

INHABITANTS

Bridging the gap between citizens and the performing arts

Introduction

The project "Inhabitants" is proposed by A.T.C.L. - Theatre Association between Lazio's Municipalities as project leader and involves a network of theatres, cultural centres, festivals, and public bodies.

The following organisations are already part of the consortium: BE festival in Birmingham (UK), B-51 Kulturno društvo / festival Ex Ponto in Lubiana (SI), Bakelit Studio in Budapest (HU), Camara Municipal do Porto (PT), Consorzio dei Teatri di Bari (IT), Culture o Centre in Orléans (FR), Festival IDEM at La Casa Encendida in Madrid (ES).

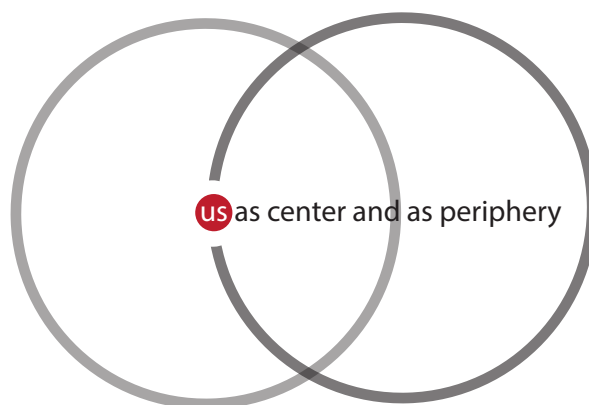
The idea of "Inhabitants" comes from the need to **shorten the distance between the places of the artistic creation** (theatres, festivals, cultural centres) **and the residents of the surrounding areas**, through methods of **participation and integration of the local communities** with the artists and providing the network of partners with new tools for audience engagement and innovative promotion of cultural events.

The general context of "Inhabitants" is referred to the theme of the *marginalization*, as it links cultural organizations that share the same interest and work on different levels of exclusion.

The geographical exclusion is faced by the partners that have their seats in peripheral areas or small towns or in peripheries of urban centres where the communities have a reduced access to cultural offers and opportunities.

Some partners that are based in big cities use to work on the involvement of specific target groups considered as minorities or disadvantaged groups (i.e. immigrants; youngsters in the juvenile prison; residents in very small towns), with the intention to reduce the social or cultural exclusion through the artistic practices.

The distances – intended as geographical, social or cultural – can create barriers to the cultural fruition and integration. For this reason the network has identified a common mission in creating and enhancing the connections between cultural spaces and local communities or groups, and by activating inclusion processes through the performing arts.



In line with this premise, the project emphasizes the combination of *artistic creation and participation*, with the following actions:

- Residences of foreign artists who work through the active and co-creative involvement of people;
- Creative workshops on the art-making held by foreign artists and didactic workshops (analysis and understanding) for the public;

- International seminars for professionals, focused on the exchange and study of best practices and skills, with the aim of developing innovative strategies for the audience development.
- The implementation of a focused and targeted strategy for the use of the digital tools to activate the interest of the local communities and maximise the impact of the activities
- A final handbook and theoretical compendium around the topic of interweaving cultures and involve communities through the performing arts: the handbook will collect the experiences taking place during the project and the evaluation of the impact of methods and activities.

“Inhabitants” wants to activate creation, sharing and training processes that are developed through the contributions of the environment and the people. **Promoting knowledge and awareness of the distinct cultural attributes of a place is therefore an important aspect of cultural development.** Significantly, public appreciation of the distinctive culture of a city or a place enables the community to develop a sense of identity and belonging, which in turn positively influences the quality of life of citizens.

“Inhabitants” will provide to this newly created network of partners the opportunity to do a shared survey on the different territories, to identify the unique characteristics of each of them, to study and evaluate the experiences put into practice, to develop a sort of *handbook* of effective tools, methods, models for those who want to work on integration through the creative processes and the performing arts.

Goals of the project

The main goal of the project is **the shortening of distances between cultural spaces and local communities and the initiation of processes of cultural local development**, through the active involvement of citizens in the artistic and creative activities.

In line with this main goal, "Inhabitants" aims to:

- **Test new approaches of audience development and involvement** through the artistic practice;
- **Enlarge the access** of the audience to the cultural offer and activities and activate a **virtuous system improving the participants' quality of life**
- **Stimulate and enhance the artistic and creative skills and knowledge of the audience** through the active participation in activities and the didactic sessions;
- **Strengthen the competences and know-how of the partners** and **internationalize** their activities and relations, through the sharing of practices and artistic programmes, the comparison of models of cultural local development
- **Support the circulation of the participating artists**, by offering them the opportunity **to work in residence abroad**, where they can practice their creative methods and develop their artistic projects, through the constant work with the communities and in relation to the surrounding areas.
- **Measure and evaluate the different impacts** of the wide range of activities toward the participating organisations, the participants in the activities, the general audience

The actions foreseen by the projects should support the network in enlarging and fortifying the relationships with the territories and improving the access to the cultural offer to disadvantaged communities in the decentralized areas or underrepresented groups in the cities. Moreover the added value of the network allows the internationalization of the activities of the partners, the networking and professional relations, and the sharing of capacities and methods, in order to reinforce the involved partners and provide them with new skills and new opportunities for international collaborations.

Calendar of activities

- "Inhabitants" starts in June 2016 with a preparation phase
- From October 2016 to July 2018 : activities will be organized by the partners in the different countries
- August and December 2018 : publication of the handbook, final closure and dissemination

The project Leader: A.T.C.L.

The A. T.C.L. is an organization specializing in the distribution of shows and cultural events, in the promotion and education of the audience. It is recognized by the Ministry of Heritage, Cultural Activities and Tourism and by the Lazio Region. The A. T.C.L. was founded in 1981 to ensure a constant cultural offering throughout the region. Lazio Region and over 60 Local Municipalities are members of A.T.C.L.

A.T.C.L. fosters the reopening of theatre spaces and the use of historic buildings, archaeological sites and libraries, and is characterized by the interdisciplinary nature of the artistic proposal, the contemporary languages, development of new audiences, the rediscovery of the traditions of the territories. It contributes to the organization of the seasons of several theatre spaces, the implementation of events and summer festivals as well as the programming of some residences in the Region.

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