



Anything is possible!

The Summary of the HUKK-AP Project –
the Programme of Involving and Developing Hobby Schools.
Experiences, activities and results

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Tallinn 2016

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Issuer: Archimedes Foundation Youth Agency

Compiled by: Kristel Altosaar, Jaan Aps, Evelin Koppel & Reet Kost

Co-creators: Ello Jõepera, Lenel Karu, Kristel Kull, Anna Kuzina, Silvi Laidro, Ülle Laursoo, Tiina Lehtme, Kristel Põhjala, Eve Ormisson, Liis Somelar, Astrid Viik & Uku Visnapuu

Language editor: Kairit Henno

Design: Tuumik Stuudio OÜ

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Introduction



The most important purpose of hobby education is to preserve interest in life.

Aarne Saluveer

Hobby activities offer young people plenty of opportunities to acquire basic life skills and qualities such as self-expression and courage, cooperation and problem-solving, creativity and entrepreneurship. Knowledge gained at hobby schools complements that of regular schools and together they create the prerequisites for young people's all-round development. Young people can meet peers with similar interests and they often get ideas for choosing their future profession. Participating in hobby education helps them to socialise and forge deeper bonds with the community. Everyone benefits from this experience of sharing company and exploring together: they learn to see and consider people's differences, and to appreciate diversity. The great value of hobby activities is also confirmed by a study titled 'Satisfaction with youth work among young people participating in youth work' (2016), in which the participants believed that new knowledge is most effectively gained at hobby schools.

Sadly not everyone can participate in the hobby activities that inspire them: studies have shown that at least 10% of young people are left out.^{1,2} Referenced sources also name the reasons why young people – including young people with fewer opportunities – do not participate in hobby activities. The main obstacles are regional differences in the accessibility, diversity and quality of hobby activities, which is to say that young people may not find exciting activities that match their needs in their home region. Exclusion may also be connected to family- and finance-related opportunities, young people's own lack of motivation, and in the case of young people with special needs, a lack of physical access to hobby schools. It is considered an equally

important reason that instructors of young people have not received training on working with different target groups and including new young people.

While acknowledging the obstacles and wishing to make sure that hobby activities in Estonia correspond more to young people's needs and interests, are more open and include young people from different backgrounds, an extensive project on hobby activities was carried out from 2014–2016 on the initiative of the Archimedes Foundation's Youth Agency, the Programme of Involving and Developing Hobby Schools (henceforth: the HUKK-AP project) with 80 participating partners.

The HUKK-AP project posed somewhat of a challenge for those involved in hobby education. Tradition is good on the one hand, standing for duration and quality, while on the other hand it is not easy to create new solutions next to what has become habitual. During the project an answer was sought to questions such as whether providers of hobby activities were ready to include target groups not included thus far and whether the process could be as important as the results. This inevitably demands the evaluation of activities thus far, cooperation between different companies and people and also analysing one's fears.

This compilation offers a thorough review of the HUKK-AP project. It includes the experience stories of instructors and participants, examples of the methods created and tested and recommendations on what to do in order to make participation in hobby activities possible for all Estonian young people who wish to take part. It is possible to read about the results, including how participating in the hobby activities affected young people and how the experience of working on a project affected the specialists who worked with the young people. The compilation also helps with thinking about how it would be possible to support young people's studies even more via hobby activities.

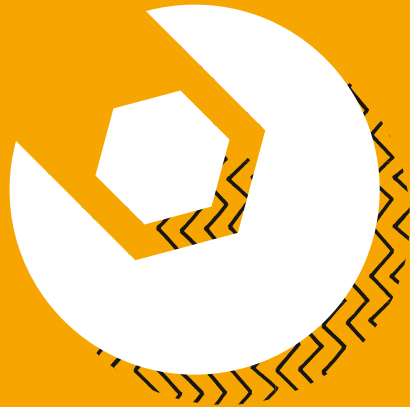
We share with you the belief of the participants of the project that anything is possible!

Enjoy reading!

1 Satisfaction with youth work of young people participating in youth work. (2016). Final report. Ernst & Young Baltic AS.

2 Youth and Youth Work. Youth Monitoring Yearbook 2011 // Young people with special needs. Youth Monitoring Yearbook 2014/2015 // Hobby education and hobby activities – Current situation and vision for the future. Presentation by Reelika Ojakivi on Inspiration Day 'Anything is possible! Hobby education will save the world' (31 March 2016).

Summary



The HUKK-AP project offered the organisers of hobby activities a chance to develop solutions that support the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in hobby activities more than the current methods.

In cooperation with the Archimedes Foundation's Youth Agency, the city governments of Pärnu and Tartu, VitaTiim and Urban Style non-governmental organisations, 59 of their local partners and 16 hobby activity teams that participated in the development programme, created new forms of activities and approaches for including young people as part of the project. Hobby activity instructors and youth work organisers were also trained. An important part of the project's activities was aimed at young people aged 7-17, who, for many reasons (health, disability, special educational needs, geographical or socio-economic restrictions) had not participated in hobby activities thus far. A tool for measuring the impact of the project and hobby activities was also created.

The following important results were achieved thanks to the project.

- 3231 young people with fewer opportunities participated in hobby activities, 1806 of them doing so regularly. The participants showed a change in their attitudes, knowledge, skills and behaviour. They became more confident, took initiative more likely, and learned to concentrate, communicate and cooperate more successfully. The skills related to their hobby improved and they became academically more successful.
- 69 new regional hobby groups were established that focused especially on the needs of this particular target group: football training, a painting group, a theatre studio, a nature group, car modelling group, dance lessons, a photography group, guitar lessons, motorcycle training, a poetry group, a pool club, a sailors' club, a hand bell group, et al.
- New hobby activity models were established and approaches were tested that had not been previously implemented in the project areas at all or to such an extent. For example, young people with special educational needs were included in regular hobby groups and they were able to participate in smaller groups or individual lessons created especially for them. Young people living in more secluded areas were reached via a mobile hobby school.
- 442 parents were involved and advised, which turned out to be of great importance in youth work. Parents play an important role in whether a young person finds a hobby activity and whether they start participating regularly.
- 1647 specialists working with young people participated in training and mentoring, which has helped to change the way of thinking in the hobby activity system and including young people with fewer opportunities has become more natural part of everyday work.

I Hobby activities and inclusion



Searching for the meaning of a hobby activity³

First of all, let's think about the meaning of a hobby activity. What is the mission of hobby education? Is it fulfilled in reality, and how?

As was said in a popular Estonian movie, this island is not really an island... I also realised that my ceramics group was not really a ceramics group. Hobby education is a sphere with a much wider purpose, degree of connection and impact.

Participant in Hobby Education's Tool Fair

Participants in the Hobby Education's Tool Fair were asked to undertake a small thinking exercise: to list three things in one minute that are sought to be packed in the life suitcase of a young person via hobby activities. The first answers shouted out by the participants were: belief in oneself, skill and desire to consider others, politeness, assertiveness and awareness, joy of living, adaptability, caring and interest in learning.

You would most probably not guess based on these answers what a water sports coach of young people from Ida-Viru County, the director of a small-town nature house or a workshop instructor from an animation hobby school in the capital consider important. All of these answers included the core of hobby activities: basic life knowledge and the opportunity to acquire the skills and attitudes necessary for becoming an independent adult. These were the aspects the participants in the Hobby Education's Tool Fair considered the pillars of their work.

The Standard for Hobby Education defines the aim the same way, according to which the purpose of hobby education is to provide opportunities for the comprehensive development of personality and to support young people in their development as members of society with good coping skills.⁴

The same document describes the principles of organising hobby education and its purposes and refers to the cornerstones of the field such as non-formal learning and key competences. For example, hobby education should be based on young people's free will and be learner-centred; it should develop creativity, social skills and ability to learn.

Against the background of a philosophy that focuses on supporting children's and young people's general development, hobby education's field of activity is still somewhat specific. As such, it may appear as though hobby education's main purpose is developing young people's professional skills. Hobby education as a teaching practice that prepares young people for their future profession follows the idea that via being engaged in sports, technology, nature, music, art or other hobbies, the specialty selected by young people will be cemented and their future career prospects will become clearer. Without a doubt hobby education has an important role in this, but it is by far not the only possible perspective.

Taking up hobbies raises a young person's awareness of themselves and provides them with a more stable basis for choosing their future profession. Also, the experience and competence acquired via hobby activities may prove to be decisive when applying for a position, for example when competing with someone who does not have such knowledge or who cannot highlight their usefulness. The network of relationships created in a hobby group can also aid with career development.

Therefore hobby activities involve much more than meets the eye.

As an instructor I help my students to become better at kendo and also become a better person.

Let's take some virtues, such as courage, determination and self-confidence – the main question is how to make them natural. Because a good person behaves correctly instinctively without having to go through complicated moral calculations at a certain moment regarding how to behave.

The learning of martial arts is about repetitive practice, and through this people not only train their body, but also

³ This chapter is based on Üllý Enni's summary article 'Inclusive Hobby Education. Including Hobby Education' which was written on the basis of a hobby education Hobby Education's Tool Fair on 27 & 28 November 2014.

⁴ Standard for Hobby Education. (2007). RTL 2007, 27, 474.

their nature and their very being. That is how martial arts develop a person's character – and it actually applies to the majority of sports – much more than mere physical aspects. You learn to lose, for example. As you develop, you understand that the problem is not your opponent. Yes, they have to be defeated, but before you reach that point, you must deal with yourself.

I see it as a reflection of how to become a better person: you cannot change others, but you can change yourself. Certain behaviour patterns simply become part of a person's nature and they do not have to think about whether they are currently courageous or self-confident or something else. They either are or aren't. How do you become like that? You must behave bravely and confidently again and again and again. If you do this, then one day you will actually become like that.

Tarmo Jüristo at the Hobby Education's Tool Fair on his job as a kendo instructor

It is a different question whether instructors consider all hobby activities the same way. Are they able to keep the aim in their mind and devote themselves to it while planning and organising their lessons? Do instructors acknowledge that teaching how to become a better person is a part of their job and is this view shared by young people and people connected to them? Does society as a whole share this position?

Make sure that everything you do fits in to the bigger picture! I do it every day. Constant analysis, reminders and making sense of things for yourself and your students – it is new-found knowledge that I take with me today.

Comment of a participant in the Hobby Education's Tool Fair

From thoughts to actions or on the practice of inclusive hobby activities

The question of whether a hobby activity should be inclusive (and to what extent) is largely dependent on what role we

believe it fulfils. The question only arises if we believe that hobby activities help to increase young people's well-being while considering their real needs.

Compared to other youth workers, hobby school employees have less contact with students with learning difficulties, possible school dropouts and young people with behavioural problems.⁵

The Standard for Hobby Education provides, among other things, that all young people shall be treated equally and that teaching shall be based on young people's individual differences.⁶ Although the realisation that certain target groups make it to hobby schools much less often comes from studies carried out a long time ago, the practice of hobby education is still characterised by a fairly high threshold. Next we shall take a closer look at steps that could help overcome this.

Inclusive youth work, involving hobby education among other things, is defined as follows: a meaningful and conscious activity that encourages and supports every young person's active and equal participation and which includes young people with fewer opportunities and special needs in everyday youth work.⁷ Productive inclusion needs professional action and the corresponding competence.

In summary, the solution is a process-based, knowingly planned and supported activity that is based on young people's needs, development and their achievements thus far and in which feedback that encourages young people is of utmost importance.

One perspective on the view of including young people with fewer opportunities has been provided by Mari Venski and Kairi Jerlov, dance instructors from the dance school JJ-Street. They see their work in the following stages:

5 Murakas, R. (Ed.) (2010). Estonian youth workers, their competencies and need for training. Study summary. Pp. 132.

6 Riigi Teataja Lisa 2007, 27, 474; §2 and 4.

7 Enn, Ü. (2013). Inclusive Youth Work – Concepts and Meanings. And on the Meaning of Inclusive Youth Work. Book: Handbook of Inclusive Youth Work. Pp. 24.

The instructors stressed that the inclusion of young people is not restricted to training. All events and camps are organised by young people themselves and thus support the development of their skills much more than simply dance-wise: entre-



preneurship, project management, teamwork skills, design, photography, web management, public relations, etc. In the case of such inclusion it is important to establish individual contact with young people, identify their interests and needs, set targets based on these and support discipline in order to achieve the expected results.

Uku Talmar proposes an interesting reasoning regarding the process-based approach. He says that both education and video games are systems designed by someone, and we know that in the first case it may be very difficult to attract young people and in the other to draw them away. What could these fields learn from each other? How clear should a purpose be or how easy or difficult should a task be to continuously attract the participant? How is it possible to tackle the recurring problem of hobby education – the emergence of a routine that quashes a learner's interest and motivation?

The biggest problem of hobby education is that some are constantly ahead of others! How can you, as a teacher, make sure that those who will never make it to the top remain interested?

Aarne Saluveer giving a presentation at the Hobby Education's Tool Fair

It is this question posed by Aarne Saluveer that is especially important in terms of including young people with fewer opportunities, as it may be enough of a challenge for young people to regularly participate somewhere, not to mention the development of skills (at least for some time). According to Uku Talmar, game theory centres around flow – the game must be engaging and follow the

gamer's development through multiple levels. It should be exactly the same in hobby activities. Yet hobby instructors focus too often on instructing and results, decreasing young people's excitement and joy of participation. As with a video game, the sense of success in (hobby) activities is also related to feedback. That is why much more attention ought to be focused on how young people should be supported with informative and motivating feedback.

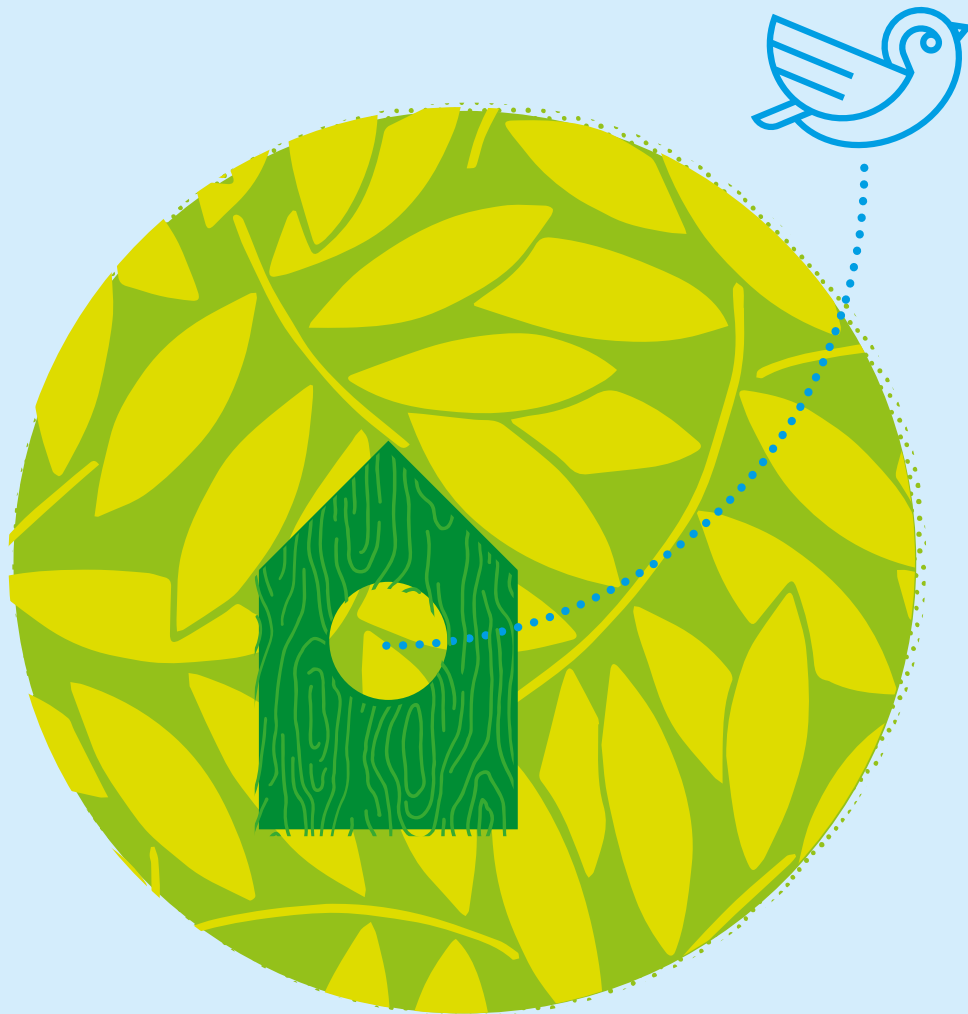
A video game increases the motivation to succeed and decreases the negativity of losing – this is one of the aspects that the Estonian education system could perhaps learn from the concept of gaming!

Uku Talmar at the Hobby Education's Tool Fair workshop

And thus we can conclude that (more) inclusive hobby activities are first and foremost important when keeping in mind the needs of young people with special needs and with fewer opportunities to create for them equal opportunities for acquiring a meaningful study experience. It is equally important to understand that inclusive hobby activities broaden the mind of all participants via shared experience. While participating in a common activity, young people experience differences and get used to them, learn to notice differences, deal with them and also support the coping of their peers. In that sense it is a great step towards a better world.

In hobby education we must teach our children how to fly through life with curiosity. And should it happen that you sit next to a huge man on a plane and you want to complain about fitting there... That's life! How do you get used to other people? And it often turns out via common interests that this is precisely the most correct way of doing so!

Aarne Saluveer giving a presentation at the Hobby Education's Tool Fair



The story of Kadri: Catching the bluebird¹

Kadri is a girl who studies in the seventh grade for students with learning difficulties. Her inability to cope in the regular class at her previous school has made her deeply insecure. Kadri feels that ever since her father left the family, there is no one to protect her anymore. Her mother is worried, but too busy with work to provide Kadri with encouraging company on a daily basis. She has to work really hard to feed and put a roof over herself and her two children. According to Kadri her mother is always tired and under great pressure, and because of that, conflicts tend to arise easily.

Kadri knows that there will always be kids at school who tease or bully or taunt her. The world seems to be a bleak place and the only defence is explosive counter-attack, using tooth and claw if necessary.

Her experience shows that friends can be bought – when she brings something nice from the school canteen or gives someone money for it. And there are plenty who are ready to exploit her, which in turn further enforces the feeling of “I’m nothing (without money)”.

From time to time Kadri sees the school psychologist to talk about her worries. Reconciliation meetings are not rare either, as her relationship with her peers often goes awry. Working with her is mostly about explaining situations and what has happened. Her low self-esteem needs to be raised again and again.

Serendipity allowed me to take a great step forward in my work on her self-confidence. Namely, I noticed some unique and eye-catching pieces of art at a student art exhibition that were created by the very same Kadri. We immediately agreed that in autumn we would talk about art school or an art group.

It was a natural course of events that she started participating in art school at the beginning of the eighth grade. Her mother gave us a permission and the first visit to the art school left Kadri pleasantly excited. A few more visits and the fated pair – Kadri and the art school – was born. Her mother was also supportive, first by giving advice, then in practice, such as writing an application or entering into a contract with the art school.

Two years at the art school have turned Kadri into a much more confident young lady. She has discovered the courage and enthusiasm within herself to fulfil another dream: becoming a volunteer at a dog shelter.

Kadri has shown me her drawings, which in my opinion tell the story of a talented person. Her dream is to continue on the path of art in her later life. Even if she does not manage to catch the bluebird, she has seen it up close. Once Kadri told me about her art studies: “This is the best thing that has ever happened to me!”

¹ Young people's experience stories were gathered as part of the impact assessment of the HUKK-AP project (Aps, J. (2016). 'Programme of Involving and Developing Hobby Schools' project or 'HUKK-AP project'. Final report). All names have been changed to guarantee anonymity.

The story of Anu: 'I have my own training class to go to now!'

13-year old Anu looks like a nice, completely normal girl in pictures. But when you meet her, you immediately notice she is actually quite special. Anu behaves differently from her peers. To bystanders her behaviour can often seem funny, incomprehensible, sometimes even frightening – for example when she is on the street even the smallest dogs scare her and she wants to run away screaming in some random direction. Or when she does not look people in the eye and does not use polite expressions, or when she has to think whether to say “hello”, “thank you”, or “please” after she has been reminded of it. She doesn't cooperate much and prefers to mind her own business. Her speech is also unique: she uses special codes – those familiar with her mostly understand her, but not strangers. She is usually cheerful, loves to visit new places, is notably good at calculating and knows a couple of centuries worth of calendars by heart. Her drawings are unique and fun and she makes beautiful ceramics.

