I returned from studying in Zadar, until... Well, it was definitely until 1997, 1998. So it wasn't just related to refugees, but it was really: the Children's Home, the Association of Muscular Dystrophy, cerebral palsy, other physical disabilities, and the Weekend Club called the Juraj Bojnačić Center - there were mostly people with Down syndrome and autism. Similarly, it was all about spending free time, and activities, we even celebrated birthdays with the children, it was really like that.
Helping with learning. We were the precursors to teaching assistants. I'll never forget, one mom said, "Thank you for dedicating more time to my Mark than his own brothers and sisters." Well, that's how it was.
[...] because some, as I said, may have been more sick, not accepted by their environment. For others, those who came from war-torn areas, it meant relaxation to them again. The sea was already an unfamiliar concept to them. Let alone after the horror they came from. It was really, Badija was... the rhythm was slowed down, even for us who came from here."

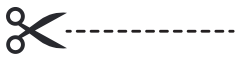
Group 1 - An external look: the perspective of humanitarian workers, volunteers, and activists

Đordana Barbarić, born in 1960. She has been employed and active in the association MOST (Modena - Split) since 1999, initially as the coordinator of activities for children and young people with behavioural problems and as an educator and supervisor in working with volunteers. From 2003 to 2020, she held the position of the association's president, and from 2013 to the present, she has been the head of the Center for Knowledge for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction in Croatia.

"[...] what's common is that children and youth are in disadvantaged positions, no matter how you look at it. That's the common denominator. Children and youth are actually in a sensitive stage of life and development.
So, what many refugees and displaced people have as a resource is that they have better family cohesion. Perhaps a good portion of them had completely normal family circumstances. Those we work with didn't have those family circumstances. Mostly, they had very difficult, complex, traumatic situations involving abuse and deep material deprivation.
So, they carry the stigma, who carry a sense of inferiority when compared to their peers.
Sometimes it's not the worst thing if you haven't really experienced trauma. If someone close to you is killed in front of your eyes, that's a lifelong trauma. Such a loss of a parent or that kind of insecurity is terrible.
That common denominator is truly that they are wounded because they are children and because they are young and they haven't developed those capacities yet. They haven't built those defence mechanisms that every one of us gradually builds through life and experience. But they both became adults overnight. That moment really defined everyone. And that's the point, the breaking point in their minds.
You can talk today with someone in their 50s or 40s years old who was a children or young during the war and ask them. They'll remember the event of leaving home. That's incredibly hard. I remember once we had a conversation about what if there's a war now and you have to leave home and take only the most important things. You don't have time - what would you take with you? And then a good portion of us said, it ended with "documents", and "money", but many of us also said a photo album.
For example, what represents the identity of your family. My mom was a war orphan. Her father died in World War II while they were in El Shatt, in exile, in Africa.
Recently there was a movie that evoked her traumatic experiences. And I know it was hardest for her - we didn't have a picture of her father. So, that photo album was also a concept for me, I would take that photo album.

Group 1 - An external look: the perspective of humanitarian workers, volunteers, and activists / Đordana Barbarić

Working with various groups of people in disadvantaged situations definitely influenced me. But, I would say, somehow in a positive way. That the amount of trouble I've seen has actually deeply strengthened my desire to make the most of every day. To truly live life as best as I can. So, that feeling is one, and the feeling that I've actually seen and heard so many difficult scenarios has made every hard thing in my life, those were some natural losses. People you love, who are dear to you, or some material moments we all go through in life, that you have a little bit of that sine wave, sometimes you're up, sometimes you're down. Somehow, I accepted it with ease. I'm speaking absolutely from my perspective, of what this job has brought me. I'm now on the verge of retirement, so I meet some conditions, but I'll keep working for some time. So, I meet the age requirements, but energetically, I feel like I still have strength. That actually, this desire to help in me has tripled, I don't know how to say it. Maybe when I started working, I wasn't even aware of how much of a gift it is to do helping work.



Group 2 - Personal experiences

Gordana Poljanec, born in Croatia, she was a child during the war in Yugoslavia.

Every year, we would go to the seaside. Each year it was a different place; we had never been to an island. That year, we really decided to go to Brač. We had never been to an island, never ever. So that year, we were actually going to Brač. I know Dad would have said we were going to Supetar, and we were like kids. At first, we couldn't even say it.
"Dad, Dad, Dad, where are we going"? Then we barely managed to repeat it. I remember that well.
And then we came here. We somehow packed up quickly. [...]

Yeah, I was in the fourth grade, finished. My brother finished too. I think the second one. And we came home. I know they were talking on the phone.
They were both upset. I realised something was happening. I never even thought there would be war and all that.
I mean, there were shootings there. Tanks passing through the streets.
People were singing and talking about all sorts of things. Some with guns. [...]

They would shoot from those machine guns. Shooting into the air.
Using coarse words, like "We'll kill them all." Imagine if we did that here. And of course, we all went outside, watching what was happening.
Now imagine if we did it from these balconies.[...]

They were just passing by with guns. Just some gang. Maybe they weren't even... Who knows what they were? Obviously, some delinquents.
What if we pulled out guns now? And you kids watched that?
And we watched from above. But I really didn't even think there would be war. I thought that. Just some little gang there. Some idiots. Shooting for no reason. It's fun for them. [...] And that day, Mom said, "Gordana, we have an hour." Pack up. We're going to the seaside. We're going to the seaside in an hour. We're leaving. Pack your things. And the child is like a child.
And all summer. I packed all the swimsuits into the suitcases. All the short sleeves. Nothing. I didn't even pack any thicker clothes, for example: „We're going to the seaside. It's not cold there". And we came here. The first two days were rainy and cold. And we had nothing to wear.

Group 2 - Personal experiences / Gordana Poljanec

[...] They killed some police officers or whatever it was. After that, it started... Yeah, it started. And I remember that a few days later, they sent two or three buses of children to Hvar. I don't know if you've heard about that from anyone.[...]

So, they gathered the children in Borovo and sent them to Hvar[...] Bračans weren't that bad, but back then, it was a disaster. In my mind, it was terrible. Yes. First of all, we Slavonians were raised completely differently back then. I believe the upbringing in Slavonia is different now. But back then... There was an upbringing where we children weren't allowed to interfere in adult conversations. You always stay silent, stand there. [...]

That's how it was in Slavonia. You wouldn't dare touch anything on the table. None of that. Only when they offer and place something in front of you, then you can take it. I don't know, while we're talking. You have no business engaging in conversation. That was a stricter upbringing there. Respecting adults. Anyone. The teacher was respected.
No, none of that. Here, the upbringing was completely different. [...]

But well, that. We were always told: "It's different with us, help yourself, take what you need." verything on the table is offered. What we don't want you to touch, that's put away.
[...]

And the language, and another struggle with my father, he's from Pučišća. How they speak there. You can't understand anything there, nothing. We would be like: „Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah". You can only slow down a bit, and repeat everything: „Yes, yes".
So we'll get it sometimes. And there was this, you know, in our place, it's half one, and here it's one... Half past noon, yes. Half past noon, and then one minus quarter.
And those, you know... But well, now you get used to it. Those are the least of things. That's the least, yes. Oh, it was terrible how they accepted us. I was shy the whole time. The homeroom teacher knew I was a shy girl. But then he made me stand in front of the entire class and say who I am, what I am, and where I'm from. And then I spoke quietly, shyly, softly. "Nobody heard you repeat it again." Then the teacher, well, the music teacher started singing "Ne dirajte mi ravnicu" [literally: "don't touch my plain/flatland", n.d.r.] and I had just started in the fifth grade. "Ne dirajte mi ravnicu." I burst into tears. That song at that moment... It crushed me. Literally. He wouldn't let me leave the classroom. He kept singing that song. In every subsequent music class, he sang the same song.

Group 2 - Personal experiences / Gordana Poljanec

Oh, come on. But I wasn't the same then. Something was obviously going on with me that day. I must have been more emotional or whatever happened that day. And that day, that song really, literally, crushed me. I couldn't, I sobbed. I couldn't catch my breath. It just wouldn't stop. And he would look at me. As if he's enjoying it. As if he's relishing it. Well, those situations were tough, but... Maybe they toughened me up."

Group 2 - Personal experiences

Deša Mihanič, born in Croatia, was a minor during the war in Yugoslavia.

"The first hiding was at uncle's in the basement. And then we were all in a house in the village. Now I can't remember whose house it was exactly, but it only had walls. It was some kind of basement too. Until the moment when we all went to the Hotel. It's a hotel that has a nuclear shelter. There were a huge number of people in that hotel.
You couldn't walk through those rooms and corridors because of how many of us there were. When we left the village for the Hotel, from Mihanići to the Hotel, there were 10 of us in one Beetle.
[...] Four of them were children. And when we arrived, we all occupied rooms. Basically, two families, the uncle's family and ours, occupied only one room. We left our belongings there, there was no more than one bag of belongings. And then we went down to the shelter and stayed there for a while.
I can't remember how many days passed. But we saw all sorts of things there - older people in traditional dress, sitting on those deck chairs, the folding ones that squeak.
Then there were children playing, and drooling children who were the most disgusting to me. Running around with saliva dripping. There were some things that were really gross to me as a child. Anyway, suddenly there were a lot of people. Those who were loud. Grandmothers who wailed and got hysterical at every sound of a grenade.
Then again, the sound of reciting the rosary that happened every day at one point. In that large room that served as a kitchen, where all those older women were mumbling. That's my perspective."

Group 2 - Personal experiences

Krešimir Cahun, born in 1992 in a town under grenade attacks, whom he preferred to remain anonymous and is called X in the interview.

"Because of the alerts and everything, the school was remote. At least by '92. By '93 or '94, she was already back in school. That's what Mom remembers, when the alert was declared, she went to pick up my sister.
[...] I can't remember when the first alert was declared.
The sirens went off every year as a reminder. And then maybe it was at the end of the year. It was October 4th or something like that.
Anyway, they went to Zagreb then and actually came back to X. after that. And now what is always hard to reconstruct, my parents moved to a new apartment in '92. And now I don't know exactly when that coincided, that we were in Zagreb. Or that Mom, Laura, and I were in Zagreb.
Dad was in the army. And grandma. Grandpa stayed in Brod.
So somewhere in that period, they bought an apartment and moved in. Maybe because of the alert, they went to Zagreb. Because I remember maybe that was Mom's memory, that when X was guaranteed, Dad called Mom to check in maybe. To see if everything was okay.
And then she asked, like, "Vinko," it was raining heavily those days. "Like, where are you, it's raining so hard." Anyway, a grenade was supposed to hit the military headquarters across the street, but it fell on the roof of the house where grandma and grandpa were.
And it blew up the whole roof. And it was raining, and there was no roof on the house at all. Hence the sound of rain.
[...]
No, because they bought the apartment in '92. And I was still actually in the carrier. That's Mom's story, that they returned to X because of the apartment. Because at that time, a lot of Serbs actually left the city. Fled. And attacks on houses began.
And then a lot of those apartments were empty, and a lot of it was because of this - Krajina attacked, so a lot of people actually fled from those surrounding villages. Everyone actually fled to X.
And there was a reception centre in the city at that time.
But then they tried to get apartments because there wasn't enough room in that reception centre.
And my parents were just buying an apartment, they bought it from Dad's friend, or rather a colleague from the company. How it was, I guess I didn't know or Dad quit, or how it was exactly, he no longer worked in that company, and it went bankrupt afterwards.

Group 2 - Personal experiences / Krešimir Cahun

He bought that apartment from that Mihić, and he told my mom, "Megi, you have to get in because if you don't, someone else will break in, and then if refugees enter the apartment, we won't be able to get the apartment. You can't throw them out." So she, I guess, that winter or fall, returned to Slavonski Brod.

[...]

So until Operation Storm actually, X wasn't. I mean, they were, you know, talking about it and digging something, there were kind of fluctuations in how much X was in danger, but actually X was always in some kind of immediate war threat.

Yes. We were in that apartment, but I know that we, according to my mom's stories, we were often at my dad's parents' apartment because that skyscraper was supposedly safer.

[...]

I don't know, no, they weren't. Those are buildings, they are from the centre, they started building in the '60s, but it wasn't a military skyscraper. It was just structurally safer. In case it gets hit... because their bathroom from grandma and grandpa was closer to the elevator in the centre. So if it hits, it won't be a bigger threat. I don't know how to explain that to you.

They also had a basement, which was dug, so you could go downstairs. These are the stories that, in a way, one mom told me that as a child until the age of four, that's in 1995 - I never saw grass. We never could be in the park because there was always some kind of alarm. Then I, most of the time, was - as a child, they put me under the sink because it was the safest place. But when there were bigger threats, somehow they probably knew when there would be a bigger alarm and bigger shelling, we were at grandma and grandpa's, at my dad's parents, and then I was either under the sink or we went to the basement. I still dread that basement today, it's horrible. I mean, not anymore, because they sold that apartment, but it is... Yes, it was actually dug in, so it was somehow safer, and we were constantly, every now and then, I grew up in the basement.

[...] Sometimes I feel like I have implanted memories, in a sense, you know, from so many stories, I can visualise it, but do I remember it, no. I actually have quite late first memories.

[...] I'm not sure how much of it is from those stories and how much are real memories."

Group 2 - Personal experiences

Jadranka Kovačić. Born in Croatia, she was a child during the war in Yugoslavia.

"It's not like it's some big deal now. Until a certain moment when dad wasn't around for a long time. He lost almost 40 kilos and almost died. And he was gone for a long time. And while he was being transferred from one hospital to another, he stopped in the official car, someone was driving him, and he stopped. So I have that memory of the scene, that a car enters our yard, but it doesn't enter, I mean, the gate is closed, right? It doesn't enter, but it's just at the bridge? Stopped, and dad gets out of the car but stays hidden behind the car door. And we just greet him, you know, in passing. And like... Like it's joy, but you see them crying. You know, like that, but like everything's great, you know. [...]

I don't know, I mean, my memory, you know, like... Weird, why is it... Yeah, finally we see dad, so why can't he, you know, stop... You know, why didn't we hug, you know, those things, like... He's in a hurry, he has to go, "We'll talk on the phone," you know, something like that.

That's the memory. And now, the story was that he went to another hospital, but he was... I mean, it was more like poisoning, I don't know now... And what else? And it wasn't... Yes, yes, like that, yeah. Something like that.[...]

My dad was never happy with the way, generally, those historical events in which he participated are written, because of the narrative. So, I don't know, I can't figure out those years at all.

And now, what I know is, it couldn't be heard for a long time, mom was already going crazy, and she called a friend from the police. And then she went alone... Unannounced, like, she's going right away. And this... Once, she didn't tell the whole story, but now, how can I, you know. What you remember and what remains with you - some barricades, something like that. But in any case, it wasn't safe. They managed to see each other and kiss, but she had to leave immediately. Something like that.

Now, there is another thing I know. That they were breaking into our house, I mean, back then in the village, while we were living, and, you know, that she was quite scared. She slept with a gun, and some things like that. What were all the reasons for that? I have to admit that I don't know exactly.

So yeah. Really. For what later happened, I know, in terms of the late '90s, the war never ended and all that. Dad had evidence materials but hidden around the house, and something like that, and they would break into our house. To steal or look for that stuff.

[...]

Well, one day we... I remember coming home from school, the door was open, and that's it, the door was open, I don't see anything special around the house, I call mom at work, um, I don't know what my mom told me, I think she sent me to the neighbour or something, and then later. You know, you hear:

Group 2 - Personal experiences / Jadranka Kovačić

break-in happened. I didn't know... unlocked doors, and it would happen like that. And one time, it was, like, a bit more ransacked their room. You know - things outside, you know, such things. But I didn't know what was happening then either, in terms of, nobody broke into our house, I didn't know why, I didn't know that they came to break in for these things. But, dictaphones, you know, such things, and that. But that was then. I don't know, I think it stopped around 2000. Now, why, how, I don't know.

I don't know, you know, I actually don't know much about what they all went through, because I think I was quite protected from it, in a way. I remember drawing. And, um, in terms of alarms, you know, and all that, while we were still in kindergarten, there were a few alerts in Ivanić but, I mean, we would go to the building down to the basement, it was nice for us there, I remember that.

What did you do? We had some special toys there, we had those UNICEF things, you know. All those blankets, toys, crayons. I remember those, you know. Tempera, paint. You know, all that, canned food. Such things we wouldn't usually eat, so we would get them.

[...]

It was nice for us, you know. It was great for us as kids. At least I don't remember, you know, trauma around it. Okay, okay, my therapist says there's a possibility that I've just suppressed a lot of those traumatic things.

[...]

For example, my dad really tried to help himself and minimise the impact on us as much as possible. But after the point where he could have realised it all, until then, we were all already crippled endlessly, and it stays with you forever. For a long time, while coming back from college. I mean, if I had stayed there, I wouldn't have been a good or normal person. Because I simply struggled with some things you can't. I mean, when I would come home, I would have auditory hallucinations.

You know, where I hear them arguing and then not arguing, where I can't sleep, where I can't... It just drives you crazy. And it was hard for me to come home. Now I don't have that anymore. I mean, now somehow enough time has passed, and I've done therapy and worked on things, and they've also worked on themselves in different ways, and our lives have taken on different contours, so to speak. So there's no longer that feeling that it will happen to me, which is... You know, I know, I remember dad from before. You know, I know that man. I had him for at least 6-7 years, you know. And then I have those relationships and all that, you know, and... Ivana is younger, you know, she's younger and has less of that. She has less of it, and then... And then she has a different relationship with him where... She loves him, but she's never forgiven him for all those things, you know. She's never come to terms with it and still harbours a kind of hatred. Resentment of sorts, which she never verbalises specifically or anything, but you feel it. I feel it."

Group 2 - Personal experiences

Zdenko Bašić, is an associate professor at the Faculty of Political Science of Zagreb University. He holds degrees in anthropology and Spanish studies and earned his doctorate in an interdisciplinary field. He has spent his entire childhood in Zadar, except for a brief period during the war when he stayed on a neighbouring island.

"I was born in 1985. I was 6 years old. I started talking about my earliest memories; I have no idea what the earliest memory of the war would be. [...] So when you remember your childhood, you remember the time during the war and you remember the time after the war.
Before the war, I think it was too early for me to remember anything. I always tell myself that in my earliest memory, like when I was one or two years old, I saw all the people in front of me, my mom, and my grandpa, like it was my birthday or something. There's a memory where it's like I didn't do anything, but I watched them. There was some kind of party, and that's when I see those photos when I remember before the war. But absolutely nothing else, the war was actually my first childhood memory for sure. I can't really remember when I realised there was a war in that childhood. [...] When I would actually figure out what was happening through my parents. My mom used to explain to me, like: there's a war going on, something about Serbs, we need to be careful, it's happening. And then, just when the biggest shock came, it was during elementary school when we had to go to some basement of the elementary school. When I was in second grade, I remember we started learning written letters, and it turned out that we couldn't actually spend the entire second grade in the classroom.
A few times we were in the shelter, I remember that. We were all down there in the dark, shouting "blah blah," in the end, it turned out we wouldn't...we cried, then there was some other kind of play, I don't know, but it was half-dark, I have no idea. Then a parent would come get you at some point. But there was this problem - I won't learn to write letters because we're not in school, and then my aunt who was a teacher, taught me letters throughout that year. So, if that was the second year, second grade, I started first grade at seven years old, that was 1992, the second, so 1993. Although 1993 was the worst, back when we didn't go to school. So, let's say I understood it that way through those dislocations from normal life: when I wasn't in my room, when I wasn't in the living room when I couldn't watch TV, when I couldn't play video games, when we had to go to the basement, when there was no electricity, when we were in school, when there was no school, then you go to another room and so on, let's say that's how it started.
Then I started to understand through conversations with my parents what exactly was going on, as they explained it to me. Those were very monolithic things, flat. We Croats. They are Serbs. Serbs are

Group 2 - Personal experiences / Zdenko Bašić

attacking us. We're hiding here, it will pass, I don't know... I never understood the connection between the electricity outage and what was happening, it just happened. Now there's no electricity, someone is throwing bombs somewhere, you don't know where. The war is never exactly with you, it's always on TV.

I have absolutely no recollection of where we were. Where we were, what this... I don't know, it's similar and like that... There was this shop near our house, where in the morning, dad and I would go to buy bread and things, then I'd buy chocolates, then we'd return home, and everything would be fine, but... Then something happens.

We have no electricity, we have no electricity all night. I'm with mom. I have no idea where dad was then or whatever. I don't know, but mom was always with me somehow. There are various interesting stories there, you know, there's no electricity, but I really loved Čokolino (something like Choco pops, n.d.r.).

I would have Čokolino for dinner, but there's no electricity, so she had some kind of heater, I don't know. You light it with a lighter, like, you light it and then you have these things, and then she would warm the milk for me on it, then I would eat Čokolino in the dark and such things, I don't know. And then you just realise these sacrifices, but, I mean, the sacrifice to you - not having normal Čokolino.

So you see from the electricity outage, the alarms are going off, you see shrapnel in the house, something happened. Dad who's upset at one point and then isn't. Then he says he'll go to the army, then he doesn't. Then he went to the army for something, then he came back quickly. Then I don't know why he wasn't there the whole time when everyone else was. And then on TV, and then "My Homeland," you know, all the songs. All our singers suddenly sing in "My Homeland," you know that it's war, and Jura Stublić has his own video, mom watches it and cries, it's also that: people... pride.

You know, from my perspective, it's like, "Man, the whole world knows this. Man, we're the strongest. Look at how many people are singing it. Those enemies will come to an end sooner or later." And that's what they said, and that was Bend Aid, and Jura Stublić, and Thompson in the end. You know, everyone's like - here. You watch it like some movie, it will come to an end at some point.

I mean, there was fear, but I wasn't aware that people were actually dying. No one around me was dying at that moment. I didn't have such stories, I just had a fear that someone would come and then they would probably kill you or something.

[...] We had that house, that apartment in the house. It was a pretty big house that actually had two yards. It had a backyard and a front yard. It had a garage, it had a grapevine above that garage, and, there, cars could be parked one or two. And as you have those three apartments, you actually have two basements and a garage. Huge house, man. It happened at one point that I came out of the

shelter when I shouldn't have and wasn't allowed. What day it was... I don't know, I saw two soldiers climbing our grapevine.
And someone said something. I concluded they were Serbs. So, like it's the enemy army, I don't know, that's climbing. That was the first time I saw someone in a military uniform live. I mean, totally, what the hell. I saw them, they didn't see me or they ignored me, climbed up and went somewhere. So, like, literally, you're now, in my home, like, someone in a guard outfit. My mom calmed me down, said these are Croats, "they're ours, let them pass, let them pass." [...] I was scared, terribly. You know, then I was like, „Ohno! Here they are". [...] We hear some gunshots. A lot of people were drinking at that time. A lot of people, those men. They were dealing with some of their frustrations, I guess, with that. Drinking in the evening, and then at one point, like, they all have guns. They would go out to the meadow and shoot. You don't know who's shooting, like, why they're shooting, what they're shooting at in the sky. What the hell, you know.
So, all those combinations... I was scared. I was scared. Those are periods, when then, you know, some family stuff comes into it, and then you're scared because of those things. You get a younger brother. He's 1990, I mean, born a year before the war. But, you know, you're aware of him, and he's a little aware. Well, he was, like, five years old when the war ended. So, he doesn't remember that, I think. But I remember him, you know? Then there's fear for him, then mom around him, then fear. Then dad went to war, so you don't know when he'll come back, so - what's with that. So, a lot of those things. And one of the biggest fears was actually when we had to leave the house.
[...]The only bigger thing that happened after the war was, like, Croatia winning the Bronze in 1998 in France. It was crazy in the neighbourhood, ordering hamburgers, it's summer, and everything's nice, here, there. We played a bit of basketball down there, but that's it. But it's not like, you know, these are people who went through the war. There are still people there, at the bottom of the street is still this problematic one, who were like. What were they, I mean, they were nothing. Croatian last name, there was some problem, or they were Muslims or whatever, I don't know. And those above were like Serbs, we were in between... [...] I remember trying to comfort my dad by saying: "Hey, there are video games that are like shooter war games. Do you want to play that since you can't go to war?" Because he literally cried one evening. I'm looking at him, you know, in the end, he suddenly left[...]. I just see photos that he and his neighbour have. They take pictures, they take pictures on the balcony at home, I have those photos where they are in military clothes with real guns on my balcony. And they take pictures next to the Croatian flag, two fingers and all, and then they... I can't grasp those details at all. What am I going to ask him now, I can't. I can but, what will he say...

Group 2 - Personal experiences

Mara Anjoli Vujić. Mara was born in Pula (Croatia) in 1974. She came to Ljubljana (Slovenia) in 1995 to study art history, and after her studies, she worked as a curator and producer for several years.

"This war influenced my whole generation, not just me. Some ideas that we had at the time with an identity that was constructed in the teenage years were left without the main purpose. Everything that we believed in was gone suddenly. It was hard for me. Pula was never involved directly in the war; it was not a war zone. What we were seeing we saw through the news of refugees that came from eastern parts of Croatia to Istria. Those were people who lived in horrible conditions and suffered. We experienced violence and war indirectly, we thought that we were lucky because this didn't happen to us. But later we realised that exactly in that process we have lost our homes. We experienced the violence in a completely different way and we raise awareness about it to this day. When I went to get my ID for the first time, I didn't know what it meant to be a Croatian or Serbian, I did not know what nationality was. I thought that I was Croatian because I was born in Croatia and always lived there. My parents never told me anything about it. We were all Slavic, but when I came to get my ID, the administrative worker discretely told me, she warned me that I was not Croatian and that I was Serbian and that I can only become Croatian if I give up my Serbian nationality and that I declare that I am Croatian, but that was completely insane to me. I did not know what it was, I declared myself as a Serbian, but I never felt like one. After they told me that I inherited it from my parents but that wasn't in my interest, because I never felt like Serbian or Croatian. I felt like a Yugoslavian because I was born that way. None of those identifications had a connection with me. I could only identify myself with my city, I always said that I was from Pula. I could maybe say that I was from Istria. Anything more than that was not the identification that I could associate myself with. I lost the criteria of nationality as important in my life. My ID card never interested me and did not communicate with me and my feelings. I would say that I identify myself with micro-location or with the world. I would more easily say that I am a citizen of the world than I am Croatian. The war sparked that in a lot of people, it was very difficult. It was difficult for many people; however, I did not care about the nationalistic provocations that occurred in the 90s. For example, suddenly in school, you got a lower score because your surname was Vujić. I could say that the provocations did not hurt me, and they showed what kind of a person is on the other side. I do know some people who changed their first and last names to be able to survive more easily in the 90s in Pula. A lot of people got fired, but my parents were not one of them, it was probably because they were in Croatia for a long time, and they were typical working-class people. They were not in important positions that could provoke some bullying and complicate their lives, I guess. Once, when I came home, I saw that

Group 2 - Personal experiences / Mara Anjoli Vujić

someone had cut out a key on the wall next to the bell, where it was written Vujić - "Van Srbi" [Out Serbs]. That was part of our everyday life in the 90s, there was a lot of impatience towards the people of Serbian nationality. I never felt like I was in danger because it was never significantly important to me whether I am Serb or not, even though the situation was intense. I had a lot of friends that were like-minded/open-minded. It was easier to survive within the group of people who were not very nationalistic. Also, Istria in general was bullied because it was "red" [ie. because of its strong anti-fascist, communist, partisan past]. Because of all that, a lot of people started going to Ljubljana. My choice was Ljubljana firstly because they had separate art studies unlike Zagreb, and secondly because I could not imagine that I failed an exam because I was from Istria. That happened to many of my friends in those times as a part of radical nationalism. People suffered a lot of discrimination at universities. I was afraid that I would leave college if that happens to me. Other than that, we used to come to Slovenia for concerts often because there were concerts from ex-Yugoslavian bands in Ljubljana, all those which were forbidden in Croatia and that's why they had concerts in Ljubljana. I knew that nationalism in Slovenia was on a lower level. When I came to Slovenia in 95', I did not watch TV for about 7 years, I didn't want to see the news. Because I felt like they poisoned us all with nationalism through TV and other media, and I didn't want to let it get under my skin. I just wanted to live in a place where nationalism was not an imperative."

Choices in the conflict

Aim:

The aim of this workshop is to explore the complex choices that individuals faced during the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s, particularly focusing on the decisions to fight or desert, through personal testimonies and discussions. This workshop aims to provide a space for young people to engage with the personal stories of individuals affected by the Yugoslav wars and to deepen their understanding of the complexities of making a choice and the process of decision-making in wartime contexts. Through testimonies, discussions, and reflections, participants will gain insights into the human experiences behind historical events and develop empathy and critical thinking skills.

Time:

2 hours

Target group:

The workshop is designed for young people aged 15 to 20 years old, with a maximum of 25 participants.

Format:

This workshop can be conducted both in-person and online, depending on the preferences and accessibility of the participants. If conducted online, a video conferencing platform can be utilised.

Key words:

Choice, decision-making, desertion, military service

Materials:

- Testimonies from individuals who faced the choice to fight or desert during the Yugoslav wars.
- Testimonies from people who helped those who deserted to find a safe haven away from the conflict.
- Writing materials for participants (if conducting activities requiring writing or note-taking).

Choices in the conflict

Description:

- **Introduction (15 minutes):**

Welcome participants and introduce the topic of the workshop: exploring the choices individuals faced during the Yugoslav wars.

Provide a brief overview of the historical context and significance of the Yugoslav wars in the 1990s.
See page 15.

- **Testimony Sharing (30 minutes):**

Assign two different testimonies to each participant (Attachment 1). Invite them to actively listen to or read the testimonies and reflect on the difficult choices faced by the people involved.

- **Group Discussion (30 minutes):**

Divide participants into small groups and facilitate a discussion on the testimonies shared.
Encourage participants to express their thoughts, questions, and emotions regarding the choices discussed.
Explore the ethical, moral, and practical considerations that influenced individuals' decisions during wartime.

Examples of guiding questions:

- Some witnesses discuss why they chose not to fight or join the army. How do they describe that moment, and where does the choice not to fight originate from, according to their interpretation?
- What differences in experiences exist between those who chose not to serve in the army when their country was at peace and those who decided it during a conflict?
- What material difficulties do young people who decide not to fight have to face? What about emotional and moral difficulties?

- What psychological consequences do men who have fought have to face, and are there differences in the testimonies? What about their family?
- What images and words do the female humanitarian aid workers use to describe the young refugee defectors they assisted?

Encourage the group to write down keywords and topics.

- **Reflection and Personal Response (20 minutes)**:

Provide time for individual reflection on the testimonies and group discussion.
Encourage single participants to write down their reflections, questions, or insights regarding the choices individuals faced during the Yugoslav wars.

- **Whole Group Sharing and Discussion (25 minutes)**:

Invite participants to share their reflections and insights with the whole group.
Facilitate a larger discussion on the complexities of decision-making during times of conflict and the impact of war on individuals and communities.

- **Conclusion and Takeaways (20 minutes)**:

Summarise key points and takeaways from the workshop.
Encourage participants to continue reflecting on the topic and seek out additional resources for further learning.

ANNEX 1: TRANSCRIPTION OF THE TESTIMONIES

Danilo Amadei

Councillor of the Municipality of Parma (Italy) in the 1990s: he was a conscientious objector in Italy, he collaborated in the reception of deserters from the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. "Conscientious objectors" are those who oppose military service in times of war and peace for religious, ethical, and moral convictions. In various European countries during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, many associations of young men sprang up who refused to serve in the army, asking to serve in civil bodies to assist and help the civilians. To this day, it is a recognised right in Europe.

"I have always tried to engage in issues of peace and international solidarity. I was one of the first conscientious objectors to the military in Italy and I was also a conscientious objector to military spending, and these choices also led to some complaints and two trials and other things but, in short, all resolved very well: my rejection of conscription was not recognised as a crime.
[...]I was indeed among the first in Italy and here in our region.
And which I had the opportunity to read, obviously thanks to enlightened educators and which are those choices that you then make when you are at that age that you carry forward to the end. So the decision to become a conscientious objector was always within me, and I also had the opportunity, and the good fortune, that the passing of the law coincided with the time when I would have had to do my conscription. That is why I was able to choose; naturally, it wasn't as easy as taking a nice walk in the park, because at the beginning it wasn't allowed that an alternative civil service could be done - outside the barracks or outside the armed forces - in short, like the financial police or the fire brigade or the forest rangers. So being able to obtain civil service obviously involved a lot of disobedience with enormous complaints and delays. In short, I had to wait almost four years to be able to start my civil service, which then lasted 23 months. I was around for almost six years. But this allowed me to meet extraordinary characters [...]
[...]The other aspect is that at the beginning we really hoped that the European Union and the UN could have a role that was a war prevention role.
We imagined that after what had happened in Slovenia there was the possibility of intervening, in short in Croatia to prevent the conflict from erupting even further between different countries that were previously in the same Federation. Instead, we have seen the total inability of the European

Danilo Amadei

Union and the UN not only to impose but even to propose a line of operations that could activate solutions other than those of war. And then, oh well, the cases of Srebrenica and others were paradoxical in demonstrating the inability of this.
Unfortunately, these thirty years have taught us nothing, absolutely nothing. Nothing has been done to prevent wars from starting.
[...]In '94, however, having won the elections and being us - that is, I was also on the council - it was also easier to try to achieve what we also asked of the previous administration. The two main projects were those of welcoming those we called conscientious objectors, especially through Trieste and Gorizia in particular, and the important thing is to put pressure on the Italian government and Europe so that they were recognized with political asylum and as refugees these conscientious objectors. They were called deserters, but for us, they were conscientious objectors...[...]I remember some doctors, a nurse, precisely this lady who then remained as head of Caritas. The husband already had a job too. I remember a few people who then stopped, but because as happens in most migrations: the most desperate people certainly don't leave. People leave who have resources, who have culture, who have tools, who often also have a history behind them that has allowed this maturation of political and also ethical and ideal choice, so many of these people were people, culture, in short, people who then returned to do their work as soon as possible, in many cases...
"The aspect that scares me most: is that military alliances have taken the place of political institutions. I believe that together with this frightening increase in military spending, truly frightening, these are the aspects that give us less confidence in the future."

Adele Mazzola

In the 1990s, she worked at the Italian Institute of Culture in Belgrade (Serbia). She was also a member of Women in Black, an international network of women committed to peace who actively oppose injustice, war, militarism, and other forms of violence. They work at the intersection of military violence and male domestic violence. Women in Black is a testament to the power of unity and diversity, encompassing women from various ethnic and national backgrounds who cooperate across these (and other) differences in the shared pursuit of justice and peace. They adopt nonviolent and nonaggressive forms of action in which they appear dressed in black and in mourning: garrisons, demonstrations, leafleting, entering military bases and other forbidden areas, and assistance.

"In the second half of the 20th century, Italy remained faithful to Art. 11 of the Italian Constitution (the Italian State repudiates all forms of aggressive armed conflict), only to then go to war in the Balkans in 1999. Italy's participation in the war with NATO was the "peak of the shock". In the Parma committee, we were very mobilised and strongly against it, and we participated in the protests from Parma (from Alviano, where there was an air base).
In 1992 a war began that could be seen from Italy, Gorizia, Trieste and Ancona. We wanted to do something against the war, but what could we do? Support for the civilian population, and support for those who repudiated the war ("deserters", was the only way to define them, because Yugoslav legislation did not include conscientious objectors or draft dodgers). The Coordination against the war in Yugoslavia was then founded in Parma, but since not much could be done, we started with a "one rifle at a time" campaign, trying to dismantle the war in small pieces. We thus began to create bridges with women's associations, or similar, to encourage the removal and escape of deserters. It was a war that Europe repudiated, but which European political interests supported.
It was not possible to take people and transport them, and the local associations provided us with

Adele Mazzola

what was essentially needed for the transport of deserters: their name and surname, a way to identify them which is the basis for organising the trip. The law declared that deserters would have the right to reception, but the problem arose at the borders, where the authorities rejected (entitled) migrants. We therefore went to pick them up across the border, organising caravans to bring them here, not without risks: at the border, we could be stopped and, as today, the authorities could refuse entry in a completely discretionary way.
[...]Then they began to deal with urgent matters: learning the language, sorting out the documents (there were frequent fights with the Police Headquarters, but with a little perseverance it was possible to bring the asylum requests into institutions that were not yet fully accepting and unequivocally take care of the requests), support their school careers and guide them towards work, support them in accessing care and medical visits... this was done by seeking the involvement of civil society and competent people concerning some issues (a major issue was that of the recognition of qualifications and professional careers: undergraduates, graduates... in medicine, for example, arrived; in some cases the papers and documents certifying their qualifications had been burned, especially those of those arriving from Bosnia, from Sarajevo)."

Bettina Barbieri

She is originally from Lower Modenese (Italy) she was an animator and volunteer of the Il Cerchio association which operated in Croatia and Bosnia between 1992 and 1996. After the end of this experience, she continued with exchange and twinning activities between the schools of Mostar (Bosnia-Herzegovina) and Modena (Italy).

"We got to know the realities of the refugee camps and from there the organisation of regular aid began to support the families of the refugee camps, some of which were even further towards the mountains, going as far as Mostar. We managed to arrive in the summer of '94: we had our first contact in Mostar where we entered a few weeks after the end of the bombings, therefore with the barricades still present, the containers as barricades. I have the memory of my first bath in the river, there was no running water, so we washed in the river: an image of thinness very similar to that of the concentration camp, in the sense of very thin, skeletal young men.
We begin to ask ourselves what is happening, and which side we should be on, because then, I believe, one of the most serious difficulties of the Bosnian conflict was having difficulty understanding, depending on where you were, who the "good guy" was and the "bad one", because certainly with the Bosnian people in Mostar, one could not help but be Bosnian and therefore be on the side of the Bosnians, because it was certainly clear who had attacked, who the Croatian side was; then in other places the Croats were the victims, as well as in some places where the Serbs were. Then it is clear that history has told us that there are certainly great culprits, but certainly what struck me the most was this: the difficulty in some moments, depending on where you were: "What am I doing?" this is what comes to mind especially when I think back to Mostar. to begin our journey also towards Sarajevo, at that time still a somewhat besieged city, which then in the summer of '94 we were unable to reach because it was still under siege. In the refugee camp, we know young people who have escaped from Sarajevo and from here a thought arises regarding the possibility of welcoming young refugees, including deserters. I remember that on every return trip, there was generally always some refugee, often young guys who arrived in Ancona without documents or who in any case the police didn't want to let them disembark and so there were these sit-ins where we occupied the ship, we said: "until they get off we don't get off either" and when we were lucky we had a friend, a financier who went on trips with us and with him it was much easier to get them ashore. I have this memory, from here also started the need to do something for some of them which then resulted, in practical terms, in the reception of 3 young men, one of whom then went to

Bettina Barbieri

Milan to Ilaria and two instead were initially welcomed by the sister and her husband who were recently married and then they remained for at least a year and a half and then subsequently in a small adapted apartment and here also began the whole part linked to reception, the difficulty of reception and we also had a quite difficult experience, because one of these young men, upon his return to Sarajevo, at a time when he had a relapse, he had started using substances and told us a series of lies to get money, I remember that we met when we understood what had happened saying to each other: "but How did we fall for it? We have always said to teach fishing and not to give money in hand." Even there, in hindsight, we stopped to think what it might mean for a twenty-year-old boy to escape from his own city, among other things they had escaped from the famous airport tunnel. I remember that when we returned to visit them a few years later one of them accompanied us to a place where he had remained prisoner as a soldier, captured as a soldier by the Serbs for a few weeks and I have the memory, as if it were in this moment, his tremor in passing through those places that he had wanted us to see anyway. It was a continuous reversal: good and evil, deception and truth that continued to mix and each time they forced you to review the reasons for a behaviour that could have been negative. I think this was the most difficult thing to explain because there were no more certainties and perhaps the only thing that could help was being in a relationship with that person. After all, it wasn't the great war, everything was so blurry, just an image of greys which it was difficult to understand, perhaps sometimes something, but in general then the culprit, the victim and the executioner were transformed in some moments. This was truly a life lesson, also concerning the idea of what a conflict of that type can be, which is a civil war, which found families in which suddenly they no longer recognized each other.

Nicole Corritore

Born in an Italian-Croatian family, between 1992 and 2000, operated in Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina in projects of international cooperation. She has collaborated with the foreign editorial staff of Italian radio networks. She writes about environmental issues, international cooperation and human rights. A professional journalist, she manages relations with the press, the press offices of local authorities, NGOs, associations and other institutions. At the moment she collaborates with the Italian research centre the Balkans and Caucasus Observatory (OBCT).

"My volunteering began by taking the title of a book by Luca Rastello, "War at Home," because I come from an Italian Yugoslavian family, an Italian father and a mother from Rijeka who had come to live in Italy, where she then married my father. But since childhood, I have always gone on holiday to an island in Croatia, where my grandmother was born, a house built by my great-grandfather. So my volunteering started at home with some of my friends from there who in 1991, as soon as the war broke out in Croatia, started calling us to try to leave Croatia and avoid being drafted. It started through phone calls, for short receptions, because in that period they enrolled those who had served in the military, the military service, but in particular corps and who didn't work, but studied. So if they didn't find you at home when the postcard arrived, they couldn't draft you. From there, in 1991, let's say, this silent coming and going began, which then, over the years, in connection with some groups and associations in the network, created an anti-war campaign that saw a series of groups online from Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, and other countries of the Yugoslav Federation. Initially, we tried to help, especially the dodgers and deserters.

In the following years, Milan, where I was born and lived for thirty years, became one of the main arrival hubs, where people waited to obtain a visa to go elsewhere, from Germany to Australia to South America, etc. Moreover, in Italy, a law was passed that allowed even those who did not want to fight to have a residence permit for humanitarian reasons. After this, I came into contact with the Pro Bosnia Committee, a committee founded by a Bosnian couple who had lived in Italy for forty years. Therefore, I began, like many others, to collect aid in front of supermarkets and help the Bosnian refugees who arrived. We're talking from 1992 onwards. My house in Milan became like that of others; it became a place of transit."

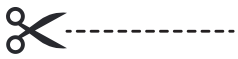
Ozren Žunec

Born in 1950. He spent his working life as a sociology professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb (Croatia). He focused on the sociology of the military and war. At the beginning of the war in Croatia, he joined the Croatian Army. He was wounded near Pokupsko. In the government of Ivica Račan in 2000, he became the head of the intelligence service, but he resigned from the position after only three months. In 1993, he initiated a petition with colleagues, demanding Franjo Tuđman's resignation from power. In 2007, he published the book "Goli život" (Naked Life). Societal Dimensions of the Serbian Rebellion in Croatia.

"Considering its nature, more and more civilians are becoming involved [in wars]. And on the other hand, the political position of the armed forces is such that civilians also participate in war? In the sense that citizens are called into the army and then they defend their homeland. It's also something that hasn't always been the case.
That dates back to the French Revolution, when for the first time, in 1793, citizens were called to join the army? And then it was the citizen's army, the French one. Now you have three processes that led to civilians being more and more involved in these matters. And now there is a general moment with war that often happens, and that is that war actually represents the breakdown of society. The breakdown of social values, the breakdown of laws, the breakdown of everything. Because war is actually contrary to everything that religion, for example, and morality teach. Yes. I always tell my military students (students in military studies) and I said: 'Look, the basic rule of all the world's religions, but really all of them, is 'do not do unto others what you would not want others to do unto you.' That applies to everything except in war. In war, you have to do exactly what you don't want him to do to you. You don't want him to bomb your city, but you will bomb his city for that reason. So, war is a 'verkehrte welt,' as Hegel would say - an inverted world. Everything is different. Things are breaking here. It's not normal to kill people. In war, you have to kill people.
Otherwise, there is no war. You can't expect war to be like a football match. There must be slaughter, there must be dead, there must be people without legs, writhing with intestines scattered in the mud, etc. Dead children are always in the ditches. Whether anyone wanted it or not, it always happens. It simply has to be. War is horrible. But very often it also leads to the society falling apart. And then you have total anomie which means, and this is your question, 'Isn't that dangerous even for your own states?' Yes, it starts like this. Then you know, anyone can get caught. And you have different degrees here. I found it interesting to observe those social breakdowns.

Ozren Žunec

The disappearance of order in America and in Japan. When major natural disasters occur. And if some hurricane sweeps through these parts of America, there in the south of USA, in the Gulf of Mexico where this constantly happens, there you have a breakdown of the system. Then the police loot the supermarkets. If you've seen those pictures - Katrina. The military came out, they were up to here in the water with guns and prevented total looting. And you have a society that is seemingly very well organised, proper, and so on. But it breaks down in the face of disaster, like a hurricane. And there are those tsunamis in Japan, where not a single store is left standing. And where the Japanese were standing in line. They stood in front of the stores and waited for them to distribute what they needed. So, you have societies that are very strong, that don't break down easily. You have societies that break down easily and quickly put everyone in danger. [Considering the Croatian War of Independence (Domovinski rat)] Well, we can say somewhere in the middle. No, not the worst. Because it hasn't been universalized. People weren't really looting in broad daylight, anyone on the street, etc. It still had a national character. It was relatively important for the choice of victim. So there wasn't a complete collapse. Moreover, I think Croatia actually did very well in the war, because the society and the system worked. And relatively well, even democratically, which is interesting. I mean you mentioned our letter from 1993, it's interesting that nothing happened to any of us. In the middle of the war, we demanded from the Supreme Commander, or the President of the Republic, to resign. There was no reaction from Pantovčak. I mean, there were no such things like you being arrested, beaten, killed, etc. I mean, that could be expected. But then again, it couldn't be expected because that wasn't the nature of that regime. So it still functioned democratically despite the war. That's interesting. I mean, they let the opposition talk whatever they wanted and nonsense, etc. But they did their thing and didn't shut them down. [...] Croatia did well in the war. Croatia didn't fall apart. Croatia preserved democracy. Which didn't really exist. I mean it was just being created then. You were learning about what the parliament is, what elections are, how it works, who's who, what the institutions are, the constitution..."



Dora Novak

She is a psychologist and reality therapist: she assisted - as a therapist - men who had fought during the conflict in former Yugoslavia.

"Not accurate statistics, but some impressions. Yes, upon return, there was a massive attack on health. Quite a few people, especially men, return to a situation where they can't assume their role as they would like. There have been a large number of cases of cancer, strokes, and heart attacks. [This happens when the war stops; when that challenge for the body ceases] And then these processes start. For a long time, maybe they haven't experienced feeling safe. Healing from trauma can begin the moment a person feels safe. Here in exile, some people relaxed a bit. But, indeed, assuming their role as hosts in a devastated household was highly demanding. And they had already relaxed in hotels, became somewhat depressed, fell ill for various reasons, neglected some relationships and lost some ways they functioned before. [...]But refugees from Bosnia - difficult. They were mostly in their milieu here. Considering the conditions of the local population and socially vulnerable citizens, it was not advisable at all to write and speak about their needs. Everyone was in dire need [residents of Split]. There were losses, deaths, job losses, companies going under, and living a tough life with little money. They could imagine that some humanitarian aid had come to help Bosnian refugees while no one was helping them. It was sensitive, and it all got complicated. I had a salary of 150 marks; I remember at that age when we were commenting to our worker union that it was ridiculous that we had to set aside one-third of our salary to pay six months' worth of school books for two elementary school children. Those were the ratios. Someone providing support was also in need. We knew well and felt that difference. We were still going back home, I had continuity, no one died for me, and my husband and I had jobs. The kids went to the same school, and so on, but... We felt the pressure and the demands of the role we found ourselves in. I wondered what a psychologist could do, pretending that nothing was happening. I was on a team for marriage and family, and I was in many stressful situations. I remember counselling a veteran who was getting divorced. He sat across from me with a machine gun on his knees. He is sitting across from me, and we're talking about what he will do with his kids and wife. So, everything was charged. Everything was happening in that same whirlpool. I mean, you are aware that it's different, but sometimes you even envy someone."

Husein Salić

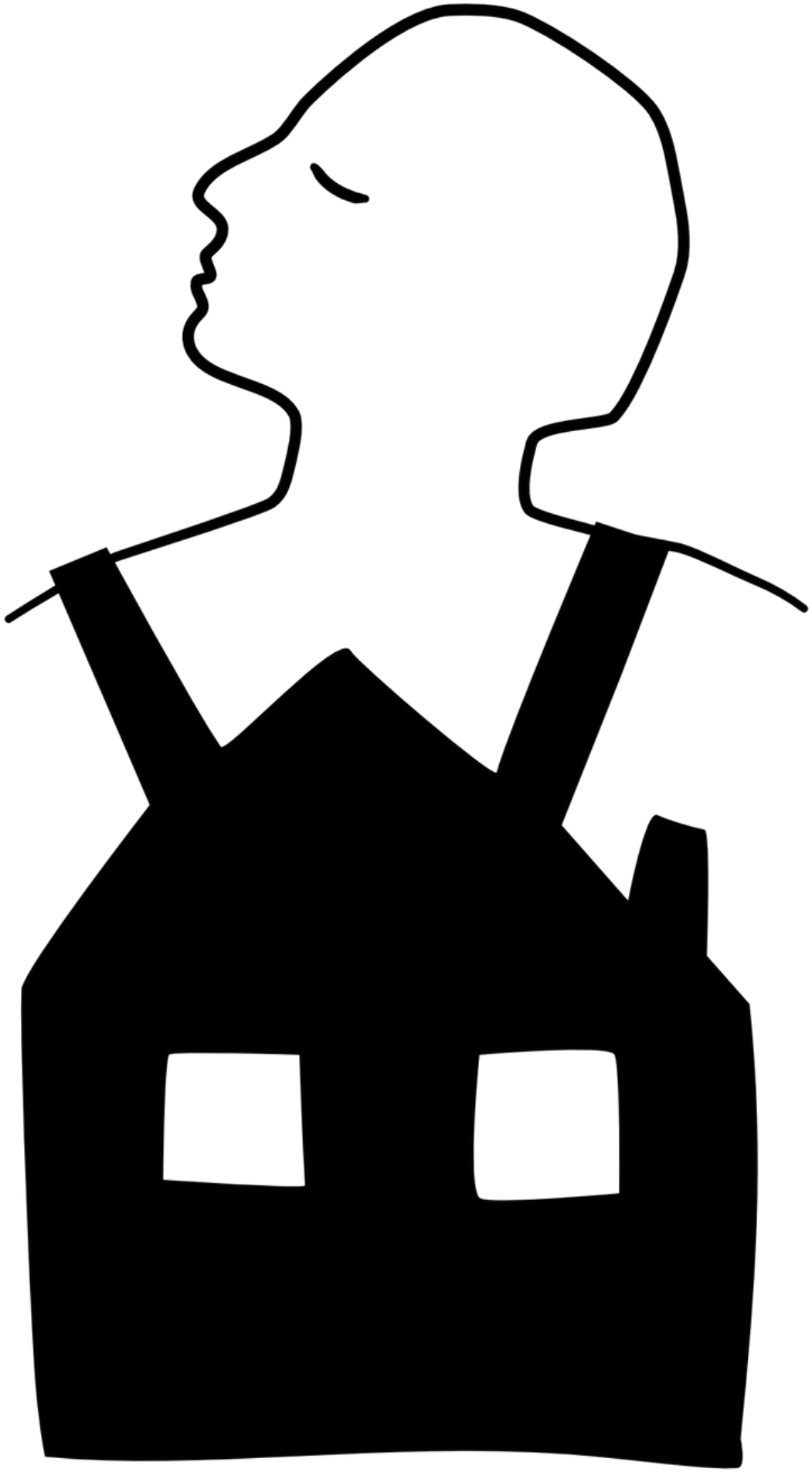
Bosnian, he was drafted at a very young age. After deciding to desert, he faces very dangerous escapes across different borders. He carried out various jobs between Italy and Slovenia while trying to get news of the people who were stranded in the conflict area. In a camp, he meets an Italian volunteer who provides assistance to war refugees, with whom he will marry and go to live permanently in Italy. In 2001, his parents also settled in Italy.

"[...] I finished high school in 1991 and I was supposed to serve in the People's Army of Yugoslavia, as is the custom...The armed conflict began and the People's Army sided with the Serbs and therefore it was evident that it was not something to do, even though some of my conscript friends did it, they went to do something, because it was not conceivable to do something different because it was punishable by law. But the more time passed it became clear that it was better not to go to the front. And so when I received the call to do military service I didn't go, I went to Slovenia, because I knew a friend there [...] and not being able to stay at home, because then he would come looking for you.
After that my parents went to Croatia and from '93 I came to Italy, and in '94 [...] I tried to go and visit my parents in Zagreb but I couldn't go through the borders because there was a conflict at the time between the Bosnians and the Croats and then I stopped in a refugee camp because I in turn had relatives and it wasn't very far away, I stopped for a few days. I was an illegal immigrant in Croatia, and I was an illegal immigrant in Slovenia, because there too they did roundups, so to speak: they took people and handed them over to the Croatian or Slovenian border. Since at that time, there was a conflict between Croats and Bosnians, the illegal immigrants, let's say, without having committed any crime but not having permission to stay in Slovenia, they took you to the border: you went from the situation of the condition of those without documents to those who exchange among prisoners of war.

Between '91 and '92, I was a deserter for the People's Army of Yugoslavia, which was the only legally recognized formed structure. And it wasn't something easily applicable because you didn't do something like that unless you had valid reasons... That is, in the sense when you do something like that [...] it was clear that someone would get into trouble by being a deserter of the People's army because now, in retrospect, it is easy to think about the war because we know what happened but at the beginning no one, including them, but no one thought the war would happen. So if war is

Husein Salić

impossible what happens, being a deserter from the People's Army was not an entirely easy thing, but t it was a decision to be made. He, my dad, told me: be careful what you do because you know well how it ends. That is, you end up badly, right? but oh well, the conflict had started, initially in Slovenia than in Croatia and it was enough to look a little, that is, a little more distance, try to understand. In short, it was understandable how the army behaved towards the Serb and Croat populations and then probably how it would also happen in Bosnia later.
Before, I was a defector from the former Yugoslavia, because I was a citizen of the former Yugoslavia! I recognized myself in those values: the watchwords of the former Yugoslavia were "Brotherhood and unity", I grew up with those and let's say I feel good about unity within a state in which populations, ethnic groups, or anything else as citizens of that state not belonging to a group or anything else or a religion.
At the beginning of the conflict, the parties were divided along ethnic and religious lines and this conflicted with how I saw things. My group now had to be Bosnian Muslims, except that I didn't... in my vision of the world it wasn't made up like that. So mine weren't mine, the old ones were no longer there, the alternative was even worse, so I found myself a deserter a second time, this time I'm a deserter with the Bosnians, because being Bosnian...
In a conflict, one defends the state as a patriot, if ever there is a state to defend, then what is one essentially defending? In essence, it defends life, home and family, that is, but then at that time our country, our house had already fallen into the possession of the opposing forces and there was no need to defend the house because it was not possible. Furthermore, there wasn't even a formation in place, there wasn't a regular army... Mostly at the beginning, there were local gangs, those who had funds to buy rifles they created an operational unit which then often they were the lords, let's say not quite how to say... They are often criminals, at the beginning of conflicts, who take over and manage things.



Memoryscape

Aim:

Reflect on the concept of home, the creation of a home, the elements that make a place home, and their similarities and differences

Time:

90 minutes

Target group:

High school students, no previous knowledge is needed for the workshop

Format:

In situ

Key words:

Home, moving, belonging, home-making

Materials:

- Papers with the extracts from the interviews,
- white papers,
- pencils and coloured markers

Description:

- **Introduction (15 min)**

The facilitator divides the participants into smaller groups of 3/4 people. Each group receives papers with extracts from the interviews (Annex). Read the extracts from the interviews and discuss the related questions:

- Which places did the interviewees mention when thinking about their home?
- Which elements connected to these places are important for them?
- Can you associate the following ideas with the interviews:

CHILDHOOD - COMMUNITY - FAMILY - NOSTALGIA - BELONGING - IDENTITY

- **Workshop (60 min)**

Back into the larger group, the facilitator suggests the participants to keep these interviews in mind during the next task.

Individually, the participants are invited to:

1) Think about an important place, and that they would consider "home". This place could be a room in their house, but also a public place (garden, park…), or other locations that they consider home (a store, a bar, a place of devotion, a community centre…). It might also be a mental, or imagined place.

Reflect on:

- Which elements of this place are important to you?
- Which feelings and sensations are connected to this place?
- Can you associate the following ideas with the place that you choose:

CHILDHOOD - COMMUNITY - FAMILY - NOSTALGIA - BELONGING - IDENTITY

2) Draw this place as a map on white paper.

3) On the back of the paper, write:

- 1 song that makes you think about this place;
- 1 scent that makes you think about this place;
- 1 detail that could make the place come alive for someone who had never been there.

4) Divide in pairs, and exchange the map with your partner.

5) Have 10 minutes for individual reflection:

- have a look at the map, can you tell which place is represented?
- if possible, listen to the song with your headphones.

6) Have 20 minutes of discussion in pairs. Ask your partner:

- Which place did you choose?
- Why is it important for you?
- Which memories are connected to this place?

- **Reflection (15 min)**

Back in the whole group, discuss together following the questions:

- Did the location chosen by your partner surprise you? Why or why not?
- Which elements were similar, in the locations you consider home? Which ones were different?
- In your opinion, what makes a place a home?

ANNEX:

✂----------

Simonida

My favourite place in my grandparents' house was the kitchen, because there we used to meet and spend time together. When we moved to Italy in 1991 … the house we moved in reminded me of my house in Serbia, because it had a courtyard that we shared with other farmers. We met very often in this courtyard, we shared little things and we talked about our day.

✂----------

Valentina

Today, if I had to associate a place with the concept of home, it might sound crazy, but I would choose a river, the river Drina. I am the daughter of Drina river. The river is a starting point, a closing point, and also a place of closure. When I think about the split between two worlds, I think about the river.

✂----------

Petra

When I think about the apartment in Sarajevo, in which I lived during my 20s, I first think about books. And the old family table, it was of my great grandmother. And the smells. The scent of the linden tree that was under my window. The linden tree was then damaged during the war and cut down.

Irena

The place that reminds me of my home is park Tašmajden. And, when I was a bit older, the bus, because in Belgrade I had to use the bus to move around the city.

Mario

What reminds me of my home, my early childhood, is our small room. The room had a view of the mountains, and when we would wake up early in the morning, during autumn and winter when it was cold, it was the best feeling, to be in the warmth of the room and look at the sun coming up.

Museum curators: personal objects

Aim:

Reflect on the concept of home starting from personal objects; better understand the importance of biographies and personal stories to understand complex historical events

Time:

90 minutes

Target group:

high school students, no previous knowledge is requested. For younger students, it is suggested to spend more time on the historical introduction (page 15).

Format:

In situ

Key words:

Personal stories, objects, wars in former Yugoslavia, home and belonging

Materials:

- Papers and pens;
- printed extracts from the interviews and photos of the related objects.

Description:

- Introduction (15 min)

The facilitator introduces the War Childhood Museum, located in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (War Childhood Museum).

The War Childhood Museum holds a comprehensive collection of personal belongings, documents, photographs, letters and other memorabilia on war experience, but also an archive of audio-video testimonies narrated by individuals whose childhoods have been affected by armed conflicts. The War Childhood Museum aims to provide a platform for coming to terms with the past on a personal level. It is only through the sharing and exchange of lived experiences that a better understanding of alternative narratives can be reached and substantial changes and sustainable reconciliation achieved.

The War Childhood Museum enables all voices to be heard and documented, regardless of national, ethnic, religious, cultural, racial, gender, and geographic backgrounds as well as experiences, beliefs, or world views. Every person whose childhood is being or has been affected by armed conflict and would like to donate their memorabilia and to share their personal story of war experience may participate in the project.

(source: Research methodology - War Childhood Museum)

With the group, the facilitator explores the objects and the personal stories available on the web page of the museum, at: A Glimpse Of Our Collection - War Childhood Museum

- **Workshop (60 min)**

The facilitator divides the participants into smaller groups of 2/3 people each.

Each group receives a photo of an object, and extracts from interviews in which is described the connection of the interviewee with the object, their significance, their relation to the war in the 1990s in former Yugoslavia, and the concept of home and belonging (Annex).

The interviews were taken in the context of the project "Moj Dom" with people from former Yugoslavia, including economic migrants, second generations, refugees and people who moved because of the wars in former Yugoslavia.

Starting from the interviews, each group has the task to write a short text, similar to the ones that they have seen on the website of the War Childhood Museum. The text should be around 900 characters (around 4 paragraphs) and be written in first person, as the examples from the Museum.

Suggest the groups to reflect on:

- Which information to include?
- Why is the object important?
- How does the object relate to the concept of "home"?

As the groups have prepared the texts for the different objects, the participants should place the images and their texts in the working space with tape. As the exhibition is set, each group presents their object and story to the others.

- **Reflection (15 min)**

As all the groups have presented their objects, the facilitator discusses with them:

- Do you think objects are a good way to talk about these difficult topics (war, displacement, belonging, identity?...)? Why or why not?
- Which other elements could be used to tell personal stories?

ANNEX:

Group 1

Iva

Iva is from Zadar, Croatia. She was born in 1984.
Iva was not even 7 when the war started. In the summer of 1991, she fled to Germany together with her mom and her two sisters. She lived in Germany for one year with her family, except for her father, who stayed in Croatia because of work.
Once returned to Zadar, in 1992 and 1993, Iva spent the summer with Italian volunteers who would come to the area to support kids whose families were affected by the war, by bringing them school utilities, taking them to the beach, organizing workshops, playdates, visiting their homes.
Because of the war, half of her house had been destroyed and they were financially in a bad situation: only her father was working, there were 4 kids in the house, animals to work with in fields, fruit and vegetables they self-produced… Her mom cooked a lot to make them forget about the war. Her mom cooked a lot also for the volunteers: it was a way that she could show her gratitude, as they "had put their life aside to spend time with them".
In 1993, the volunteers had a program to bring children to Italy for the summer months. Iva joined them in 1994 when she was 10. Some people accompanied them from Zadar to Ancona, all night long by ferry. Their host families were there waiting for them.

When going to Italy, she didn't take anything with her. However, when she got there, Sara (her 16-year-old host sister) gave her a dog plush toy for her to feel better, and Iva still has it. The toy was one of the things that she brought with her when she was going to college. Today, her own kids are not even allowed to play with that puppy - Iva says jokingly - because she's very protective of those memories. After being back, she also kept in contact with her family in Italy for 3-4 years by sending letters, before Sara went to college and then they gradually lost contact.
Iva now lives in Zagreb with her husband and three kids. She recently wrote a children's book: it's a story about earthquakes, in particular about getting through the stress caused by the earthquake that hit Croatia in 2020. The message here is to help kids feel safe in their own house. Iva's experience of an unstable sense of home played an important role in her writing this story.

Group 1 / Iva

photo: Codici

Group 2

Biljana

Biljana was born in Jagodina, Serbia, on November 17, 1984.
She lived in Jagodina until she was 18 years old, where she finished elementary and high school, and then went to study Serbian language and literature in Belgrade. She became a journalist.
Life in Belgrade though became very difficult. As it became unbearable to stay in Belgrade because of the bombing, she returned home to her parents in Jagodina and got a job at the radio station, where she became the editor of the daily program.
Because of the war conditions, Biljana had little money, and therefore she began to think about leaving her hometown. Biljana enrolled for master studies at the Institute for Humanitarian Studies in Ljubljana in the Anthropology of Everyday Life and Media Studies program and was accepted through a scholarship. Thanks to the scholarship, she was able to move to Ljubljana in 2002.
When thinking about her home in Jagodina, Biljana associates it with music, food, and the family kitchen. Considering the objects, the most important for Biljana are the ones that were given to her by her family and close ones. For example, she has a carpet that was given to her by her mother, when she moved away, as a talisman to bring her luck and a good atmosphere in her new home. The "magic carpet" was given to her mother by her grandmother, on the day of her wedding. Biljana put the carpet where she needed the most luck, which at that moment was at her job, to bring new projects and fortune.

When asked what home means to her and where she was happiest and felt most at home, Biljana replies that it's really hard to say. She says that it is important to feel accepted, that you are not some "alien" or some "foreign", but that you are part of a community. It is important to have people you love close by, to do what makes you happy, to have freedom, and to be able to think freely, and act freely. And that you are not constrained because of your origin or for other characteristics that you have.
Today Biljana can't say where her home is. Every time she goes back to Jagodina is not the same place she remembers, same for Belgrade. And then when she's back in Ljubljana, there are things that bother her, because she's still a foreigner, even after 20 years. She says that people who immigrate always feel like outsiders. »What is home« is a difficult question.

Group 2 / Biljana

photo: Peace Institute

Group 3

Ognjen

Ognjen was born on April 29, 1976 in Sarajevo. When asked why he moved from Sarajevo, Ognjen explained that there is a long story behind it. His father was not responsible enough to provide for the family. As a result, his parents fought a lot and later separated. Ognjen moved with his mother to Germany, because she got a job there. This was a few months before the outbreak of war in Sarajevo, in 1992. Ognjen was 15 years old at the time.
After 9 months, Ognjen and his brother returned to Serbia, to Užice (his father's hometown), because his brother wanted to study. In the end, they moved to Novi Sad, where Ognjen finished high school and studied history at the university.
When asked why he moved to Slovenia, Ognjen replied that it was related to his love situation. His brother got married in Ljubljana in 2008 and when he attended the wedding, Ognjen met a girl, with whom he corresponded for some time after. Because of her, he later decided to move to Ljubljana. He says that it is difficult to say where his home is. He has fond childhood memories of Sarajevo. Sarajevo is a part of him, and this part of the Bosnian identity is absolutely living inside him. He is both a Bosnian and a Serb. National identity was not that important to his parents, and he is grateful to them for that. Because of this, he was all the more shocked when war broke out.
Today, he feels most at home in Novi Sad because he spent his 20s and 30s there, and that's when he socialized the most. He says: "I perceive Sarajevo as a city and not as a connection with people. I love the people there, but I don't know them. In Novi Sad, however, I have many memories with the people I was connected with".

When asked which object makes him most think about his home, Ognjen shows the chess set. The set is the clearest connection he has to his grandfather's home in Sarajevo. It is the set on which Ognjen learned to play chess, his grandfather taught him how to play. The chess set was handmade by a Slovenian man, who gave it to his grandfather. The man was a carpenter, to whom his grandfather did him a favour, and in exchange, he said he would make with wood whatever his grandfather wanted (a kitchen, a bed…). The grandfather asked for the chess set. His grandfather took it with him when he fled the war from Sarajevo. He was able to bring the chess set to Novi Sad, and now this chess set travelled with Ognjen back to Slovenia and completed the whole circle. Ognjen would love to find the family of the Slovenian man who built the set to tell them this story.

Group 3 / Ognjen

photo: Peace Institute

Group 4

Igor

Igor was born on January 14, 1978, in Sarajevo. Of Italian origin, Igor's father was a Catholic, while his mother was an Orthodox Serbian.
As the conflict started in Bosnia and Herzegovina, he remembers spending a lot of time in basements, where they hid looking for shelter. After one and a half years, they were able to leave the city. The exit from the city was turbulent and dangerous. They had to pass through territories controlled by Serbian and Croatian forces. In the end, he fled to his aunt who lived in Slovenia.
He stayed in Ljubljana for 4 years. After Ljubljana, he moved to Toronto, Canada, where he spent a total of twenty years. He lived in Chicago, Cuba, New Zealand, France, and Australia. He finally came back to Ljubljana and then to Rijeka, in Croatia.
After 20 years, 2 other continents, and 100 cities, he notes that although he doesn't feel bad anywhere, in his soul he feels like he is from Sarajevo. He feels in his heart that when he visits Sarajevo, he really is visiting home because his father's grave is there, his family is there, his family's families are there, and he grew up there. Sarajevo is his special city, and the feeling he gets in Sarajevo cannot be found anywhere else.
But he says that if he moved back to Sarajevo now, he wouldn't feel at home. He says: "I would go somewhere that is fictitious and at this moment it doesn't exist". Sarajevo was surrounded for four years and after the war, everything changed. The kind of life that existed when he was young and lived there is no more. This home has disappeared and is no longer the definition of home, even though both he and the other Sarajevo residents resist this realization.

The object that reminds him most of Sarajevo is Vučko. Vučko was the hero of a cartoon created by Nedeljko Dragic, published in several daily and weekly Yugoslavian newspapers, and became the mascot for the Winter Olympic Games, which took place in Sarajevo in 1984. He remembers: "I was very young during the Olympics of 1984 and we had in our apartment a brown and white Vučko plush. And it stayed on the television. Or on the dresser next to the television".

Group 4 / Igor

Image source:File:Sarajevo Safeta-Hadzica 2011-11-11 (2).jpg - Wikimedia Commons (Safeta Hadžića street in Sarajevo, 11 November 2011, author: Milan Suvajac).

Group 5

Mara

Mara was born in Pula in 1974.
Pula is the largest city in Istria. Mara thinks that the people there are nice, open, and tolerant and thinks that they are much more friendly and tolerant than other parts of Croatia. There are quite a few civil initiatives in Pula, there was a punk culture, and the alternative scene was very lively. There were many musical subcultures.
Considering the war period, because Pula was quite far away from the areas most hurt by the conflict, they did not experience the war directly. Still, they experienced it through the media and refugees who fled from the war zones to Pula.
Mara says that the war affected an entire generation, not just her. Identity is built precisely in the teenage years, and then they were just teenagers and everything they believed in before was destroyed during the war.
They experienced violence and the collapse of the system in an indirect way. She also didn't know what a Croat was and what a Serb was, and she didn't know what nationalism was. She thought she was Croatian because she was born in Pula until she went to get a new identity document. While she was there, they discovered that she was actually of Serbian nationality. If she wanted to keep her Croatian citizenship, she had to refuse Serbian nationality.
To her, what was happening was completely insane. She had problems defining herself because she felt neither Serbian nor Croatian, but rather Yugoslav. Then she identified herself with the city of Pula and globally, with the whole world.
She went to Ljubljana in 1995 to study art history, and after her studies, she worked as a curator and producer.

Mara says that she connects the music group KUD Idijoti with home. She says that the city of Pola identified with the band Kud Idijoti because they were a band "outside the system". You could hear them only in smaller clubs, they were not allowed to play their music on the radio because they rejected nationalism and the nationalist project of Croatia, while singing antinationalist and anti-fascist songs. These songs helped many in dealing with a crisis in their identities and values, connected to the changes brought about by the war.

Group 5 / Mara

Image source: File:KUD Idijoti in Belgrade.jpg - Wikimedia Commons (Croatian punk band KUD Idijoti in Belgrade, 20 February 2009; originally posted to Flickr as KUD Idijoti in Belgrade, author: Viktor Markovic).

Group 6

Husein

Husein is originally from Bosnia and Herzegovina. He just finished high school in 1991, when was called for military service in the Yugoslav People's Army. However, as the war in Croatia started in the same year, he decided to not respond to the draft letter and leave the country.
First, he went to Slovenia, to a farm where he had already been working every summer when he was younger. From January 1992, he lived between Slovenia and Croatia. His parents also joined him.
With the beginning of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 1992, he would have had to side with the Bosniak Muslims, but he did not recognize himself to that national identity. Because of this reason, he became a deserter also of the new Bosnian Army.
From 1991 to 1993 Husein was a deserter, which was very dangerous and risky. Because his documents recognized him as a citizen of Yugoslavia, and as such a deserter, he had to live without using his identity documents both in Croatia and Slovenia, where he risked being arrested and handed over to Croatian authorities.
He finally decided to leave for Italy, Tuscany, where distant relatives worked and could help him. He crossed the border into Italy illegally, but a fellow villager, who lived near Trieste, provided transportation and helped him cross.
Husein decided to not join the army because he identified himself with the slogans of "Brotherhood and Unity" of the former Yugoslavia, still believing in them and thinking they were the best principles to organise a state and a national community. At the beginning of the conflict, the parties were divided along ethnic and religious lines, which conflicted with his principles, but he saw his "own" - the Yugoslavs - disappear.
Now, as an adult man, when he needs to retreat into a thought of a positive, happy past, he goes back to childhood, which he associates with a time when everything was fine. It's possible that he was "indoctrinated," but that organisation of the state and society - self-management of factories, unity, brotherhood, social equality, etc. - he saw and still sees as a positive model, an ideal, without social classes and exploitation. Maybe everyone was poor, but all basic services were guaranteed, and in factories, the surplus value was invested in public housing, universal healthcare, and so on. Of course, there might have been deep idealisation, but his image is positive and happy.

Group 6 / Husein

Image source: ARKZIN II_4 (arkzin_II_04.pdf (monoskop.org)).

Photo translation: KNOW YOUR RIGHTS! If you don't want to serve in the army or carry weapons because of moral or religious beliefs, the Constitution gives you the right of CONSCIENCE OBJECTION. When registering for the first time for the army, the employees must inform you of the right of conscience objection. If you want to know your rights and how to apply them, you can contact CENTRE FOR PEACE, NON-VIOLENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS, ZAGREB. Antiwar campaign of Croatia, tel (041) 422-495 every Thursday between 17:00 and 19:00. GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

Group 7

Rasid

Rasid Nikolić is born in Banja Luka in 1989.

