

Blink

The magazine of Non Formal Education

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Year 2024

International

Ukraine: educating
under fire

Report

Ubuntu: a philosophy or
a Non Formal Education
Programme?

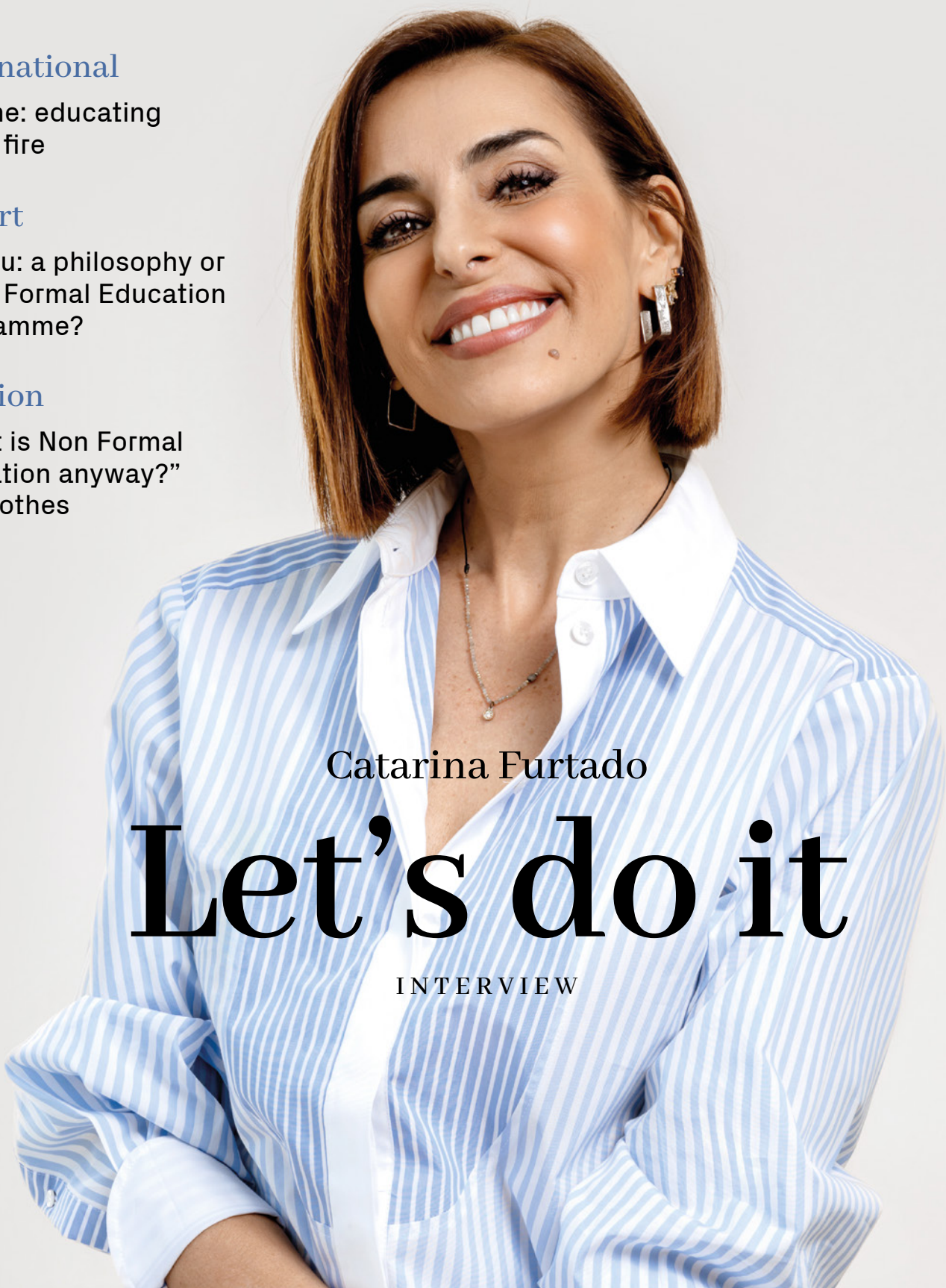
Opinion

“What is Non Formal
Education anyway?”
Luís Rothes

Catarina Furtado

Let's do it

INTERVIEW



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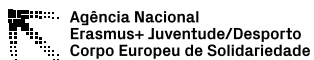
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Editorial

Luís Alves

Musicians often say that their second albums are always more difficult. Expectations of growth, innovation and consistency create both pressure and the opportunity to assert a musical identity.

With the proper differentials, Blink is also seeking to assert its editorial identity in this second issue. While maintaining the structure, we wanted to emphasize the magazine's diversity and plurality, along with its non-sectarian nature, contrary to its creation in a closed circuit, aimed at broad audiences, breaking out of self-isolation bubbles that retract the capacity for development and collective recognition of Non Formal Education.

It is within the framework of these objectives that the variety of voices, perspectives and themes printed in these pages should be interpreted. Provocative exercises, reflective essays, inspiring examples and stories that mark lives and the world, are opportunities for contact, discovery, deepening, or new ponderings about the contexts and events that shape our educational journeys and our ability to fulfil ourselves.

"But what is Non Formal Education anyway?" wonders Luís Rothes. I raised this same question in the extensive interview with Catarina Furtado, and it will remain as the watermark of this project. For now, here are the answers and many more new questions in blue - "Walter's non-formal colour" - with the 'Ubuntu philosophy', with a 'Psientific' experience or with what I "have heard", "under fire" with the Ukrainians.

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Opinion

The meaning of Non Formal Education is the main topic of the leading opinion column in this issue of Blink, where the difficulty in defining this concept with reasonable precision is reflected upon. Educator Luís Rothes is the author.

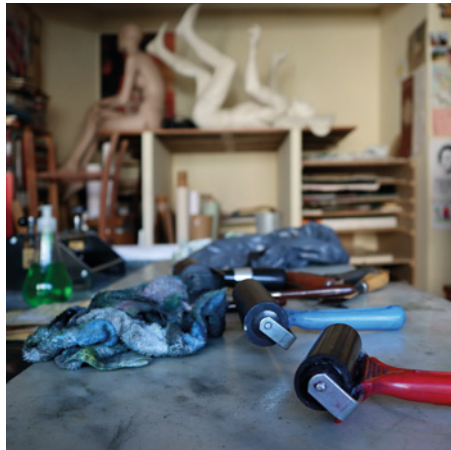
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In & Out

Rodrigo and Ida Vogel are two young people who decided to leave Portugal and Germany, respectively, for some time, to have experiences of Non Formal Education that will shape their lives.

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Walter's non-formal colour

In an unsuspecting street in Porto, a Brazilian settled in Portugal immerses young people and others in his blue world, where, more than creating artists, he cultivates and balances souls and personalities.

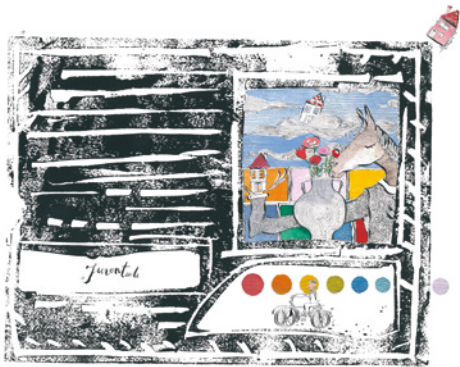
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Interview

Better known for her television work, Catarina Furtado has a story to tell in defending human rights and creating an NGO. In this edition, she was interviewed by Luís Alves, the director of Blink.

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I have heard...

Gil Nunes can be a journalist, a creative writer, a sports commentator, or a youth policy promoter. In this edition of Blink, he assumes the role of columnist.

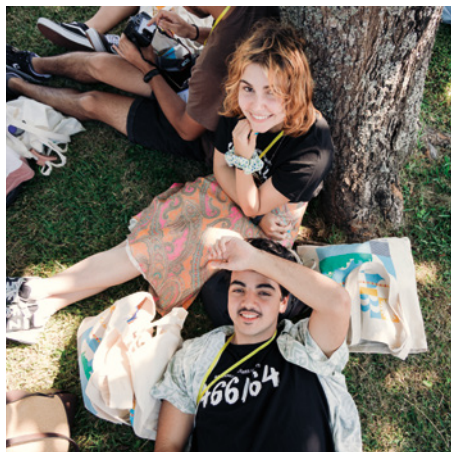
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International

There is a Ukraine that the news does not show us and a generation that cannot be lost, for whom Non Formal Education can be part of the solution when everything, including schools, is missing.

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Report

Ubuntu is a training academy for trainers based on a philosophy inspired by personalities like Mandela and Luther King, but it is above all a Non Formal Education programme.

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Non Formal Education and different contexts

For Ana Moutas, the fact that Non Formal Education is adaptable to various contexts makes it a powerful tool in the learning process of its beneficiaries, with positive results.

what

Luís Rothes
Non Formal Educator

IS NON FORMAL EDUCATION ANYWAY?

As an educator, this has been one of the questions I have persistently been asked.

In general, those who ask this question feel that they have an idea as to the meaning of the concept of Non Formal Education (NFE), but say that it is difficult to define this concept with reasonable precision. As Blink is recognised as an NFE magazine, it's worth providing a contribution to clarifying this concept.

Perhaps it would be useful to start by going back in time and remembering that, in traditional social structures, it was above all in the family and in the neighbourhood that the socialisation process took place, enabling not only the learning that was essential for work and the profession, but also the development of all the skills that were essential for social life, in which knowledge and agility, dispositions and principles, aspirations and projects crossed paths. Training was then eminently practical and carried out in the contexts in which life took place. The very creation of writing a few millennia ago hardly interfered with this reality: the possession of certain formalised writing and calculating instruments, despite signs of progressive extension, remained limited to very small minorities, who essentially acquired them in a master/apprentice relationship that was little different from the one that marked other craft practices.

Over the last two centuries, however, the school paradigm has come to deeply mark the history of education. It is worth emphasising the fundamental features

of the school form, which developed in Europe and then spread throughout the world. It is immediately marked by an unprecedented form of relationship between a "master" and his "pupil" and the master is no longer a craftsman "passing on" know-how to a young person. By becoming a place of its own for learning and differentiated from other places where social life takes place, the school tends, on the one hand, to strip social groups of their competences and some of their socialising tasks and, on the other hand, leads the school to develop its own ways of structuring and carrying out itself, with school work taking place in a specific and defined time, school time, which becomes a period in a person's life, with its own times in the year and its own very significant moments in everyday life.



Over the last few decades, however, the inadequacy of the responses centred on this type of school approach has been confirmed, and there have been clear signs of a major crisis in this school model. As a result, some concepts have been consolidated, overcoming a vision restricted to school, which, without falling into a dichotomy based on an irreconcilable alternative between school and non-school, have proved

important to thinking about the current and future reality of education. The qualifiers of permanent, recurrent, formal, non-formal and informal have in fact served to break up a monopoly that relegated education to the school system, making its development harder.