Anu lives in a place where there are rather good opportunities for individual therapy and for working with other children. What was missing was that Anu couldn't participate in extracurricular group trainings like 'normal' children. It seemed impossible, because although Anu will gladly go anywhere, she tends to be uncooperative once she gets there. What trainer wants a child participating who does not cooperate, but instead runs around constantly and minds her own business? What would the other children think of her? As a parent, I would feel guilty, as always, if my child behaved that badly.

When the news came that the HUKK-AP project was supporting a dance therapy group for autistic young people, I was really happy. Anu loves music and dances to it in her own way. She was able to feel completely free there.

Anu didn't do much during the first test lesson, but she felt great and wanted to go back the next time. The second time she participated more – around 50% of the time. To understand the significance of this achievement you need to be a close relative of an autistic child. Anu has a favourite song, which is called 'Happy', and she has danced to it with others since the very first lesson.

The lessons include dances that are both faster and slower and those that develop physique and coordination. Parents and children can show each other actions and sounds that others then imitate – a very encouraging approach. The instructors are people who understand such children and can resolve the difficult situations that arise, naturally and with ease.

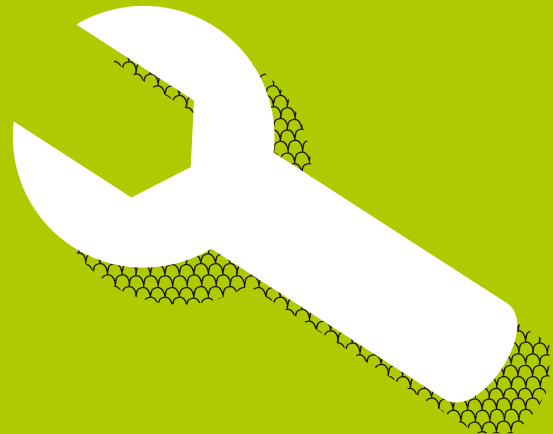
Sometimes Anu participates more, sometimes less, but she is making positive progress. More than before she now dances on her own initiative and is more successful in participating in showing activities to other children and following others. Dance therapy is something Anu eagerly awaits, for the whole week beforehand. It is delightful that Anu now has her own training to go to, just like 'normal' children.

One beautiful Friday a plaster cast was removed that she had been wearing for two and a half weeks due to injuring the ligaments in her ankle joint. She still did not want to put any weight on her leg. There was a dance therapy lesson that Saturday, so we decided to go there with Anu. Once we arrived, she immediately tossed her crutches aside and danced the whole lesson! She limped, but she still danced. When we left, her friends for the previous few weeks – the crutches – were no longer under her arms, but in my hands. And thus we got rid of them! What brilliant therapy!



II

Introduction to the Programme of Involving and Developing Hobby Schools and its field of activity



The purpose of the Programme of Involving and Developing Hobby Schools was to develop diverse and effective hobby activity opportunities that correspond to young people's needs. First and foremost the project aimed to create conditions and solutions for including young people with fewer opportunities in hobby activities at the same level as other young people. The project was carried out from 1 January 2014–30 April 2016.

The HUKK-AP project was aimed at instructors of hobby activities, organisers of youth work and young people aged 7-17 all over Estonia with fewer opportunities compared to their peers and who have not participated in hobby activities thus far for many reasons (coming from families with a low income; having a disability or health-related special needs that hinder participation; learning difficulties; limited regional opportunities for hobby activities).

The project was initiated and coordinated by the Youth Agency of the Archimedes Foundation (henceforth: YAAF) in cooperation with Tartu and Pärnu City Governments (henceforth: CG) and the Urban Style (JJ Street street dance school) and VitaTiim non-governmental organisations. The partners' task was to create local-level cooperation networks, to work together to find ways of including young people in hobby activities and also to coordinate the entire project in their area. The partners' regional cooperation networks included nearly 60 hobby schools and other organisations involved in youth work. Activities were carried out in Ida-Viru, Tartu, Jõgeva, Valga, Põlva and Pärnu counties.

Additionally, young people from six more counties were included. For this, YAAF created an open development programme for the hobby activity teams of other areas, as part of which training, mentoring and support for creating hobby groups for young people with fewer opportunities were offered. The open development programme was carried out from 2014–2016 in two stages, and in total 16 hobby activity teams participated.

The wide and varied amount of partners (companies involved with hobby activities and/or young people with fewer oppor-

tunities) helped to create different solutions for making hobby activities more inclusive (see Annex 1).

The activities fell into five categories.

1. Training for hobby activity instructors and youth work organisers

During the training, special needs in general and general principles and methods of working with young people with fewer opportunities were addressed. The subjects of including young people and their parents and assessing its impact were also addressed. The range of training activities were wide: seminars, field trips, experience sharing, evaluation meetings and other activities supported by supervision, peer group counselling and mentoring.

Besides local and national training, study visits and job shadowing training in Iceland and Norway supported by Erasmus+ programme were also undertaken. Partners to and participants in the open development programme were able to learn from one another and share experience during special meetings, such as Hobby Education's Tool Fair.

2. Cooperation and joint projects with partners

The partners and hobby activity teams of the project first established the needs of their region, choosing priority target groups, among others. In cooperation with the members of the network, solutions were developed for including the region's young people with fewer opportunities in hobby activities and for extending everyday practices.

During the project, for example, joint projects emerged between hobby schools and general education schools or schools/classes for students with special educational needs. Youth centres, sports clubs and other providers of hobby activities also included young people with fewer opportunities in their activities.

One approach was to use a mobile hobby school that reached areas where young people either had no opportunities for engaging in hobby groups or where some young people did not find it interesting. The activities were provided as group activities during lessons or as field trips and training outside school. In addition, a hobby and career module was created so that young people could plan their future career more consciously. Hobby schools tested small classes and individual teaching for young people with special educational needs or included them in regular groups.

Hobby schools and youth work organisations were also able to acquire the necessary tools, such as musical instruments, digital and nature education tools, sports goods, art materials, etc. New study aids made the activities more diverse, meaningful and attractive to young people.

3. Including young people with fewer opportunities in hobby groups, counselling children and parents

The aim was to find for every included young person a suitable way of participating in hobby activities. Besides hobby activities, a lot of time had to be spent on personal counselling and motivating the young person. Some young people with special needs were first offered a hobby group in a general education school already familiar to them and they then moved on to a hobby school. Others had to be taken 'by the hand' to hobby schools and continuously advised and encouraged. The operating methodology considered a young person's specific character to enable them to experience success. It was also kept in mind that the environment should encourage young people's participation and learning. It was possible to participate in many fields of hobby activity: music, art, information technology, nature and the environment, technology, robotics, sports, dancing, etc.

Parents were also advised and, when necessary, they were assisted in accessing other services, such as social services.

In youth work, including hobby activities, the effective approaches are not similar – young people's background, interests and needs, forms of activity, instructors' competence, networks and everything else is far too diverse for that.

Ülly Enn⁸

4. Introducing the opportunities of hobby activities to young people and informing the public of the activities and results of the project

The project partners had to find ways of successfully reaching young people who had missed out on hobby activities thus far, based on the target group, purpose and local conditions. For this, the teams used schools (teachers, support specialists or by going there personally and organising sample lessons), posters, flyers and social media. The target group was also reached via youth centres, mobile youth work, various unions or local key personnel.

To inform the wider public, local and national media channels and social networks were used. The aim of information sharing was to encourage leaders in the field to offer hobby activities more focused on young people's needs and interests.

5. Monitoring and assessment activities of the impact of the project and hobby activities

During the project, the company Stories for Impact and the promoters of the programme created a model for assessing the impact of hobby activities. Partners and hobby activity teams had to gather both participation data and experience stories that helped to identify trends related to the target group and to determine the impact of hobby activities on young people (see Appendix 2).

8 Enn, Ü. (2014). Inclusive Hobby Education. Including Hobby Education.

YOUNG PEOPLE

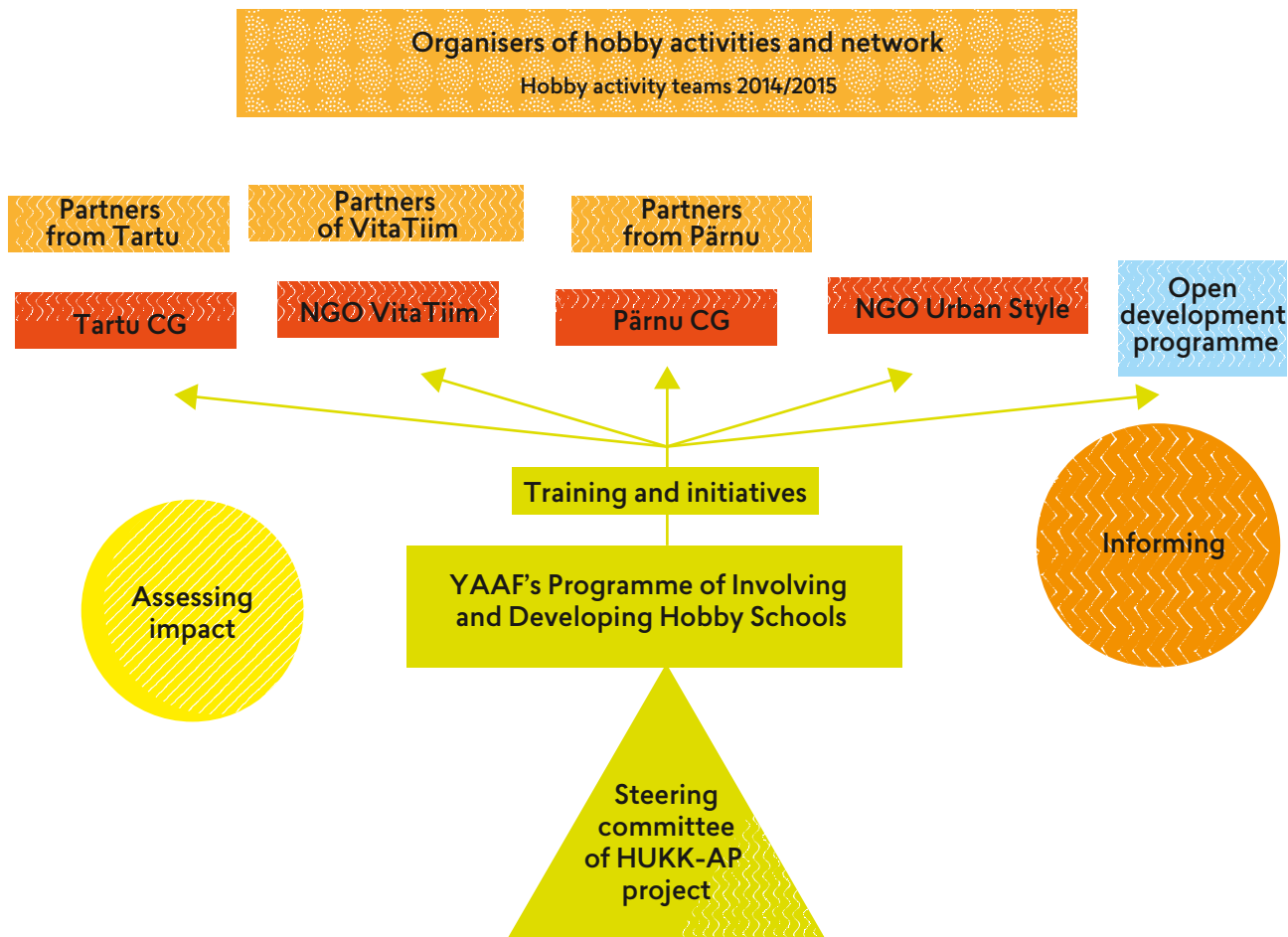
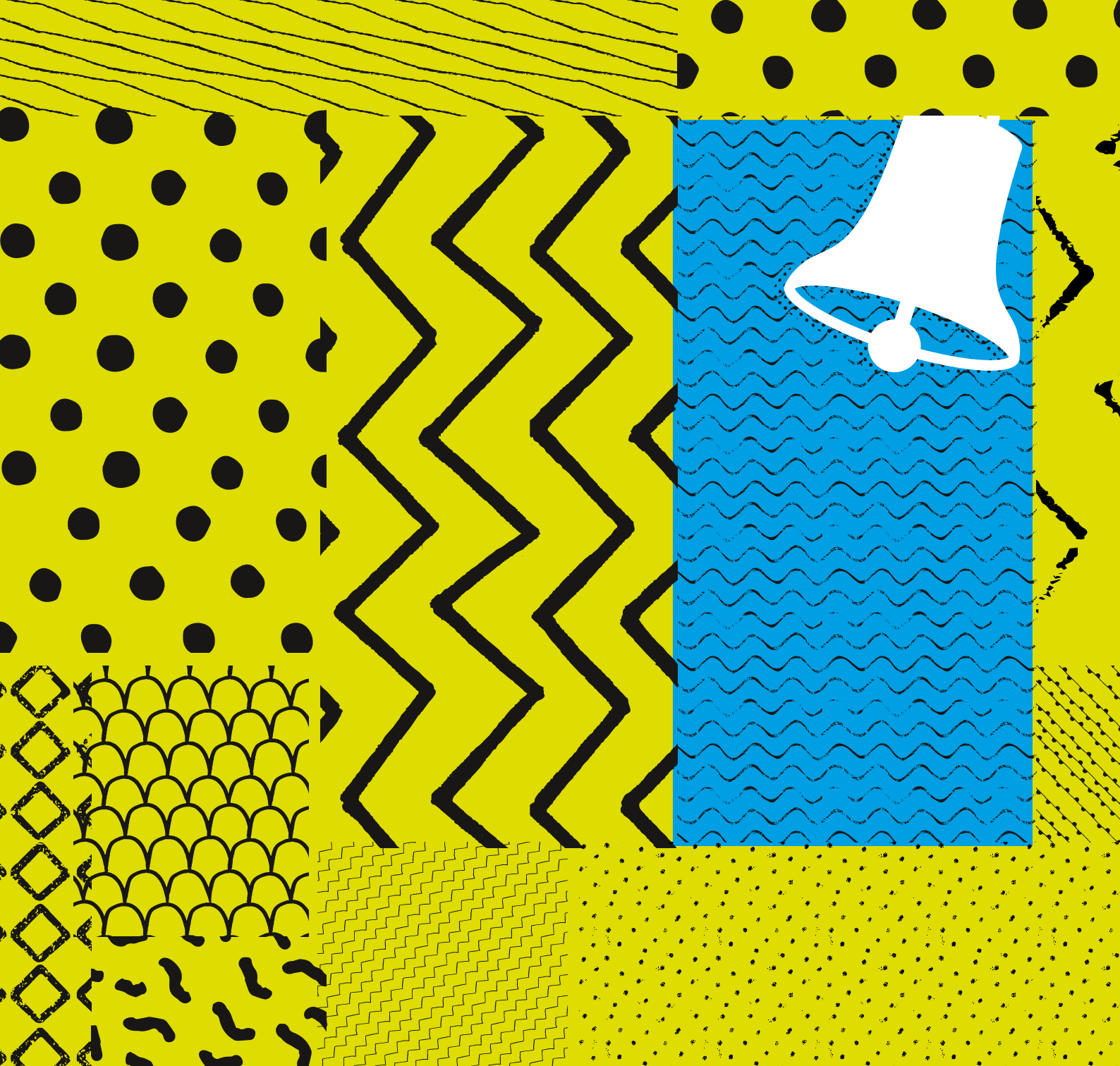


Figure 1. Project's field of activity.



The story of young musicians: Hand bell champions

In cooperation between a school and a school of arts, a hand bell hobby group was created in one of Estonia's larger municipalities. The municipality already had a wide selection of hobby groups, but people wanted to create something for young people who had never participated in a hobby group or training. Participating in a hand bell group or similar hobby activity supports the development of social and cooperative skills, encourages the habit of consistent activity and develops musical abilities.

The young people invited to the group were characterised by a lack of communication skills, problems with fellow students, fights, exclusion, behavioural problems and computer addiction, and due to various reasons (limited interest, no support from parents, etc.) had not participated in hobby activities before. After a discussion with the social pedagogue and their form master, they decided to participate. It was positive that most of them had plenty of free time.

Ten young people aged 8-11 started participating in the group. It took a lot of attention and care to form this new habit. Their form masters, the teacher of the extended-day group and the social pedagogue had to remind the children every Wednesday that they should not go home, but to the hand bell group instead.

Their parents were also involved in establishing the new habit. For example, they were told about the importance of the new hobby group. The group instructor consistently talked to the young people and helped them develop patience while waiting for their turn to play. The instructor also taught them to resolve conflicts and be more good-natured if someone played the bells incorrectly. Strict rules and a smaller classroom helped the young people control their behaviour to a greater extent. Playing the instruments in turn helped them to develop patience, teamwork and listening skills, and there were fewer fights between the young people.

All 10 of the young people attended the group till the end of the school year. They developed the habit of participating in a hobby group and the eagerness to play a musical instrument. Creating the group showed us the importance of developing the field of hobby activities and finding opportunities to include young people with fewer opportunities who require attention and organised activity. From now on we will try to find young people more opportunities for performing, as it means a lot to them.

The story of Haruto: Little Japan

Haruto is a nine-year old private school boy from a town in Estonia. He seems to be a child like any other, but in reality he is rather special: he is from an Estonian-Japanese family. He spent his pre-school years in Japan, but began school in Estonia, despite having very little grasp of the Estonian language. He is a joyful and adventurous boy who finds Estonian language and culture rather unusual. But that doesn't stop him.

I met Haruto when he was in the second grade. It was clear that he understood the language quite well already, but something seemed to be holding him back. His Japanese culture and rearing made him confused and thus he was unable to express his thoughts and build correct sentences as quickly as his Estonian peers.

In a hobby group smaller than a regular class he was able to think, discover and create at his own pace, without a pushy teacher and restless fellow students. The group mainly consisted of Estonian and Russian students from the first and second school levels and provided a safe environment for learning and development. The child that used to be rather quiet in his regular class started to slowly open up.

Linguistic and cultural obstacles became clear quite quickly in the hobby group. For instance, the boy was unable to understand the difference between writing and drawing in the Estonian context due to the peculiarity of the Japanese language. Haruto also failed to understand the meaning of words or preferred to answer questions by saying "whatever", which is a polite and ordinary answer in Japan.

As the instructor of the hobby group, I created a supportive environment with the other children in the group where everyone could learn something about Estonian folk traditions and develop linguistically. Haruto's form master played an important role, as he sometimes came over to talk about the bottlenecks they had noticed when communicating with him. For example, we had to work a lot on accented characters.

As the weeks passed, it became increasingly noticeable that Haruto had become more active in lessons: he told jokes, spoke of his own initiative, wanted to answer questions, asked questions himself and enriched our meetings with examples from Japan. All of the children participating in the group made noticeable linguistic progress. Their vocabulary, coherence and ability to express themselves increased, and what's most important, thanks to their linguistic development, they had become more active at school. They learned a great deal that was new to them about Estonian culture and folk traditions. The world of children from foreign language families, who had been excluded somewhat previously, had suddenly increased and become richer.



III

Results of the HUKK-AP project's impact assessment: number and background of included young people



3231 young people with fewer opportunities all over Estonia participated in HUKK-AP project's hobby activities, 1806 of them doing so regularly (see Figure 2).

Considering the possibility of participants overlapping, it is estimated that the project affected the lives of at least 2500 young people, most of whom would have been excluded from hobby activities suitable for them and their positive effects because of numerous obstacles.

Each project partner was able to find an approach suitable for their region and to test it. All partners offered young people instructed hobby activities on a regular basis, while some of them also organised one-off events and other activities.

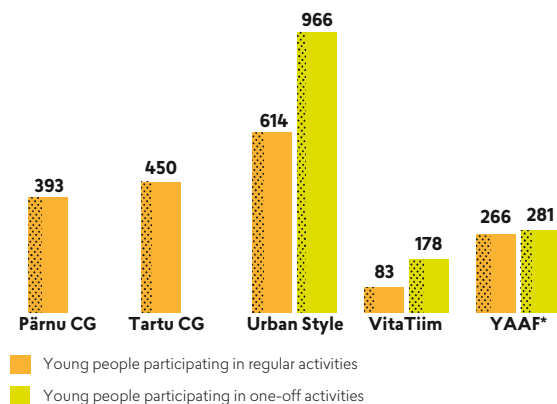


Figure 2. Young people who participated by partner and means of participation.

