

SOCIAL ACTING

FEEDBACK & SWOT ANALYSIS

Coordinator:



Pramata & Thamata

Partner organisations:



Nordisk
Teaterlaboratorium



Modernoi Kairoi



Stowarzyszenie
Edukacyjno-
Społeczno-
Kulturalne Teatr
Brama



Actors School



Replika Cultural
Association

February 2020

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1 Introduction

1.1 Abstract

This report seeks to communicate the findings of SWOT analyses and additional feedback on the aspects of Social Acting in relation to the partner network and the project's operations. Partners gave their input individually in the first phase of Social Acting, during the period preceding the kick off and assessment meeting of the project (early December 2019). It was found that the relevance of the project and the qualities and experience of the partnership in the field are the main strengths of Social Acting, while lack of expertise, resources, and somewhat insufficient insights are the primary weaknesses. Externally, Social Acting can offer numerous opportunities, such as networking, human development, and development of education, while it can be threatened by financial instability, administrative imbalances and lack of flexibility in staffing.

1.2 Summary of Social Acting

Social Acting (SOCIAL ACTing) refers to a multilateral project carried out by 6 partners from 5 EU countries: Greece, Portugal, Denmark, Poland, and Romania. The central idea is to prepare, implement and evaluate 5 study visits in the respective local communities of the partners in order to highlight good practices applied in the field of the *Social Theatre* — the practice of extracting value out of dramatic art for social purposes and for the benefit of weak individuals and marginalized social groups. SOCIACT also aims to improve the profession of actor profession and to encourage them to actively participate in social entrepreneurship actions and in the sector of solidarity economy. The study visits will involve 62 people from the theatre sector who are experienced or sensitized in societal matters and human offer to individuals or groups that are on the verge of social exclusion such as elderly, deaf, blind, people with learning disabilities or behavioural difficulties, hospitalized, etc.). Study visits will be organized in partnership with local associated partners and stakeholders from all partner communities, who are active in drama, cultural and social sectors.

The working methods to be applied make use of elements of the socio-cultural theory of learning, emphasising human relationships, physical objects and cultures. Knowledge acquisition will take place in cooperative environments, through knowledge-tool parallels, but also through discussions and the joint implementation of activities.

The expected results will be the mapping of ways for approaching socially excluded groups through the tools offered by dramatic art, the acquisition of new teaching and operational skills of the participants in the provisional study visits, the widening of the fields of professional or voluntary activity of the professional or student actors and the creation of new or improved social services of partners and associated entities.

The content and the results of the study visits together with a variety of documentation of the project's complementary actions will be presented in an Activity Report. This product will be available on Web and will be the primary promotional material to be used in the following activities related to dissemination, exploitation and multiplication of project's outputs. The partners intend to continue their co-operation after the end of the project by creating an active network on Social Theatre that will promote actors' mobility and application of the identified good practices' activities and they will take steps to further expansion of it.

1.3 Scope of the present analysis

SWOT analyses are effective when solid strategies are needed for prioritisation in many kinds of endeavours. In the case of Social Acting, SWOT helps adjust future actions within the framework of the project and adapts them to the state of the art in the partner communities. This practice requires optimisation of the processes that comprise Social Acting towards directions identified by the analysis. Complementary to SWOT, feedback from the partner organisations helps understand secondary details or location-specific characteristics of the local communities that may be used to further optimise Social Acting processes and more efficiently target the project's operations.

1.4 Collaborating organisations

The partnership consists of one coordinator (Pramata & Thamata SCE) and five partner organisations. Their profile and scope of work are presented in the following paragraphs. Partners are listed in country-code alphabetical order.

1.4.1 Social Cooperative Enterprise Pramata & Thamata (Coordinator)

Pramata & Thamata SCE (abbreviated as PRATHA SCE) was founded in 2014 in Kalamata, Greece (Laws 4019/2011 & 4430/2016) for the purposes of social and solidarity economy. The organisation aims at promoting entrepreneurship in fields of culture, environment and education in order to enhance cultural decentralization and social cohesion, using innovative techniques. PRATHA SCE has organized various cultural, social and educational initiatives and has collaborated with many organizations from Greece and abroad. Their works have circulated in schools, festivals, social partners, information centres and businesses.