Here we want to emphasise the importance of the concepts of formal, non-formal and informal education. This set of concepts has been fundamental in consolidating a broader vision of education. It is based on the recognition that a wide range of social practices must be considered educational. However, by broadening its scope, the concept of education necessarily becomes more ambiguous, since it starts to refer to practices with very different characteristics. Now, with this set of concepts formal, non-formal and informal education, the intention was precisely to classify these educational practices in a way that clarifies them. Classifying is always clarifying. And classifying requires, above all, being clear in defining the criteria on which this categorisation is based. In this case, the classification is based on two decisive criteria: the intentionality of these practices and the possibility of academic and/or professional validation of the learning undertaken.

Formal education refers to social practices and institutions with an assumed educational purpose and which allow for academic and/or professional qualifications. In order to appreciate the role of the school, it is necessary to consider that this institution is not only a training context, but that it also plays a fundamental role as a body recognised by the state for the validation of knowledge and the awarding of school diplomas, which form part of a graduated system of diplomas and are therefore an essential resource for social affirmation. The concept of informal learning emphasises the existence of educational dimensions in social practices, even if they are not intended to be educational. NFE, in turn, includes social practices in which there is an assumed educational intent, but which are not materialised through school processes leading to an academic and/or professional qualification. In NFE, we are therefore dealing with a very broad range of means and institutions that produce educational effects through intentional, methodical and differentiated processes, which clearly have an educational purpose, developed by social actors whose educational role is institutionally or socially recognised, but who are not part of the graduated educational system validated by the state.

“Non Formal Education, in turn, includes social practices in which there is an assumed educational intent, but which are not materialised through school processes leading to an academic and/or professional qualification”

The field of NFE therefore encompasses a very wide range of educational practices, with an enormous impact on the lives of all of us, on the realisation of the right to education and on the construction of fairer and more democratic societies. Valuing NFE does not, however, mean devaluing formal and informal modes of learning. Educational development will undoubtedly involve a proper articulation between the different modalities that make up the heterogeneous reality of education. Today, as always, we learn informally, Modernity affirmed schooling and, in contemporary society, we are witnessing the development and articulated affirmation of multiple forms of learning. It is in this context that it is essential to recognise the importance of NFE and to value spaces such as Blink magazine where, in the diversity of its realities, perspectives and approaches, it can be disseminated, debated and valued.

NON FORMAL PEOPLE

Within the scope of Erasmus+ programmes, thousands of young people set out to discover other cultures, representing important educational processes. From the inside out and from the outside in.



VOLUNTEERING WITH MIGRANTS IN NORWAY

Rodrigo is Portuguese, and at the age of 18, he travelled through Europe using a community programme called DiscoverEU, which covered his travel costs. In a few weeks, he visited Norway, England, France, Monaco, and Malta. Although the European Commission's idea is to provide train travel, flights are also available, especially to peripheral or ultra-peripheral countries like Malta. "I started by flying to Malta and from Malta to Oslo, where I was involved in volunteer activities," says Rodrigo, who attended the Mela Festivalen, a music festival focused on the culture brought by migrants living in the norwegian capital. "This allowed me to meet people from many countries, particularly migrants from Asia," he says. This volunteer work experience turned out to be an opportunity for Non Formal Education for Rodrigo, who claims to have learned a lot. "First of all, I learned about Europe and European citizens and how we have so much in common, despite the various contrasts," says the young man from Lisbon, for whom "the Scandinavian environment can be diverse, but the truth is that I realised that the European Union is a kind of de facto union, which made me feel at home."



LEARNING ABOUT LIFE BEFORE UNIVERSITY

Ida Vogel is German, and at the age of 19, she moved to Portugal for six months to volunteer at an institution that cared for people with profound disabilities. "I left my country, my friends, and my family for half a year, and that represents a big change in my life, as I had never been alone," she begins to explain to Blink. "Basically, I wanted to do something different after my school education. And I wanted to spend a year outside Germany without formally studying. Portugal came up because of the project involving care for people with disabilities." The young German refers to the Association of Cerebral Palsy of Coimbra (APCC), explaining that "I wanted to be with people from whom I could learn something different and that school did not provide. But also because I want to study medicine, and I think this work is related, giving me skills that will be an advantage when I am in higher education." Ida explains that life in Coimbra is very different from what she had in Germany, but that "after some time adapting, meeting people, and getting used to the language, I made friends, and everything became easier." And she is not alone in this adventure, as, within the scope of the European Solidarity Corps, the institution received, along with the German, other young people from France and Turkey.

R E P O R T

BLUE. WALTER'S NON-FORMAL COLOUR



Walter Almeida crossed the Atlantic almost 25 years ago, from Brazil to Portugal, where he has been involved in various Formal and Non Formal Education projects.

Always with the visual arts as a pretext and social intervention as a context, he hosted BLINK at Casa Azul, a flat located in the urban centre of Bonfim, in Porto, which has been transformed into an art studio where many children, thirsty for creation, spend a few hours away from screens and social media.

With experience in Formal Education, namely as an assistant professor at the University of Porto, after studying design and printing techniques in a degree programme at the Federal University of Espírito Santo and a Master's degree at the University of Porto, he never disconnected from Recife and his country of origin, where he keeps in touch with similar projects to those he is developing in Portugal, especially in the printing area.

One of the projects he is involved with in Portugal is "O Bando dos Gambuzinos", a cultural association that educates mainly home-schooled children and where different types of art, such as body expression, are always appreciated. Walter teaches visual arts there, an activity that is somewhere between school formality and a Non Formal Education method.

In Portugal, he also works with the association "Qualificar para Incluir", a Social Solidarity Association with acknowledged Public Utility and a protocol with the Social Security Institute, which has been operating in Porto since 2001.

The organisation's main focus is the educational and professional qualification of children, young people and adults in precarious situations. Its mission is to enable families to access jobs that protect them from lack of income, chronic livelihood instability and social exclusion. And here, once again, the art of printing and plastic expression is the medium Walter uses to help the association achieve these goals.

But among the various educational and artistic processes it is linked to, Casa Azul is the one that best fits the definition of Non Formal Education. This space, located in the parish of Bonfim in Porto, has been running for about seven years. "The house is a more recent project than a previous one called Chapa Azul," Walter explains, amidst the colours and books that fill every room in the small flat. "It's a community intervention project, using printing techniques, especially those linked to tiles, which is something that really interests the target audience," he explains.





This artist and trainer didn't land on the subject of tile printing by chance. It's an area he has researched in depth within the academic world and which he implements across the country using a van he calls his mobile unit. "With Chapa Azul I go wherever people are and need me and where social intervention is necessary. Art, printing techniques, are just the way to reach them".

But how is it that through tiling and artistic expression one can make a social intervention, both with Chapa Azul and Casa Azul? Walter explains that he always tries to adapt his speech and activity to the context of each community and each person he visits or who visits him. "I always try to value the knowledge and skills of the people I meet and take into account the particularities of the condition in which they live. When I'm invited anywhere, I try to find out about the difficulties, potential and living conditions of those people and adapt my activity to that specific context".

In other words, Chapa Azul's activity is not standardised and uses one of the most important and powerful tools of Non Formal Education, which sets it apart from other forms of teaching: the ability to start from the person's circumstances and then define its intervention programme. In order to do this, Walter always tries to make the most of what people already have knowledge of, in other words, he tries to "be a meeting point for people, a socialising place, as well as a place of appreciation, by working on a sense of belonging and valuing the social and cultural context of the people he works with".

Neither the mobile unit nor Casa Azul intend to create artists. "I have no such pretence," says Walter Almeida. "I don't even feel like an artist myself, although that's what my academic qualifications consist of. My concern here is precisely that people should be able to express themselves and what they like, in whatever way they can. There is no concern to turn them into artists. There's an appreciation of what they like and how they do it, with no judgement," he says, explaining that he encourages "free expression, striving to improve, but with no pressure attached".

Although school is no stranger to him, for Walter Almeida it is through Non Formal Education that the most life-changing projects can be developed. "I've always been connected to school and the academic world, which play a very important role in shaping people. Non Formal Education doesn't replace them, but it's a much more rewarding way of reaching people and transforming their lives, because it addresses the personal and social circumstances in which they live. That's very rewarding," he says.

“My concern here is precisely that people should be able to express themselves and what they like, in whatever way they can”



INTERVIEW



WHEN THEY TELL ME THAT IT'S NOT POSSIBLE I SAY

Interview with
Catarina Furtado

Let's do it

When invited to talk about Non Formal Education, Catarina Furtado only had one condition: that the interview take place at Corações Com Coroa, an association she founded that helps vulnerable women overcome seemingly impossible problems. The UN Goodwill Ambassador answered all of BLINK's director's questions and couldn't resist trying to switch roles and also be the one to ask Luís Alves questions.



Non Formal Education is the purpose of this project. It's a diverse concept. How would you explain what Non Formal Education is to a reader?

My answer is given with the full conviction of the experience I have as a woman and a citizen, but above all with the experience I have travelling around the world, making documentaries and as a United Nations ambassador. So it's not a technical answer, but an empirical one that has a lot of what I see on the ground. For me, Non Formal Education is everything that completes, moulds and enables human beings to live in society. So it's everything we think comes with home and school education, but it really doesn't. It's everything that's more invisible, but doesn't appear in the textbooks. But for me, it's the major key to people being able to live with the tools they need to be able to deal with their emotions, but also with the more rational part of life in a co-operative society.

You had a very diverse and plural training and educational background, school, formal education, art school, film and theatre teaching, journalism school, your family background... was this diversity of experiences and educational spaces was important for you and does it explain a lot of what you are today?

That explains it entirely. I trained in dance at the Conservatoire, then did journalism, theatre and film in London and, yes, I've had multiple inspirations. If you've studied dance, you gain a great deal of discipline, which has helped me to be a disciplined communicator, but everything else, sensitivity, emotions, empathy, all of that has come very much through art. But there is one part that I think is very much part of my Non Formal Education: volunteering. Volunteering should be much more encouraged, not as a way of putting it on the curriculum, but as a way of instilling it in yourself. And for me that was very important, because it allows us to see the different parts of ourselves. Parts where I've navigated and do navigate. I've opened up my eyes through volunteering. It gave me a much clearer idea of what I wanted and didn't want. That's not clear with the formal school model alone. And I had that possibility. I'll give you an example: when I'm trying to combat female genital mutilation in a country like Guinea Bissau, I don't just use what is known from a medical point of view, but I use what I've learned in theatre, music and emotions to reach out to the people.

“I have never received any formal education to become what I am”

One of the lesser-known stages of Catarina's journey was her first steps in the media. Was Formal Education enough?