* YAAF includes the number of young people who participated in the activities of the hobby activity teams of the open development programme.

What is the background of the young people chosen for the HUKK-AP project?

Young people found their way to the activities of HUKK-AP via the network of local specialists mostly due to their special educational needs and/or difficult socio-economic situation (Figure 3). More than others, regional leaders included students from regular classes at regular schools (national curriculum with no exceptions) in their activities who were described as young people having behavioural problems and financial difficulties, with no friends or interests or coming from families in a complicated psychological situation. Young people who studied on the basis of a simplified curriculum or who had special educational needs (adjusted curriculum/with exceptions) were included somewhat less. In numbers, the least included were young people who, due to the distance of their home from the centre, had not yet accessed hobby activities that sufficiently considered their interests and needs.

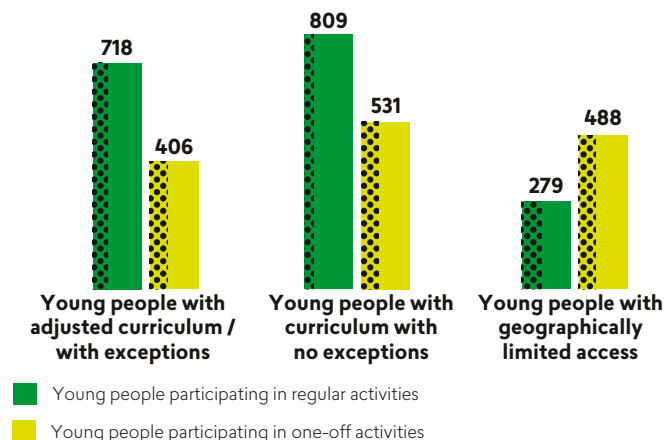


Figure 3. Young people who participated by target group and means of participation.

Which work formats did young people participate in?

Figure 4 shows that the highest number of young people (1521) participated in group activities. For example, young people with fewer opportunities were either included in the regular groups of hobby schools or other youth work organisations or placed in special groups created for them. One-off activities (1425 participants) were either formed as a part of the mobile hobby school (e.g. activities outside of training of Urban Style or the field trip hobby groups of the NGO VitaTiim) or designed to arouse interest in hobby groups. Young people with special educational needs were also able to participate in individual studies at hobby schools (285 young people).

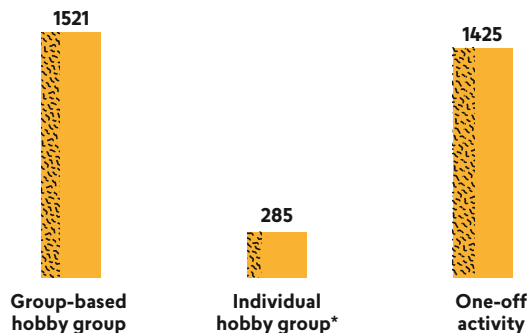


Figure 4. Young people who participated by work format.

* It was not possible to differentiate the individual hobby groups of Tartu CG.

The experience of partners proved that in order to include young people it is important to communicate and work in close cooperation with their parents and other family members. For example, including 393 young people from Pärnu in hobby activities also called for school social advisers' support for 201 families. In the case of 1580 young people, the NGO Urban Style cooperated with 156 parents.

Key results in terms of project partners

Pärnu

The activities organised by the Pärnu team mostly saw the participation of young people aged 7-17 who were at risk, had special educational needs, studied a simplified curriculum (including those with disabilities and health-related problems) and were from rural areas.

Young people at risk who went to general education schools participated in the regular groups of hobby schools. These were young people with learning difficulties or who had a poor socio-economic background, in the case of whom the counsel of support specialists, assistance in finding a suitable hobby and becoming engaged in it were very important. Young people with special educational needs or those following a simplified curriculum participated in small groups at hobby schools and received individual teaching. In Pärnu-Jaaguپی young people with limited access were offered the chance to participate in the activities of the mobile hobby school. Of the 393 young people who attended the activities on a regular basis, the highest number (188) participated in the regular groups of hobby schools (Figure 5).

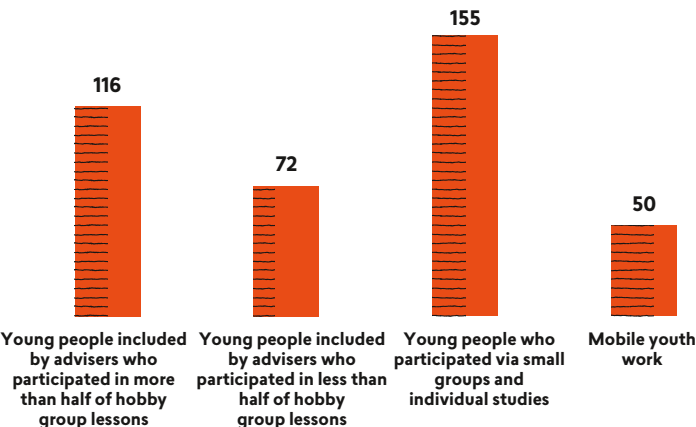


Figure 5. Young people from Pärnu who participated in regular activities by work format.

Tartu

Tartu included mainly young people with special educational needs, those who follow a simplified curriculum and those who come from families with socio-economic difficulties. Young people whose first language is Russian were also offered opportunities for engaging in hobbies.

The greatest value of Tartu was the high number of cooperation partners, which created more opportunities for providing various hobby groups and testing different approaches. This certainly helps in terms of including young people more effectively, because it increases the chance of finding an activity corresponding to a young person's interests and needs (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Young people from Tartu by local partner that offered various activities.

NGO Urban Style

Urban Style offered young people with fewer opportunities due to socio-economic and geographical factors and those with emotional and behavioural problems street dance training in six regions all over Estonia and also arranged one-off events. Besides training dancing skills, their approach also stresses the importance of supporting young people in setting goals and fulfilling them. Of the 1580 young people participating, 614 did so on a regular basis (Figure 7).

JJ Street's one-off training gave young people who cannot afford excursions, training or visits to outdoor events due to their families' financial situation a chance to participate.

Extract from a HUKK-AP experience story

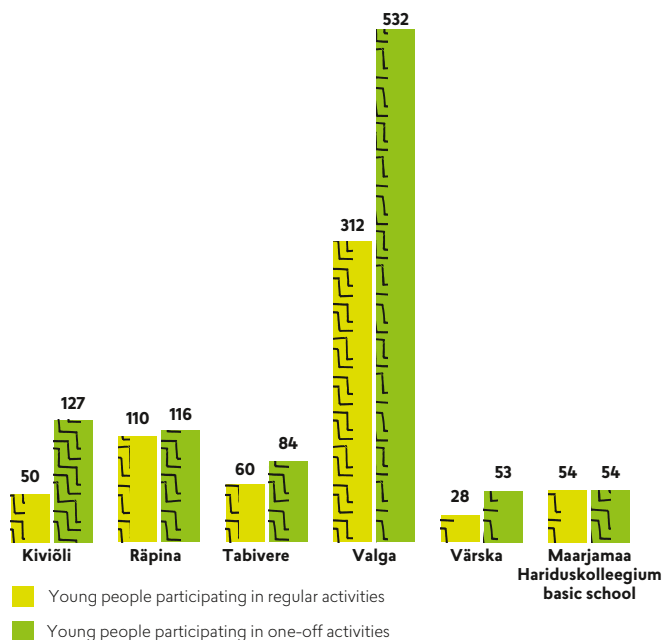


Figure 7. Young people included by the NGO Urban Style by area of operation and means of participation.

NGO VitaTiim

Of the 261 young people from Ida-Viru County included by NGO VitaTiim whose hobby activity participation was hindered due to financial, health-related and geographical reasons and disability, 83 participated in regular hobby and career studies. The young people were able to familiarise themselves with various hobbies, plan on connecting their possible occupation with their hobby and prepare a career plan. The remaining 178 young people participated in one-off events via the mobile hobby school in areas with insufficient opportunities for hobby activities (Figure 8).

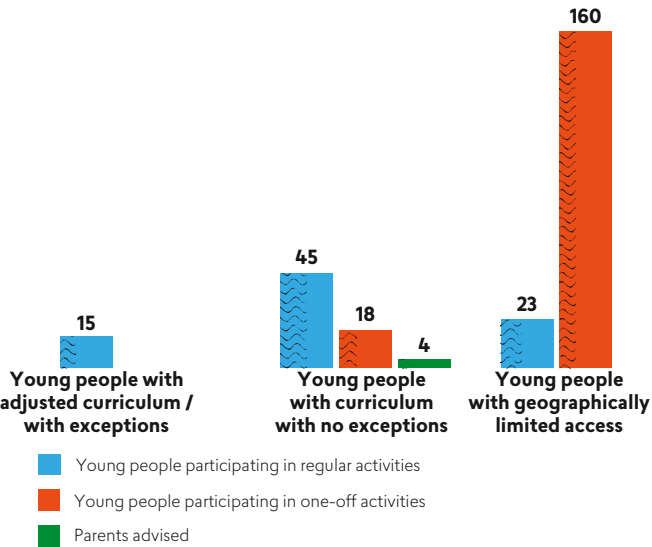


Figure 8. Young people included by NGO VitaTiim by target group and means of participation.

Hobby activity teams of the open development programme

547 young people were able to participate in activities initiated by the hobby activity teams of the two open development programmes of the Archimedes Foundation's Youth Agency. In total 81 parents were also advised (Figure 9).

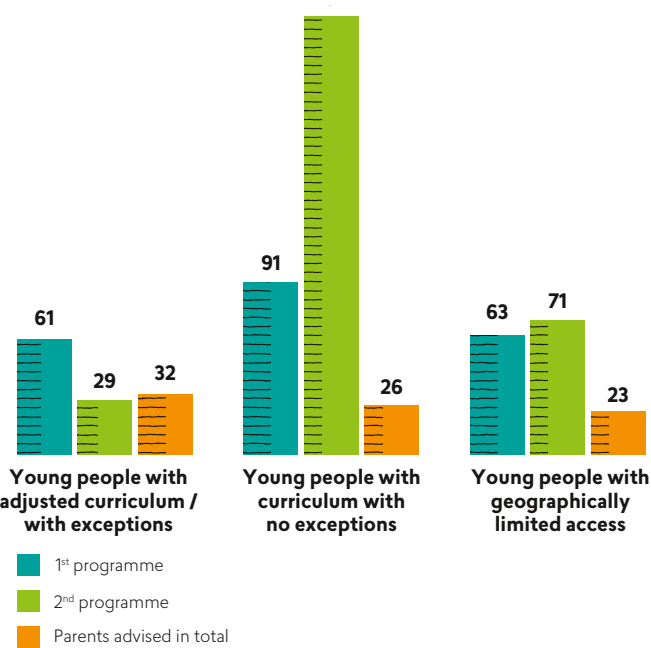


Figure 9. Participants of hobby activity teams of open development programmes by target group.

IV

Results of the HUKK-AP project's impact assessment: changes materialising in participating young people



The stories gathered as part of impact assessment revealed that the main problems for young people who were involved in hobby activities were behavioural problems at school or home. They had also experienced psychological problems. It was often highlighted that they found no support at home either. They

did not participate in hobby activities mostly because of a lack of money, interest or suitable opportunities.

Figure 10 shows the observations most often made by the participating specialists and those from the experience stories on the needs and problems of the participants.

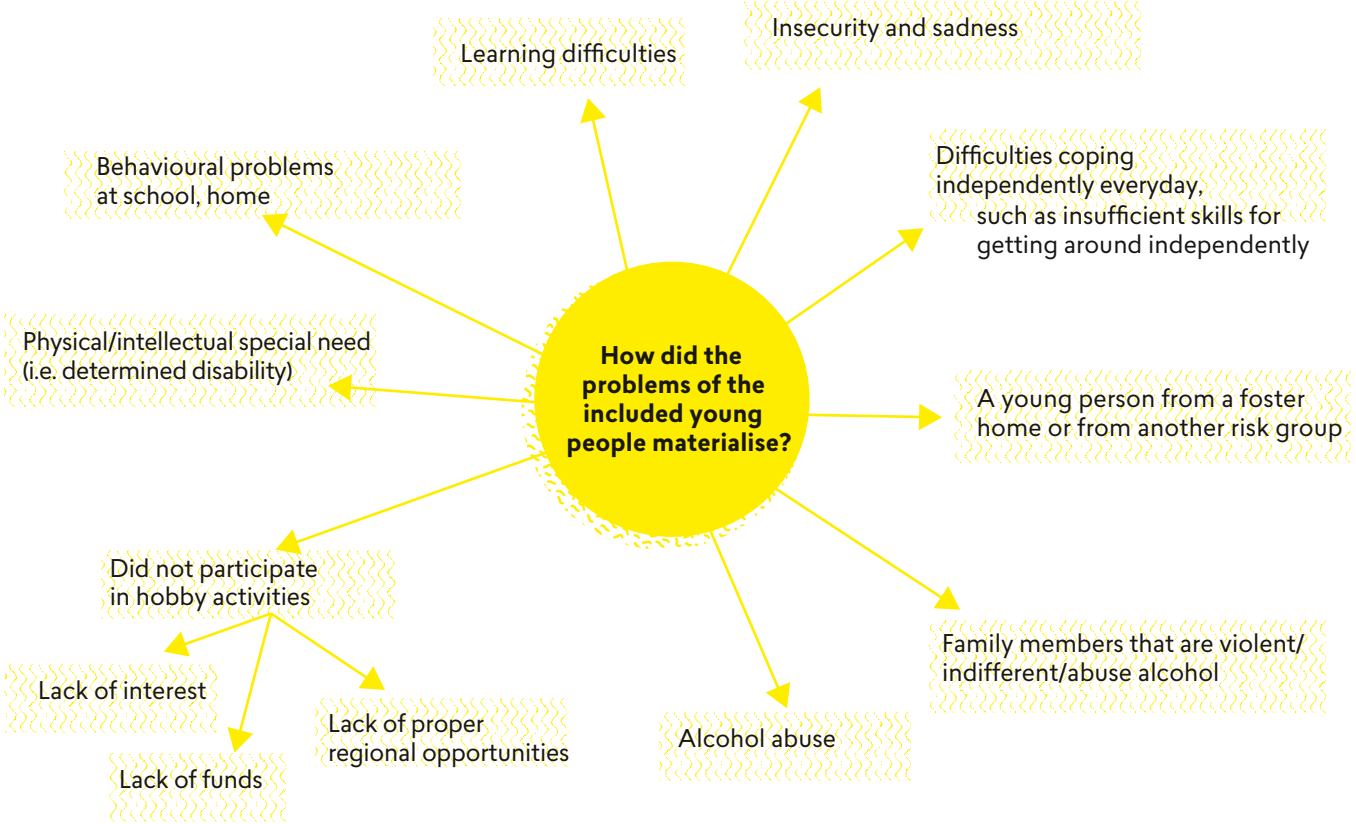


Figure 10. Overview of problems concerning the young people participating in the HUKK-AP project.

It can be said that if even one of the mentioned keywords describes a young person, their ability to participate in hobby activities may be hindered. The great value of the project in including young people is all about noticing and taking their problems and needs into consideration and creating appropriate opportunities. In the case of every participating young people, an attempt was made to look beyond the 'diagnosis' and to identify their interests and needs.

The analysis of the HUKK-AP project's experience stories proved clearly that including young people with fewer opportunities in hobby activities has a positive effect on them. The change may have affected the young persons attitude, knowledge, skills and behaviour both within the environment of the hobby activity and outside of it. In total six changes were identified. Positive impact may have materialised in a number of ways:

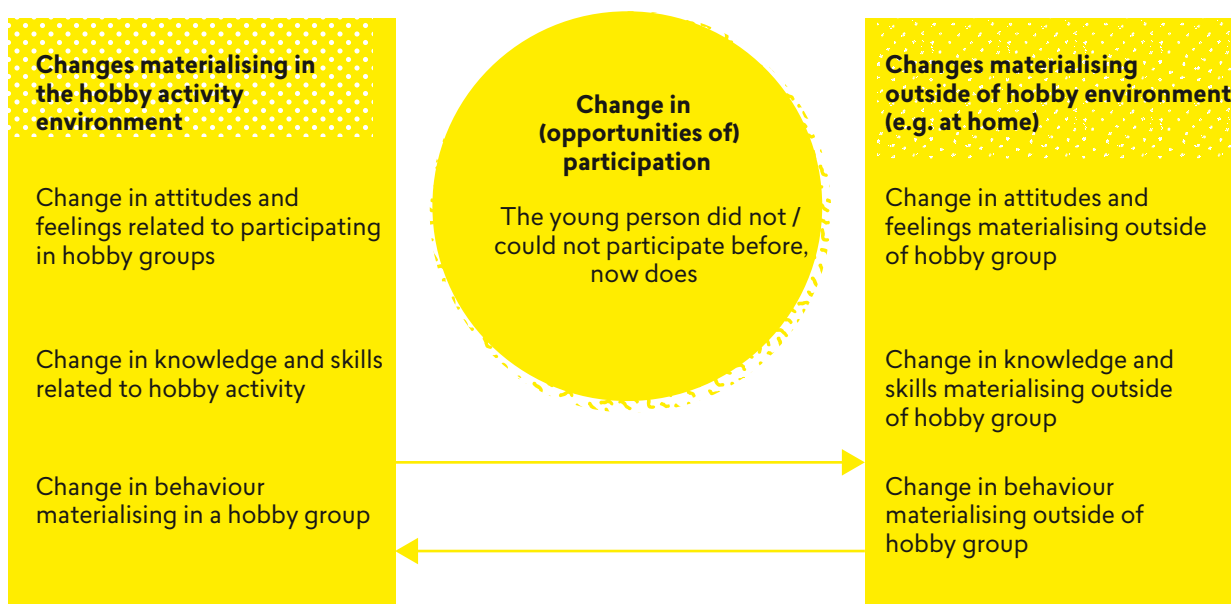


Figure 11. List of main changes that happened with the young people.

1. Change in attitudes and feelings related to participating in hobby groups

The story of Anneli: fears and role models

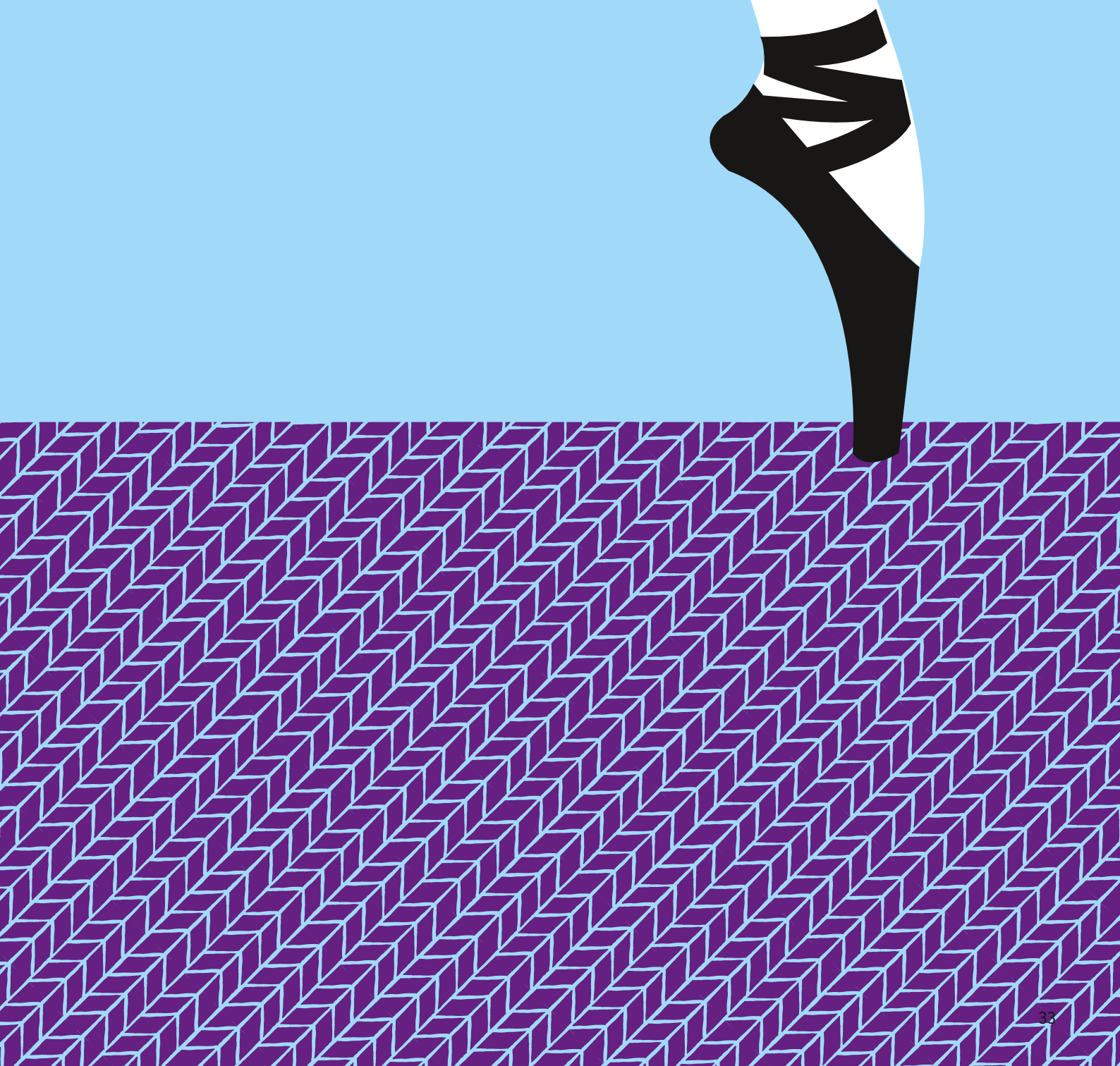
At the beginning of our story, this young girl from Southern Estonia could have been characterised thus: leads a sporty lifestyle, academically successful, shy by nature, unsure, has low self-esteem, honest, sincere, helpful and has very high willpower. She was not particularly social and preferred to stay at home. She comes from a family that has rather strict rearing methods.