Among others, PRATHA SCE has collaborated with Faris, Kalamata's Municipal Social Enterprise, for the production of drama plays and the organization of international art festivals; with the local culture club "Plus 1-Mic. Toubouros" in preparing and hosting drama workshops for children; with the music ensemble Meligyris in order to help children become acquainted with the evolution of music.

Moreover, PRATHA SCE has prepared workshops on cinema, music and performing arts, and produced drama plays using various methods, such as document theatre and devised theatre techniques.

Indicative works:

- *A trunk full of theatre*, drama performance which unfolds the history of the Art of Drama and Theatre and marks its value, a project that has been presented to schools, festivals and private business' venues, such as IKEA.
- *Hermes meets Bach at the café "1930"*, an educational project for audience development among children on music;
- *Alimono stous neous – Give Youth a chance* by Al. Sakellarios and Chr. Giannakopoulos, theatre performance.
- *Midsummer's Night Dream* by W. Shakespeare in an adaptation for children.
- A workshop on Cinematography hosted by the well-acknowledged film director N. Kallaras.
- *Intermezzo*, a presentation about the Interwar Period, was based on documentary theatre while the "Interview", a play regarding the problems of Youth Unemployment, was created using the Devised theatre technique.

1.4.2 DK – Denmark, *Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium*

Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium Odin Teatret was created in Oslo, Norway, in 1964, and moved to Holstebro (Denmark) in 1966, changing its name to Odin Teatret/Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium. Today, its 40 members come from eleven countries and four continents.

Odin Teatret/Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium's activities include: Odin's own productions presented on site and on tour in Denmark and abroad; "bartering" with various milieus in Holstebro and elsewhere; organisation of encounters for theatre groups; hosting other theatre groups and ensembles; teaching activity in Denmark and abroad; the annual Odin Week Festival; publication of magazines and books; production of didactic films and videos; research into theatre anthropology during the sessions of ISTA (the International School of Theatre Anthropology); periodic performances with the multicultural *Theatrum Mundi* Ensemble; collaboration with the CTLS, Centre for Theatre Laboratory Studies of the University of Århus; the Festuge (Festive Week) in Holstebro; the triennial festival Transit devoted to women in theatre; OTA, the living archives of Odin Teatret's memory; WIN, Workout for Intercultural Navigators; artists in residence; co-productions; children's performances, exhibitions, concerts, round tables, cultural initiatives, transformative processes and community work in Holstebro and the surrounding region.

Odin Teatret's 54 years as a laboratory have resulted in the growth of a professional and scholarly milieu characterised by cross-disciplinary endeavours and international collaboration. One field of research is ISTA (International School of Theatre Anthropology) which since 1979 has become a performers' village where actors and dancers meet with scholars to compare and scrutinise the technical foundations of their scenic presence.

Odin Teatret counts 40 permanent collaborators, 24 full time equivalent, for administration, performing and producing festival and new events, 20 artists in residence, 20 volunteers from local communities. Host researchers and a scholarship from every part of world that visit Odin Teatret Archives (OTA) for research in Theatre anthropology.

1.4.3 EL – Greece, *Modernoi Kairoi*

Modernoi Kairoi is a state-certified higher drama school, empowering concise and modern methodology for theatre teaching and effective tools against the challenges drama expression faces. The methodology includes systems of Stanislavski, Grohotski, Lekok, Brecht's method, pantomime techniques and marionette theatre, the work of Actors Studio, Brook, Manuskin, Oida, Marshall, as well as serious modern education systems actors. Drama School "Modernoi Kairoi" shapes the training framework that aims at maximising the actor's means of expression. Improvisation and physical training are the two basic education tools. Improv and animation classes take place on a daily basis and seek to improve physical fitness as well as body intelligence, kinesiological imagination, liberation, relaxation, and creativity. In the field of acting, Modernoi Kairoi has a wide repertoire spanning from ancient drama theatre and Shakespeare to the Brecht Epic Theatre and the Theatre of the Absurd. Teachers of Modernoi Kairoi are highly experienced professionals, while the premises of the school are modern, pleasant, and with high technical specifications. In 1985, theatre Modernoi Kairoi represented Greece at the Eurotheatertage festival in Bonn, Germany, with Moliere's *School of Women*.