I think that's an excellent question. But I don't think so. I really don't. To be a journalist - and I'm not a journalist, because I never applied for a journalist's licence by choice and because I found it incompatible with some of the presentation activities I wanted to do - you have to be curious. In order to be curious, you have to have experience and you don't learn that at university, but you do learn it from a practical point of view. And so you have to put your head and body in unpredictable places and confront yourself with other people's stories. This requires stripping away a series of concepts and prejudices that we gradually acquire.

Journalism is perhaps one of the professions where this need for a more global culture is most obvious...

Absolutely. It's fundamental. Culturally, not only through the concepts we learn, but also in terms of our experience. Journalists are whistleblowers. You have to be brave. I learnt that from my father, to whom I pay tribute. He often took risks to tell the truth, even though there are many truths. But I think that even in this regard he was courageous, for example when he told the story of the colonial war and managed to bring the two sides face to face so that the reader, in this case the viewer, could draw their own conclusions. It's the same story told by two sides. I never asked my father: so what do you think? Never, because his answer is right there. And that's what a journalist is. And it takes courage. And courage is gained in Non Formal Education.

Catarina is a communicator. Being a communicator is an innate skill, but it can also be developed. Of the various educational or professional spaces you've occupied, which have contributed most to developing this competence?

I don't think I'd ever stopped to think about it. In fact, what I do today is being a communicator. But I never had the formal education to be what I am. I studied all those years at a very demanding school, the dance school, but that limited me immensely for what I would become in the future. I never wanted to be a public figure, I never wanted to be known, let alone in front of the cameras, because I was very shy. And when I was told, aged 19, to audition to be a presenter and I decided to give it a go, because I'm brave and curious, I felt the limitations were precisely in dance, because in dance we speak with our bodies and without a voice. Apart from that, I never had any lessons as a presenter, nobody ever taught me how to be in front of the cameras - nowadays there are, and I think it's good that there are, but in my day there weren't - and that's also why, at a certain point, I wanted to stop and take a break from my career because I wanted to study. I felt that there was something innate in my abilities, but that I needed to be more comfortable and that's why I went to study theatre and cinema. It was this mix of Formal and Non Formal Education that made me who I am today.



“
I'm extremely lucky to have had parents who always dragged me along to various activities
”

You have a career marked by a certain activism, as a UN Goodwill Ambassador, also as the founder of the association where we are doing this interview, and you are involved in many other causes. How did you become aware of these causes?

I'm extremely fortunate to have had parents who have always dragged me into different activities. My mum was a special education teacher, my dad a journalist... I learnt a lot of things that sometimes weren't even stipulated for my age. But I was there. And as one of my greatest characteristics is curiosity, I learnt and absorbed many of the realities that my parents experienced. Often I would go with my mum to a special education school, Crinabel, and I would stay there. Other times I'd listen to my father on his reports. I listened to adults a lot. Sometimes in my room, I'd go to the door to listen to adults talking, because I was very curious. For example, I was very curious about the 25th of April. I realised that there were very different people to those I met at school. Through my father's reports, I realised that there were people who lived very differently, many of them without the right to go to school. Just as there were very different people at my mum's school. And that got me interested in these people and these causes of people who had different opportunities. That's why, when I was nine, I started volunteering at Crinabel and during my summer holidays I took the time to invest in these special people. I realised on one of those holidays that prejudice and discrimination were at an all-time high when someone on the beach mistreated my friend Tó, who is diagnosed with trisomy 21, and asked me to take him away from her. It was very shocking for me and at the age of nine I spat in her face... From then on I tried, not through formal education, but through Non Formal Education, to master the area of human rights.

And today you're an ambassador...

When you sign up for things, they appear. Nothing predicted that I would receive this invitation from the United Nations almost 24 years ago. Little did I know that the letter from Secretary General Kofi Annan would push me to study these areas even more.



“I realise that we alone are powerless, but that we can sow the seeds in others of the urgency to do something”

A 24-year commitment like this is unusual...

I'm the only one in the whole world with this longevity in mandate. It's a voluntary mandate, renewed every five years. I've been through three former secretaries-general and several directors of my UN agency. This isn't a medal to pin on your chest. But I still feel a certain pride, because this represents



the enormous conviction I have that it is possible to change the world. I believe that small actions can work miracles. I realise that on our own we are powerless, but that we can sow the seeds of the urgency in others to do something. And that can be taught, just as empathy can be taught. And all this makes my actions as an ambassador of goodwill bear fruit.

This translates into your action as an ambassador in this educational dimension. It's not just about educating young people, but sensitising an entire community.

The ambassadors of these UN agencies are public figures with prestige and credibility in their own countries who use their visibility and activist conviction in developing countries. However, in all these years, I find myself having to explain the basics of human rights, solidarity and charity to many people in developed countries, including our own. Solidarity is something that is promoted vertically, not horizontally. All these issues are still not very clear to many people. I encounter many people who have completed many Formal Education programmes, but who are unable to accept others, to be tolerant and everything that makes us grow. In other words, they have a very limiting definition of success, which has to do with the money they make or their career progression. And not with what they leave as their footprint in the world. For me, the number of lives a person manages to change is the right measure of how successful we are in life. So I find myself talking to people who are highly educated, but who don't have a good grasp of human rights issues. Just as in developing countries - such as Guinea, for which I have a lot of affection, but I can talk about Haiti, South Sudan, São Tomé, Mozambique, East Timor, Bangladesh, and also Lebanon... - I find myself talking to people whose mindsets need urgent change. We can respect traditions, but we have to be able to respect human rights and raise this awareness. And by talking, by explaining things, you can achieve this.

So Catarina you are truly one of us, an agent of Non Formal Education, often together with political decision-makers, or not?

Yes, I often have meetings with presidents and ministers... [laughs] Now I'm going to tell you my secrets. Where do I get my tricks? Let's pretend that Luís is a health minister in one of those countries where, in order to give birth, women have to walk twenty kilometres, under the sun and in intense heat, for example in Africa, in order to get to a health centre where they might be able to give birth. These are countries where maternal and infant mortality rates are huge. So what is my role in front of you? Firstly, I have to be humble, because coming from a developed country I cannot claim to know more than a minister. So I have to say to you: "I apologise, Minister, for being here speaking to you, but I've just walked the route that those mothers walk and it is an impossible one. Do you want to come with me, let's walk the 20 kilometres together?". These strategies, which have often worked, where did I get them? From Non Formal Education.

“I always think there are worse things. Relativisation is a great solution to my problems”

Corações com Coroa is the association where we are having this conversation. What motivated you to create this project, what you've already done and what remains to be done?

I don't want to ricochet here, but doing it, in your line of work, what do you most enjoy doing Luís?

What I love most is transforming realities and leaving a positive impact in the world. And I've been fortunate enough to be in places that have allowed me to make my contribution...

And what do you feel deep down inside?

There's an altruistic dimension to this desire to participate, but there's also a selfish dimension to getting satisfaction from being part of solutions. But you're already interviewing me and the idea was the opposite [laughs].

Every time I think about the second part of your answer, which is being selfish in order to feel good, I stopped answering three or four years ago. Now I stick to the first. What happens inside me is a huge satisfaction, the difficulties are immense, the bureaucracy makes everything very difficult, but every time I see a woman who says "I don't need you anymore, thank you, I'm off", or a young woman who has graduated with one of our scholarships - we've already given 35 - tells us "I've graduated and the first salary I get I'll give part of it to Corações Com Coroa", what happens inside me, I can't explain. So I only believe that we can do good things if they have an emotional impact on us. Passion. I don't believe that reason alone can work. It is this encounter between passion and reason that makes me feel strongly about things. I'm passionate about changing people's lives. I'm passionate about putting my privileges, the good life I have, the result of hard work but also of some luck, at the service of others. It's an addiction for me to help someone separate the wheat from the chaff, to get out of



a hot spot. I no longer say it's a selfish thing, it's a decision and a life choice. And Corações Com Coroa (my daughter named it this way) is also a choice. Do we want to put a crown on our hearts or not? I decided to put mine on.

But intervening in public affairs also leads to disappointment and frustration. How do you deal with these circumstances?

I'm getting better and better at dealing with these frustrations, because I've realised they exist. I'm very optimistic, and I'm glad I am. And at first I thought everything would be much easier. I had less control and I thought everything would be much more agile. And I also thought that human beings are made up of a majority of good ingredients and a minority of bad ingredients. Today I think more or less the same. But I already know that on this journey I'm going to encounter deception and ill-formed people and liars. I didn't think they actually existed before. So today I'm much more prepared and the disappointment is always lighter. And I deal with it by always thinking that there are worse things. Relativisation is a great solution to my problems. I think: it could have been worse, so how do we find the solution? At the start of this project, we heard a lot from the team, "but that's impossible". Now I've taught people, when faced with problems, to ask: "But how are we going to do it?".

And it is either with a sense of optimism or rather with scepticism that you view the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

I knew you were going to ask me that... I've come from working on the MDGs - Millennium Development Goals - and I've moved on to the SDGs. In fact, the MDGs left a lot unfulfilled

and that's why the SDGs were created. I can't be a hypocrite and say that we're doing very well. We're not doing well at all, especially with two wars on top of it that have set us back a long way from the levels we had reached a while ago. The pandemic was also a disaster for many of the SDG measures. In other words, here and there we were making progress and the pandemic pushed many of the goals down. So did the wars. What I feel is that, even though we're a long way from meeting the goals we had for 2030 - not least so that we can have effective measures - it's important to look back and realise what worked and what didn't. There are many measures from both the MDGs and the SDGs that have already worked. Therefore, the issue often has much more to do with political will, with a sense of serious commitment, than with "the world is lost". Many things are unpredictable, others less so. Wars, more or less, we knew could happen. What the goals tell me, the ones that go well, is where it's worth investing. The biggest problem is that we don't usually invest in the right place, i.e. in alleviating poverty. And I have many examples on the ground in the countries I've visited. If we invest seriously in gender equality - when I say gender equality, I obviously mean sexual and reproductive health, because we're talking about women's quality of life and the number of children they have - if we invest in women's education and health, there really is an impact on many of the SDGs. During the pandemic, what happened, and it was shameful, is that funds had to be allocated to combat COVID-19, of course, but where were they cut? In the areas of gender equality. And it's very tiring to keep having to explain that when we promote gender equality we are promoting the quality of life of all citizens around the world. And I have to explain this to men, because they are the ones who make most of the political decisions. And it's with great sorrow that I say this, because studies show these results.

“

The pandemic was the downfall for many of the measures of the UN Sustainable Development Goals

”

Even so, the SDGs create a framework that commits political actors, if only to hold them accountable...