Anneli was engaged in orienteering and jogging but did not enjoy them. She did not enjoy performing and did not like being the centre of attention, and due to her fears and loneliness she often tended towards negativity. But in her heart she hoped to find something that would allow her to shine.

A local dance school helped her. At first Anneli had to be convinced to participate in the events of the school. Once she had settled in, they tried to include her in dance lessons, but she felt reluctant. But seeing other young people positively and freely expressing themselves during the lessons, she wanted to give it a try. As early as her first few lessons she found that she liked the activity. Anneli's parents initially took against her participating in the lessons, but after a conversation with the trainer, she got her family's permission.

The next challenge was Anneli's fears: her fear of failure, quickly losing her temper after making mistakes, and fear of performing in public. For several months Anneli was dissatisfied and tended towards negativity during lessons, especially when she had to dance in front of others. The trainer had conversations with Anneli outside of lessons and found time for private lessons, encouragement and inspiration. The trainer was interested in what was currently going on in Anneli's life and helped her see smaller and bigger moments of success and changes, for example that she had never missed a single lesson. She also encouraged other group members to support Anneli and they did so gladly, because it is the motto of the dance school to share everything you get with others.

By the end of the year Anneli had become a role model who encouraged others to conquer their fears. She is not afraid of public performance and keeps practising on her own and reaching for her personal goals. There are also changes in Anneli's personal relationships. Whereas at first her relationship with her sister was not the best, she now encourages her sister, supports her activities and has a more positive view of life in general. Anneli's parents have also noticed the positive impact of the lessons and also support her and attend her performances.



2. Change in knowledge and skills related to hobby activity

The story of Aleksander: Nines, mixels and lickers⁹

Aleksander's passion for drawing became clear as early as in kindergarten and now his parents can't even count how many tonnes of paper they have bought for their son. The young man, who studies in a class for children with special needs, found the art school a few years ago on his teachers' recommendation, when the HUKK-AP project began.

At first it was not easy to deal with Aleksander. He did not look anyone in the eye and refused to socialise. He was disturbed by other sounds while he himself could be very noisy, expressing himself loudly in Japanese and shooting sounds he was used to hearing in cartoons. Since he wanted to draw all the time it was sometimes the case that while waiting for the beginning of lessons he drew characters on pictures other children in his class had drawn.

Drawing is Aleksander's real passion – he would gladly do it all day. His favourites are robots and mysterious creatures he calls nines, mixels and lickers. These human-like creatures, who often appear in the boy's drawings, are always on the good side in the battle between good and evil. Nines are strange number-shaped characters who perch on crocodiles, elephants or horses in some of the pictures. Mixels are robots that are made up of pixel squares which are the result of enlarging computer icons. The mysterious lickers are friends of the nines.

His father says that his son is inspired by cartoons and video games whose characters he often reproduces in his drawings. "He doesn't draw cats, flowers or butterflies but keeps looking for motives from the computer," said his father.

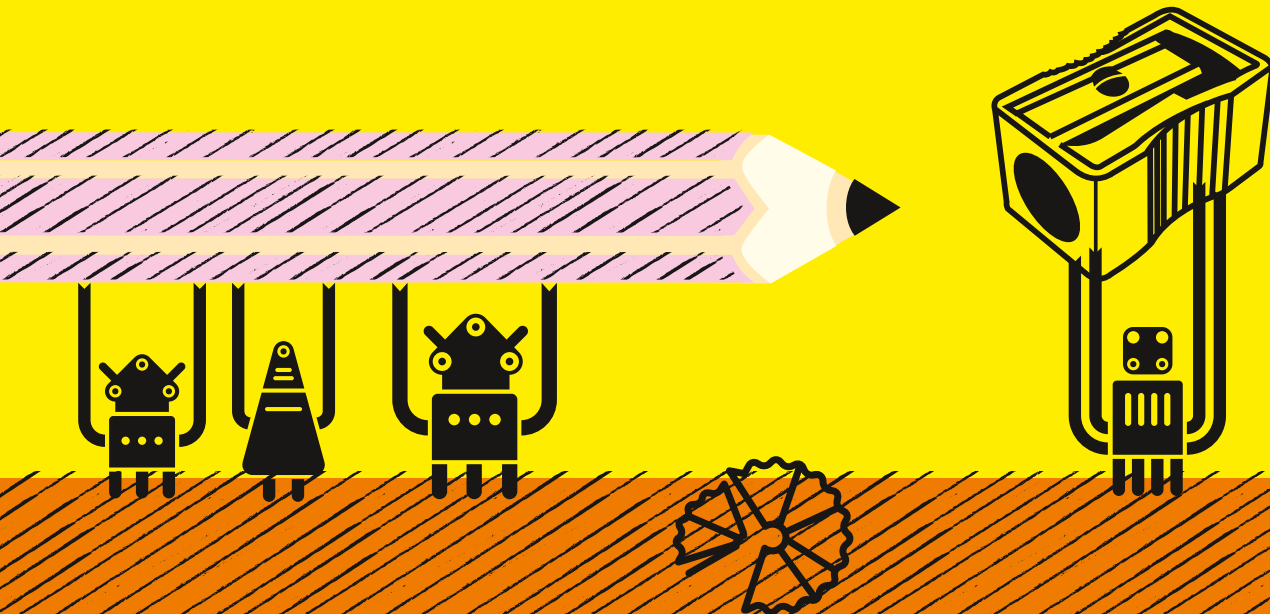
The art school teacher noticed the boy's unique talent and development quite early on. "I found the uniqueness and philosophical aspect of his drawings charming," said his teacher, admiring Aleksander's creations. "His world is very unconventional and he has an explanation for everything. Aleksander often reproduces cartoon characters, but it is part of the learning process. Developing a personal style is a question for the future," she said.

After two years of individual therapy the young man now gladly goes to art school and has even made a friend there. The boy looks at his peer, smiles and discusses things with him. Before, Aleksander would draw a small doodle and then demand another piece of paper, but he can now fill an entire page with

⁹ This story is based on an article by Karin Klaus entitled 'A special young artist draws nines and mixels.' Pärnu Postimees, 28 January 2016

a drawings. Also, he has started to use more and more colours in his drawings. His teacher says that he is constantly developing and can already draw other things. For example, he is trying to draw emotions. The boys great listening skills make the cooperation pleasant and easy.

Since Aleksander's pictures are so special and attractive, a personal exhibition was held in his home town in early 2016. "What more could you wish for a child living in his own world?" his teacher asked.



3. Change in behaviour materialising at hobby school

The story of Natalja: self-confidence rediscovered

16-year old Natalja, who studied at a vocational school, attended the youth centre's open workshops with her very active boyfriend. The young lady stood out because of her bold blue hair and yet extreme modesty. Despite her eye-catching looks she was unable to utter a single word despite knowing several people in the group. During the icebreaker games introducing the first workshop she whispered her answers in her boyfriend's ear, so we got to know her through him. It was difficult for her to look strangers in the eye and she felt uncomfortable if someone talked to her or if she was asked about her school or hobbies. Although Natalja had to be convinced to participate in the first few workshops, she became a regular at them.

Our team saw what was behind Natalja's modesty and sadness thanks to the project carried out prior to the HUKK-AP open workshops, as part of which suggestions on 'How to improve life in Estonia' were gathered from the centre's children and young people. These suggestions were turned into a book. While working on it, by chance, we included a story written by Natalja. We discovered later that it was hers. The somewhat angry story showed that Natalja had recently dropped out of high school. She was most likely one of those young people who had found it an insurmountable obstacle when Russian schools started partially teaching in Estonian. She wrote: "If I study at a Russian high school, it means I want to study in Russian!"

Dropping out of school had greatly shaken Natalja's self-confidence. Despite her family not harbouring any ill-feeling towards her studying at a vocational school, she herself found it embarrassing. Natalja felt ostracised in Estonian society and was angry.

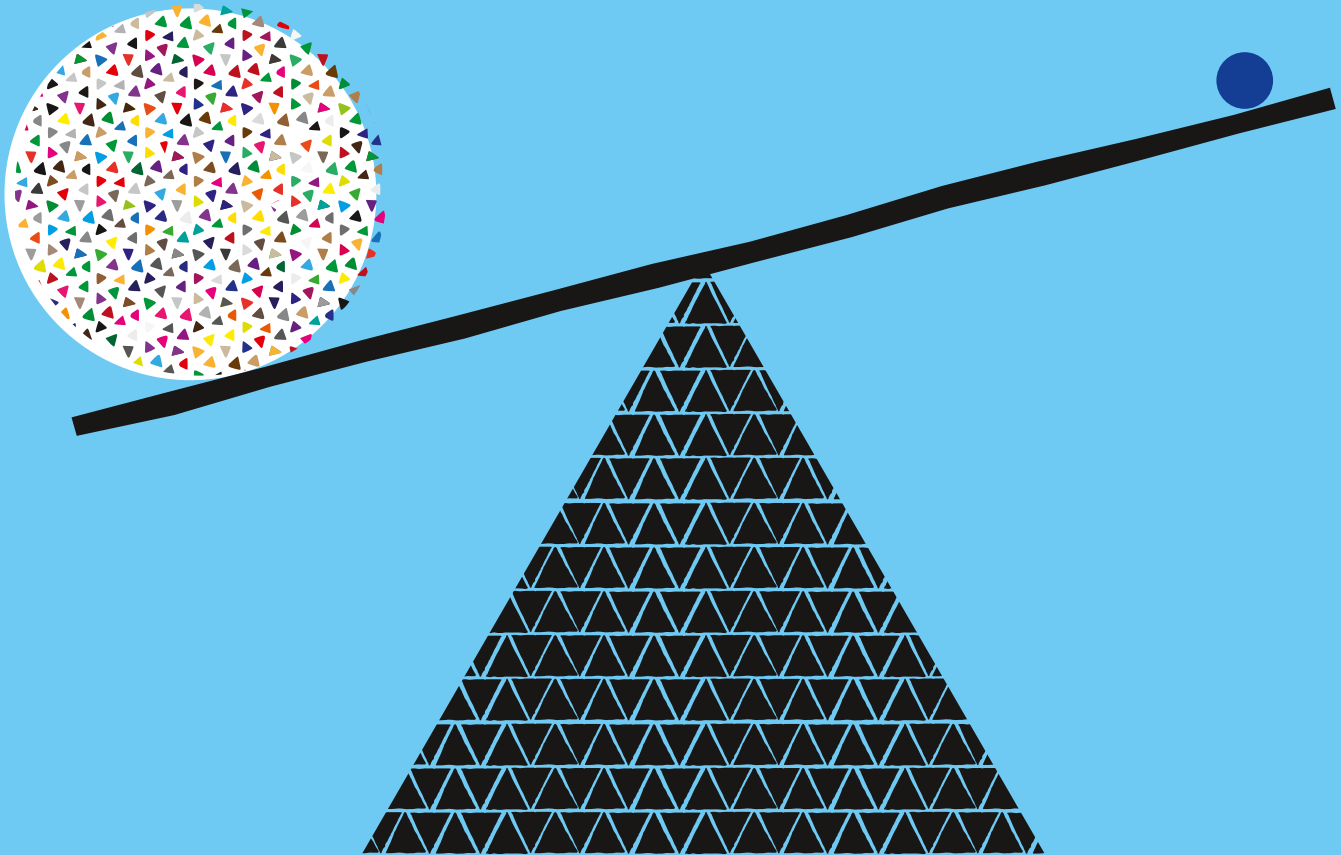
Natalja's greatest support was definitely her open-minded and caring boyfriend. But we noted that participating in the workshops also had a positive effect on her. She became increasingly active and no longer needed to be convinced to participate.

During the workshops we always organised a break between activities in order to cook together for dinner after every meeting. The dishes were very simple (baked potato with a side) and easy to cook in the big oven in our workspace. Natalja became increasingly happy to participate in cooking activities, and that gave us a great chance to converse with her in a relaxed atmosphere and to learn

more about her. While at first Natalja had communicated with the world through her boyfriend, participating in the activities made her communication more open and she began talking to instructors and other young people.

Since many excursions take place at our centre and at any time, and our workspace often formed part of the tour, we sometimes ended up being part of an excursion. Once, when we were busy cooking, a large group of guests and the founder of the centre turned up. The manager explained briefly that the young people there came together every week, and he asked Natalja, who was standing nearby, in his effusive way: “Well, girl, tell me, what are you up to here?!” – “My eyes in potatoes!” replied Natalja in front of the strangers in a clear, loud voice. Everyone approved of her clever situational humour. For us this little incident was a big deal, for we clearly remembered our first meeting, at which Natalja was completely unable to speak in front of a much smaller group.

I last saw Natalja and her boyfriend just before Christmas. They paid us a visit to have a discussion on continuing participating in the workshops next year. Natalja looked me in the eye and smiled when she greeted me. As I complimented her on her new and more modest hair colour, I realised that the growth in Natalja’s self-confidence and her hair colour were inversely proportional. Just as her self-confidence grew, the need for an eye-catching colour decreased. That realisation gave me the feeling that Natalja was slowly regaining her self-confidence and could face 2016 with a more positive mindset.



4. Change in attitudes and feelings materialising outside of the hobby group

The story of Pille: The great game of pool

Our (life) story is just like a game of pool. One cue strike hits a ball, which in turn hits another, the second hits a third and, if we are very accurate, we hit the target. But some balls bounce around stubbornly, being a little different, for example from another set or simply a little broken, and they often do not reach the target. Do they even have a target?

One of the pool balls that rolls a little differently is Pille from a typical Estonian town. She is a little bit smaller and simpler than others. She is easy to manipulate and thus she bounces from one bad influence to another, searching for her place. She is like a white cue ball that tends to hit the ball of the wrong team. Her way of searching for her place is problematic by society's norms and customs. It includes lying, stealing, drinking and buying both alcohol and friends using stolen money. Her 'peers' look for her on Facebook because of her debts and thefts. She hangs around bus stations as if homeless, spending time with ex-cons, being drunk and frank. Her simplicity and malleable nature are exploited and she is encouraged to steal. Pille thinks this earns her a place in their company – at least she belongs somewhere.

It could be said that she did not get the positive and directing cue push full of love at home that would put this stubborn ball on the right track, towards the right team and, finally, into the right hole.

At some point something different happened on the pool table. When the HUKK-AP project began, part of which was a game of pool, Pille was the very ball that was missing from the table. But how is it possible to direct a young person into the centre who is used to rolling along the side streets?

Whispers that were deliberately started soon reached Pille's ear: "Have you been to the youth centre? We could do with some help there, we know you like to take care of the little kids." Pille was curious. She came here, felt successful in what she did, but then disappeared again. She was repeatedly called on to play free pool and thus, with small pushes, Pille would come back to the centre for a while and would then disappear again for months.

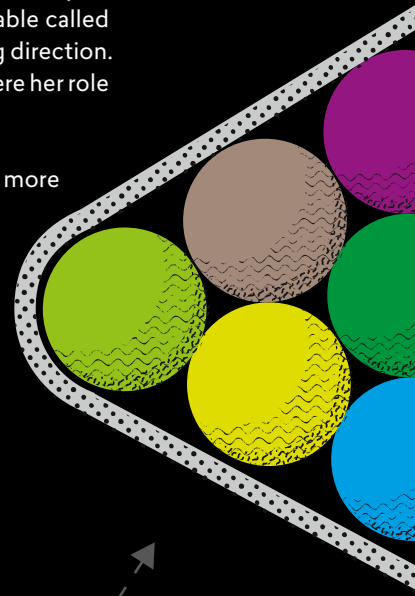
Meanwhile Pille was part of a far bigger game. It turned out that Pille's problem was a lack of role models and care at home. Thanks to the support of the HUKK-AP project, a way was found to give her another push. At the start of the new season

Pille was one of the first who rolled into the youth centre, where youth workers (i.e. positive pool cues) and the table were already waiting for her. Pille had finally found herself a new game table – young balls became her new friends who participated in activities, the open youth room and hobby groups directed by gentle pushes from the youth workers.

Pille also found someone she could trust, who listened to her and did not judge her. She had found her first positive role model who helped her find new and nicer role models. Pille kept rolling in and playing until December, when she realised that she should return to the school she had dropped out of a year before. She realised that there was more to life than just a game table called 'the street' and balls of the opposing team pushing her in the wrong direction.

Now Pille knows she has a place she belongs. There is a game where her role is important and where she is wanted.

Pille still has a long road ahead of her and she has to make many more choices.
Time will show which way she goes.



5. Change in knowledge and skills materialising outside of the hobby group

The story of Andres: From a love of cars to communication skills

Andres would have been better off studying in a quiet environment, because he was afraid of changes and avoided classrooms. He did not participate in general gatherings and would lose his temper merely because of a smell, a noise or a light. Meanwhile Andres sought contact with his teachers, had trusty conversations and was frank towards the school adviser. He had a chance to join a small class in another school, but he wanted to continue his basic education at his home school. One of his reasons was: “Who can I talk to there about myself?” It became clear that the peculiarities of Andres that caused serious difficulties with communication and socialising could hinder his development according to his predispositions.