1.4.4 PL – Poland, *Stowarzyszenie Edukacyjno-Społeczno-Kulturalne Teatr Brama*

Theatre Brama: revolutionizing the relationship between audience and theatre by utilizing performance to create a participatory meeting, not a spectator activity. The ensemble is a diverse group dedicated to a common artistic goal realized by researching the heights and depths of emotion, recalling heritage and reacting to the reality of life. As a cultural and educational association, it utilizes

non-formal and informal educational methods to empower people to use art to improve their lives and their world. It was founded in 1996 by its Director, Daniel Jacewicz, based in Goleniów, where they have premiered many performances and hosted numerous projects. For many years it has managed to create a vibrant artistic environment in Goleniów. It works with people of all ages and from different cultural backgrounds. Its staff is the Director and a team of 8 artists/administrators. It has hosted 8 successive EVS projects, each of which has lasted one year. It travels to offer workshops and perform in festivals in Poland as well as internationally. However, being located in a small city with a population of 25,000, the majority of their work is community based. Its staff work with different groups in the local community, ranging in age from young children to seniors, using theatre as an educational tool to increase communication skills, develop creativity, enhance empathy and foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Working in the local community has helped Brama to create a wide network of individuals who can be counted upon to participate in events, happenings and performances either artistically or practically. It has also helped with the development of a strong audience who regularly attend the cultural offerings provided by it. In 2011, the city of Goleniów gave the Brama Association a residence in the amphitheatre in the centre of the city for the purposes of their work. Brama works under the umbrella of the Goleniów Culture House, however it is an independent theatre/association and maintains its own independent headquarters. It has been an artistic presence in Poland since 1996 and is known and recognized throughout Europe. To date, thousands of people have taken place in the activities of the theatre, involving themselves in the development of Polish independent theatre, the promotion of theatre, theatrical activities and the arts education community. It has won many prestigious awards over the course of the theatre's 23 years.

Theatre Brama was one of the founding members of the West Pomeranian Theatre Offensive (ZOT) a lobbying group formed by 11 alternative theatres located in the region, the West Pomeranian Culture Forum an organization made up of culture houses and cultural providers located in the region as well as the Polish Nationwide Theatre Offensive (OOT). In Poland, Theatre Brama is best known for their project the *Alternative Theatre Academy*, which recruited independent theatre makers from across Poland and help them to strengthen their entrepreneurship skills thereby increasing the amount of independent theatres functioning in cities but more importantly, "excluded" communities across Poland. In Europe, it is best known for their participation in the Creative Europe project *Caravan Next*, which was a long-term project in which professional artists used theatre and performing arts as a tool to strengthen communities across Europe.

1.4.5 PT – Portugal, Actors School (ACT)

Actors School (ACT) is an actor training school, created in 2001. Today, ACT is recognized for the quality of the training provided and the outstanding route of some students who have passed through the school. ACT's main objective is to contribute to the training and professional qualification of a new generation of actors, passionate, creative and autonomous actors.

ACT activities are based on solid techniques that allow qualified professionals to respond to the diverse demands of the market, whether in the theatre or in the cinema or in television, through the acquisition of a set of tools that enhance the best and greatest competencies; thus, ACT counts on the contribution of the team of professionals with a wide experience and competence in the areas. ACT develops the professional course of actors constituted by 3 levels of training taught over 3 years. Each level corresponds to a school year and its certificate, being compulsory the frequency of the 3 years to obtain the professional certificate. The course has an average of 620 hours. Study visits and open classes are organized with artistic personalities who share their experience with the students.