Right, I'm very much in favour of the SDGs. Now I'm going to say something that is politically inappropriate: I'm a big fan of goals because they compromise. And goals that are signed by everyone, even more so. The commitment that the SDGs have brought - and we have signed them, we are there - is a very serious commitment. But we have to make them important and if there were strict monitoring, as there is with the financial goals, and a penalty for those who don't fulfil them, perhaps we could take them to their real dimension. Just as I think the SDGs should be translated and mastered from an early age in schools. Commitment has to come from active citizenship, which concerns everyone and begins as soon as we are born. We all have a responsibility to fulfil these SDGs.

“At school, it's easier to cheat to get the perfect exam grade than to have someone who will be able to reflect upon things”

In Portugal, do you feel that the school is open to diverse educational initiatives that are not strictly linked to the curriculum?

I really enjoy giving lectures in schools. I save days in my diary to go to secondary schools in particular to talk about these issues. I've had hundreds of invitations from the north to the south of the country. When I go, I have the opportunity to speak, but also to listen. And I have two teenage children, one enrolled in a private school and the other, my daughter, in a public school. What I think is that we're a long way short of the education we should have. Who am I to talk about this, but I've said it to education ministers. I think our schools are very dated. It has very archaic, obsolete teaching, there's a lot of competition - which I don't think is a bad thing to promote, but in a healthy way. But it's easier to get the perfect exam grade than to have someone who reflects upon things. We need a critical sense, based on a foundation of study and reading. But kids nowadays don't even have the space to think. On the other hand, I'd like to point out the many wonderful teachers who do think, "This isn't in the subject, but I'm going to get someone in here to talk about empathy". But they're in a tight spot.





So the school has to open up?

They do, but I also realise that they themselves, the teachers, even these special ones, have little time and space to think and do things differently, between bureaucracies and obligations. And so there's no room for sharing, for the kids to talk. The kids are eager to talk. And then we complain that they're automated by mobile phones. We have to realise that this is part of the new generation, but that it's important for them to have the critical spirit and the information to be able to sort out what's interesting and what's not on social media, for example.

Who are Catarina Furtado's role models?

My references are the hundreds of women I've met over the last 24 years who have managed to overcome life's difficulties. Because it is possible. When people tell me it's not possible, I say: "let's do it".

And what dreams you have yet to fulfil?

Plenty...

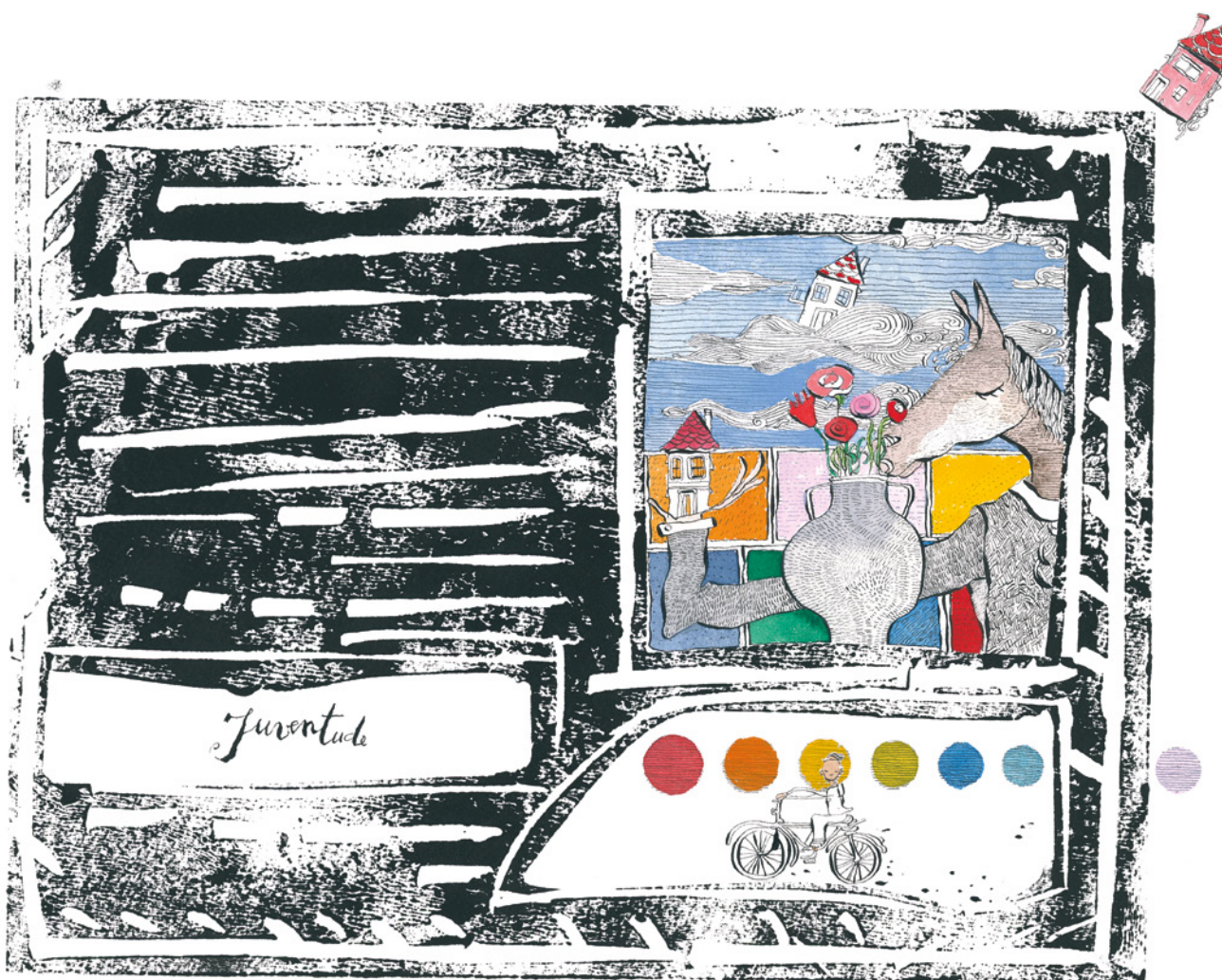
PROFILE

Catarina Furtado

Born in Lisbon in 1972. She is the daughter of well-known journalist Joaquim Furtado and teacher Helena Furtado. She studied at the Dance School of the National Conservatory in Lisbon while attending regular school at Liceu Passos Manuel. Her career has spanned TV presenter, actress, author and documentary maker. She has been a Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations Population Fund since 2000. She has been the guest speaker at the Public Presentation of the State of World Population Report at the Portuguese Parliament and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 2012 she founded the Corações Com Coroa Association, of which she is president. In 2005 she was honoured with the Order of Merit by the President of the Republic Jorge Sampaio. In 2010 she was a speaker at the Millennium Summit in New York, invited by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon. She has co-authored three seasons of the RTP1 documentary series "Príncipes do Nada" and four documentaries "Dar Vida sem Morrer" in Guinea-Bissau. As a TV presenter, she has fronted programmes on SIC and RTP, such as "The Voice", "É Urgente o Amor" and hosted the Eurofestival da Canção for a worldwide audience of over 150 million people. In 2022 she was considered by Marktest to be the most credible person to front social awareness campaigns. Throughout her career she has also taken on various projects as an actress and has written children's stories and song lyrics.

I HAVE HEARD...

Gil Nunes
Writer



An endless puzzle. Where the complement is clothed in shades of permanent diamond and the substitute is soluble in the cup of the negligible. A new world. Holistic: everywhere this word is repeated to the point of madness. Sometimes bitter, sometimes sweet. To remind us that youth is a disease when we think we see our cure within it.

Or perhaps a way out of it. I think therefore I smile. I smile, then I make a mistake. Non-formal, we take the mistake. The pedalling success. We realise that failures are actually camouflaged stages. And embracing error allows it to become truth, and then nothing becomes truth. And vice versa. We un-complicate. We substitute. Embracing error becomes embracing knowledge. Wavy. Serene. Transversal. Rainbow.

From the blue of Do It Yourself to the violet of youth participation. The yellow of cookery sprinkled with the orange of the Sustainable Development Goals. In symphony green. Or the indigo of human rights in a ball of yarn with the red of family management. An open window to welcome a whole world of colours without hierarchies. Without levels. Where the jeans of the political decision-maker cross paths with the fine silk of the young skater. A cappella conversations. No filters. To remind us that formality is a disease. That space. Where many believe they see their cure.

On the road to success, the road is not always even. Or rather, it's always smilingly winding. Whether we're mad or right, it doesn't matter: we're opponents of the brown straights. And everywhere, that word repeated to the point of madness: resilience. The soup of Non Formal Education is short-lived, but its ingredients are plentiful. Isolated initiatives tend to slowly fall into the cauldron of time, unless youth workers take over the reins of the kitchen. Soups, sometimes without water. Of stone. But with the deep imagination of those who know how to get out of the "box" and, from the depths of the shelf, pull out the secret ingredient that makes the magic happen. The plim-plim. The shower of flavours. For the enjoyment and enthusiasm of all the young people who, from that moment on, will be speaking the same language as us. Or we speak theirs. Vice versa. Truth. Truth.

And rainbows can, after all, spring from the monotonous immensity of the blue skies. After all, the stage has actors of all colours. Coming from everywhere. Thinking in one way or another. Thinking in circles. All right and all wrong. A saying: dressing room doors are always open: you come! And bring a friend too! Because tomorrow is always too far away. On stage we will always be a today in which your ideas count and really make a difference. With us, your voice will never be a deaf cry that someone tries to silence.

All I know is that I know nothing. All I know is that, in some cases, I don't go there. Or I don't go there either. Because the day after a young man took part, that very next day nobody died. Everyone lived. In the imagination of a condominium where nature is made and created. And fiercely recycles itself. And also transforms itself. Without leaving anyone behind. Where everything is lost in the echo of the wind. Where everyone can be young in the unanimous abolition of the customs of time.

I sit here in this never-empty rainbow and reminisce. Youthful light pours in from the balcony and illuminates a vase of flowers on the table. On the table. At a round table where everyone is its knight. And heads as strong as horses. Our head: unique, authentic and marvellous in its imperfections and in the talent that emerges in each of us. Because from youth participation we make society. From society we make democracy. Until we reach that point where everything is built and nothing is deconstructed. With walls painted red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. On houses, cars, bridges and streets. That word repeated to the point of madness. Someone wrote youth everywhere.

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

U

KRAINE:

EDUCATING UNDER FIRE

With schools closed, a displaced population and funding allocated to war, victim support and health, Ukraine is desperate for support for its Non Formal Education processes. BLINK discovered a country that won't surrender and that stubbornly lives its day-to-day life with charm, despite the gunfire.