His mother is a Bosnian Muslim belonging to the Khorakhan caste, and his father is a Serbian Orthodox Christian of another Romani caste.
Rasid cares significantly about his origins and deals with Roma's art and activism. After his father deserted from the army and emigrated to Germany, the family reunited with him thanks to family reunification and moved to Italy in 1993. They initially live in a Roma-nomad camp, where Rasid spends his childhood.

He grew up with an expanded vision of his family and developed his passion for puppets, which became part of his artistic journey in Turin. Rasid uses his puppets to tell the story of the Roma and their role in society. He describes the harsh reality of nomadic camps in Italy, legalised but without essential services, and reflects on the sense of belonging and unity he experienced there. Finally, the apartment in Turin becomes a way for his family to regain possession of a home after years of difficulty and precariousness.

The object represented is a photo that Rasid always keeps with him. It was taken in 1999 when he was ten years old. The author is her uncle, her mother's brother, who filmed her and her husband spontaneously, smiling while watching Rasid and his sister play in the park. It represents "the serenity after the storm". In fact, in that period, Rasid and his family lived in an apartment in a very problematic neighbourhood of Turin after having gone through wars, separations, escapes, and transit camps.

Group 7 / Rasid

photo: Marco Carmignan

Group 8

Simonida

Simonida Petrović was born in 1968 in Požarevac, Serbia.

She moved to northern Italy with her husband in the early nineties. They brought their son, who was only a few months old then.

When she left, she decided to take music cassettes with her, which helped her through difficult times, especially during the war. Despite being safe in Italy, she was worried about her family, friends, and city back in Serbia.

The music on the cassettes helped her relax and reminisce about her life as a girl and distant loved ones. During those years, music also helped her child, who was growing up in Italy, to learn his parents's native language.

After the war, she was accepted by Italy and became an Italian citizen. At thirty, she was baptised, finding answers and comfort in her faith. She received an Orthodox icon of Saint Petka, known as the protector of women and the poor, which she now keeps by her front door. Every Serbian family has a patron saint and celebrates 'Slava' with beeswax candles and bread.

Group 8 / Simonida

photo: Marco Carmignan

Group 9

Nermin

Nermin Fazlagić was born in 1988 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

His is the story of a war refugee child, with his first memories linked to his uncle's house in Croatia, after fleeing from Sarajevo. He has no direct memories of the war, but the awareness of the presence of the conflict was always present in his childhood drawings of it.

Growing up in Italy, he forgot Bosnian until returning to Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1999 with his mother and brother, where he experienced the difference between his life and that of his peers who had lived through the war. Back in Italy, he perceived his Bosnian and Muslim identity, and as an adult, he had to choose between integrating and disappearing into the masses or accepting his diversity.

He chose not to hide, delving into his culture and religion. He founded cultural organizations like Dzemat and was involved with the Bosnian Islamic community in Italy to preserve cultural and religious identity for future generations. He feels Italian in Bosnia and Bosnian in Italy, a conscious choice reflecting his destiny and his widespread sense of "home": it is not a place but what you feel and are.

For this reason, when he thinks of "home," the first object that comes to his mind is a typical Bosnian cup of coffee. He remembers the Bosnian custom of coffee and slow dialogue while waiting for the coffee to be ready.

Group 9 / Nermin

photo: Marco Carmignan

Group 10

Vedrana

Vedrana Škočić, born in 1963, is a Croatian woman of Serbian origin, married to a Bosnian, and lived through the Yugoslav conflict of 1991.

She went on a short holiday to Spain with her boyfriend. While she was away, the war broke out in Slovenia, and she couldn't return to Croatia. She sought refuge in Switzerland with her mother. Due to the collapse of tourism, she lost her job, and they moved to Vedrana's house on the Croatian coast. However, the city of Šibenik was closed off by the military. They then went to Bosnia, but job opportunities were scarce there as well. A friend in Zagreb hosted them, but the bombings started. They then moved to Italy, to Valpolicella, where they harvested grapes and learned Italian. They lived in precarious conditions until they found accommodation with priests.

Vedrana, a teacher in Croatia, worked as a housekeeper in Italy, while her boyfriend, a political science graduate, worked as a dishwasher and receptionist. They obtained a residence permit for humanitarian reasons and then for work. Despite making continuous trips to Croatia and Bosnia for short periods, they cannot settle there permanently due to ethnic discrimination. Vedrana tells her migration story in a monologue, which is part of a project sponsored by the Municipality of Verona and had a cathartic effect on her.

Vedrana dreams of returning to her homeland once her husband retires, underlining the deep connection with the places she has lived in and the difficulty of living as a migrant. "I am not very attached to objects, but to people, to emotions, to relationships. This object refers to being with someone. Our coffee is not taken like the Italian one, at the counter, in a hurry, but for two hours sitting and chatting. For us, coffee coincides with being together."
It belonged to her mother, who gave it to her immediately after the war, in 1995 or 1996. It was the first or second time that she returned to Sarajevo with her newborn baby after the war. Friends from the countries belonging to the former Yugoslavia, still consume it in company today, when they get together they say to each other: "Come on, let's make our own coffee".

Group 10 / Vedrana

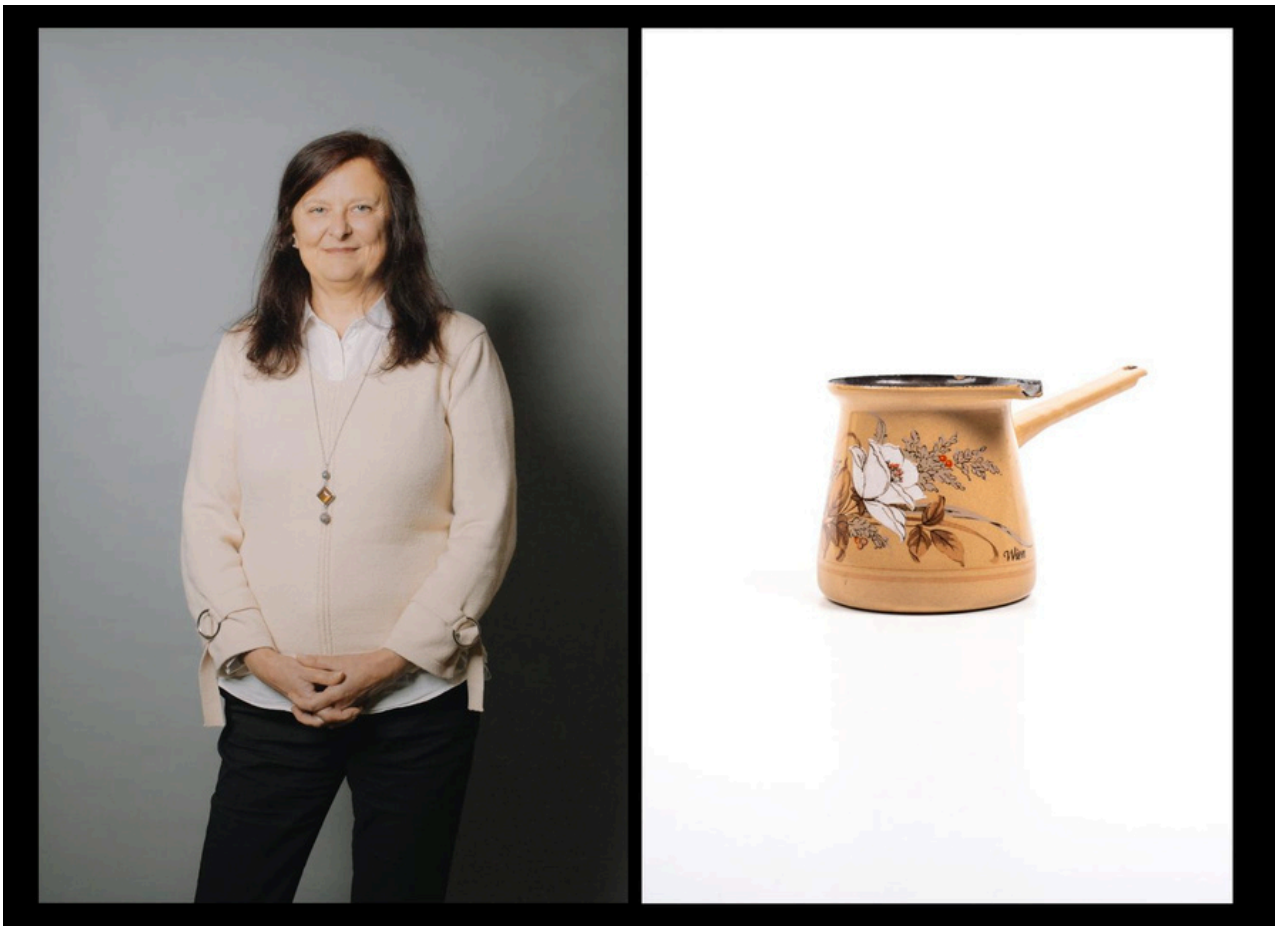


photo: Marco Carmignan

Opinion-metre

Aim:

Promote communication and understanding among youth with different understandings of the concepts of home and identity

Time:

90 minutes

Target group:

high school students, youth

Format:

In situ

Key words:

Dialogue, home, identity

Materials:

- Printed papers with extracts from the interviews
- sellotape to divide the working space
- PowerPoint with statements for the main activity, for an easier understanding of the task
- markers and papers

Opinion-metre

Description:

- **Introduction (20 minutes)**

The facilitator divides the participants into smaller groups of 3/4 people. Each group receives papers with extracts from the interviews (Annex). The interviews were taken in the context of the project "Moj Dom" with people from former Yugoslavia, including economic migrants, second generations, refugees and people who moved because of the wars in former Yugoslavia.

The participants discuss, in their smaller groups, the question:

- "How differently do the people in the interview interpret the concept of home, and how it is connected to their identities?"

- **Main activity (50 minutes)**

For the main activity of the workshop, the facilitator divides the space into three sections. The easiest way to do it is to visually divide the space by using a paper-sellotape. The first section is symbolised by the symbol + (plus), meaning agreement; the middle section with the symbol = (equal), meaning "not sure"; the last section has the symbol - (minus), meaning disagreement.

As the facilitator reads the statement, the participants divide themselves in the space, depending on their personal views on the topic. After each statement, the facilitator asks participants positioned in the different sections to express why they chose to stand there, and why they agree, disagree, or are not sure about the statement.

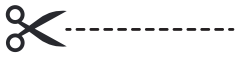
Statements:

- Home is more a feeling than a material place
- Once your home is lost, no other place can be home again
- Home is created by a family
- The right to a home is a human right, and because of that should be granted to everybody
- Your home can change, but not your identity

- **Conclusion, Vocabulary (20 minutes)**

To conclude the session, the facilitator divides the participants again in the same groups from the introduction. Each group has the task to discuss together and agree on 3 words that for them are connected with the concept of home. The facilitator underlines how it is important that all participants in the group agree on the chosen terms. In the end, each group presents its vocabulary.

ANNEX:



Elvira

I became aware I had lost a home when I went back to Bosnia. After one year of nostalgia, when I got back I didn't recognize the places and the people.
The warmth, the home, in which I identified myself, was not there anymore. But you also don't have a home in the new place where you are living, because that place is not a place that saw you grow up.
One knows when the home is lost.
I thought I found my home when I decided where I was going to live, when I stopped being at the mercy of political events. After that, Rome became my home, because it was my choice.

Rada

This house - where I live today - is the one that made me feel at home the most. Because it is a family nucleus. So you don't care about the cabinet, the television, the door, that is not important. It is the person that makes you feel at home. I feel at home where I feel the affection of the people. This is also what a homeland is. The people that love you, and you love them, and they know you.
It took many years to make this home, to not distinguish anymore between "our people" and native Italians. But when you share your everyday life, language, and culture with them, when you enter a social fabric, this becomes your home. Where you feel good is your homeland.

Igor

I would say my home is Sarajevo. But that is a perception of a past time, when I lived there.
That city doesn't exist anymore. If I went back to my home - after so much wandering around - I would come back to something fictional, that does not exist. Going back to Sarajevo is not going back home for me. Home is fictional, is a place where I grew up. But the house where I grew up does not exist anymore. We will always be people without a home, people that do not have a concept of home. It will never be the same again. What is left is an "adopted family, an adopted home".

Biljana

I think that, first of all, home is where you feel accepted. Where you are not some "other", but that you are part of a community. Where you have close ones. Where you can do what you want. Where you can think freely. Where you can act freely. Where you are not limited by your background or identity. Where you feel yourself. I don't know where I feel at home. I feel we are outside of everything. We are never really at home. Maybe that means that we are at home everywhere.

Amela

Until a few years ago, I would have said I am "Bosnian", and then "Muslim".
But in the last few years, I got closer to my faith and now I feel these identities are on the same level. I usually say first I'm Bosnian, because it is immediately noticeable through my name and surname, and then, later, that I am Muslim. Only lately I'm going towards being first Muslim, and then Bosnian, because being a Muslim is a style of life. Islam gives you a lifestyle and a way to be.
Being Bosnian is a question of culture and small things in your life, that I feel are minor if compared to Islam.

(In)Equality

Aim:

To understand different realities of people, those that are privileged and those that are excluded, allowing for reflection on inequality, social exclusion, stereotyping, stigma, etc.

Time:

45 minutes

Target group:

All ages

Format:

In situ

Key words:

Social stigma, privilege, social exclusion

Materials:

- Sweets or candies
- Annex

Description:

- **Workshop (30 minutes)**

Participants sit in a circle, each participant receives a card that describes their character (Annex). All characters are different and live in the same country, which is a Western European, or North American country.

During the game, each participant will receive 5 candies. The moderator will ask each participant questions according to the information on their card. Participants will respond with a 'yes' or 'no'. When a participant answers 'yes', they can take an extra sweet from the centre. If they answer 'no', they must return one sweet to the centre. Through answering the questions, each participant must respond as the person they are portraying, using their imagination and personal life experience.If the participant runs out of candies, they need to raise their arm or stand up. Those without any sweets are 'exposed'. At the end, each participant counts their sweets as it's then visible that some will have much more sweets than others.

The moderator asks the following questions:

- Do you practise a religion that is a majority religion in the country which you currently reside?
- Do you speak the language of your host country fluently?
- Do you have a job?
- Do you have a family of your own?
- Do you live with your family or do you live close to your family?
- Do you have your high school diploma?
- Do you have a university or college degree?
- Can you afford higher education (university or college)?
- Do you own a house in the host country?
- Do you have health insurance?
- Are you a documented immigrant?
- Are you a member of an esteemed community?

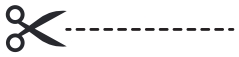
- **Conclusion and reflection (*15 minutes*)**

The participants discuss their characters and are asked questions for reflection.

The questions are:

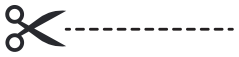
- How did you feel being that character? Privileged or excluded?
- If you didn't have any more sweets and had to have your hand raised, did you feel stigmatised, 'alone', isolated? Any other description?
- How did you make decisions for your character? Were those decisions based on stereotypes?
- Could you identify with the role you played?