It also develops a set of workshops for adults and show professional. About the social responsibility, includes children and adolescents to attend classes in themes of theatre, cinema and television.

In the context of social inclusion, the ACT:

1. Develops the project *21 em Cena*, theatre classes for young people with down syndrome.
2. contributed to the project *The Language of the Heart* aiming to raise awareness of the need for integration and social inclusion of the hearing impaired;
3. Develops classes for blind people with the Centre of Rehabilitation *Nossa Senhora dos Anjos* since 2014;
4. Developed theatre classes for the elderly;
5. Contributes to the project *Educating for Citizenship*, developing pieces presented in several basic schools of the Municipality of Lisbon, Portugal.

About the partnerships developed by ACT we highlight the National Theatres D. Maria II, São Luiz and Trindade, the SP, SIC, RTP TV and TV Globo. About international partnerships, we highlight Cours Florent (Paris, France) and Michael Chekhov Acting Studio (New York, USA).

Since the beginning of its activity, ACT has awarded professional certificate to more than 230 students and has certified more than 20 students with 1 year of open training. ACT has 24 teachers, national and international and an internal team of 5 paid employees and 1 volunteer (unpaid employee).

1.4.6 RO – Romania, Replika Cultural Association

REPLIKA Cultural Association considers itself “an artistic mouse trap for community issues”. REPLIKA started its activity in 2011, in partnerships with state theatres from Bucharest, Romania. In 2015 we opened REPLIKA Centre for Educational Theatre that was conceived as an independent, interdisciplinary space, promoting the collaboration between professional artists and members of vulnerable communities and encouraging a theatre for young audience, deeply involved in society. REPLIKA strongly believes in mutual education through artistic means, in art as a form of empowering ignored social groups, voicing their needs and expectations. REPLIKA believes in the activist artist, mirroring the society and transgressing our realities, in educational utopias becoming reality, in pedagogy as a shared process of raising community stories, in a theatre based on cooperation and respect for everybody’s story. Located in District 4 of Bucharest, REPLIKA supports free access to cultural education as a fundamental right, expanding the access to culture for vulnerable categories disconnected from contemporary art. This is why all the REPLIKA events are free admission.

Radu Apostol (director), Mihaela Michailov (playwright), Viorel Cojanu (actor), Mihaela Radescu (actress), Silvana Negrutiu (actress), Gabi Albu (set designer), Elena Găgeanu (video artist) are the associated artists of REPLIKA Cultural Association. We will lead the workshops based on educational theatre methodology and community-based theatre methodology.

The Cultural Association Replika has a relevant experience in theatre activities with young people and a substantial interest in creating performances that are based on themes like - civil rights of kids, democratic participation in taking decision, civic involvement of the young generation, documenting themes and subjects of major impact in the Romanian society. In 2015, the Association created a unique space in Bucharest - Centre for Educational Theatre Replika - dedicated to collaborations between artists and marginal, excluded communities, thus giving voices to socially and politically ignored categories and creating a theatre for inclusion, auto-representation, democratic participation and solidarity.

In 2015, the organizer developed a theatre project – *Face of the Rights* – focused on the Convention of the Rights of the Kids, in which 9 teenagers and 2 actors perform. The performance aimed at a general awareness regarding the rights of the kids, at developing their political consciousness and engaging them in reflecting on what kind of world they want to change and what kind of societies they desire to live in, at building up a sense of moral responsibility.

The Centre for Educational Theatre hosted the political theatre performance *What We Would Be If We Knew*, documenting 100 years of protests of the workers in Romania. The Centre also hosted the performance *Inter-face*, documenting the Holocaust of the Jewish, Roma and Gay people in Romania.

In 2015 we developed a community-based theatre project called *Our Daily Hunger* that was focused on personal stories of elder people that due to economic difficulties have to live in the Social Centres. Based on their stories we developed an immersive theatre piece that was questioning the meanings of social assistance, health care. Audience and artists recreate together the plan of a very less known Romanian philanthropist of the early 90s to cure “our daily hunger”: a dinner party with friends. Based on an incomplete scrapbook of notes that was found in research, the uncertainty of the very existence of the philanthropist, but also on interviews with a number of people who have lost their homes in the Sector 4 of Bucharest, *Our Daily Hunger* creates an immersive experience that explores the nature of poverty in Romania, the relation between actual social change and the artistic process, the conflict between reality and fiction and how we consume it in performance.

2 Data and methods

Data used for the present analysis was collected during the kick off meeting of the project, which was held in early December in Kalamata, Greece. Among the agenda items for the kick off meeting was answering questionnaires with eight open-ended questions and a SWOT matrix.

In the **first part** of these questionnaires, participants were encouraged to give succinct answers to the following open-ended questions:

- The importance of the social dimension of the theatre/drama according to your opinion.
- The situation of drama vocational education in your country in formal settings.
- The situation of drama vocational education in your country in informal settings.
- The situation and opportunities of the vocational rehabilitation of professional actors/actresses
- The deficits/gaps in formal drama vocational education you discern
- The importance of the Social Acting Project for your institution
- The importance of the Social Acting project for your local community
- The needs the Social Acting project comes to cover

Their feedback gave useful insights that can help us understand the state of the art and optimise the project in order to improve its results. The information in these answers is presented in §3.1 below.

In the **second part**, each of the partner organisations are asked to build an individual SWOT matrix based on the project, the partner's contribution to the project, and the partner's view on the implementation of the project in the partner's local community. A set of indicative questions are included, which aim at helping the partner to compile the matrix.

The SWOT matrix feedback was used as input for the SWOT analysis presented in §3.2.

The SWOT analysis seeks to identify the internal and external factors that are favourable and unfavourable to achieving the project's objectives and to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses which usually arise internally and opportunities and threats which usually arise from external sources. The four modules of the analysis are strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, as explained below.

- Strengths: characteristics of Social Acting that give an advantage over others.
- Weaknesses: characteristics that place the project at a disadvantage relative to others.
- Opportunities: elements that the project could exploit to its advantage.
- Threats: elements in the environment that could cause trouble for the project.

The SWOT analysis results will be put to good use to leverage the positive aspects and eliminate or subdue the negative aspects of Social Acting.

3 Findings

3.1 Feedback from partner countries

3.1.1 Denmark

According to partner organisation *Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium * Odin Teatret*, theatre in Denmark is seen as a tool to foster citizen participation, community cohesion, social inclusion and educational attainment. *NTOT* actively seeks to develop this agenda by collaborating projects that discuss present and future cultural values in pan-European, local, and transversal contexts. It is important to *NTOT* to merge their common transnational European findings and develop dissemination that can affect change in a bottom-up manner.

Drama vocational education in formal settings is almost entirely based on small organisations such as independent theatres and workshops which can gradually affect culture in the medium and long run. Existing top-down models of governance significantly undervalue drama education in informal settings which affects the enrolment of skilled people as well as the support and representation of drama education in other sectors.

Regarding drama vocational education, *NTOT* addresses the art in its global context and the fact that borders are no longer able to separate cultures like they used to. Therefore, every sustainable cultural project must be able to promote intercultural development taking into consideration that different cultures now co-exist and are shaping communities within the same city and perhaps even the same neighbourhood.

Social Acting can bring positive impact to *NTOT*'s local community. The tools Social Acting will offer will help socially excluded groups become more involved through dramatic art. In addition, new teaching techniques and operational skills will support the participants.

NTOT operations focus on researching, experimenting, implementing, and documenting development methodologies, collaborative strategies, practices, and exchanges in different contexts. Opening a dialogue at EU level via Social Acting (discussion table, international cooperation and exchange, panel about arts and culture, masterclass and residence) will improve skills and capacity building of cultural operators.

3.1.2 Greece

Modernoi Kairoi's view on theatre is a predominantly socio-artistic expression that indirectly affects the collective human behaviour by influencing individual mindset. Modernoi Kairoi carries out theatrical plays with socio-political themes and can significantly benefit from projects such as Social Acting that support theatre as a means not only of entertainment but also education and inclusion.

Drama vocational education in Greece is found in both formal and informal settings. Formal settings consist of drama schools that operate as public post-secondary educational institutes or private companies while informal settings mainly include seminars or short (day-long) workshops. Drama schools have been criticized due to their alleged lack of vision about theatre and about the actor's education, in addition to a cut-and-dried culture promoted by the educators and trainers. Similarly, informal seminars and workshops are tainted with lack of vision and disorientating operation.

Professional acting in Greece does not require work permit, which allows for non-professional people such as amateurs or models to engage with the art. The oversupply affects actors' wages and their opportunities of rehabilitation.

Formal drama vocational education is not unaffected by this phenomenon. Stakeholders are either confused or do not challenge the role and purpose of theatre, leaving a big part of performances to suffer from narcissism and keep their distance from theatre's social acting role.

3.1.3 Poland

The social dimension of drama contributes to a circular effect where people who have attended a theatrical performance embrace the social aspect of it and wish to re-experience the feeling of inclusion, according to the Polish partner *Stowarzyszenie Edukacyjno Społeczno Kulturalne Teatr Brama*. Social theatre can help addressing difficult issues in society and societal problems.

Drama education in Poland can be found in formal and informal settings. Private drama schools are the dominant form of formal drama vocational education in Poland, as public universities cannot accept but a limited number of students. Private drama schools have expensive tuitions which, in some cases, can prohibit students from pursuing their wish to study theatre. Informal settings include well over 800 independent theatres located in villages and small towns across the country as well as several "non-professional" acting groups for informal training. Participating in these indie theatres is generally either free of charge or low cost.

While there certainly are openings for artistic residencies in Poland, it is often the case that candidates coming from the Polish formal drama vocation system possess a narrow set of skills pertinent to their specific degree. They may not know how to promote themselves, how to manage their careers, or how to apply for grant funding.

3.1.4 Portugal

Theatre contributes to the humanity of the individual, as expressed by *ACT – Actors of School*, Portugal. Theatre helps the individual build on their social skills such as communication and empathy and, therefore, improve their social expression.

Portugal has two national schools at the upper level of education, yet the country's National Education Plan encompasses vocational schools in senior high schools that are accessible to students. The mandatory attending may impair the quality of artistic training, however. Not all vocational schools have all modules relevant to theatre; for example, *ACT – Actors School* is the only vocational school that includes courses on cameras for TV and Cinema. In addition, some private schools in the cities of Lisbon and Porto have a weak program. The large number of students

In informal settings, there is a lot of supply in the area of dramatic education. Entities of various legal nature promote theatre courses and clubs for the general population with a special focus on youth and childhood. There are vocational education entities that organize acting techniques workshops such as *ACT – Schools of Actors* for interested non-professional individuals.

The professional theatrical environment in Portugal is fragile as theatres do not directly employ actors. Professional actors and actresses are subcontracted by national theatres and carry out the performances at a low price. Lack of funding threatens many of these companies and can drive artists and creative professionals to unemployment or temporary employment in relevant or unrelated sectors. However, this culture of agility adds some stability to the industry.

Social Acting can help with increasing of the communication among the members of the local community and with promoting equality and integration of ethnic minorities, among others, in addition to raising awareness to differences and to specific problems in local communities. *ACT – Actors School* has developed projects focusing on the deaf and youth with Down syndrome; Social

Acting can extend their operation into the elderly community and against loneliness and isolation, as well as extending their expertise in complementary fields such as psychology and sign language.

3.1.5 Romania

Theatre companies identify sensitive issues of the society and topics relevant to their local communities, as expressed by *Replika Cultural Association*. To them, theatre has always been a community art that carries the society imprint in which creators can shape themselves. Replika also believe that theatre represents a method of educating and forming the man in the society. As Hamlet, the theatre artist should conceive “spectacular meshes” through which may illuminate his fellow creatures. In the social theatre the artist has a civic, humane attitude that coexists within the artistic status. The activist artist, the artist with attitude, claimed by the contemporary theatre that is deeply anchored in the social and political area, is also found in Shakespeare. Hamlet’s actors of the show presented to King Claudius are the voices of this attitude. Their act instigates, their act challenges. They become Activist Actors, Actors with Attitude, capable of revealing vulnerable issues. The assertion claiming that the interpreters of Mousetrap were traceless concerning the provocative act of the spectacle is denied by Shakespeare himself through the example of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where the troupe of handcrafters apriority analyses all the possible implications of their spectacle. Replika strongly believe in mutual education through artistic means, in art as a form of empowering ignored social groups, voicing their needs and expectations. They believe in the activist artist, mirroring the society and transgressing our realities, in educational utopias becoming reality, in pedagogy as a shared process of raising community stories, in a theatre based on cooperation and respect for everybody’s story. Replika support free access to cultural education as a fundamental right, expanding the access to culture for vulnerable categories disconnected from contemporary art. This is why all their events are free and this is why they tell their stories.

Theatre and drama education in Romania is a relatively recent field that developed in the last 20 years and is found in both formal and informal settings. Nearly every major city has high schools with theatre classes, where drama and acting methodologies are taught by professional actors. Students who have attended theatre classes in high school tend to continue their education in art universities, which are also found in every major city. Art universities in Romania have Acting and Directing departments some of which have Master and PhD programmes (e.g. UNATC I.L. Caragiale, Bucharest, Univeristy of Arts in Târgu Mureş, Babes Bolyai University in Cluj, University of Arts in Iaşi, Arts University in Sibiu, Timișoara, Craiova, etc). Each year, approximately 1500 students in Preforming Arts graduate in Romania.

In informal settings, theatre is the most popular — or the first to come to contact with — extracurricular activity. Public school theatre groups are not uncommon and are lead by professional actors or teachers. National theatre festivals for high school groups are common in Romania. Some examples are: Amfiteatru Festival in Botoşani, “George Constantin” National Theatre Festival, Okaua Theatre Festival, IDEO IDEIS, Birlic Festival, Relief Theatre Festival). Organisations like Replika contribute to these festivals with expertise sharing and mentoring or actual theatrical performances.

Professional actors in Romania are limited in terms of employment opportunities and vocational rehabilitation. Accredited actors seek employment in other fields such as kindergartens and schools, or engage with artistic activities teaching acting or organising workshops on applied theatre. Vocational education is also negatively affected by the Bologna Process which limits the length of studies to two and a half years.

Social Acting can support Replika Centre's development and expand their social impact by improving the links between the local community, most importantly its vulnerable members, and the existing or planned projects.

3.2 Collective SWOT results

3.2.1 Strengths (internal factors)

Internal skills & experience. Members of the partnership are highly qualified in carrying out operations pertinent to Social Acting.

- Extensive experience with similar projects on both national and EU levels, meaning that work portfolios, research materials, and processes are already in place
- Professional background in fields such as event production and management, staging, communication.
- Well-structured company organisation.
- Experience in inclusive performing arts and agility in their work that allows them to accommodate people of different backgrounds, social groups, ages, etc.

Established network. Partners have managed to build a solid stakeholder base that adds value to their contribution to Social Acting.

- Partners have managed to attract a broad community of artists and stakeholders, in some cases on national and international levels.
- Existing collaboration with cultural institutions, associations and collegiums and good understanding and connexion with people's struggles
- Common vision across their network

Project characteristics. The project has been designed to address present issues while promoting collaboration.

- Good timing: Social Acting is designed to answer current trends and seeks solutions to problems that target audiences are facing now.
- Fosters transnational partnerships in a field that lacks them and could be significantly benefited from – important for partners without such partnerships.
- Promotes collaboration of people from a wide variety of backgrounds
- Good and relevant objectives, e.g. teaches entrepreneurship to young artists

3.2.2 Weaknesses (internal factors)

Lack of expertise in some fields. It has been identified that unavailability of the following skills can affect the operation:

- People with HR background in non-artistic areas, such as psychologists, social workers, sign language
- Advanced skills in administrative matters, management, and the ability to expand operations and draw funding for larger social action projects
- Technical skills: AV, IT, communications
- Public relation skills, competency and tools regarding the social aspect of theatrical performances

Insufficient resources.

- Work spaces

Incomplete or skewed insights as a result of low public involvement:

- Not fully understating the real needs of local communities
- Not enough public stakeholder involvement (about the importance of arts in the social sector)
- Poor dissemination channels, especially in schools and other educational institutions

3.2.3 Opportunities (external factors)

Networking

- Increase mobility, meet new partners to include in our network, expansion of partnerships at international level
- There exists the ability to integrate SOCIACT to the state pedagogical program (liaison with the Municipality of Lisbon, TV, theatre companies)

Human development for all involved parties.

- Development of personal skills such as emotional intelligence, empathy, creativity

Development of local education and post-education

- Building opportunities for Theatre Education to become part of the curricula in Romania
- Offering graduating students the possibility to develop their abilities in working with vulnerable groups lacking access to cultural events
- Widen exchange network with other European Schools
- Exploring new methods and practices in developing the professional field of drama & theatre in education
- Increase the number of practitioners in educational theatre

Development of partner organisations

- Opportunity to improve the performances and to increase the devoted audience
- Improve existing tools and methodologies
- Opportunity to contribute to the trend of meaningful and indicating theatre
- Recognition of ACT – Actors School as a school with an innovative training program
- Opportunity to improve communication and enrich our works with interesting perspectives and possibilities out of Greece.

3.2.4 Threats (external factors)

Threats of financial nature: national/international economic crisis, loss of financing or unstable financing, loss of financing for projects under development

Administrative threats: reduction of working spaces or their condition, insufficient advertisement/promotion

HR threats: team is too small and/or not many volunteers and/or current staff needs to be trained or not fully competent

Cultural threats: Individualism and cultural/geographical isolation, conflicts and political situation in Denmark and Europe

4 Recommendations

Social Acting has been designed to address the weaknesses that were identified in the partnership, such as lack of specific sets of skills in management and technology, and incomplete insights of the local communities, to name a few. The partnership is expected to be fully dedicated to extracting as much value as possible from their involvement and contribution.

The coordinator and the partnership must ensure that all financial threats are eliminated to the highest extent possible by thorough controls and investigations where necessary, total elimination of reckless expenses and relentless tracking of the cash flow. Market research and procurement in correct timing, such as booking air travel when ticket prices are low, will help. In addition, it is recommended to seek external sponsors that are willing to support the project and its activities either financially or in kind (offering work spaces, resources, etc.).

The effective and widespread dissemination of the final results and the general outputs of a project is generally mandatory for projects like Social Acting. It is therefore crucial that the partnership will develop their network and their marketing strategies which, in turn, will support the high level of dissemination Social Acting requires. Network building is a gradual process that starts well before the dissemination phase and as soon as possible.

The partnership is expected to time manage. Social Acting has been carefully designed and can be very efficient time wise so long as the partnership respects the deadlines and plans ahead. Periodical administrative audit may also help. In addition, it is recommended to dedicate a few hours every week for cleaning and organising the working spaces following the concept of “simple but functional” rather than “fully equipped but less practical”.

Finally, each partner will have their own motivations, expectations and assumptions as they enter a partnership. It is important to be clear about these from the beginning and to monitor them over the life of the partnership to ensure that they still hold. If things have changed, adapt as necessary.

As put by Jean Monnet (1888–1979),

*Make men work together.
Show them that beyond their differences
and geographical boundaries
there lies a common interest.*