In Ukraine, since February 2022, 375 schools have been destroyed and another 4,000 seriously damaged because of the war. As a result of the Russian attacks, 6.2 million people have been internally displaced and the United Nations estimates that more than 3.5 million children have "severe to catastrophic levels of need". According to the same organisation, around 75% of parents reported that their children showed symptoms of psychological trauma, with impaired memories, shorter attention spans and a reduced ability to learn. It was in this backdrop that BLINK went to Ukraine to find Non Formal Education projects and to understand how the European Union can help in the process.

When the country was invaded by one of the world's biggest military powers in February 2022, schools were closed. The priority was to defend sovereignty, the people, the infrastructure and to prevent Putin's regime from taking over the capital. The way the institutions reacted, but above all how the Ukrainian people resisted, as well as the aid that came from the European Union, the United States and other countries, made it possible to defend Kiev and avoid collapse and the loss of sovereignty. But the damage was inescapable and continues to be felt. The Donbass region and other parts of Ukraine were violently occupied, causing large migrations. More than two million Ukrainians, many of them children, left the country. Schools, still recovering from two years of the pandemic, were one of the first victims of the disruption and a year and a half after the start of the occupation, the first cycles were still closed.

More than 4,000 schools have been damaged by Russian bombing, there are daily bomb threats and 375 schools have been completely destroyed and there are daily bomb threats

In June 2023, BLINK visited cities such as Kiev, Zhytomyr and Lviv, where many levels of education had already resumed, but the first cycles were still closed and many children stayed at home and were educated through alternative means. As of September 2023, all pupils in non-occupied Ukraine had returned to school, but conditions were far from ideal.

BLINK visited one of the schools destroyed by a cruise missile on 3 March 2022 in the city of Zhytomyr. The large building, right in the centre of the city, right next to other public buildings such as the theatre or the local administration, has remained completely inoperable to this day. Zhytomyr is an industrial city situated halfway between the capital Kiev and the Polish border. With a population of 266,000, before the start of the war it became an important logistical centre for the country's defence, as this is where much of the military aid arrives from Europe, mainly by train. As a result, it is a prime target for Russian bombing.

The city is also linked to the aerospace industry, and it was there that Sergei Pavlovich Korolyov, the engineer who designed the rockets of the Soviet era, was born, giving his name to the most important museum in the Zhytomyr Oblast.

The museum is full of space capsules, rockets, instruments and shows how hard and complex the conquest of space was when, during the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union disputed this race at all costs.



The destroyed school is one of Zhytomyr's landmarks, but no street corner is oblivious to the threat, with anti-tank barriers, sandbagged trenches and protected windows

Unlike cities like Lviv or Kiev, Zhytomyr is a city with little or no modernisation, where public transport takes place on old 1960s trolleybuses and where the population is older than we've seen in other Ukrainian cities. The destroyed school is one of the city's landmarks, but no corner is oblivious to the threat, with anti-tank barriers, trenches built from sandbags and windows protected by film or even wood. Zhytomyr seems to be waiting for enemy soldiers at any moment and it never allows us to lose sight of that.

As you can imagine, in these conditions, a museum doesn't have its usual customers. There are no tourists, no academic missions from abroad to study the cosmonautical artefacts it holds, and no exchanges. Our visit was the first by foreigners in two years and the large pavilion, full of history, echoed uncrowded.



Zhytomyr

Zhytomyr is always prepared to receive and combat Russian tanks. It is impossible to live without feeling it on every corner of the city.

No wonder the museum was empty and that we were among the first foreigners to visit it in many months. At the end of the visit, however, a group of primary school children began a joyful visit. It was Non Formal Education replacing school.

But the visit to the Sergei Pavlovich Korolyov Museum of Cosmonautics was just the beginning of a lesson that Zhytomyr would teach us. After all, the city, which is twinned with Portuguese city of Vila Nova de Famalicão, was teeming with Non Formal Education projects, many of which had already been set up during wartime and the opportunities it also provides. Others, which already existed, had been adapted to the new circumstances by people with the will and the courage to do so.

ZHYTOMYR

THINKING OF THE POST-WAR ERA

This is the case with Nataliia Tarasenko, who heads ZHOMGO "Parity"/Zhytomyr Youth NGO, a Ukrainian non-governmental youth organisation that aims to achieve parity. Founded in 2012, the organisation has adapted to the current war conditions in the country, where Non Formal Education is one of its most important tools.

"Our organisation is an NGO that seeks to promote parity and has been working on issues related to gender and equal opportunities for over 11 years. Our focus at the moment is on the labour market and the opportunities given to boys and girls," Nataliia began by telling us.



Liceu No. 25

was destroyed by a Russian missile and constitutes one of the most painful wounds in the city, which is 150 km from Kyiv.

"We've always worked with young people, but we're also very interested in getting in touch with those responsible for youth policies, particularly municipalities. Here in Zhytomyr we've been working a lot with the town hall on gender-oriented projects and community work," says the head of the organisation.

We confirmed this during our visit to the town hall, where BLINK interviewed the politicians and learned how eager they were to collaborate and receive help from non-governmental organisations to overcome the disruption caused by the war, both in the labour market and in the education sector.

The young people we contacted confirmed the importance of Non Formal Education and the work of these associations, especially in a city like Zhytomyr. A young Ukrainian woman who was attending a meeting on Non Formal Education as part of the Erasmus+ programme told us that the city feels "stuck" between the border and Kiev. "We're a small town compared to Lviv or Kiev. And we're in the middle. Everyone drives through here, but the city is rarely considered, for example, for events like this one, for cultural events or music concerts. There's rarely anything here that gets noticed outside the city. But when there is, young people turn up with enthusiasm and they participate," she noted.

And indeed, Zhytomyr looks very much like a city from the former Soviet Union in the 1960s or 1970s, both in terms of architecture and visible austerity. And so it's no wonder that gender issues are also prevalent.

“We have young and not so young people in our society who become permanently disabled because of the war, but we also have many widows, because men are the ones who go to the front to fight the most”

In Kyiv, daily life is lived with normality. But the sirens and mobile phone alerts daily remind of the imminence of air raids.



Returning to the conversation with the head of ZHOMGO, she confirms that she currently considers that it is very important to focus on gender and to keep the issue present in youth policies. "Given the context in which we live, there are huge inequalities with regard to gender issues. It was necessary to define new target groups for our work. "We have young and not so young people in our society who become permanently disabled because of the war, but we also have many widows, because men are the ones who go to the front to fight the most. This causes specific problems that we try to address through Non Formal Education," says Nataliia.

She also explains that, from her own experience, she can "guarantee that Non Formal Education offers unique opportunities to respond quickly to today's challenges. Through it we can provide adequate skills and knowledge, especially

to young people, so that they can feel comfortable under the conditions that the country offers them at the moment."

But the discourse of political leaders in Zhytomyr is not confined to the current situation. Both the municipality and the NGOs are keen to look to the post-war period. "We are also thinking about that period, because it is very important that people are trained for work and can adapt quickly to new realities. Young people need to acquire new skills and competences in order to take part in the recovery and reconstruction of Ukraine," says the head of ZHOMGO.

KIEV

FROM SIMMERING THREAT TO WILLINGNESS TO MOVE ON

The country's capital has few public signs of the war, almost pretending in its day-to-day life that it doesn't exist. But the danger is there and so are the wounds inflicted on the formal education process of a generation.



When BLINK arrived in Kiev, the city had been under daily attack from missiles and drones for over two months. But in the first two days we spent in the city, we were spared the fear. Contrary to the image created by the media, Kiev lives its days with a strange normality, an enormous social dynamic, some joy and an incredible ability to keep everything running.

On a sunny weekend when the temperature was over 30 degrees, Ukrainians were out and about, enjoying the city, its extraordinary and well-tended gardens, and the beaches on the banks of the River Dniepre and the charming terraces on the large and imposing avenues, where much of the Soviet brutalist architecture still remains, yet where contemporaneity is everywhere.

Although the average standard of living is lower than in EU countries and a teacher's salary is around 300 euros, everything is much cheaper and there is no shortage of anything on supermarket shelves or in the windows of the hundreds of luxury shops that decorate the city's main streets.

The clean, wide pavements of Kiev's streets, where the local administration has left no trace of bombing, young people are the common factor. There is a new generation that is constantly enjoying the public space, which reflects a population with an average age that is quite low when compared to other European capitals and, above all, when compared to Lisbon.

In Kiev, there are more women than men on the streets. Many more, especially in their 20s and 40s

We are almost distracted from the threat and the brutal situation the country is going through. Outside Maidan Square, where Ukraine cried out for freedom and independence in 2014, at the cost of the blood of many young people who stood up to the power complicit with Moscow, Kiev wants to live almost without signs and symbols to remind it of itself. There isn't the expected proliferation of flags or displays of patriotism in most neighbourhoods and public spaces. But a closer look reveals the marked wounds in society and even in demographics. There are more women than men on the streets. Many more, especially in the 20 to 40 age group, where the male presence is very scarce. And there's a certain gloom in the eyes of the beautiful young Ukrainian women who stroll in groups of two or three.

A male army uniform here and there breaks up the abnormality. Sunday was Father's Day in Ukraine. In fact, in Russia too, which is perhaps why the sirens were silent. An exhibition of Ukrainian artists, many of them young, had opened at the House of Ukrainians (an arts centre in the city, rebranded after its original name of Lenin House), where the war and its impacts were the theme.

An exhibition

about the war at an exhibition centre in Kyiv received visits almost exclusively from women.



Here, even more so, the audience was almost exclusively female. Faces closed, tears of anger on the faces of lonely young women. The paintings, which mirrored the blood and brutality of war, were appreciated at length. Art, often also the result of Non Formal Education processes by young Ukrainian artists, can revive wounds, but it also helps to heal nostalgia, mourning and hopelessness. After all, if Kiev tries to pretend on the street that the war doesn't exist, it is actually more prevalent than it seems.



The presence of Russian tanks and missile launchers in the centre of Kyiv may shock most Europeans, but there it seems natural.

In one of the city's main squares, at the end of a wide avenue linking two of Kiev's most important Orthodox churches (one of them a UNESCO heritage site), we found yet another brutal proof of the aggression, which also becomes the least formal process of education we've encountered.

War tanks, artillery pieces and Russian army lorries lie before everyone's eyes. They were destroyed and burnt during the terrible battles of Irpin, Bucha and Mariupol. The colour of the fire on their armour, the smell exuding from the interior where Russian soldiers died at the hands of the brave Ukrainian defence, the now useless cannons turned towards the sky, invite us to reflection. And the Ukrainian army is aware of this and is using these "trophy" to ask for financial aid.

Fathers and mothers put them to another use. Families with young children often stroll past these pieces. If it seems surreal, and it is, it's actually a kind of Non Formal Education process and a motivation for the need to defend the country from the brutal aggressor. It is a difficult context to understand for a European who was born and has lived in an environment of supposedly guaranteed peace, but one that comes naturally to a country marked by invasions, occupations and aggressions.

And if the demographics, art, tanks and uniforms aren't enough to remind us of the situation we're in, after two days and two nights, the sirens will help. The night in Kiev is indeed very different from the day. The city's excellent restaurants, full of charm, warmth and good cuisine, start by setting the tone when they rush you to close at 10pm. At that time, Martial Law dictates that everything must be closed, lights, doors, everything.

Fathers and mothers show their young children destroyed Russian tanks. It's a kind of process of Non Formal Education and motivation for the need to defend the country

The curfew is at midnight, creating a strange lapse of time between the closure of shops and restaurants and midnight. From the moment the sun goes down until the curfew, the pavements of the big avenues are filled with small improvised parties, with music blasting from portable speakers, bottles of vodka and a frantic kind of joy. When you think about it, these young people who enjoy the few hours of each evening when they can get together, they don't know what the future is, but they don't have a past either.

Come to think of it, a young Ukrainian man of 18, while waiting to be called upon to pick up an AK-47 to defend his country, has never been to a nightclub, after two years of the pandemic that hit him at 14 and the war that castrated him at 16. The strangest hour in Kiev is, after all, the last of the day. Before midnight, you have to get home, close the door, because no one, no one at all, is allowed on the street.

But also because it's usually at night that sirens scream, announcing air strikes. But in the 21st century war, before the sirens, mobile phones are ringing. It was an App that the Ukrainians installed on our mobile phones, which warned loudly and flashed a red light on the screen, advising: "proceed immediately to a shelter", "Kiev is under air strike".

The Ukrainian capital is just over 120 kilometres from Belarus and less than 200 from Russia, very close to Chernobyl and not far from Zaporizhzhya, where there are nuclear threats. And it shares the same River Dniepre, where Ukrainians sunbathe in the middle of Kiev during the day. In other words, the capital is within reach of major risks and, on Monday night, BLINK experienced all the shades of the threat, after 35 drones or missiles were launched towards the capital and other cities across the country, such as Lviv or Zhytomyr, also on our route.

The plan is to be able to be underground in less than three minutes, the time it takes for a hypersonic missile to travel between Russia and Kiev

The idea of the warnings in the app and the sirens is to be able to take us underground in around three minutes, the time it takes for a hypersonic missile to travel between Russia and Kiev, and stay there until the app gives us the green light. And what is a shelter? The biggest of them all is the Kiev Underground, the deepest in the world and one of the oldest. But it can also be a basement, sometimes specially adapted to function as a bunker.

In our hotel, routine takes us to the sub-basement where once the fitness centre was. The huge hotel, located next to the Olympic Stadium in Kiev, seemed like an ideal, obvious wall to be targeted by a Russian projectile. But we really felt that the chances were not entirely academic when the staff (the female staff, rather) took cover even more quickly than we did. Otherwise, the huge hotel was practically empty. Apart from BLINK, there were only a dozen or so UNICEF employees as clients.

The hours-long wait is accompanied by an online consultation of a website showing which regions are under attack, the level of the threat and where artillery shells have been detonated. The dark red on the map is not a good sign, let alone the denotations a few kilometres from the city centre.

And all of this leads us to wonder under what conditions workers, students and leaders of institutions are able, the next day at 7am, when the sirens go silent, to pretend that they slept through the night and to fulfil their duties. Remarkably, they carry out.

ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME TAKEN TO KIEV BY PORTUGAL

Ukrainians' mental health, and in particular that of young Ukrainians, is perhaps one of the biggest concerns we found in the administrations of the Kiev and Lviv Oblast. Oblast are regions and the administrations are the governments of those regions, which in Ukraine hold very important political and executive power, particularly when it comes to education.

No wonder, then, that they received the director of the Portuguese National Agency Erasmus+ Youth/Sport Agency and European Solidarity Corps, who BLINK accompanied on his visit to Kiev, with particular interest.

In Kiev, visits to the Tchaikovsky Conservatory of Music, located right next to Maidan Square, as well as meetings with the Deputy Minister for Youth and Sport and the numerous youth associations he summoned for a meeting, showed that this is a concern that cuts across Ukrainian society and that Non Formal Education, supported by the Erasmus+ programme, can make a difference.

Youth mental health in Ukraine is perhaps one of the biggest concerns we encountered in the administrations of the Kiev and Lviv Oblast



In Ukraine many young women are alone. Some have lost their partners or brothers; others are waiting for their return from the front.

Luís Alves' meetings in Ukraine were followed a week later by a Webinar held remotely from Portugal, which helped open even more doors to cooperation with that country. Resulting from the cooperation with the Ukrainian Office for Erasmus+ and the Ukrainian Ministries of Youth and Sport, as well as Education and Science, hundreds of Ukrainian participants and those from more than 70 different nationalities jointly advanced over the course of two days towards realising projects and partnerships in the subsequent rounds of applications.

Read online the mission report of the director of the Portuguese National Agency Erasmus+ Youth/Sport and European Solidarity Corps Agency in Ukraine.



L VIV:

CHARM IN TIMES OF WAR

If Kiev exudes charm like Paris, even in wartime, how about Lviv, an extraordinary city with over a million inhabitants, which is very close to the Polish border in the Krakow Region.

In fact, Lviv was once a Polish city, hence the name Lvov. It's not surprising, then, that Lviv is also a unique city from a social point of view. Firstly because it is predominantly Catholic, in contrast to the overwhelmingly Orthodox Ukraine.

Another characteristic of the city is its relationship with culture and art. Ukraine's first book was written there and there are constant references to poets, philosophers, thinkers and writers such as Taras Shevchenko and many others. The city's architecture reveals nobility, charm and even some opulence of the past.





Lviv is Catholic, unlike the rest of the country, which is Orthodox. Despite being far from the front lines, its churches are filled with sorrow.

If Kiev has a lot of people and a lot of youth on the streets, Lviv is a buzz of beauty, animation and charm. The streets are full, the corners are charmed by lovers, the terraces in the wide squares smell good and the gardens, made up of sports rinks, are full of young athletes. And there are lots of small flea markets, vinyl records and above all books.

It seems impossible that two days earlier the city had also been under attack by Russian drones, as a professor from the Catholic University described when we visited that educational establishment. While Kiev is better protected by the shield of US anti-aircraft systems that we found concealed, this is not so evident in other cities, where defence systems are more rudimentary.

At the university, the student lounge had been transformed into a bunker and that's where several teachers and students, like the teacher who guided us, had spent the night two days earlier. "We could hear the drones that sounded like mosquitoes and the anti-aircraft fire from just 400 metres away," she said, frightened. In Lviv, many of the houses don't have basements and transport takes place on the surface. "When there are attack alerts, I take my seven-year-old son and take refuge here in the university shelter," she explained.

Education in these circumstances is difficult, whether Formal or Non Formal. As we were told at the Catholic University, students are exempt from going to war, which is compulsory for all men between the ages of 27 and 60. But even so, there are many women who voluntarily enlist, as well as young men who, being university students, could otherwise avoid going to the front.

Ukrainian men up to the age of 60 are not allowed to leave the country and this is a major limitation for academic training and Non Formal Education

Despite Lviv's distance from the war front in the Donbass, and despite the dismissal of university students, one lecturer confessed to us: "15 of my students have already died and this causes tremendous wounds in the process of education and training. There are friends left behind, studies left half-finished, girlfriends widowed in their 20s, friends who accumulate anger and blame themselves for the friend who has gone, while they have stayed".

In this context, the processes of Non Formal Education and participation in the social life of the city are therefore regarded as fundamental by the university's management, but they too are often hampered by the war. The Catholic University of Ukraine encourages its students to take part in exchanges and social initiatives and, before the war, around 70% of its students had parallel Non Formal Education activities, which helped to complete their academic studies. But many of them cannot continue these activities today, especially those that involve travelling, especially abroad.

Ukrainian men up to the age of 60 are not allowed to leave the country and this is a major limitation for further education, both for young people and for teachers and adults, who are deprived of going to seminars, meetings and exchanges, but also of visits from foreign colleagues.



Young Ukrainians try to find some normalcy in the disruption, and Lviv does not lack charm.

A NIGHTMARE CALLED MOBILITY

In fact, Lviv isn't even one of the most disadvantaged cities when it comes to mobility, due to its proximity to Poland. With no flights throughout Ukrainian territory, the only way to travel in and out of Ukraine is by car or train. Travelling by car, as BLINK found out when it travelled along the motorway between Kiev and Zhytomyr, is possible, but has its limitations. Halfway along the motorway, a major construction site was holding up traffic after a Russian missile destroyed the road, which is now being repaired. And then there are the checkpoints, where the army can pull over and search vehicles.

Between Warsaw and Kiev it takes 21 hours by train. A dive into the unknown in very precarious conditions

Crossing the Polish-Ukrainian border by car can mean waiting at the border for more than 24 hours, so it's not a good solution. The train, however, turns out to be the best way to travel. BLINK was no exception and, like heads of state or the UN Secretary General, it used the same blue trains that took them all to Kiev.

Our first journey began in Warsaw, Poland's capital, and ended 21 hours later at Kiev's majestic central station. In between, we transferred at Chelm, a small Polish border town. From then on, it's the unknown. The old sleeper train seems especially heavy and gets heavier as it dives into the Ukrainian night.

In each cabin, with non-existent soundproofing and precarious air conditioning, there are four tiny beds, two on top of two, and forced interaction with strangers. One couple (a rare occurrence on a train full of women returning home after a year and a half in asylum) travelled with us. He was a karate athlete, one of the best in Ukraine, with a trophy won in Tokyo. He was returning home, having received a special authorisation from the government to be able to travel.

Ihor Kostliarevskiy had a mission: in addition to practising the sport he loves, he wanted to raise funds in Japan to help soldiers at the front and to develop Non Formal Education projects for soldiers' children, who were deprived of education, through sport.

Like Ihor's karate club, Ukrainian NGOs are currently facing serious financial problems and need to be creative in order to keep their Non Formal Education projects alive, as all the money that the state used to put into their programmes is

The old Ukrainian trains

seem immune to the risk of Russian bombings, but the journey is laden with shadows and fears.



now channelled into the war effort and the health system. International fundraising is therefore often all that's left to keep these projects going.

Andriy Chesnokov, Ukraine's Deputy Minister for Youth and Sport, confirmed just that in Kiev, admitting that his ministry's projects have had to be much more creative in the face of budget cuts. The minister acknowledged to BLINK that "the approach taken by the Portuguese National Agency for Erasmus+ Youth/Sport and European Solidarity Corps has been very creative and intelligent", and that it is a way to mitigate underfunding: "building a platform for future communication could be a very interesting example for the sustainable development of the Non Formal Education sector in Ukraine", he said.

“I was in a coma for two months and when I woke up I had a broken foot. Let's see if I recover and can go back to work”

For those entering, it is the unknown on that first trip to Kyiv. But the rest of the journey isn't easy either. Between Zhytomyr and Lviv there were 13 hours of slow travelling on a line that had already been bombed several times and was very, very noisy.

The company, however, was different. In the cabin, apart from BLINK, there was a couple with a daughter. She was a distraught mum, worried about the little blonde who was coughing and seemed to be running a fever. He, in uniform, sporting a web of irons and spikes that pierced his plastered foot and ankle. "I've just had surgery to try and save my leg," he told us. Months earlier, this brave Ukrainian soldier had stepped on a landmine. "I was in a coma for two months and when I woke up I had a broken foot. Let's see if I recover because I have a family to support and I don't know if I'll ever be able to work again", he concluded. The retraining of a mutilated generation, in a country that is now the

world's largest minefield, is a challenge that seems insurmountable. The help that Europe can give in the field of Non Formal Education and in creating new opportunities for these victims is vital.

Our travelling companion was also a living example of the need to dedicate public funds to the war, to supporting its victims and to health. Not even if this has to happen at the expense of sport, school or other Non Formal Education processes, which, after all, are more necessary than ever. The shortest train journey made by BLINK turned out to be the connection between Lviv and Rzeszów (Poland) and then on to Krakow, already on a 21st century train and not on the old ukrainian blue and yellow ones. Fewer hours on a more normal train feels good, but raises other questions. Especially when, while still in Lviv, the train was invaded by many ukrainian soldiers. If on entering the country everything takes longer, but is calmer, with soldiers (mainly women) collecting passports one by one in each

cabin and then returning them with a ironic smile at seeing Portuguese heading towards the war they want to escape, when leaving, everything is much more tense.

Shouting, behind loaded Kalashnikovs and with their fingers on the trigger, the ukrainian army wants to make sure that nothing that shouldn't leave the country gets out. The soldiers invariably get particularly nervous when they see middle-aged men, as we were, on their way to the Polish border. Speaking in Ukrainian, only the barrel of the AK-47 is heard, either to open a suitcase or to ask for a passport again.

“Portugalia???? Ok!”. After all, Ukraine has realised that anyone who takes the time to dive into its territory in search of support for Non Formal Education projects can only come for the right reason and leave, despite everything, with longing for what is left behind.



Post-war thoughts are on the minds of those who survived the battles but lost capabilities and need alternative professional opportunities.

Young journalists from Europe



The Eurodesk is part of the Young Journalists of Europe in the context of the European Year of Youth (2022) with the goal of authoring podcasts, writing articles and producing videos featuring reliable information for young people. The Young Journalists of Europe (2024 edition) have been selected from different EU countries, and they travelled to Brussels for their first meeting, which took place between 11 and 15 February. The Young Journalists of Europe were keen to develop their writing skills and to address young people in Europe with engaging texts. Eurodesk is a European information network for young people, created in 1990. As a support organisation for Erasmus+, Eurodesk provides comprehensive and accessible information on learning mobility to young people and those who work with them.

International Education Day



International Education Day was celebrated on 24th January and was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 2018, with the aim of highlighting the role of education towards peace and development. In 2024, the events organised by UNESCO themed "Learning for lasting peace", emphasised the crucial role that education plays in promoting peace and harmony. Alongside Formal Education Non Formal Education also plays a significant role in supporting peace and understanding through the promotion of tolerance and respect for diversity.

AGORA EU brought together hundreds in Lisbon



In addition to the Annual Meetings and Events of Beneficiaries of the Erasmus+ Programmes Youth and Sport Programmes and the European Solidarity Corps, AGORA EU was a two-day initiative that took place over two days in December 2023 and brought together thousands of educators, managers and young people in Lisbon. The event included moments of one-to-one dynamics with the directors and project managers, the Eurodesk Multipliers Meeting, the #DiscoverEU Young Ambassadors Meeting and activities for European Solidarity Corps volunteers. In the same context, participants were able to attend the Conference Democracy: Youth in Action. Various non-governmental organisations and young people also gathered in work groups and had the opportunity to attend programmes such as 'Paths and spaces for participation: from local to global', "Youth // Democracy // Future: Philanthropy's role in empowering democracy" and 'From theory to practice: Youth in Action'. The closing session was attended by His Excellency the President of the Republic, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa. The Democracy: Youth in Action was a partnership between the Portuguese National Agency for Erasmus+ Youth/ Sport and the European Solidarity Corps, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, the Permanent Youth Observatory (ICS-ULisboa), the European Parliament Office in Portugal and the European Commission in Portugal. It was also held under the patronage of His Excellency the President of the Republic.

Best Practices of the European Solidarity Corps Awarded



As part of the AGORA EU, and taking the occasion of the celebrations on 5 December, marking International Volunteer Day, the Portuguese National Agency for Erasmus+ Youth/Sport and European Solidarity Corps presented the European Solidarity Corps Best Practices Awards, in the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon. The ceremony was hosted by Catarina Furtado and featured musical performances by Irma, Tiago Nacarato, Ana Bacalhau and Tatanka. The Good Practices Awards are a public recognition of the organisations benefactors of the European Solidarity Corps programme.

Webinar for Ukraine



Co-organized by the Portuguese National Agency for Erasmus+ Youth/Sport and ESC and the National Erasmus+ Office of Ukraine, the “EFFY - Erasmus+ Future Focused Youth Webinar” was held in 2023, which aimed to foster collaboration to set up renewed partnerships for European cooperation, especially with Ukraine. The information sessions and debates were also marked by cultural moments that offered sounds from Ukraine, the presentation of information and good practices on the Erasmus+ KA2 action that enabled sharing the reality of Ukrainian youth organizations. The closing session was attended by the director of the Portuguese National Agency for

Erasmus+ Youth/Sport and ESC, Luís Alves, and the representative of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, Oleksandra Husak. Andriy Chesnokov, the Deputy Minister of Youth and Sport of Ukraine, was another participant, who traveled to Lisbon especially for this purpose.

Sharing experiences in volunteering



The passion for volunteering now has a privileged space on the social network Facebook, where it is possible to share the topic. The space is also used to disseminate the latest and most exciting volunteer opportunities. The exchange is managed by the European Solidarity Corps and users are encouraged to share their experience, to contact with organizations hosting projects or simply to ask for advice about volunteering or to ask questions on the subject. The group is private but can be accessed via the qr code.



UBUNTU: A PHILOSOPHY, AN ACADEMY OR A NON FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME?

Ubuntu is a training academy for trainers, based on a philosophy inspired by personalities such as Mandela or Martin Luther King, but above all it is a Non Formal Education programme with a story to tell in Portugal and around the world which, due to its persistence and scale, can help explain the interest of this type of education and its potential.



BLINK discovered Ubuntu, launched by the Instituto Padre António Vieira - an innovative programme that has been tested in various national and international contexts and in the various training cycles - primary, secondary and higher education - and which already offers a set of benchmarks that give us consolidated pointers on the paths that Non Formal Education can pursue in other contexts.

Ubuntu started with the creation of an Academy of Leaders more than a decade ago, which resulted in the Ubuntu Schools programme, which has a one-week impact on the school community of formal education establishments at the primary and secondary school levels and is then followed up at the higher education level. This programme is based on a methodology that has a significant impact on increasing socio-emotional skills, such as self-knowledge, self-confidence, resilience and empathy, which are fundamental in the fight against bullying and school failure. But its final focus is service.

Their methods are recognised by the Gulbenkian Academies of Knowledge, and they have DGERT certification for trainers. They are also recognised by the European Union as a reference practice for working with young people.

The programme, which develops socio-emotional and relational skills, promotes educational success through the development of skills and "Ubuntu attitudes"; citizenship education based on an ethic of caring and a culture of conflict management and solving stimulated by the ability to building bridges. It is aimed at training young people and it is developed on the basis of the servant leadership model. It draws inspiration from figures such as Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King and Malala.



466/64:

The Mandela's prisoner number is never forgotten in the Ubuntu programme.

THE AFRICAN ORIGINS OF A "MADE IN PORTUGAL" PROGRAMME.

In fact, the term "Ubuntu" refers to an African philosophy that translates into the expression "I am because you are" and the valuing of interdependence and solidarity. Inspired by these values, the Academy aims to develop and promote participants' personal, social and civic skills, thus helping to transform them into agents of change for the community, thereby helping to build a fairer city with a greater sense of solidarity.

Last school year alone (2022/23), the "Ubuntu weeks" impacted 112,269 students and 5,310 educators in 414 schools in Portugal. Subsequent surveys of young participants revealed that 67 per cent of students felt "more resilient", 39 per cent "more empathetic", 54 per cent said they had a better understanding of themselves and 70 per cent said they believed more in their talents and qualities.

Rui Marques,
has led the Ubuntu Academy.

A student from Montemor-o-Novo Secondary School, which hosted the programme between 21 and 25 February 2022, said that "the week was very good and full of emotions. It was something that touched me deeply, because I emerged a different person who views a number of things from a new perspective".

But Ubuntu doesn't just have this impact on young people, the ultimate target of the programme. Teresa André, a teacher who was also enrolled in the same Week, said that "it was incredible, because it gave me the opportunity to get to know myself as a person and to see my students from a different perspective. It was the best present I could give my students. I'm sure they'll take away tools to apply in their lives and make a difference in the lives of those they meet."

The programme has been headed up by Rui Marques, known for his social work, for founding the Fórum Estudante magazine and, above all, for the Timor Mission, which in the 1990s involved a challenging boat trip to the territory of East Timor, then occupied by Indonesia, and Pedro Amaro Santos, assistant director of the programme at the Instituto Padre António Vieira, who has been one of the main driving forces behind it.

Born in Trofa, Pedro is 31 and attended the Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Programme in Human Rights at the Portuguese Catholic University in Porto. In 2016, in the midst of the refugee crisis, he volunteered in Greece and when he returned he saw this mission as "a starting point". Since then, he has been active in welcoming migrants and refugees in Portugal and, at the service of the Padre António Vieira Institute, he has embraced the Ubuntu project, which he explained to us.

"Today, the project has many variations, many formats. But it essentially consists of three aspects: the training of trainers, which is where our method always comes from; the implementation of training for children and young people, which is intensive and spread over five days, and, finally, the creation of Ubuntu Clubs or Ubuntu Circles, for the older ones, in the context of Higher Education, for follow-up and monitoring," he explains.



Pedro Amaro Santos
found a purpose called Ubuntu at the Instituto Padre António Vieira.



AROUND THE WORLD, MAKING TRAINERS AUTONOMOUS

For Pedro, "our idea of training trainers, in what we call the Ubuntu Academy, is to empower educators so that they can develop the programme themselves without us, while continuing to stimulate its pillars and values."

The circles for older pupils are adapted to the different communities. "We feed them with suggestions for activities and dynamics, to keep the values alive and the groups going," he adds.

But Ubuntu isn't just being developed in Portugal, where it has a reach in more than 400 schools. "We already have around 5,000 trainers all over the world, including teachers linked to schools and youth organisations," explains Pedro Amaro Santos, adding that we are now present in 20 countries in Africa, Europe, Latin America and Asia: "we've had participants from 190 countries in our programmes," he reveals.

In fact, this "made in Portugal" programme is spread all over the world, with offices in Kenya, Zimbabwe and Colombia, as well as regional delegations in various parts of the globe.

In Europe, Ubuntu is most popular in Portugal, Spain and Germany, but the deputy director reveals that plans are underway to expand to Austria and that the programme has already been deployed in Greece and Belgium. In Latin America, it operates in Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru and Mexico. In Africa, where it has a large presence and it is an inspirational source, it is active in countries such as South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, Cape Verde, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. In Asia, it operates in East Timor, the Philippines and Cambodia. "These are the countries where we have more face-to-face programmes, but we reach other latitudes through online training," says Pedro.

The use of digital media is a novelty for the Ubuntu programme, which was born in person. "We thought that Ubuntu would always have to be developed in person. That was the idea and the foundation. We thought that personal presence and hugs were decisive factors in training and transforming. And that's how it was for a long time," reveals Pedro Amaro Santos, adding that "the pandemic showed us that it didn't have to be that way. We were forced to make this digital transition and we realised that we could reach so many more targets with digital media and further transform the world. The digital remained after the pandemic," he reveals.

But what do you learn at the Ubuntu Academy, i.e. within its train-the-trainer component? "We try to set ourselves up as a school for these three competences: servant leaders, bridge builders and carers. Servant leaders are people capable of serving their communities; bridge builders are individuals who build relationships and promote peace. Carers should be able to promote an ethic of care, for themselves, the people around them and the planet," he explains.



N

ON FORMAL EDUCATION AT SCHOOL



Ubuntu

is a way of bringing Non Formal Education to schools and transforming the educational experience of thousands of young people.

But are formal schools, at the first levels of education, prepared to receive Non Formal Education? Pedro Amaro Santos believes so, but adds that "we've come a long way. Three years ago we were working with a universe of 50 schools, which was already very significant. Now we've made the leap to over 400, because the system realised that an approach in this area was valid and important for students' education." He refers to the response given by the Portuguese Ministry of Education: "While we had less than 100 schools, we were blazing a trail and knocking on a lot of doors. And we received all kinds of responses. Often they didn't understand what we were asking for. What we asked for was the willingness of educators to embrace the project and we also asked for a week without classes, which is still quite strange for some of our schools. So there was a process here of schooling and explaining that it wasn't about promoting a few more games, but that it was an investment project that could leverage skills," he explains, adding that "we already have schools where practically all the students have already been through the project and are already feeling the advantages of Non Formal Education".

Pedro even cites the case of a school in Tomar, where those in charge of the establishment describe the programme in a way that he considers "beautiful". They say that "Ubuntu is not a school project, but the school's educational programme". The head of the programme considers this to be "a very great level of transformation. How does this happen? With results, but also with a level of commitment on the part of the Ministry of Education".

In fact, the transformative milestone was precisely that the government stopped looking at Ubuntu as something that was accepted on a school-by-school basis and authorised that, in a general and national way, schools that so wished could implement it.

MEASURING RESULTS WITH NO ARROGANCE

Ubuntu weeks have a direct impact on the students who receive the training, but also on the trainers. As we've seen, well over half of the participants show significant improvements in aspects such as resilience, better self-knowledge or faith in their abilities. And four out of ten feel more empathetic. But is it possible to go further in measuring results? For example, in school performance?

Pedro Amaro Santos warns that "this area of measuring results should lead us to be very cautious. Because they are always incomplete. We shouldn't be arrogant. Not least because we are talking here about socio-emotional competences or impacts on life history. That said, we always feel that there are new aspects to incorporate. In particular, we're interested in evaluating how Ubuntu can incorporate Formal Education? How can it work on themes such as the environment, ecology or eco-hope? How can it contribute to the integration of migrants in the school context? We're always interested in exploring these new areas, which can be linked more directly to school performance," he explains, admitting that "we already have some experiences, because we feel there is room to explore this connection".

"We've learnt that Ubuntu is a kind of meta-identity, regardless of religion or nationality," says Pedro, recalling the evolution of the project: "Initially, the Ubuntu Academy experience was for young people from migrant families in the Lisbon area; then it moved on to young people from vulnerable groups in the Lisbon area. But then it began to expand and we started to think about what it means to be vulnerable. Wouldn't a student from the interior of the country, whose parents make a huge effort to have him study in Porto, for example, be a vulnerable person? In other words, not exactly a resident of a problematic social neighbourhood in Lisbon? So we started to think about what vulnerable meant. And that's why we've expanded it to anyone who wants it," he explains.

Returning to school and school performance, and still refusing to evaluate the programmes direct results on school performance, Pedro Amaro Santos always recalls the excellent experience that the first cycle has provided. "School in the early years allows for a better follow-up of the programme, because after the Ubuntu week, it has been normal for students and teachers to continue exploring the theme throughout the year and to consolidate its values and methods."

One thing is certain, Non Formal Education can be included in school programmes and contribute to personal formation and the consolidation of values, but it can't be too dominating either, as he explains. "We're always learning as well. Just as with the digital issue we realised that there would be advantages to incorporating it, when previously we didn't think so, the same thing happened to us with the age issue. We were convinced that having diverse audiences was interesting and that we shouldn't be too closed off, but that too great a disparity, for example in terms of age, was harmful because it caused dispersion. The reality of what we found in Germany showed us otherwise. In that country we were presented with an audience ranging from 18 to 70. We thought that was bad. But it wasn't. It was fantastic and added to the experience," he says.

And that, in fact, is one of the great advantages of Non Formal Education: its plasticity, adaptability and ability to learn from its own experiences.

Another interesting experience that made Ubuntu learn from itself was achieved in Vila Nova de Gaia, in the north of Portugal, at the Vocational Rehabilitation Centre (RPG), where there is a very diverse public, either because they are people who have been functionally diverse all their lives and need to enter the labour market, or people who have had an accident at some point in their lives that has resulted in cognitive or motor disabilities. Some of these people have functional problems, such as no longer being able to read or write at the age of 50.

Ubuntu was at the institution a few years ago, adapting its intervention to that type of audience and training trainers. The results were excellent and there is a perception that employability has improved. Today, the institution continues to develop the project autonomously, as those responsible for the Ubuntu Academy desire.

N

ON FORMAL EDUCATION AND DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

Ana Moutas
Investigator

Non Formal Education is an educational approach used in the learning process that is characterised by its flexibility, informality and lack of a rigid structure. The fact that Non Formal Education (NFE) can be moulded to the most diverse contexts makes it a powerful tool in the learning process of its beneficiaries, with positive results in different groups, structures and locations.

From the experience we have gathered at Psientífica over the years, especially in the context of the Águeda Youth Centre, NFE is the fundamental tool for developing our work at local level.

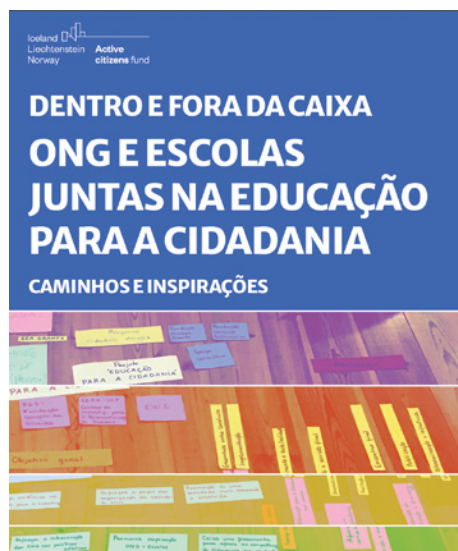
It is through NFE that we bring young and old together in intergenerational activities to discuss issues such as education, dating, work or discrimination. It is through this same approach that we get young people from all over Europe to identify the problems, the causes and to find solutions to minimise them in their communities. It is through NFE that we are also able to develop training programmes for youth workers in order to provide them with practices that can boost their intervention in the host community. It is also with NFE that we go to educational institutions, from primary school to university, to develop the most diverse activities on the various topics of interest to young people, so that they can find solutions to their individual and group/community challenges. Its complementarity with formal education allows young people to be leaders of their learning process in a space that is intended to be safe and welcoming, where they can express their points of view, ask questions, share knowledge and build solutions, thus contributing to a more inclusive, dynamic environment where community ties are strengthened and lifelong learning is encouraged.



In order to implement this transformative movement, we rely on the openness, trust and availability of all stakeholders. It's the schools, the university, the homes, the associations, among other organisations in our municipality, led by Águeda City Council, that allow us to reach such a wide target audience and continue to implement change. Naturally, this relationship has been built up over years in which we show the work done and present the results obtained, thus validating the intervention through NFE.

NFE is indeed powerful in its approach, allowing everyone to experience it on a different level and learn different things in the same session, depending on the level of each participant's involvement and willingness to accept it. It allows us to act locally to bring about change at a global level, in the certainty that all those who go through this process will be active agents in their community and will be more capable of contributing to the improvement of their environment.

Inside and outside the box



Game board Entrecomp 4 Youth



Inside and Outside the Box: NGOs and Schools Together in Citizenship Education | Paths and Inspirations is one of the products of the Education for Citizenship Project implemented by the Gonçalo da Silveira Foundation and it is based on three pillars: NGO-School partnerships; development and evaluation of competencies; "a Whole School Approach". This application develops themes such as the implementation strategies for citizenship education strategies (EECE), teaching and learning about Citizenship Education Relationship between schools and NGOs, participation and democratic relations in a school context, the development and assessment of competences in Education for Citizenship, Training in Citizenship Education and Coordination and Articulation between actors in the area of Citizenship Education.

As part of the Entrecomp 4 Youth, the Federation of Youth Associations of the District of Braga presented a game and a handbook of Non Formal Education activities. The project can be found online and aims to provide youth workers, trainers and facilitators with the necessary tools and resources to train young people in entrepreneurial skills, raise awareness of the importance of active participation and develop a set of activities that connect the 15 competencies of Entrecomp to an engaged citizen.



Video of the mission in Ukraine



The mission of the Portuguese National Agency for Erasmus+ National Agency Youth/Sport and European Solidarity Corps to Ukraine took place in June last year, which resulted in the country director, Luís Alves, meeting with dozens of Ukrainian organizations that could benefit from support for Non Formal Education projects. The video recapping the week-long visit can be viewed on the agency's page, where you can also track its other activities.



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