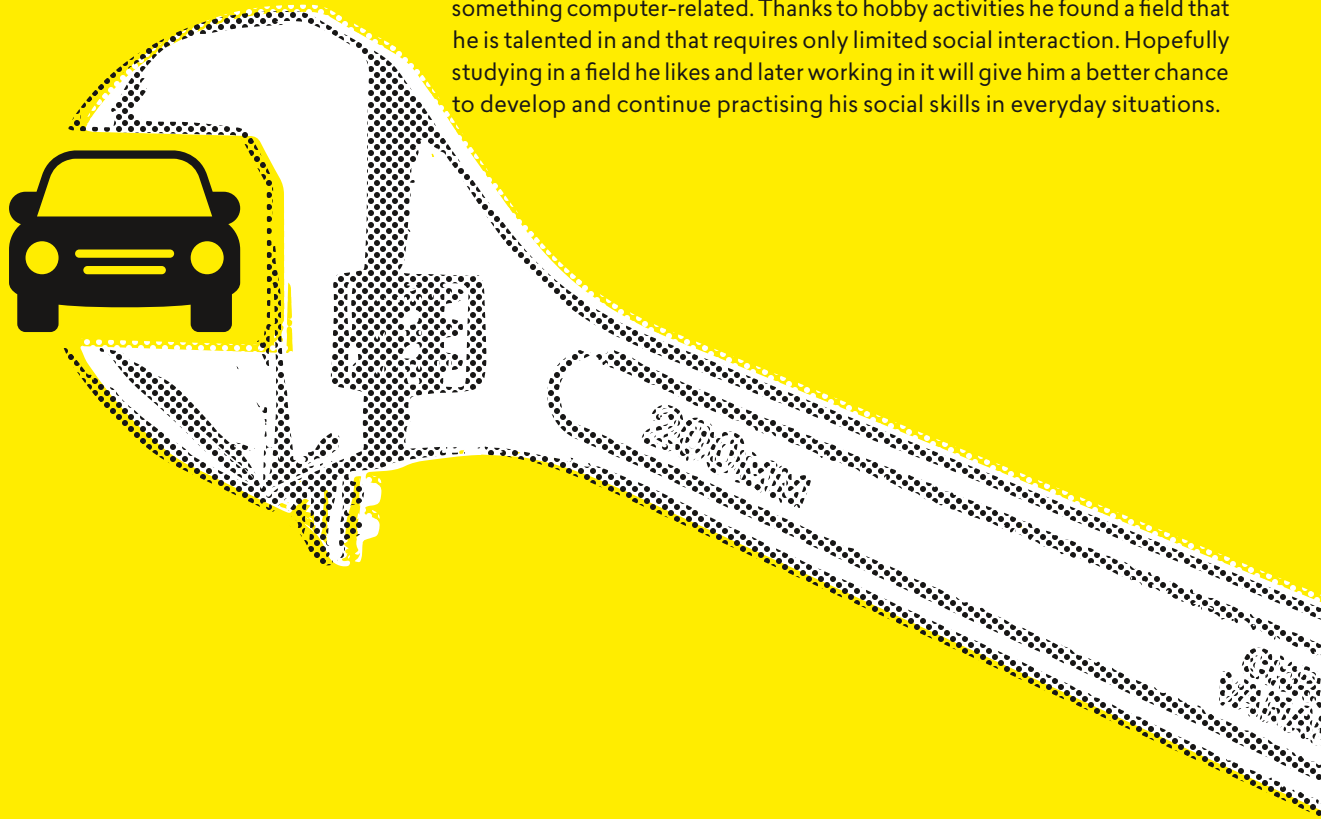
Andres often talked about technology: what kind of cars were on the street, what kind of toy cars he had at home, how he wished they were bigger, etc. He was interested in technology, but did nothing practical to develop it. Since the school’s social adviser was able to have trusty conversations with Andres, there was an opportunity to support the child and his parent and speed things up a little. The purpose was to find the most suitable place to develop his interest in technology.

At the same time the company of other children should also suit Andres – there should not be too many children and they should not be quite the same age. Just as if it was meant to be, the HUKK-AP project started. There were no hobby groups that matched Andres’ needs at school, but the hobby school was very helpful and suitable in terms of fields and fees. Andres started participating in a model car group. He got along well with the instructor and did not avoid the other children. He especially liked that the instructor used a computer in his work and talked about various technology subjects. Andres was also allowed to wander around the building and attend other hobby groups. The social adviser from the school often contacted the hobby group instructor over the phone to support the boy’s hobby activities and prevent problems.

After every hobby class Andres visited the social adviser to talk to him about his activities. It was important for him to talk about the cars they had used and what other technical tools (such as computers and model helicopters) they could look at and use. He loved participating in the hobby activity and the number of his acquaintances grew. He also experienced no communication problems.

It was clear that participating in the hobby group developed his interest in technology further. His preferences became more clear and he started finding ways of engaging in technology by himself: he bought old toy cars, planes and helicopters that he fixed and tried to get working again. Then, on the suggestion of the school social worker, he agreed to participate in the school's robotics event. His results made him part of the representative team of the school.

Andres is working to finish the ninth grade and he is certain that his future will involve technology: he either wants to be a car mechanic or do something computer-related. Thanks to hobby activities he found a field that he is talented in and that requires only limited social interaction. Hopefully studying in a field he likes and later working in it will give him a better chance to develop and continue practising his social skills in everyday situations.



6. Change in behaviour materialising outside of the hobby group

The story of Siim: Finding his own path

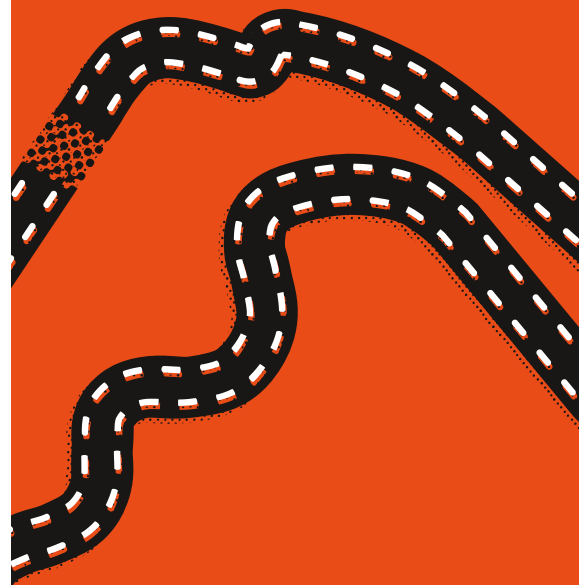
Siim is a boy who is eager to take the initiative, is very lively and physically well developed. He has mostly grown up around his mother and brother, as his father has been working abroad for many years. Siim is always full of ideas and is constantly up to something that is important to him. It is difficult for him to stand still, as there is a constant need to do something: go and get something, take it somewhere, look for something, find it, examine it, solve it, fix it. School lessons are too long for him, but the breaks pass way too quickly and because of this Siim is forced to deal with his own important business during lessons. This has resulted in trouble at school, of course.

Siim can behave very politely, but his active lifestyle may not give him enough time for this: sometimes it is his powerful body language that helps him get from A to B quickest. Ever since basic school his mother and form master have worked in close cooperation to make sure that Siim's behaviour remains within the limits and that his studies continue. As a witness to the fact that Siim's life outside of school is no less calm and that on his search for adventure he often ends up in trouble, the school has often written official character references at the demand of the juvenile police and the Juvenile Committee.

Siim has been counselled by the school psychologist, but his troubles have not ceased. It was becoming increasingly possible that Siim's leisure activities would result in serious offences and difficulties coping with his studies. His parents did not know what to do and the school was also worried about the whole situation. Many support networks and the psychologist tried to give advice to his family. Siim was the one least worried about it – he just wanted to spend some exciting time with his friends and the question about it causing him any problems or dangers did not bother him.

The school social worker thought that finding Siim a proper leisure time activity might help him. Siim's family agreed with this, but had to face the question of what to recommend for him and how to get him interested. Since Siim had many good characteristics such as adaptability, courage, good communication skills, ability to learn, etc. the range of hobbies was wide.

Siim's first choice was orienteering, because he loved to run around unknown territory with a map, find objects and be the pathfinder. He remained interested in orienteering for about two months.





Next, he decided after watching a dancing competition on TV that he wanted to try breakdance. He had the body for it and a sense of rhythm, but lacked persistence in practising and the desire to work hard with others as a group. His third temptation was guitar lessons, which were ended by a broken arm.

I had searched for all of these opportunities with Siim online first, discussed them with him, thought about them and went there with him to take a look, but we did not find any activities that intrigued him. Siim himself could not describe what the obstacle was, he was simply bored. This was most likely the result of his fidgeting and lack of routine tolerance. Maybe he thought he was not being recognised enough.

Then we tried to find a hobby that would offer enough challenges, was diverse and would force him to make individual effort without losing the chance of experiencing a sense of success and deserved recognition. As a fourth try he took up motorcycle training, in which a schoolmate of his was already participating. Now he has been there for about five months and he likes it. Siim is happy because the motorcycle training is interesting, he can tinker with technology, work in a garage and learn about traffic and road rules. His parents especially like the fact that the training activities are visible on Facebook and that they can be sure Siim is there keeping himself busy. Siim has also discovered physical training and swimming for himself, but he does not find them as interesting as motorcycle training.

Siim has found interesting activities for himself that he plans to continue with. Since he is restless, activities that offer him a change and have little routine work well for him. At the same time, following traffic and training rules and instructions on using the garage helps him maintain discipline and balances out excessive rushing about. Siim gladly tells his schoolmates about his training and he enjoys winning other people's attention. His parents are happy that their son has left his street buddies behind and found a suitable hobby. His school still cooperates with his parents, because in the case of such an active young man the form master and parents still have to meet and discuss things sometimes to better support the child.

Finding an activity using trial and error allowed Siim make a choice based on his personal preferences. This was further assisted by the in-school network led by the social adviser (subject teachers, form master and teaching methodologist) as well as outside the school network (instructors of hobby groups). Thanks to his parents' years of persistence in solving their child's problems and achieving trusting cooperation with him, it was possible to find a hobby that encourages his development.

... his social skills and orienteering abilities have increased over the months. His parents trust him enough to allow him to go from school to the hobby school with his group mates.

Extract from a HUKK-AP experience story



Change in knowledge and skills materialising outside of hobby group

Developed communication and teamwork skills
Setting goals
Better ability to concentrate and pay attention
Getting around independently
Evaluating oneself more adequately
Increase in Estonian vocabulary
Belief in oneself
Desire to learn new skills
Broadening their understanding of the world
Increase in self-confidence
Higher academic success

Change in knowledge and skills related to hobby activity

Developed skills of playing a musical instrument and dancing
Development of creativity
Ability to orientate
Emergence of artistic talent

She joined the training with her friends... she talked only to certain people and never made decisions herself - others made decisions for her. I placed her in a different group to separate her from her friends. This year she is much more independent, talks about her decisions and expresses her ideas, including in groups in which her friends participate, and does not restrict herself.

Extract from a HUKK-AP experience story



All of the children participating in the group made noticeable linguistic progress. Their vocabulary, coherence and ability to express themselves increased, and what's most important, thanks to this they became more active at school. They also learned a great deal that was new to them about Estonian culture and folk traditions. The world of children from foreign language families, who had been excluded somewhat previously, had suddenly increased and become richer.

Extract from a HUKK-AP experience story



Change in behaviour materialising in a hobby group

Decrease in the number of conflicts between students
Improved cooperation between teacher and student
Improved ability to focus
Consistent attendance
Courage to express one's ideas
Greater initiative
Performances and exhibitions

How did the changes in young people materialise?

Change in attitudes and feelings related to participating in hobby groups

- Making new friends
- Pride in one's work
- Extra motivation
- Sense of belonging
- Growing interest in subject

He has found a hobby for himself that he is interested in and he says he wants to continue with it. He also likes his trainers and he plans to use his training to be successful in future. He is a bold boy who needs and seeks challenges, and the first setbacks – the first tests of the training according to the trainers – have not scared him and have not made him give up.

Extract from a HUKK-AP experience story



Change in behaviour materialising outside of hobby group

- Organising various activities
- Distancing from undesirable friends
- Trying out new things
- Better behaviour during lessons
- Decrease in degree of aggressiveness
- Self-assertiveness
- Decrease in modesty
- Decrease of addiction
- Independent practising
- Encouragement
- Becoming more talkative
- Ability to get around independently
- Initiative

He gained more confidence and was ensured that not everywhere outside of a safe environment means a negative attitude towards him.

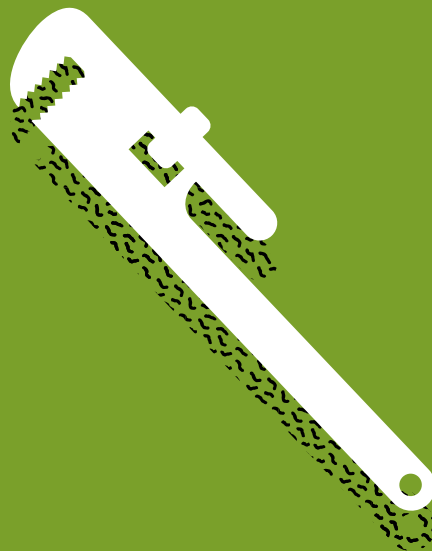
Extract from a HUKK-AP experience story

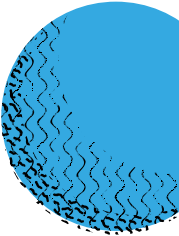


Figure 12. List of main changes that happened to the young people.

V

Results of the HUKK-AP project's impact assessment: changes in competence and networks of participating specialists





It is my aim to help young people find their way in life. I consider it important that a person develops compared to what they used to be. Every person has their own victory.

Aleksandr Nesterenko, a teacher from Narva Young Sailors' Club



How often young people can participate hobby activities that match their interests and needs depends on the attitudes of the leaders in the field and hobby group instructors and on their readiness to create new possibilities. Because of this, one of the objectives of the project was to encourage not only young people but also people and organisations who greatly influence young people's participation in hobby activities and their ability to stay involved in them and thrive.

As part of the HUKK-AP project, many models of inclusion, cooperation and funding were tested. Success was made possible by influencing the specialists' competences, including their attitudes, during training, supervision and experience sharing.

The long-term effect of the experiment, however, depends on the participants' post-project steps. For example on a funding decision – whether it is possible to continue activities that turned out to be successful during the project to the same or a greater extent or whether the experience gained can be utilised in other areas the project has not yet reached.



'Cooperation' is no longer just some popular word or label. Doing something together has become a part of our everyday job and is now a standard.

Kristel Kallau, director of Pärnu Art School

Me and my assistants travelled around small settlements in our municipality where there are no hobby schools. I don't think the mobile hobby school is enough. Sure, maybe there's a spark of interest in the children, but our main effort should be to make sure that interest doesn't fade away. But that requires a system to be built; it means we need workers, funds, planned work.

Extract from a HUKK-AP experience story

The following pages highlight the most important short-term effects of the HUKK-AP project on those who include young people in hobby activities. They are illustrated by quotes from the experience stories of the project promoters.

The four main aspects of the impact of the HUKK-AP project on the specialists and networks were the following.

1. The project assisted in better noticing the needs of already participating young people, reacting more effectively or asking for help when in need.

Including special young people is a great lesson in tolerance for our hobby school. When I have a difficult moment I always think about the words of Ruuda Palmquist, a psychodrama lecturer: “Well, there are all kinds of people, and sometimes some of them may be more difficult to handle.” We are all unique and we all need more attention from time to time.

Signe Söömer, director of Tartu Nature House hobby school



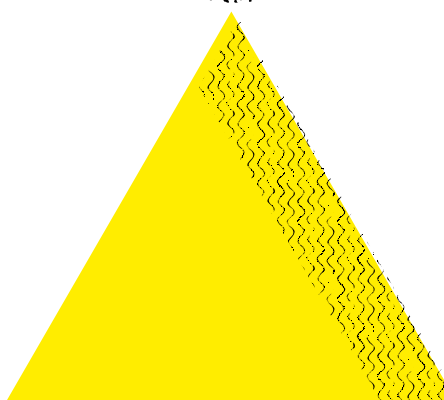
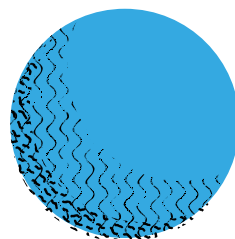
Hobby school teachers noticed the child's problems, but weren't always able to see the special educational needs behind it, because they didn't have the skills they needed to identify it and provide support. Even if they had the skills, the environment (e.g. too large a group) may have hindered their implementation.

Teachers are first and foremost professionals with pedagogical training. There was no complementary training, no preparations or inner confidence to handle students with special educational needs (SEN).

Extracts from HUKK-AP experience stories

The experience stories showed that many hobby activity specialists were previously unable to take young people's specific nature into consideration or analyse them, or take a more supportive stance in resolving a situation. It also turned out that some specialists were afraid to clearly formulate young people's different needs and deal with them for fear of labelling them. Parents also lack experience of discussing their children's special needs with hobby school teachers and youth workers.

It was also noted that wider outreach and also personal experience assisted in understanding young people's different needs and their naturalness and taught the importance of noticing them.



2. Specialists working with young people acquired knowledge of, experience in and courage to involve young people with fewer opportunities

An important part of the project was increasing specialists' awareness of characteristics and opportunities of including new target groups via training and support activities (e.g. meetings for sharing experience and supervision). This holistic approach provided many specialists working with young people with much-needed moral support and a positive learning experience and created readiness (provided there are enough resources) to include young people with fewer opportunities in future and to work with them.

The children in our simplified-curriculum nature courses have taught me that what's most important is to take time – to listen to them, answer their questions, view their completed works or simply hug one another. They have taught me to plan my activities more thoroughly, monitor my emotions and speech and not rush to help as soon as possible, but do so when asked.

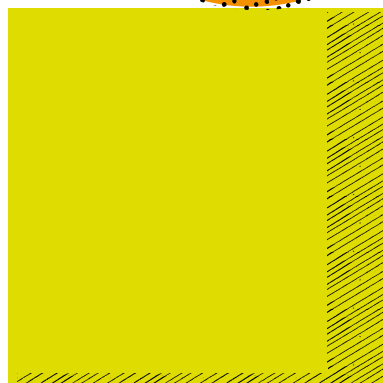
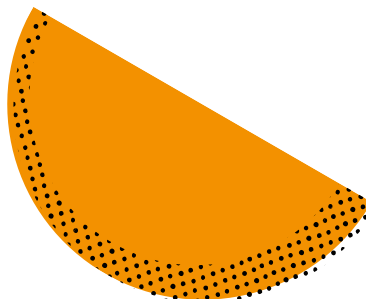
Signe Söömer, director of Tartu Nature House hobby school



/By the end of the project/ teachers have grown used to working with 'special' children and no longer complain that they are difficult or problematic. Teachers don't think these children should not participate in hobby activities, that they should be kept elsewhere or that someone else should take care of them.

The project has greatly changed how often SEN youngsters are involved in hobby activities. Whereas previously hobby school instructors felt uncertain and hesitant in terms of including students with special educational needs, the experiences they acquired via the project have changed those biases greatly. The growth in the number of people interested in the project was clearly noticeable during the two-year project period, because it was the network service that encouraged new members to try working with children with special educational needs.


Extracts from HUKK-AP experience stories



3. There is cooperation between parties who previously did not participate in different networks (as purposefully or to such an extent).

The purpose of hobby activities is to provide opportunities for the comprehensive development of a young person. The more complex a young person's needs and problems hindering development are, the more specialists from the fields of social work, youth work, education, medicine and law enforcement need to cooperate.

In order to enable over 2500 young people to participate



The HUKK-AP project gave new meaning to the cooperation between Viljandi Hobby School and general education school. Together we conducted a study among young people on their hobby education-related needs and reached out to those who hadn't participated in hobby groups before. Young people were involved in groups they found interesting, and we also searched for solutions together if some were excluded from activities.

Anu Peiel, director of Viljandi Hobby School

in the HUKK-AP project's activities, all of the partners had to either launch or develop their existing cooperation networks further. New cooperation models and practices were created in many regions for involving young people. For example, a regular network service for specialists in contact with young people was created.

The network supporting the young person could have been smaller or larger, but the important aspect was to include all key personnel. For instance, the Pärnu network included members of the management and teachers from both general education and hobby schools, city government specialists from the education and culture departments, social pedagogues and psychologists from the advisory centre.

Teachers feel safe thanks to the training, supervision and development seminars. Teachers from other hobby schools, members of the management, school social advisers and representatives of general education schools also attend the meetings. This has created a network where everyone knows one another and, when necessary, they can look for help and support.

Extract from a HUKK-AP experience story

4. Partners effectively used project funds to test new activities that could henceforth be continually funded.

At the beginning of the project it emerged that many hobby activity providers had their own established activity models, some of which were difficult to adapt for young people with fewer opportunities, for example including young people with certain mental health-related special needs in regular groups. People were aware of such young people, but lacked the resources to learn more about their special needs and create participation opportunities for them alongside their main work.

the HUKK-AP project provided inspiration and funds to test new approaches, such as individual hobby groups for young people with special educational needs and the mobile hobby school. If the initial solutions did not go according to plan and/or did not produce the desired results, there was enough time to adjust them.

We tested a new approach in our animation workshops. Young people assigned by the Juvenile Committee participated in our workshops, which took place at a local youth centre, but we also included other visitors to the centre. It worked - animation works with all young people! They were really interested in our workshops. Although sometimes they had to be reminded and encouraged to attend.

Sondra Lampmann, instructor with the Nukufilm Children's Studio



The promoters themselves learned that hobby education does not revolve around the hobby school building. There are many children who need someone to provide them an opportunity for hobby education in a familiar environment, because they can't work in a big group.

Extract from a HUKK-AP experience story

Including young people in hobby activities in a new way often required extra tools and materials, which were also provided by the HUKK-AP project.

Thanks to the project we acquired tools we did not have before: now we can restore the old dolls, make new ones, sew costumes and make decorations. The most important aspect is that all of these activities help our children develop, because they can work on it: sewing, colouring, cutting and drawing. All of our children are good at something, but what that is exactly only becomes clear when a child has the chance to try something. For instance, it turned out that one of our boys is very talented at drawing – this became clear when he started painting a rug for our new fairy-tale.

Extract from a HUKK-AP experience story

Successful activity models should be described in detail and provided with further funding so that young people with fewer opportunities can continue to participate in these hobby groups.

Positive examples are Pärnu City Government continuing to support the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities and with special educational needs in hobby education after the HUKK-AP activities and Tartu updating its youth hobby activity support mechanism. According to this, the participation of young people with economically fewer opportunities and those with special needs in hobby activities is supported with a higher capitation coefficient (provided that the young person is a registered resident of Tartu).

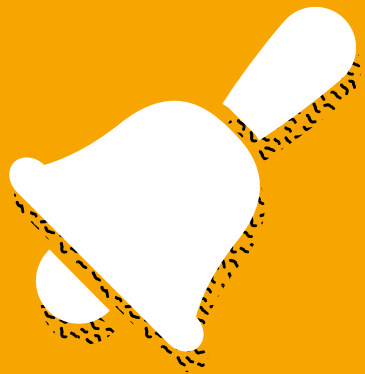
I hope that the system in Pärnu, where SEN young people can participate in hobby activities, will be implemented elsewhere as well. It is my dream that one day the participation of all young people in hobby activities is funded on a national level. I'm ready to share my knowledge and experience to make that happen!

Kristel Kallau, director of Pärnu Art School



VI

Key lessons and recommendations: what does the effectiveness of including young people with fewer opportunities in hobby activities depend on?



For young people with fewer opportunities to participate in hobby activities and to obtain a valuable learning experience there, inclusion as a whole should be thoroughly considered and planned.

Figure 13 shows the factors that were highlighted via the analysis of the HUKK-AP project's experiences and that have an impact on the effectiveness of creating development opportunities for young people. When planning and promoting youth inclusion it is important to acknowledge all parties and the factors influencing them and, if need be, influence those.

First, young people with fewer needs should be located, then their needs and interests should be determined while also deciding which hobby group subjects and methods could support their development the most. In the case of young people with low material opportunities or those living in rural areas, how their access to hobby activities could be improved should be considered.

Just as with all other young people, the important condition of including young people with fewer opportunities is to broadcast the information in a way that arouses curiosity, excitement and dreams without causing too much uncertainty. Young people with physical or intellectual special needs in particular should be provided with access to the locations of the activities.

In some cases it may be reasonable or (depending on the type of activity) even the only possibility to offer a hobby activity outside of the formal education system. In other cases it is close cooperation with general education schools and offering activities within schools that provides young people with access. Young people's lives include at least two daily environments (home and school) and their support greatly influences young people's awareness, motivation and ability to participate in hobby groups. They can either support young people's participation (e.g. noticing a connection between hobby school participation and academic success or a decrease in burden of care) or hinder it because of their own choice (e.g. laziness) or due to restrictive circumstances (e.g. not enough time or money).

First and foremost it is important to gain the family's support or at least to try to stop them from counteracting the young person's participation. Whereas in the case of foster families including a young person in hobby activities can be made the priority of the

institution/foster home as a whole (including it becoming a part of the everyday work of the foster parents or caregivers), then in the case of regular families every family's motivation has to be separately supported, approaching this on a case-by-case basis.

It is systematically easiest to include young people via general education schools. In this case the educational institution itself can organise hobby groups via its employees or external service providers or be an active cooperation partner in guiding young people towards non-school hobby groups.

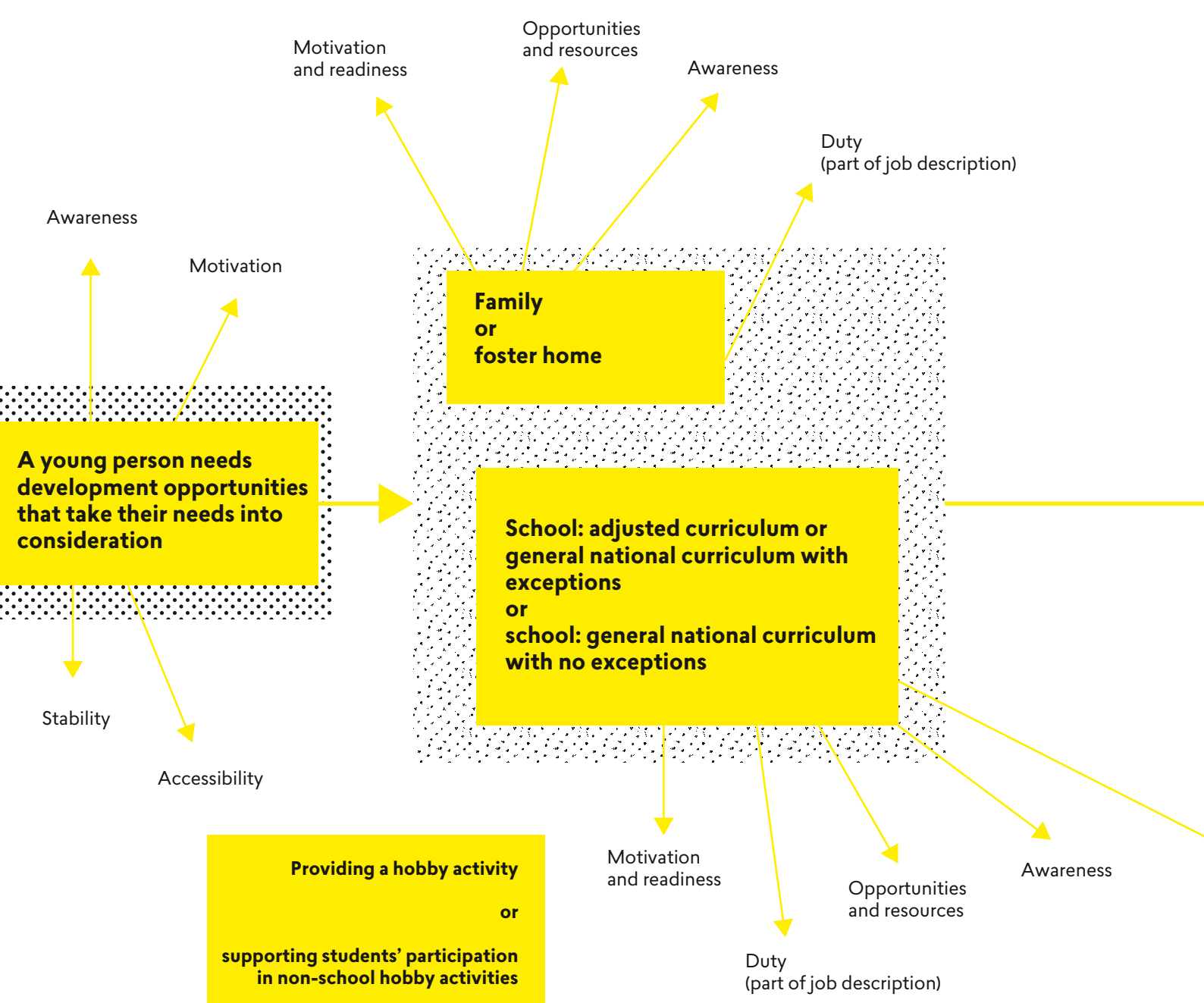
Hobby education participation is largely dependent on resources (both from the perspective of young people in terms of their participation and that of an organiser in terms of organising activities).

The first step is to have a discussion with hobby group instructors on how to be open to new target groups and what methods to use to actively involve them. This is where the specialist's own readiness and desire to develop professionally has a great role and should definitely be supported. Attention should be paid to acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to work with the target group. The professional development of instructors is supported and motivation is maintained by sharing and analysing knowledge, whereby it is important to connect it to earlier lessons. Many hobby group instructors participating in the HUKK-AP project said that young people with special educational needs have always participated in their groups, but they have not been that well-informed in the past when attending them. The instructors certainly need a payroll and a suitable place for hobby lessons, and the necessary tools need to be found.

It should be stressed that cooperation between all parties (family, teachers, social pedagogues, child protection workers, social workers and support persons) takes up a lot of time.

The final destination of this journey is the systematic and continuous organisation of the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities who live in the area in hobby activities.

The more we aim to follow the needs of young people when providing them with hobby activities, the more time and effort it takes. Figure 14 depicts the most important activities that the specialists participating in the HUKK-AP project highlighted in their experience stories.



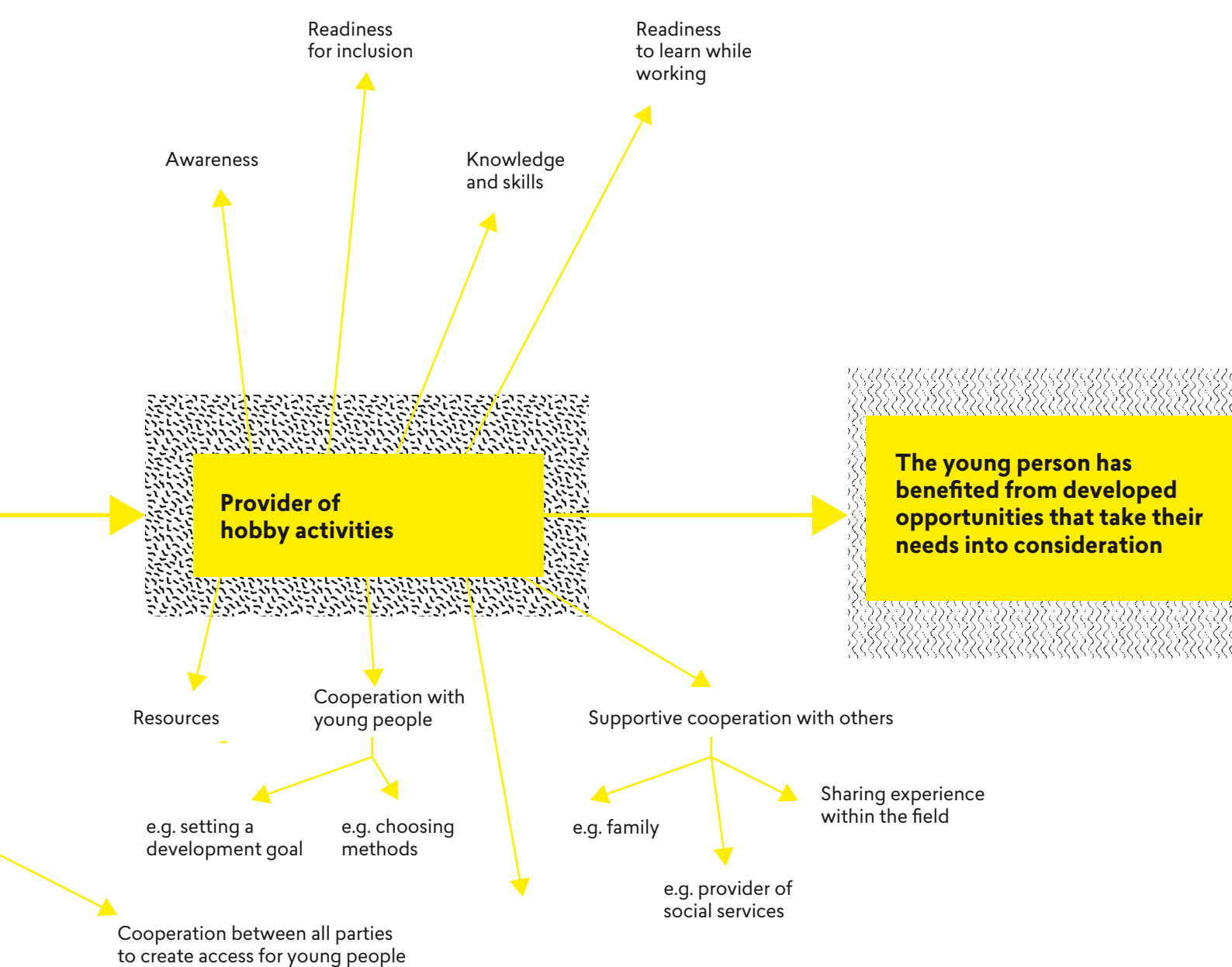


Figure 13. Parties and factors affecting a young person's success in participating in hobby activities. The left side of the figure represents a young person who is not yet participating in hobby activities and whose development we could support via inclusion. The right side depicts a successful end result: a young person has participated in activities according to their needs and interests and has benefited from it, for example by acquiring new skills or a more positive attitude in life.

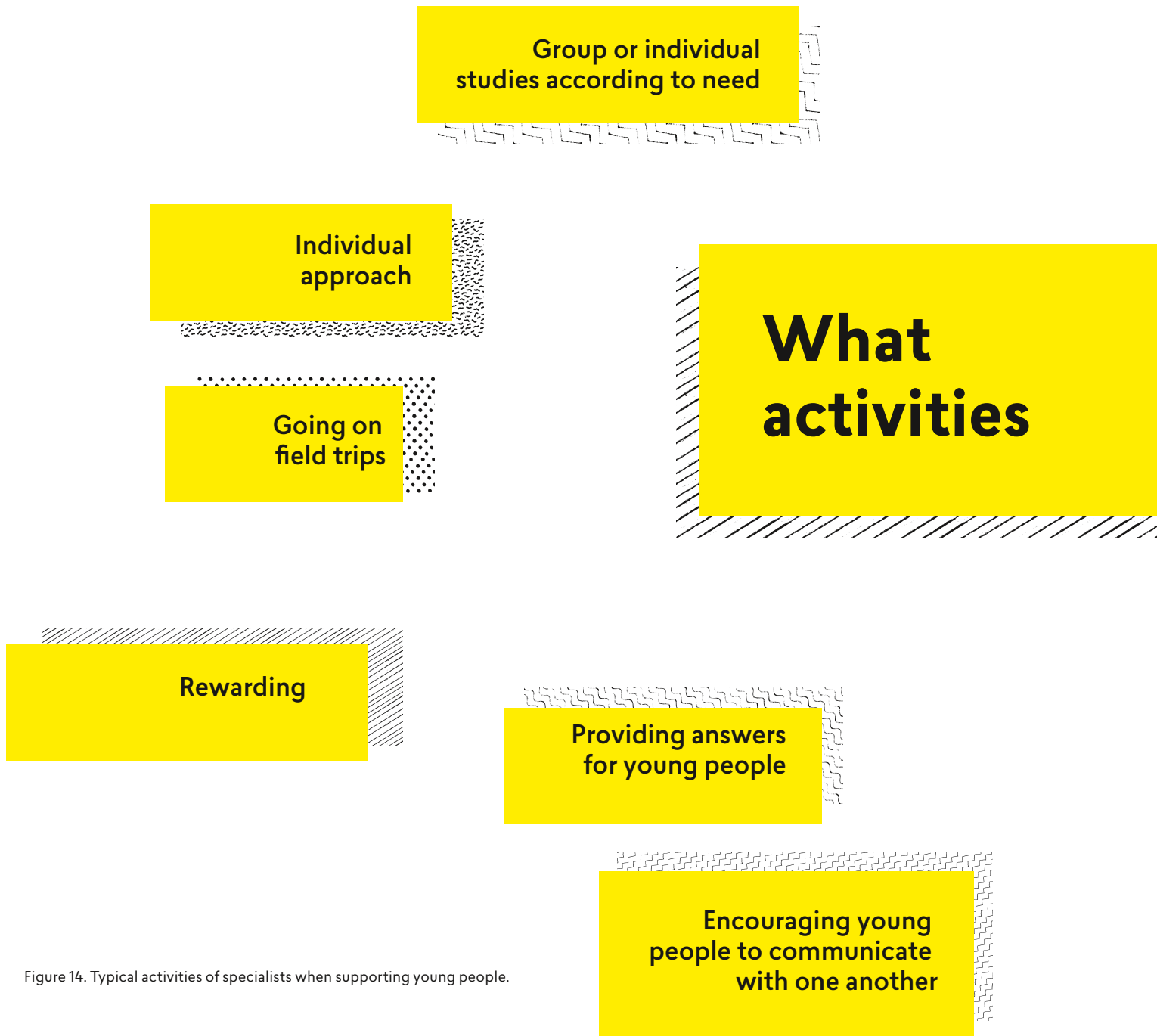


Figure 14. Typical activities of specialists when supporting young people.

**Constant
consultations
and conversations**

**Involving
the parents**

**Assistance in
using public
transport**

**did the specialists
working with young
people carry out?**

?

**Attending hobby schools
with peers and caregivers**

**Encouraging and
inspiring attitude**

**Setting specific
rules**

**Offering
various
activities**

The story of tolerance: special young people in a special group.

A completely normal art and handicraft course was attended by a very colourful group of young people. Peeter had an autism spectrum disorder; Riin became easily irritated. Two Russian girls, who also spoke Estonian, participated as well. Claudia was from Israel. She was learning Estonian, but preferred to communicate in Russian and English. Marleen was also developing her artistic talent in the group, but she was very critical of other people's peculiarities – expressing it with negative comments and nasty insults.

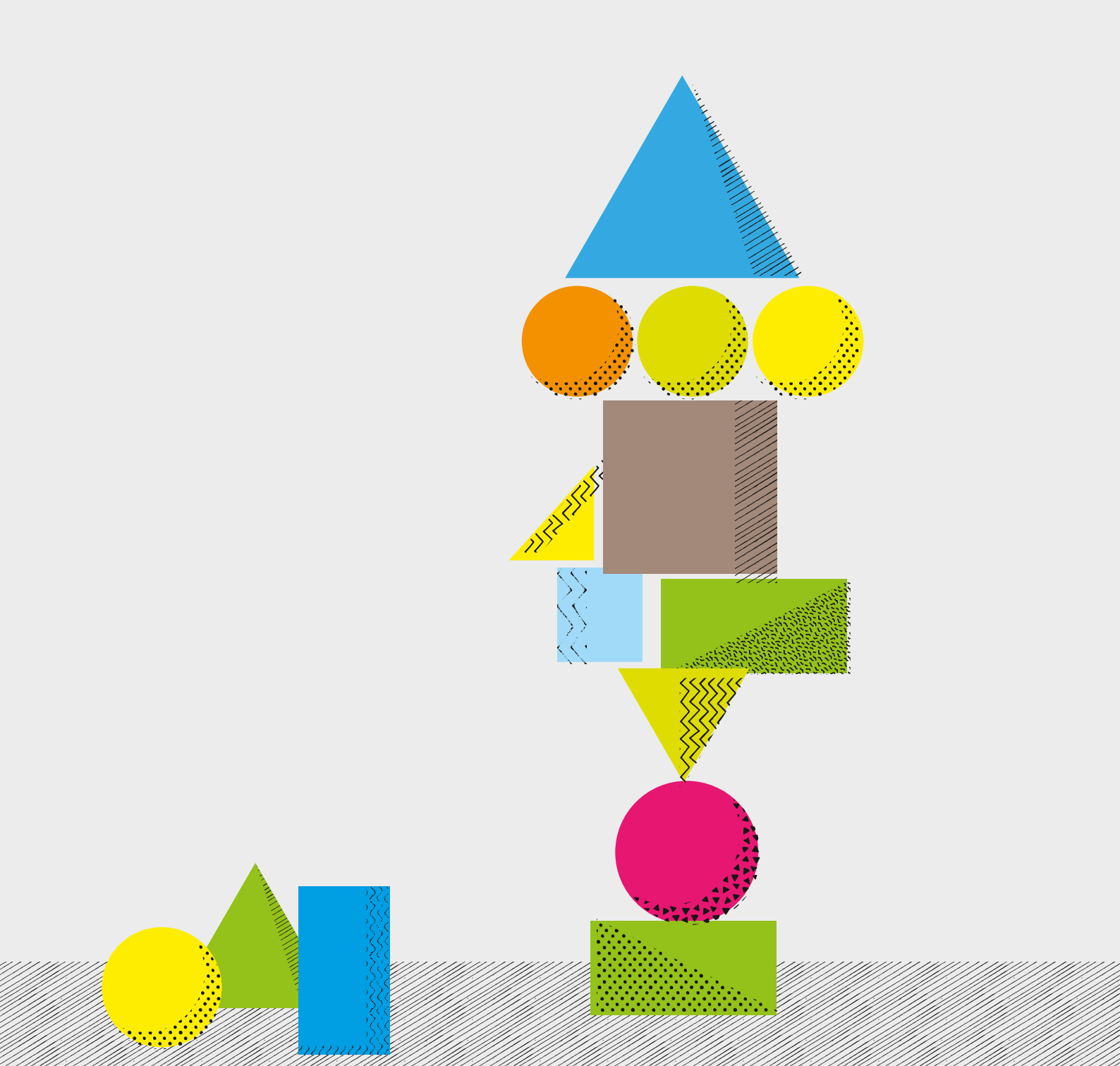
The group's instructor faced an interesting challenge: how could she make this motley crew cooperate? How would it be possible to approach all the 'complicated' young people individually and also give them enough attention? The instructor had to deal with a language barrier, special needs and also potential bullies. Peeter, for instance, started making animal sounds when he was nervous, which Marleen, in turn, made fun of. Claudia felt excluded when everyone spoke in a language that was unfamiliar for her. Riin started crying when she did not receive enough attention from the instructor.

