

# Working Group “VUKA” Former Socialist Countries Open their Past to Europe (SCOPE)

## ABSTRACT

The project “Former Socialist Countries Open their Past to Europe” (SCOPE) focuses on gathering cultural heritage (CH) in the form of documents and personal testimonies from the former socialist countries (FSC) in the Danube Region. The main goals are to create an extensive database (DB) of the publicly available and newly collected documents, and to develop a user-friendly application for data search and analysis. The collection of available documents will be examined by group of historians to select significant CH movements on a specific geographical area. