



★ NETWORKING EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

European Conference

**Closing the empowerment gap through citizenship education
How to address educationally disadvantaged groups**

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Report

**Workshop 8
Learning Method – a playful Access
to Citizenship Education (Outdoor Workshop)**

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Part I: Introduction

The workshop began with a short introduction-round and the question about the motivation to participate in this workshop (led by Olga Napiontek).

Beside the fact, wanting to know more about the method *urban game for civic education*, the participants also mentioned that they decided for workshop 8 because it was an opportunity to spent time outdoor, and learn more about the topic in a different way, in a more interactive apply. The workshop was defined as “a practical workshop, something additional to theoretical conference parts”.

The second step built the introduction to the method – a short presentation on geocaching and the connection to education (by Katarzyna Lorenc). During the short introducing presentation on the method three questions were raised. First one was dedicated to the GPS-device, that has to be seen only as a medium and cannot be more important than the topic itself. The second question was connected to the audience that can be target by this method. A few examples of the method - the use of geocaching and urban games - were indicated. In the last question we were asked about other possible topics/subjects that can be learned with the use of urban games/ geocaching.



Next step was the introduction to the historical context of the urban game by Mateusz Fałkowski. He talked about the emergence of organized opposition in Poland, repertoires of action and organizational forms and the meaning of Solidarność.

Part II: Urban game

Participants were divided into two groups. One group was using the GPS-device; the second one was working with codes. Each group got their own instructions and a Polish guide who helped them with the translations (if necessary).

The group, supporting the democratic opposition in their fight against the communist regime, had the goal to produce and to distribute a flyer. The first step was connected to the mission on writing an official petition to the communist government for the purpose to receive paper. Participants had to formulate this request in Polish, using dictionaries and their creativity, trying to find proper words, fitting to the 80s. The next task was about printing the flyer with the use of original machine. The former member of Solidarność movement introduced the historical method of using the machine. He prepared the master copy of the flyer. Participants asked him questions about his motivations and conditions of everyday activities of opposition. In the third flat participants had to multiply the flyer in an edition of 50 copies. Finally, after reaching the conference venue the participants distributed the leaflets to other participants of NECE 2011. During the whole time the participants had to be very careful and had to try not to be caught by secret agents.

Part III: Discussion

The last part of the workshop built a 40 minutes long discussion.

During the evaluating talk participants shared their impressions of the urban game. It was described as exciting and very involving. The given historical frame let the participants submerge to this time period and into the topic, while seeking for the hidden treasure. The game was described as very activating.

The participants were even pleased with the weather conditions. The cold and darkness, the “dangerous scenery of Old Praga” was given the right frame for the taken action. The border between reality and the task was described as crossed/mixed.

The participants also liked the authenticity of the game, the real settings – meeting with one of the dissident, his original self-made print machine, real surrounding of his flat. Additionally the participants have learnt some Polish words while writing their petition. The Participants described this as quite practically.

While the discussion, participants came back to the questions posed in the initial presentation - devoted to the use of geocaching and urban games as a learning method. The group that was working with the GPS-device described the use of this technical equipment as not necessary or even disturbing and not fitting to the topic of this game. The group was also aware how to make sure that the device (or other medium) won't get more attention, than the given topic. Although the new technology was described as fancy and could probably attract to the young generation. But the group (participant that were working with

GPS-device) was not sure if the GPS-device were really necessary. The group tried to see the device as a side effect or extra but couldn't see any context connection. The urban game itself was also seen as a tool for adult's education.

During the discussion the organizers also asked about the compatibility of the method for disadvantaged groups and which could be the target group. The participants saw urban game clearly as a tool to reach disadvantaged groups.

Further more the groups were thinking about knowledge that can be transfer in the framework of urban games. They saw the method not only as a tool to teach about the historical circumstances, but also as a tool to broach the issues from the present on behalf of the experiences from the past. The start for a discussion like that could be: What were the values in the past and what are the values nowadays? The connection between the past and the present, or even the future and the comparison of historical knowledge with today's practise, were very important for the participants. Concerning the reflection of the topic with so-called "disadvantaged groups" they discussed if and how this method would be different for "advantaged groups".

For time-based reasons the last question from the presentation – for which topics/subject you could use the game – couldn't be discussed. Therefore the discussion ended on the topic how to build a bridge between the historical topics to nowadays? How to see and explain the similarity, if there is one?

The participants would have liked to have more time for the reflection after the game. The group also communicated the need to know more about the background of the history of democratic movement under the communism.