The instructor tried group work as a solution. One of the tasks was to speak in English, which was the most difficult for the young people. It didn't start well, as they were afraid of communicating in an unfamiliar language. But group activities broke the ice.

What's more, the instructor also carried out exercises where everyone talked about things they didn't like, to increase tolerance and highlight distinct traits. Every lesson ended with them sharing their thoughts and feelings, which helped to alleviate tension. Exhibitions were also held where the young people's works and creations were displayed. This greatly boosted their confidence.

During Christmas the whole group participated in a youth initiative charity project to help those who had to spend the holidays in hospital. Every participant was given their own little assignment. Later they analysed what went well and what could be done better next time. The young people felt it was nice to help someone.

In six months the group became very unified. They came to know one another's needs and work around them. Common projects created a feeling of greater unison. The shared purpose was fulfilled with very different young people, and via exercises the participants became a group. Together we found that hobby activities teach young people social skills that are useful both in the hobby group and in later life.



VII

**Key lessons and
recommendations: where
should we begin when
including young people
with fewer opportunities?**



The inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in hobby activities should be carefully planned. The following questions are based on the HUKK-AP project's experience and will help in thinking through the planning, carrying out and assessing of young people's inclusion and its impact. These questions may be of assistance to decision-makers and promoters in local authorities and also to the managements and specialists of service providers.

Planning the inclusion of young people in hobby activities

- How many young people with different and clearly noticeable needs are there in the region? Based on what common features (location, type of need and risk, etc.) can they be divided into target subgroups?
- How many young people in the target subgroups are not yet being regularly included in hobby activities?
- What kind of special needs do these young people have? What kind of hobby activity work formats would help to include them in the best way possible (for instance offering individual hobby activities or a mobile hobby school)?
- What might the number of included young people be? What kind of resources (and how much) would be needed to get results?
- Which purposes of inclusion in hobby activities assist the later coping of young people with different kinds of needs as much as possible, including participation in the job market and, in the case of more serious special needs, lower the burden of care of their family? In other words, how do hobby activities affect the acquisition of skills and experiences and development of attitudes that have as

strong a connection as possible to the ability to manage well in later life?

- What kind of training and consistent support do the teachers and instructors of young people need in order to help them achieve the set goals through hobby activities? What kind of extra resources do the facilities where these specialists work require?
- How should the work of the cross-sectoral network surrounding youth be organised to ensure that the inclusion of young people meets its intended purpose? For instance, how does information on cases that require more attention and effort from the network of specialists move around?

Analysis of the results of the inclusion of young people in hobby activities

- What kind of development opportunities were offered for young people and to what extent (hours)? This is where the fields of hobby activities, methods used, etc. should be counted. Instructors' contribution should also be calculated, for example the number of hobby group lessons, including preparation and post-lesson activities, and the contribution of related workers.
- How many young people were reached? Here it is important to count the number of individual young people who participated during a specific period of time (for example a quarter, semester or academic year). The total number of young people who participated in hobby activities in a region may provide an erroneous overview of the number of young people included. Namely, analysis of some HUKK-AP partners' group logs proved that the same young people participated in several hobby groups in the same period. Without distinguishing between individuals

(using unique codes), the statistics, in some cases, may indicate a rate of participation of young people dozens of times higher than it actually was.

- Which young people with fewer opportunities were included less and which more?
- What was the regularity and consistency of young people's participation in hobby activities? What did this depend on?
- What was the development of the included young people like in comparison with commonly set goals? What did the specialist who worked with young people with similar kinds of special needs do differently to accomplish the goals in comparison with those who did not accomplish the desired results?
- What worked and did not work in the specialists' work?

Planning further development based on the analysis of the results of inclusion

- How can the range of offered activities be increased, their volume increased and their consistency ensured based on young people's unique needs and interests?
- How can young people with fewer opportunities be included in hobby activities to a greater extent and how is it possible to increase the field of activity of the organisation through this?
- How can the regularity and consistency of young people's participation in hobby activities be increased?

- How can hobby activity specialists and other parties to the network be supported in order to assist them in helping young people to set relevant goals and achieve them?
- How can the work of the network be organised even more effectively so that it supports young people's development on the one hand and specialists' opportunities to provide high-quality work that meets young people's needs on the other?

It is important to stress here that it helps to open up the potential of hobby activities (in terms of young people's development, the coping of families and reducing the long-term expenses of the public sector) when:

- the connections between all of the above-mentioned questions are taken into consideration;
- all of the questions are answered as a whole and on a regular basis.

For instance, it is of no use to simply follow the trends of inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in hobby activities if this is not accompanied by an effect on policy decisions. It is also of little help if young people's development and the factors hindering it are analysed only once and this is not accompanied by an analysis with specialists on how their work can be better organised. Discussions with hobby school teachers and instructors of hobby activities do not have much impact if resources are not used to further develop current practices (know-how, materials base, etc.).

VIII

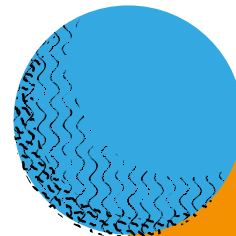
**Key lessons and
recommendations:
what should be the focus
of attention and be taken
into consideration when
including young people
with fewer opportunities
in hobby activities?
From practitioners to
practitioners**



Working with young people with fewer opportunities¹⁰

1. **Approach every young person individually** – what works with some young people might not work in other cases. Do not get stuck in a rut in terms of your habits. Be flexible. Identify young people's needs and interests (including what they really want to do) and act accordingly. Keep in mind that you should treat everyone equally – if you promise something to one, the others will want the same. By acting in this way you will also prevent extra work.
2. **Try to find new ways of including young people in hobby groups** – for instance you can organise a 'Bring a Friend' or 'Come as a Group' events. Offer the opportunity to participate for free to introduce the hobby. Use social media and spend time talking to young people on Facebook, WhatsApp or other social media channels. Include a marketing expert in your team.
3. **Make things interesting for young people** – they often don't know what they want and thus they should be encouraged and given a small push. In order to decrease your burden and increase young people's happiness, include them in creating and promoting activities in any way possible and get them working together. Be ready to propose interesting ideas yourself, as this inspires young people. Present young people's creations in the places they live and get around in! Give them the opportunity to develop within an organisation.
4. **The approach of 'from one young person to another' works** – use other young people to motivate their peers. Role models are very important to them, and if one young person has achieved something and stood out, showcasing this themselves sparks more interest than an adult doing so. Make use of pop-culture trends that connect to young people's idols or create trends yourself. Success stories are also important, as sharing them creates a feeling of safety within a group.
5. **Adapt the hobby activity to a young person's (school) day** – make sure that the school and hobby group work in harmony. Plan the hobby group time so that young people can make it there without difficulty. If they take the second shift at school (afternoon) hold the hobby group lesson in the morning.
6. **Do not allow a young person to disappear** – if for some reason they can't participate in hobby activities anymore or don't want to, try to reach an agreement with them and their parent and find them a new hobby.
7. **Remember** – you can work with every young person!

¹⁰ All of these good ideas and recommendations stem from the experience of HUKK-AP project partners and participants in the development programme (the seminar 'Processes initiated by HUKK-AP and its discoveries' on 9 & 10 February 2016 and the partnership seminar 'Interesting Practices in the Involvement of Youth at Risk in Hobby Education' from 10–12 November 2014).



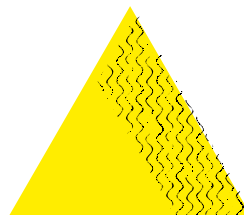
Involving the parent

1. **Communicate with the parent** – try to find out as much as possible about the peculiarities of the young person. Take the knowledge you gain into account as much as possible – for instance, an autistic child may be greatly disturbed by unfamiliar places, smells, noises, etc. Be sure to seek guidance regarding emergency situations. This will leave you prepared and you will know how to act. Be sure to explain to the parent what you need the information for and let them know that you will not misuse it (you will not forward it to people not involved in the situation, etc.).
2. **Include the parent in the decision-making process** – their support and assistance are of the utmost importance in including their child. Always seek a parent's agreement to their child participating in the hobby activity. Remember that it may not be easy to include a parent. They may be passive or be afraid of putting their child in a group of 'special young people'. It helps to be patient and explain.



Training and supporting specialists and the network service

1. **Train the people who work with special young people and do not leave them to their own devices** – remember that working with those young people is teamwork. Thoroughly prepare the specialist both mentally and in terms of skills. Provide them with common training, counselling and constant support. Employees (and through them young people) are helped most by a functional local network – this keeps their motivation high and assures them that they are not being left on their own with their problems. Contribute to the creation of a broad network!
2. **Develop the curricula and think the organisation of work and the role of the group instructor through** – as they support the inclusion of different young people. Be flexible when carrying out activities. Make an individual development plan for each young person. Design the study environment so that it provides enough security, freedom and challenges.
3. **Consistency, consistency, consistency** – once you have started working with a young person or on the creation of a network and wish to achieve something, you need to finish it. You must be prepared for processes to take much more time than you anticipated. You must work hard to cooperate.



IX

**Key lessons and
recommendations: what
can be done to support
learning in hobby activities?**



What is the definition of learning for young people?

Young people may have very different experiences of learning and defining it. When young people with special educational needs first arrived at a lesson in a hobby school in Pärnu as part of the HUKK-AP programme in 2014, many were confused when the teacher asked: “What would you like to learn?” Everyone sat in silence; no one could answer the question. Further conversation proved that they had never thought about it like that. They explained acquiring knowledge and skills by saying that they simply had to, but were unable to explain why. So far their experience was limited to getting something done, without thinking about why it was needed or what possible future benefit it might bring.

It certainly pays to contribute to the development of young people’s skills in self-analysis, whilst taking their capabilities into consideration. Then they will be more prepared to answer questions such as “What did I learn or experience that was new?”, “What did I already know?”, “What did I find complicated and why?”, “What surprised me and why?”, “How do I feel right now?”, “What did I learn about myself?”, “What did I learn from that experience?” and “What will I start using from now on?”.

It was also noted during hobby classes that the word ‘learning’ prompted defiance among most of the young people and made them feel that they were at school, not at a hobby school. This is where more inspiring alternatives have to be creatively found for young people.

“Every human being actually has an innate need and motivation to learn, develop and grow,” says Astrid Viik, Pernova Education Centre’s deputy director in the field of teaching work.

What should be done to support young people’s studies?

As an instructor of a hobby activity, it is important to think through how the young people participating in the hobby group



Figure 15. The roles of the supporter of learning.¹

1 Geudens, T., Bergstein, R., Pernits, K. (Eds.) (2013). Discovering the Youthpass: Practical tips and methods for using the process of the Youthpass to the greatest extent.

should be directed to study consciously, ignite passion in them to this end and instruct them professionally.

The emphasis is on perceiving one's own role: what can an instructor or the creator of the study environment do for young people so that they see themselves as students and are able to spell it out and make sense of what they have learned (Figure 15)?

When designing an effective learning experience the participant's characteristics (age, capabilities, special needs, prior experience and attitudes), style of studying and preferences must be kept in mind. Ways of creating an environment that supports a specific young person's personal development must be found and methods that provide enough of a challenge and a degree of participation must be chosen.

"It is important to make every young person responsible for their own learning experience – there is no actual learning without it," Astrid Viik explained.

The instructor should think with a young person about the value of studying according to the young person's capabilities during the initial stages of the process. Some place results above all else, while others enjoy every small achievement they chalk up during an activity.

Also, the purpose of learning should be defined together (including parents) as early and as clearly as possible. The purpose should be based on the young person, their wishes and needs, and be realistic and assessable. It is important to monitor how a young person moves towards their goals with them.

The instructors should discuss motivation and possible challenges with a young person, to make sure the latter is not afraid of making mistakes. Mistakes should be a natural part of the learning process. They can learn a lot even from a negative experience, but only if it has been talked through and given a meaning.

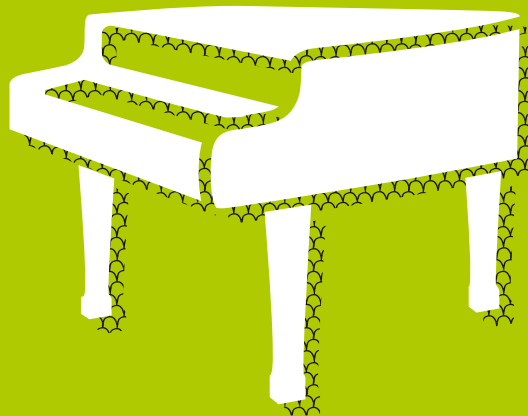
Also, a young person's learning experience should be analysed with them and they should be encouraged to note changes (even unexpected ones) and acknowledge them. This increases young people's self-confidence, dedication and their understanding of how they have developed themselves through different activities. They can experience that it is possible to study and discover oneself in very different ways and environments. The activity should be reflected upon using appropriate methods, meaning that they should look back on their experience and ponder its meaning.

It is important to help young people connect what they have learned with life outside the hobby group. It also pays to describe and show both young people and others what they have learned in different activities, for example by using the Youthpass. This tool gives a young person the chance to see the traits they still need to develop, and to work on them.

For instance, we can talk about a girl who attended a nature group and who was previously convinced that she wanted to become a cook's assistant. But after an analysis carried out with the instructor in which they used the approach of the Youthpass, she discovered that she should try the profession of assistant gardener. This method allowed her to see her strengths, including the fact that she loved to take care of plants.

Annex 1

Intervention logic of the HUKK-AP project in terms of project partners



Archimedes Foundation Youth Agency

Target group

Partners, teams of the open development programme, public

Range of activities

12 counties

Coordination, leaders

Applying for funds, project management
Supporting partners and teams of the open development programme
Project manager of the Archimedes Foundation Youth Agency, manager of YAAF, communication workers, organiser of training activities, financial specialist

Steering group

YAAF, Pärnu CG, Tartu CG, NGO VitaTiim, NGO Urban Style

Network

16 teams of open development programme

2014

Desired change

Outreach activities

Public's greater knowledge of project's activities and results
Wider spread of inclusive hobby activity mindset

Assessing impact

A model for assessing the impact of hobby activities has been developed
Hobby schools' ability to assess the effect of their activities has increased

Readiness and competence

Readiness and competence of promoters of hobby activities and coherence fields to work with the target group has increased

International cooperation

New approaches in the field of hobby activities
Greater readiness for cooperation projects
Internationalisation of hobby activities via Erasmus+ programme.

Kehtna School of Arts

Hand bell group for students of Kehtna Basic School who did not have a hobby activity before
60 young people

Hobby Activities and Youth Work Foundation (Harku)

An Impro Theatre group for young people with special educational needs
11 young people

Porkuni School

General and football training for young people with special intellectual needs
38 young people

Rae Hobby School

Including young people with lesser opportunities in hobby activities (sports, dancing, singing, art, music) in cooperation with general education school
37 young people

Viljandi Hobby School

Including young people who had not participated in hobby activities before in hobby school lessons (material processing, mechatronics, motorcycle training, art, dancing, etc.) in cooperation with a general education school
Drama group for a smaller class
52 young people

'Linda' Ubja Village Organisation

Adventure group for young people from the Ubja and Sõmeru region
17 young people

Activities

Result

16

hobby activity
teams included

547

young people
included

878

specialists participated
in training activities

Introducing the activities and results of the project in the media, Youth Agency's channels and presentations

Testing and development of impact assessment model

Training on impact assessment and instruction

Training for partners / Opening, intermediate and closing events / Hobby Education's Tool Fair
Carrying out the open development programme: training, mentoring,
supporting hobby activity projects and monitoring

Study visits and job shadowing training in Norway and Iceland

International partnership programme

Introducing Erasmus+

Supporting the development of project ideas

2015

Estonian Association of Care Placement Workers

Workshops (e.g. felting, making handmade candy, street dance) for young people from foster homes with the aim of helping them find a suitable hobby activity

58 young people

Tallinn Kanut Garden Hobby School / NGO Hobby Schools Association

Drama class for young people with school-related problems on the school's premises

85 young people

Lohusuu School

Photography and video class for students from grades 6-8 at Lohusuu School

30 young people

Nukufilm Children's Studio

Animation workshops in Keila for young people assigned by the Juvenile Committee and other visitors

16 young people

Culture and Youth Centre of Pühalepa Municipality

Hobby lessons on photography, animation, dancing, music and ceramics for young people (with special needs) from Pühalepa.

115 young people

Ukrainian Cultural Centre

Open workshops on art and handicrafts, joint dinners for young people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds

28 young people

The open development programme is a training and mentoring package for teams working in the field of hobby activities. Hobby activity teams developed ways of including the area's young people with fewer opportunities in hobby activities and carried them out (the grant was up to €750). Two development programmes were carried out during the project.

Pärnu

Target group

Young people aged 7–17 at risk, young people with special educational needs (SEN) and studying on the basis of a simplified curriculum (SC) (including young people with a disability and health-related problems), young people from rural areas, parents

Area of activity

Pärnu, Pärnu-Jaagupi

Coordination, leaders

Steering group: youth adviser of Pärnu CG, director of Pärnu Art School, manager of Pärnu Study Counselling Centre; later: director of Pärnu County Rajaleidja Centre, school social adviser of Pärnu Study Counselling Centre

Partners

Pärnu Study Counselling Centre, Pärnu House of Arts, Pärnu Art School, Pärnu Sports School, Pärnu Music School, Pernova Education Centre, Pärnu Old Town Basic School / Pärnu Old Town Basic School Study Centre, Pärnu Kuninga Street Basic School, Pärnu County Rajaleidja centre, Pärnu Tammsaare School, Pärnu Ülejõe Secondary School, Pärnu-Jaagupi High School

Desired change

Network

Functioning cooperation

Better coordination of specialists' work

Readiness and competence

Specialists' readiness and competence to work with the target group have increased

Inclusion of young people

More young people find hobby activities that are suitable for them

Outreach activities

Young people and their parents are more aware of hobby activity opportunities

Public's greater awareness on the results and activities of the project

Assessing impact

More in-depth overview of the impact of hobby activities on young people and of the challenges specialists face

**Including young people at risk in regular groups at hobby schools
From September to December 2015,
10 support specialists:**

- introduced and visited hobby groups with young people
- advised young people
- took young people to groups by hand

- advised the family of a young person on the subject of hobby activities
- assisted with accessing support services (e.g. social work services)
- advised general education school teachers and hobby school instructors

Activities

Regular network-related meetings, constant communication
Specialist are aware of existing hobby activity opportunities and direct young people to them
Development of hobby activities

Training, sharing experience, study visits, case discussions / Advising teachers and group instructors
Peer group counselling and supervision for group instructors (individually and in a group)

Partners attend training together, e.g. a group instructor, a teacher, a youth worker and a support specialist

Training subjects: SEN students – teaching and educating them; self-management and being sparing in a teacher's everyday work; instructing on problem behaviour in the case of intellectual special needs

Small groups / Individual work / Regular groups / Mobile hobby school
Support specialist support/advice for young people, parents

Study aids for group activities, e.g. musical instruments, sports goods, IT tools

Conducting a study among SEN young people on hobby activities

Introducing the opportunities of hobby activities to young people, their parents, teachers and other specialists

Examples: a young person and a support specialist look for information on hobby groups online; conversation meetings for parents at hobby schools to include young people at risk; introducing a project at a council committee meeting; newsletter and seminars for the managing bodies of Pärnu's general education schools

Gathering data on young people's participation and entering it on the form created
Gathering stories of the experiences of young people and specialists

Result

409 393 201

specialists
participated
in training
activities

young
people
included

families
advised

Mobile hobby school

- Once a week, three teachers from three municipality hobby schools from Pärnu travelled to a school 30 km away
- The teachers carried out art, nature and drama lessons for students from grades 6-8
- Hobby activity lessons formed part of the school day

Small groups and individual work at a hobby school for SEN and SC students

- Hobby activities were provided individually (1-2 students) and in a small group (4-6 students)
- A teacher from a general education school joined the group and supported the activities as an assistant teacher
- The following hobby activities took place: guitar, kannel (a type of stringed instrument), scenic design and props,

poetry theatre, ceramics, photography, friends of the forest, art, the Orff method and rhythm instruments, table tennis, soloist studies, electronics, ABC of the engine

- From September to December 2015, 56 hobby groups were organised, instructed by 17 hobby school teachers

In total 63 lessons per week took place.

Tartu

Target group

Young people aged 7–17 (up to 26) from families with socio-economic difficulties, young people studying in schools and classes for students with special educational needs (SEN) and on the basis of a simplified curriculum (SC), young people with Russian as a first language

Area of activity

Tartu

Coordination, leaders

Youth Policy Service of Tartu City Government

Partners

Tartu Herbert Masing School, Tartu Children's Art School, Tartu Kroonuaia School, NGO Kirepi Manor, NGO Tartu Maarja Support Centre, Tähe Youth Club, NGO Tartu Social Capital Development Centre, NGO Öökull, Anne Youth Centre, Lille Maja Youth Centre, Tartu Aleksander Puškin School, Triiton Badminton Club, FC Tartu Football Club, Tartu Autism Society, AHHA Science Centre Foundation, NGO Tartu Swimming Club, Tartu Emajõe School, Tartu Perekodu Käopesa Foundation, Tartu Hiie School, 'Omanäoline' Private Hobby School, Tartu Nature School hobby school of Tartu Environmental Education Centre Foundation, NGO Noored Toredate Mõtetega, Association of Tartu Free Waldorf School, NGO Tervis ja Sport

Desired change

Network

Functioning cooperation

Tartu City Government has increased the range of hobby activity target groups

Readiness and competence

Specialists' readiness and competence to work with the target group have increased

Inclusion of young people

More young people find hobby activities that are suitable for them

Outreach activities

Young people and their parents are more aware of hobby activity opportunities

Public's greater awareness on the results and activities of the project

Assessing impact

More in-depth overview of the impact of hobby activities on young people and of the challenges specialists face

Friends of nature hobby groups at a hobby school
Tartu Nature School

Friends of nature hobby group for SC students from a SEN school

- Size of group: up to 10 young people
- Duration 1.5 hours, once a week
- Plus travel, hiking, events

Friends of nature hobby group for Russian SC students from a small class

Stage one:

- Size of group: 9 students
- Duration: 45 minutes, twice a week
- Takes place on the school's premises, in cooperation with hobby school teachers the habit of attending a hobby school was established

Stage two:

- Size of group: 15 students, 2–3 with special needs
- Duration: 45 minutes, twice a week in the hobby school's regular groups

Activities

Network-related meetings, constant communication

Information events for new network partners

Development of hobby activities (facility-centred)

Hobby activity support by Tartu CG – for both young people from economically disadvantaged families and young people with special needs (coefficient 1.5, resident of Tartu)

Study of the bottlenecks and needs of hobby activities of young people with fewer opportunities

Training, sharing experience, peer group counselling

Training subjects: children with special needs in hobby education; peer group counselling – resolving cases; autistic children, noticing them and instructing them

Hobby groups: mixed and special groups

Available groups: band group, hiking and adventuring, improvised theatre, drama, cooking, art, nature, music, clay art, robotics, art and handicraft, badminton and football, swimming, health school, dancing, folklore group, et al.

Study aids for group activities, such as nature education-related tools, hiking equipment, musical instruments, tools for band group

Hobby activity fund: grant for providing hobby activities (up to €2000)

Introducing the opportunities of hobby activities to young people, their parents, teachers and other specialists

Examples:

leaflet on hobby activities including information about hobby groups for young people with fewer opportunities

sample hobby groups at a youth centre

sample lessons, introduction at schools

note in a student's study journal or invitation to an event on paper

Gathering data on young people's participation and entering it on the form created

Gathering stories of the experiences of young people and specialists

Cooking classes at a youth centre Lille Maja Youth Centre

- Size of group: 8–12 SEN students, including SC students
- Duration: 1.5–2 hours, once a week
- The class formed part of the school day

- A form master, a head of extracurricular activities or a youth worker brought the young people to the youth centre
- As their confidence grew, the SEN young people participated in an open cooking club at the youth centre once a week

Result

177

specialists
participated
in training
activities

450

young
people
included

NGO Urban Style

Target group

Young people aged 7–26 living in rural areas or countryside regions, young people from families experiencing socio-economic difficulties, young people with emotional and behavioural problems, parents

Area of activity

Kiviõli, Valga, Rāpina, Vārskā, Tabivere, Maarjamaa Hariduskollegium basic school

Coordination, leaders

Manager of NGO Urban Style / JJ-Street Dance School

Partners

Rāpina, Kiviõli and Valga towns; Tabivere and Vārskā municipalities

Desired change

Network

The local authority's support for activities of NGO Urban Style has grown
Functioning cooperation for reaching young people in need of hobby activities

Readiness and competence

Specialists' readiness and competence to work with the target group have increased

Inclusion of young people

More young people find hobby activities that are suitable for them

Outreach activities

Young people and their parents are more aware of hobby activity opportunities
Public's greater awareness on the results and activities of the project

Assessing impact

More in-depth overview of the impact of hobby activities on young people and of the challenges specialists face

MOBILE HOBBY SCHOOL

Street dance training

- For instance hip hop, breakdance and locking at different levels
- Duration: 1 hour, twice a week (trainer drives to the location)

Activities outside of training

- Discussion evenings on various subjects (e.g. history of hip hop, movie discussions)
- Training on etiquette and performing
- Motivation event by a trainer from another town, etc.

Larger events

- For example Camp of Hip Hop, JJ-Street Baltic Session, JJ-Street Dance School spring concert
- Participating as a dancer and as part of the management team

Activities

Cooperation-themed meetings with the representatives of a local authority

Cooperation-themed meetings, constant communication with region's teachers and culture, youth and social workers

Training, case discussions

Training subjects: approach of the dance school in the new context for including young people at risk; supporting teenagers and their parents via a network service

Mobile hobby school

Advising parents

Introducing the opportunities of hobby activities to young people, their parents, teachers and other specialists

Examples:
introducing dance styles at schools
free sample training
distributing the posters and flyers of the dance school in the region

Gathering data on young people's participation and entering it on the form created
Gathering stories of the experiences of young people and specialists

Individual work

- Appraisal with a young person
- Motivation
- Advising parents

Work is based on an empowerment model that supports a young person's

- self-awareness
- self-confidence
- self-fulfilment

Result

65

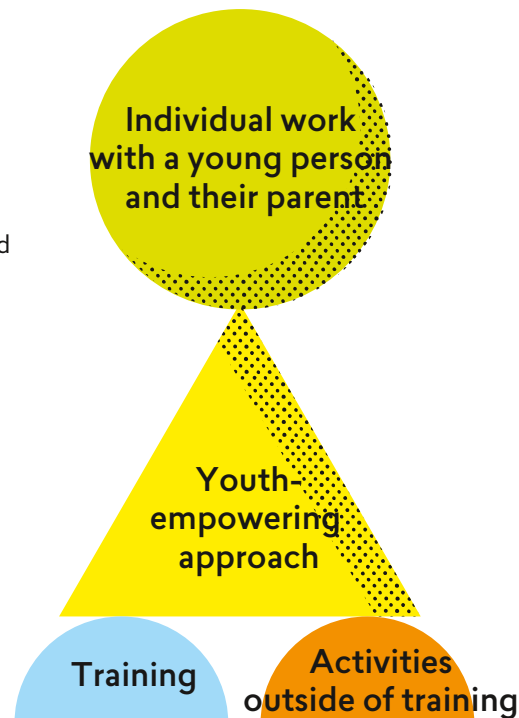
specialists
participated
in training
activities

1580

young
people
included

156

parents
advised



NGO VitaTiim

Target group

Young people aged 7–17 who live in rural areas, come from families experiencing social and economic difficulties and have health-related problems

Area of activity

Sillamäe, Jõhvi, Narva, Kurtna, Oru, Lohusuu, Narva-Jõesuu, Sinimäe, Kohtla-Järve

Coordination, leaders

Manager of NGO VitaTiim, open study room worker, financial specialist

Partners

Narva Laste Loomemaja hobby centre, 'Ulei' Sillamäe Hobby and Youth Centre, Jõhvi Cultural and Hobby Centre, Narva Young Sailors' Club, Vaivara Hobby Centre, Narva Peetri School/Narva School no. 6, Narva Estonian Grammar School, Narva Paju Secondary School, Narva Orphanage, Kreenholm High School, Vaivara Municipality Open Youth Centre, 'Tšaika' Scout Club, Kurtna Youth Centre, NGO 'LAD' Children's Day Centre, Ahtme School, Kuremäe Convent

Desired change

Network

Functioning cooperation

Readiness and competence

Specialists' readiness and competence to work with the target group have increased

Inclusion of young people

More young people find hobby activities that are suitable for them

Outreach activities

Young people and their parents are more aware of hobby activity opportunities

Public's greater awareness on the results and activities of the project

Assessing impact

More in-depth overview of the impact of hobby activities on young people and of the challenges specialists face

MOBILE HOBBY SCHOOL

- Size of group: 8 young people per instructor
- Duration: 1 day
- Young people from the area are brought to the location by bus
- Lesson structure:
 - icebreaker exercises
 - theoretical part in a playful manner
 - acquisition of new knowledge and skills
 - reflection

Subjects on the basis of one meeting:

- learning to tie knots
- hike from Oru to Pühajõe River
- building a bridge using wood and ropes and crossing the river
- learning the values and wisdom of scouts and hiking

Activities

Result

118

261

specialists
participated
in training
activities

young
people
included

Regular network-related meetings, constant communication

Development of hobby activities

Training, sharing experience, case discussions

Advising group instructors

Partners attend training together with hobby school instructors, college students, head of extracurricular activities, Rajaleidja career adviser

Training subjects: ADHD young people in hobby education; non-formal learning in hobby education

Hobby groups: Target group-based, mixed groups / Mobile hobby school / Hobby and career module studies

Study aids for group activities e.g. musical instruments

Introducing the opportunities of hobby activities to young people, their parents, teachers and other specialists

Examples: introductory activities at schools, youth centres, orphanage, youth day 2014

Spreading information via active retired people and church in a rural region

Gathering data on young people's participation and entering it on the form created

Gathering stories of the experiences of young people and specialists

Hobby and career module studies (4 modules)

- Size of group: up to 12 young people (mixed and special groups)
- 4 modules have been established with hobby schools
- Duration of module: 80 academic hours for regular young people, 45 for SEN young people
- Subjects on the basis of one module:
 - group conversations, for instance on a hobby's impact on life, career and future
 - checking out new hobbies (e.g. model planes, aerobics, dancing, music), trying them out, choosing one

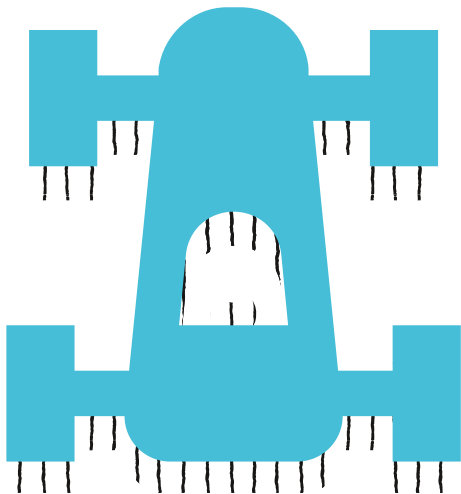
- meeting representatives of various professions, such as basket weavers and professional football players
- motivational meetings in a youth group
- advising young people on choosing a hobby and career planning, including visiting Rajaleidja Career Centre
- visiting schools providing professional training
- visiting companies providing professional work
- field trips to an adventure park, museum
- participating in a community project, for instance face painting during Children's Day

Annex 2

Description of methodology of impact assessment of the HUKK-AP project

Assessing the effect of hobby activities first requires clear purposes to be set for the participation of young people, and as a result to the changes taking effect.¹¹ In practice, however, it may turn out to be difficult to find suitable assessment methods and choose the right one(s). The partners to the HUKK-AP project wanted to know how participation in hobby activities impacts both young people and their instructors. They also wanted to create a model for assessing impact that could be used later as well. Thus a method was created that included statistical indicators related to participation and experience stories.

Quantitative methods were used to gather data on the number of included young people, their background and their consistency of participation. Qualitative methods were used to determine the initial needs and risks of the included young people, the positive impact that resulted from the hobby activities and the instructors' experience and development.



Quantitative analysis

A special solution for gathering raw data on a common basis was created for the HUKK-AP partners in order to ensure that the numerical data was comparable at a later stage in terms of different areas and the seven sub-periods of the project. Three types of data was gathered in regard to the participating young people (Figure 16).

1. Background to (reason for) including a young person in the project

Background information explains the reason for including a young person in the project and provides information on their possible needs. Based on this, the young people were divided into three categories.

- Adjusted curriculum or general national curriculum with exceptions (for instance, a simplified curriculum of basic school).
- General national curriculum without exceptions (i.e. a student from a regular class in a regular school, such as a young person with behavioural problems, from a family with low income or a young person who has no friends).
- Geographically restricted access to hobby education (cases in which there were no opportunities for organised hobby activities or they were not diverse enough due to the distance from the centre of the municipality).

¹¹ Aps, J. (2016). Report on assessing the impact of the HUKK-AP project.

2. Form of hobby activities and support services for parents

It was determined whether a young person participates in regular group or individual lessons or in one-off events. Data on advised parents was also gathered.

3. Regularity of young people's participation

In order to assess the consistency of young people's participation, the regularity of participation in long-term activity was examined: participating in more or less than 50% of lessons. It was also taken into consideration whether a young person had already participated in another HUKK-AP long-term activity: young people participating for the first time (i.e. new to the project) vs young people participating repeatedly (i.e. also in some other long-term activity).

The aim was to avoid counting the same young people several times in the analysis, but in the case of one-off events it was not possible to separate 'unique' young people due to the sheer volume of data.

Qualitative analysis

In order to assess the changes materialising in young people included in the HUKK-AP project, the method of experience stories was implemented. The created structure was used to describe:

- the original situation and the needs of the included young people;
- the activities that a young person participated in and the challenges of hobby activity providers;
- the changes in a young person's situation and needs during the process and at the end of it.

Experience stories were analysed using the method of qualitative content analysis.

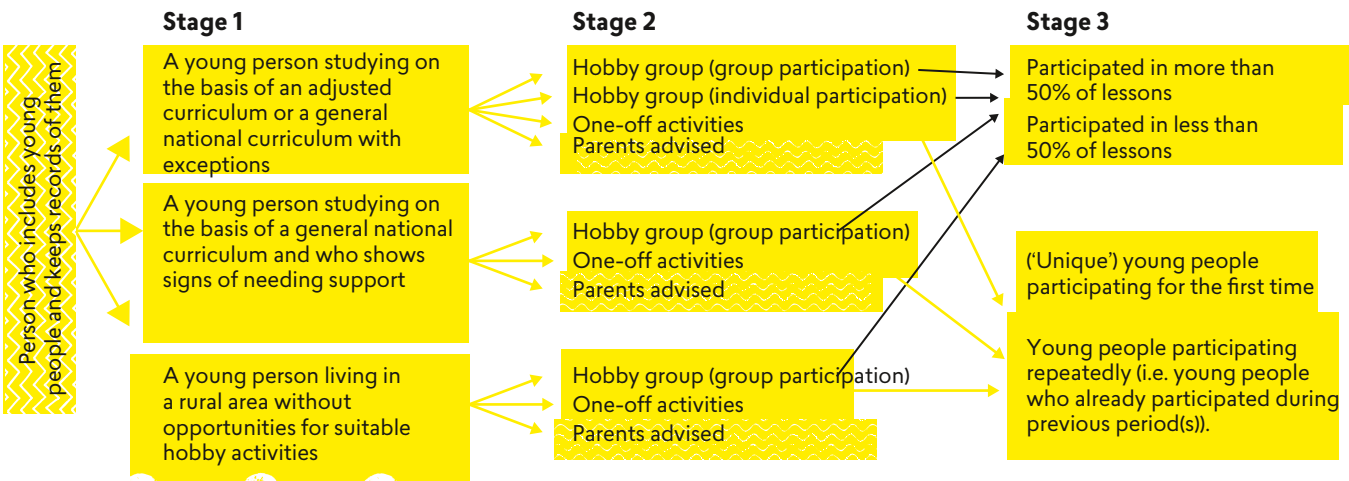
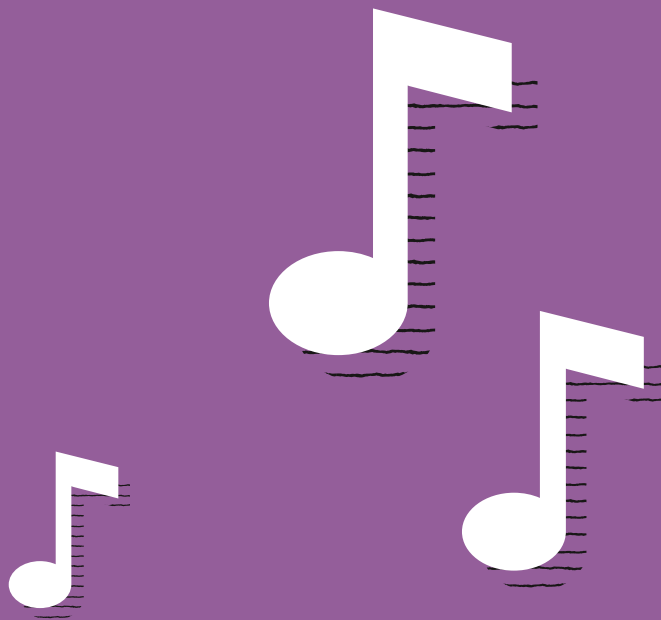


Figure 16. The process of gathering statistical data on young people participating in the HUKK-AP project.

Basic terminology



Geographically restricted access to hobby activities – in the context of the project, missing opportunities for organised hobby activities due to the distance from the centre of the municipality or they are not diverse enough for taking young people's needs and interests into consideration.

Young people with special educational needs (SEN) – young people who, due to disability, health status, learning difficulties, talent, behavioural and emotional problems and anything else related require adaptations to the content and process of hobby activities (individual approach) and/or to the environment (tools, methods, rooms, support personnel, etc.).

Hobby activity – general term for hobby activity and hobby education. Systematic, supervised engagement in a chosen hobby in education acquired within the adult education system and outside of work to acquire substantial knowledge and skills in the chosen area, on a voluntary basis. This takes place mostly in the non-formal study environment and its purpose is to provide opportunities for the comprehensive development of a young person.

Adjusted curriculum or general national curriculum with exceptions – in the context of the project, for example measures for supporting the development of a student with special educational needs created on the basis of a simplified curriculum of a basic school and the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act.

Young person/student studying in a simplified curriculum (SC) – a young person with an intellectual disability.

Young people with fewer opportunities – young people who are at a disadvantage compared to their peers, who face obstacles in their lives that make it more difficult for them to participate in lifelong learning, fulfilling their civil rights and in general social life. The obstacles may be of a geographical, health status, disability-related, financial situation, special education needs, cultural background or social nature.

General national curriculum without exceptions – in the context of the project the so-called regular class of a regular school, where students, according to the specialists, have displayed problems with behaviour, lack of interest, friends and motivation, have non-supportive family relationships, etc.

References and additional reading



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Notes

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