ANNEX: identity cards, short stories

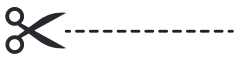


You come from Somalia, you are married to a native of your host country. You left because of the Civil War and moved to Germany. You live with your wife in an apartment which you own. Your faith is Islam. You graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Somalia. You have a worker's permit and work as a delivery driver with a minimal hourly wage. You are not fluent in German. You experience discrimination in your workplace on a daily basis. You want to get a certificate or a master's degree in the host country, but you can't afford the tuition. For a scholarship, you need a legal residency permit, which you cannot afford either. Your thoughts constantly linger: Will you work your whole life as a delivery person? Is this it? Can you do something more, earn a decent wage? How much longer can you endure being ridiculed at this job? How are your parents and sisters doing back home? Will you ever be able to send a decent amount of money to them home?

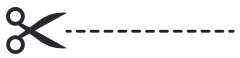
You are a young woman from Guatemala. You have a darker skin tone. You crossed the border to a North American country illegally and you work in a restaurant. Your salary is below minimum wage. You live with your co-workers and pay the rent to the landlord who is also your employer. You do not complain to the employer because you have no worker's rights as an undocumented immigrant. You have no health insurance. You left because of the low employment rate in your country. You completed 5 grades of elementary school. You only speak your mother tongue. Your family is still in Guatemala. Will you move to another workplace? If you find another job, you probably need to move from your boss' apartment as well? The rents are high and you need new roommates, but you need to feel safe. Where will you go?



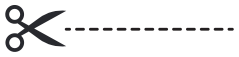
You come from Bangladesh. You moved to Italy illegally. You work on a farm. You work under a punishingly hot sun for ten to twelve-hour shifts (temperatures go up to 40 degrees). You get paid by individual tasks rather than by the hour. Your wife and family are in Bangladesh and you live in a ruined stable with no water. You want to get an education, but you can't afford it. You finished elementary school and want a General Educational Development. For a scholarship, you need a legal residency permit, which you cannot afford either. You have a darker skin tone. As you lay in bed, thoughts keep racing through: When will there be rain? I strained my back. I have blisters on my feet from those heavy boots I wear that protect me from thorny plants. What if I collapse and need medical attention? Will they find out that I don't have any documentation?



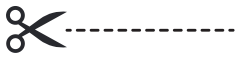
You are a young man from Pakistan. You are not making enough money for your family. You meet a group of people that promised you a lot of money if you work for them in a Western European country. They give you a sizable loan for the travel and place to stay, and you need to pay them back as you work. You are given souvenirs to sell to tourists on the street. You are not able to get back until you earn enough to pay off your debt to the employer. You only have 3 years of elementary school. You do not speak the language of the host country. You live with 5 other people that are in the same situation. Your faith is Islam. You have a darker skin tone. How will you get back? Let's say you get back home: imagine the shame of getting back without any money. How is your family? When will you see them again?



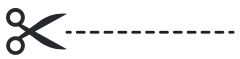
You are a woman from Syria. You left because of the war. You have a master's degree and speak the language of the host country proficiently. You have a worker's permit and work as IT in a company. At work, you feel discriminated against by your colleagues. You live with roommates. You are away from your parents, siblings and friends. You are of Islamic faith. Will you try and find another job? Or should you stay and face further discrimination? How are your parents doing? Are your siblings taking good care of them? They must miss you a lot. I do not have anyone to talk to, to really understand what it's like being alone.



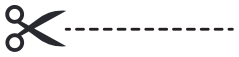
You are not an immigrant. You are a young man, a citizen of a Western European country, where you were born and where you completed your Master's degree. You receive a decent monthly wage. You live as a tenant with some friends. You consider yourself an atheist. You're white and you live close to your parents. You maintain the same circle of friends from high school. You argue with your roommates, mostly over religious and political beliefs, leftovers, cleaning chores and the thermostat. One roommate is being especially annoying, mostly because they were dating your ex. Your roommates can sometimes be rude or lack interest in conversing. You feel you do not belong anywhere. You're bored and feel you want to move somewhere far away.



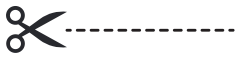
You are not an immigrant. Legally you are not. Even though you consider yourself an Italian young woman, you often feel like you are treated like a foreigner. You were born in Italy, where your parents found refuge from Bosnia and Herzegovina during the war. You graduated and now receive a monthly salary that you feel is low given the work you do and your skills. Additionally, the rent is high, but your cousins in Bosnia and Herzegovina often make jokes about how spoiled you are. You have light skin and hair tone and identify as an atheist. Italians often have trouble understanding your name, so you always have to spell it. People have mistaken you for being Russian, Serbian, Slovenian, Roma, Palestinian, and more. On one hand, you wish people would judge you for your personality alone, but on the other hand, you feel that you should demand more knowledge of Bosnian culture.



You are not an immigrant. You are a middle-aged woman, a citizen of a Western European country where you were born and where you completed your Master's degree. You are married and have children. Your salary is well above the average. You own a 4 bedroom house in an upscale part of town, have a swimming pool and three cars. You are a member of an esteemed Country Club and enjoy a circle of influential friends. You have no debt. You are of Christian faith. You consider yourself white. Still, you are very upset with one of your kids because they do not want to go to the University that you graduated from. They are looking at another University instead. Your second marriage is not going well. You are obsessing over not getting adequate attention and affection. One day you'll just leave all of them behind because they're all ungrateful to you!



You are not an immigrant. You are a woman living as a citizen of a Western European country where you were born and where you completed your Bachelor's degree. You live in a nice suburban area, in a house your parents helped you buy. You and your partner both earn good salaries and manage to save for a trip every now and then. You are an atheist, your partner is Christian. Both consider yourselves white. You're angry at your dad because he keeps rubbing on you how he bought you that car. He thinks he's so much better than you. You argue with your partner a lot. The partner got very upset because you ordered the wrong paint for the bedroom walls. You feel you are not being taken seriously when your partner asks you to do something for them, and you are in the middle of your own work. That can trigger you badly. You want to go to Greece, your partner wants to go to Spain. Also, you're upset because your supervisor did not sufficiently acknowledge your effort in a project you worked on for ages.



You come from South Sudan. War and famine have caused you and your family to seek asylum in a Western European country. You are not allowed to work whilst your claim is being considered. You are instead provided with accommodation and support to meet your essential living needs. You do not know the language of the host country. You graduated high school in South Sudan. You are of Christian faith. You do not know what the government of your host country will decide. When will you hear back from them about getting a worker's permit? It's been a couple of months already. How much longer do you need to wait? When and how will you find work? How much longer are they going to keep you here and feed you? They guarantee education. You need to learn their language. But how long will it take you to learn the language? Will they move you to another reception centre?

Racing board game

Aim:

To understand inequality by understanding different cultural, economic, ethnic and historical backgrounds. For those that are privileged, to see how much they have, and to learn to be humble.

Time:

30 minutes

Target group:

All ages, 6-9 people

Format:

In situ

Key words:

Inequality, discrimination, historical contextualization

Materials:

- Figurines,
- gaming board,
- dice
- Annex

Racing board game

Description:

- Workshop (20 min)

Each participant gets a figurine or token that they need to move across the gaming board. Each person throws a dice and walks over marked fields, according to the number they get. The goal is to get to the finish line. Whoever gets to the finish line first, the game ends.

However, each person gets a card with a story that describes the background of that figurine (Annex). They should read their story carefully since they will need that information in the game. The other side of the cards contains the game rules.

The start location for each figurine depends on their personal history, social, cultural and economic background. Some figurines are more privileged than others and have a starting point closer to the finishing line.

- Conclusion and reflection (10 min)

When the game ends, participants present their characters and tell their stories to others, sharing the problems the characters face. Then they talk about how successful they were in the game.

Questions for participants:

?

- How did you feel playing with that figurine? As a winner, how did you feel winning? As someone who didn't win, how did you feel about yourself and the winner?
- Can anyone connect this game to immigration laws?
- What would you say to people that think that certain migrants are 'lazy', when commenting on their lack of success? Have you ever talked to someone that puts similar labels on immigrants?
- Do you know similar life stories of immigrants that you would like to share?

ANNEX 1: RULES OF THE GAME

At the beginning of the game, all who are not immigrants can immediately move 5 fields forward.

Only non-immigrants can take the shortcut.

Red field - if you come from Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Syria, Tanzania, Libya, North Sudan, South Sudan or Yemen, you need to move 3 fields back. (Trump's travel ban)

Purple field - if you do not have finished high school, you need to wait 1 turn. If you have a master's degree, throw the dice again.

Green field - if you practice the Islamic faith, you need to wait for 1 turn.

Yellow field - If you immigrated and do not speak the language of the host country fluently, move 5 fields back.

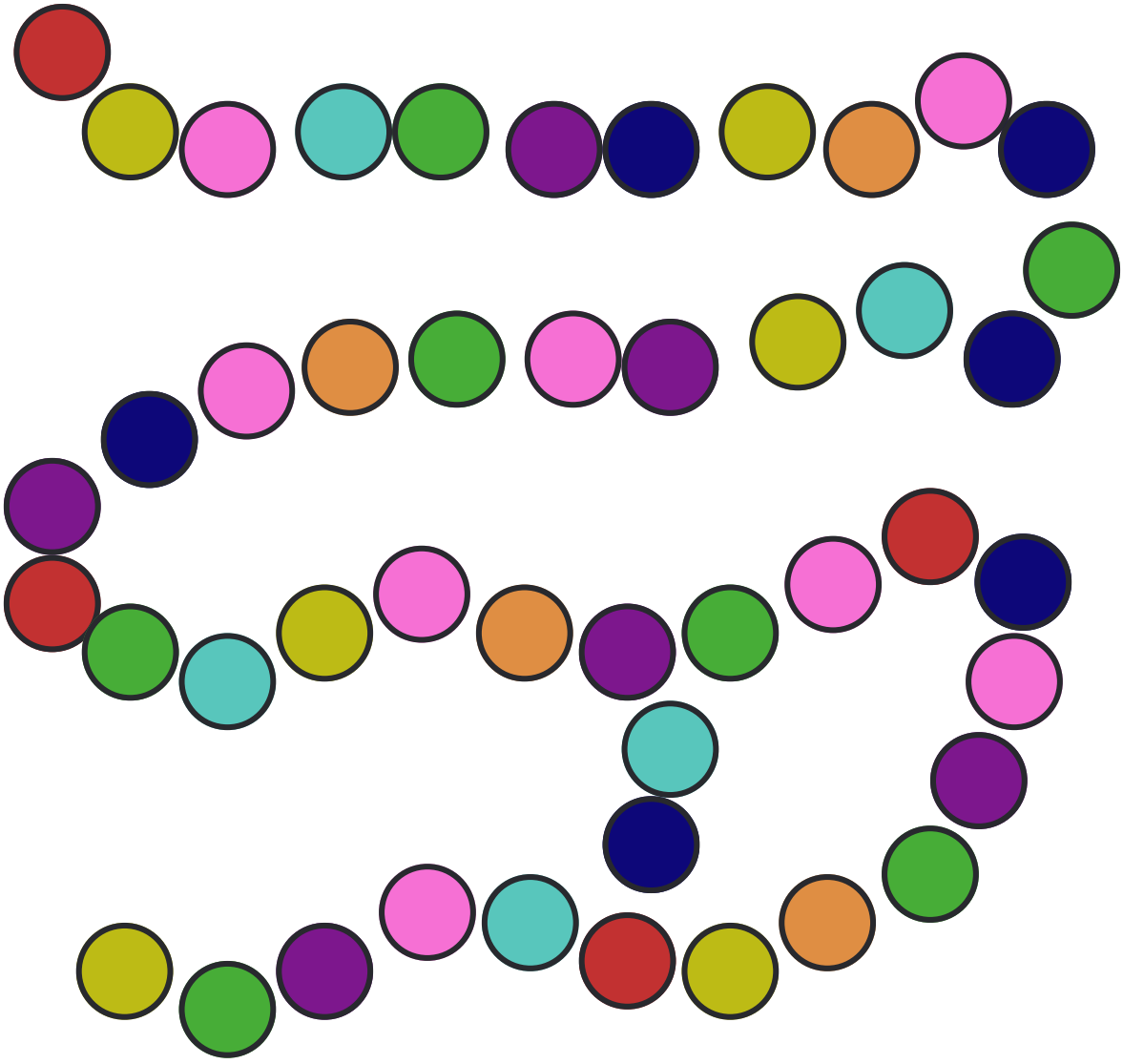
Pink field - if you immigrated and your parents, spouse, children or friends live in your country of origin, move 3 fields back.

Dark blue field - If you are discriminated against at work, move 3 fields back.

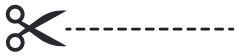
Light blue field - If you do not have a permit to work, you need to move 5 fields back.

Orange field - If you're considered white, throw the dice again.

ANNEX 2: GAMING BOARD



ANNEX 3: Identity Cards, short stories



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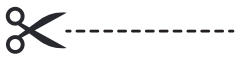

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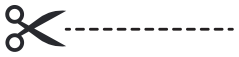

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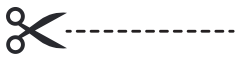

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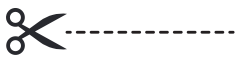
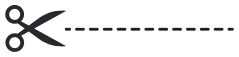
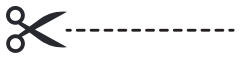


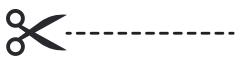
You are a woman from Syria. You left because of the war. You have a master's degree and speak the language of the host country proficiently. You have a worker's permit and work as IT in a company. At work, you feel discriminated against by your colleagues. You live with roommates. You are away from your parents, siblings and friends. You are of Islamic faith. Will you try and find another job? Or should you stay and face further discrimination? How are your parents doing? Are your siblings taking good care of them? They must miss you a lot. I do not have anyone to talk to, to really understand what it's like being alone.



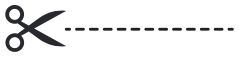
You are not an immigrant. You are a young man, a citizen of a Western European country, where you were born and where you completed your Master's degree. You receive a decent monthly wage. You live as a tenant with some friends. You consider yourself an atheist. You're white and you live close to your parents. You maintain the same circle of friends from high school. You argue with your roommates, mostly over religious and political beliefs, leftovers, cleaning chores and the thermostat. One roommate is being especially annoying, mostly because they were dating your ex. Your roommates can sometimes be rude or lack interest in conversing. You feel you do not belong anywhere. You're bored and feel you want to move somewhere far away.



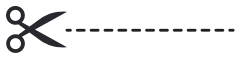
You are not an immigrant. Legally you are not. Even though you consider yourself an Italian young woman, you often feel like you are treated like a foreigner. You were born in Italy, where your parents found refuge from Bosnia and Herzegovina during the war. You graduated and now receive a monthly salary that you feel is low given the work you do and your skills. Additionally, the rent is high, but your cousins in Bosnia and Herzegovina often make jokes about how spoiled you are. You have light skin and hair tone and identify as an atheist. Italians often have trouble understanding your name, so you always have to spell it. People have mistaken you for being Russian, Serbian, Slovenian, Roma, Palestinian, and more. On one hand, you wish people would judge you for your personality alone, but on the other hand, you feel that you should demand more knowledge of Bosnian culture.



You are not an immigrant. You are a middle-aged woman, a citizen of a Western European country where you were born and where you completed your Master's degree. You are married and have children. Your salary is well above the average. You own a 4 bedroom house in an upscale part of town, have a swimming pool and three cars. You are a member of an esteemed Country Club and enjoy a circle of influential friends. You have no debt. You are of Christian faith. You consider yourself white. Still, you are very upset with one of your kids because they do not want to go to the University that you graduated from. They are looking at another University instead. Your second marriage is not going well. You are obsessing over not getting adequate attention and affection. One day you'll just leave all of them behind because they're all ungrateful to you!



You are not an immigrant. You are a woman living as a citizen of a Western European country where you were born and where you completed your Bachelor's degree. You live in a nice suburban area, in a house your parents helped you buy. You and your partner both earn good salaries and manage to save for a trip every now and then. You are an atheist, your partner is Christian. Both consider yourselves white. You're angry at your dad because he keeps rubbing on you how he bought you that car. He thinks he's so much better than you. You argue with your partner a lot. The partner got very upset because you ordered the wrong paint for the bedroom walls. You feel you are not being taken seriously when your partner asks you to do something for them, and you are in the middle of your own work. That can trigger you badly. You want to go to Greece, your partner wants to go to Spain. Also, you're upset because your supervisor did not sufficiently acknowledge your effort in a project you worked on for ages.



You come from South Sudan. War and famine have caused you and your family to seek asylum in a Western European country. You are not allowed to work whilst your claim is being considered. You are instead provided with accommodation and support to meet your essential living needs. You do not know the language of the host country. You graduated high school in South Sudan. You are of Christian faith. You do not know what the government of your host country will decide. When will you hear back from them about getting a worker's permit? It's been a couple of months already. How much longer do you need to wait? When and how will you find work? How much longer are they going to keep you here and feed you? They guarantee education. You need to learn their language. But how long will it take you to learn the language? Will they move you to another reception centre?

Membership

Aim:

To understand what it feels like to be rejected by a group, and to feel what it's like to be a part of a group. To feel what it means to be in an exclusive group and what it means to be a 'stranger'.

Time:

40 minutes

Target group:

all ages, 10 people

Format:

In situ

Key words:

Discrimination, rejection, privilege, exclusion, power,

Materials:

- N/A

Membership

Description:

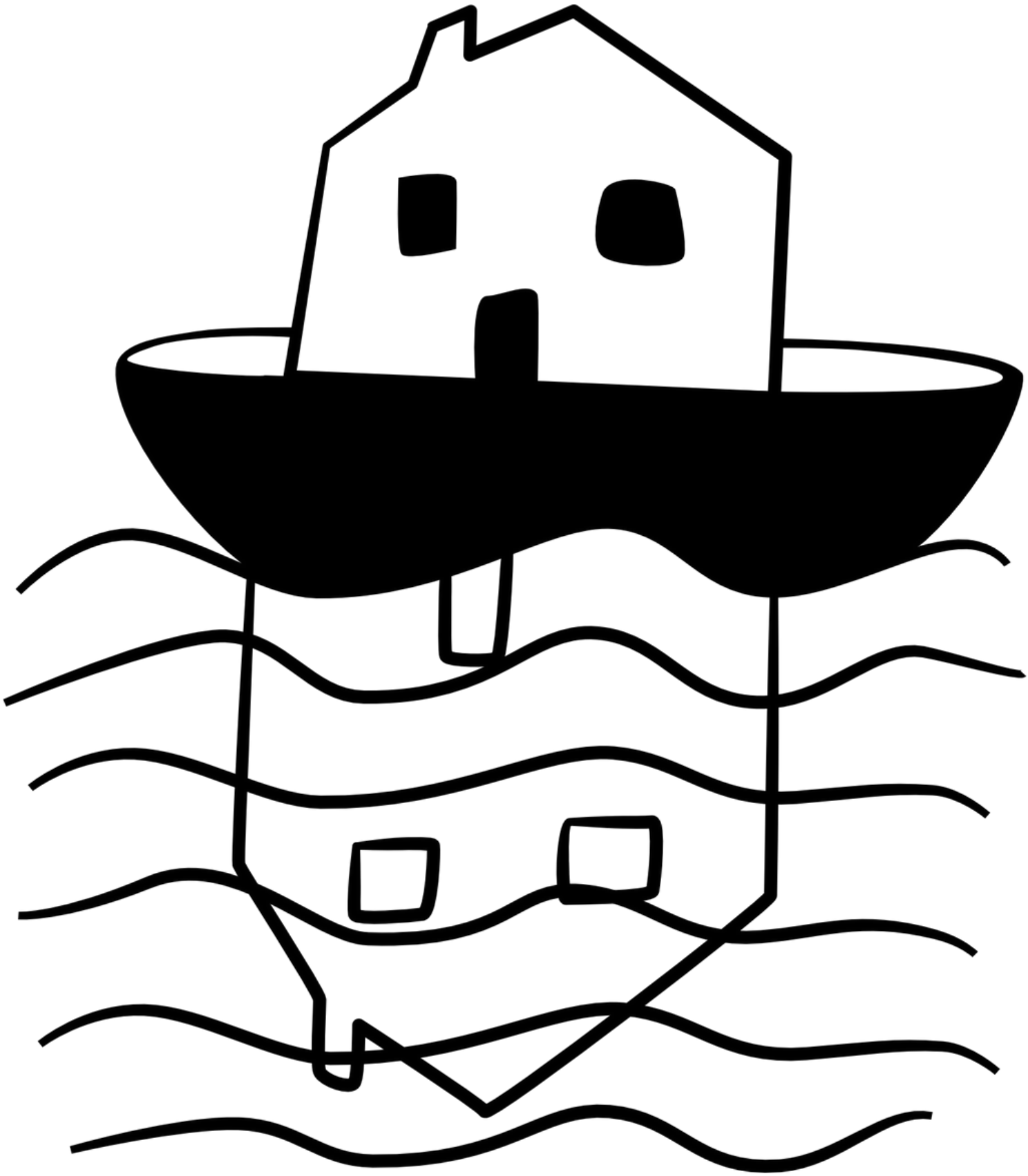
- Workshop (30 min)

A volunteer goes outside the room. The remaining participants divide themselves into 3 groups based on a common agreed point of reference (colour of eyes, colour of hair, clothing style, a common keyword, or something else).
The person that was outside comes back into the room and needs to choose a group they believe they belong to. In order to join, the 'non-member' needs to elaborate on why they belong to that group and emphasise what they have in common with that group. If the reason for joining the chosen group is wrong, they are rejected by the group.
Then the 'non-member' tries to join another group. Then another volunteer goes outside the room and the participants form into groups again. And so on.

- Conclusion and reflection (10 min)

The moderator asks questions for reflection, encouraging participants to share their points of view and their feelings:

- (moderator asks the 'non-member': How did they feel not belonging to any group?
- Did you feel power in being a member of a group? How did you feel rejecting the person who tried to join? Was it easy to reject them?
- Did you let the person join because they guessed the correct reasons to join or did you feel empathy towards that person?
- Can anyone relate to the feeling of being rejected in real life?



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- Bodrožić Ivana, *Hotel Zagorje*
- Bodrožić Ivana, *Rupa*
- Bošnjak Elvis, *Gdje je nestao Kir*
- Bunjevac Nina, *Fatherland: A Family History*
- Cvijetić Darko, *Schindlerov lift*
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- Jergović Miljenko, *Dvori od oraha*
- Mujčić Elvira, *Dieci prugne ai fascisti*
- Rastello Luca, *La guerra in casa*
- Rumiz Paolo, *Maschere per un massacro. Quello che non abbiamo voluto sapere della guerra in Jugoslavia*
- Sacco Joe, *Safe area Goražde*
- Vidojković Marko, *Kanđe*
- Vojnović Goran, *Čefuri raus!*
- Žmirić Zoran, *Pacijent iz sobe 19*

Songs:

- Balašević Đorđe - *Računajte na nas*
- Balašević Đorđe - *Krivi smo mi*
- Bregović Goran - *Kalašnjikov*
- The Cinematic Orchestra - *To Build A Home*
- Ekaterina Velika - *Par godina za nas*
- Jura Stublić i Film - *Dom*
- KUD Idijoti - *Mir no alternativ*
- Rimtutituki - *Slušaj 'vamo*
- Zabranjeno pušenje - *Počasna salva*

Movies:

- *L'appuntamento*, Teona Strugar Mitevska
- *Druga strana svega*, Mila Turajlić
- *Halimin put*, Arsen A. Ostojić
- *Quo Vadis, Aida?*, Jasmila Žbanić
- *Zvizdan*, Dalibor Matanić
- *Reznica*, Davor Marinković
- *La lunga vacanza*, Davor Marinković (realized in the context of the project Moj Dom): https://vimeo.com/video/1013567236

Websites

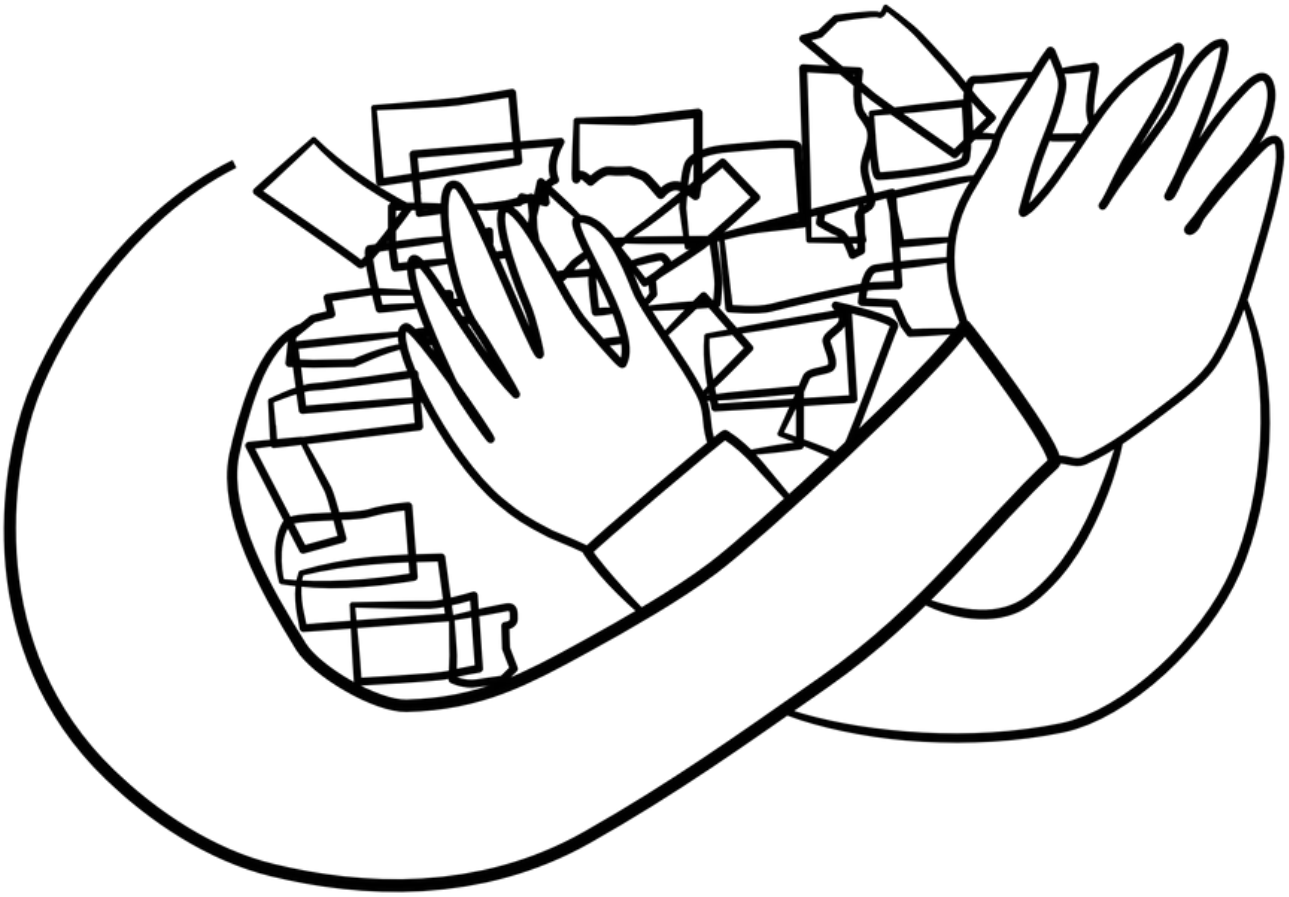
Remembering Yugoslavia explores the memory of a country that no longer exists: https://rememberingyugoslavia.com/

Osservatorio Balcani Caucaso Transeuropa (OBCT) is a research and media centre specialising in Southeast Europe, Turkey, Eastern Europe, and the Caucasus, as well as EU policies on media freedom, civil society, Eastern enlargement, and cohesion policies: https://www.balcanicaucaso.org

Online Course

Introductory online course that provides some interpretative keys and fundamental concepts for critically approaching the complexity of the Balkan region: https://www.cci.tn.it/cci_cp_elearning/i-balcani-passato-e-presente-di-una-regione-europea/ (only in italian)

Prepared by the Center for International Cooperation (CCI), an independent association engaged in analysis, information, training, and the promotion of knowledge on international cooperation, European affairs, peace, and human rights issues.



6. CONCLUSIONS

We hope this educational resource has provided tools and inspiration to tackle complex and sensitive topics such as home, belonging, and war experiences through the use of personal stories and objects. The workshops are designed to stimulate reflection and dialogue among students and informal groups, helping them to better understand the historical and social dynamics that have shaped the lives of many people.

We would greatly appreciate your feedback on the use of this workshop in the classroom or with informal education groups. Your opinions are valuable for further improving our resources and ensuring they meet the educational needs of students.

Please visit our website to access the other publications and results created in the project Moj Dom at www.mojdomproject.eu and leave your comments and suggestions.
Thank you for your commitment and collaboration.

MOJ DOM

Project name: Moj Dom. Refugees, migration and erased memories in the aftermath of Yugoslav wars

Leading partner: Codici, IT

Project partners: Institute of Ethnology and Folklore, HR; Documenta, HR; IDIZ, HR; University of Regensburg, DE; University of Graz, AU; Bosnien in Berlin, DE; Maska, SI; Mirovni Institut, SI; Lapsus, IT

Coordinators of the educational toolkit: *Documenta* and Lapsus

Funded by the European Union.

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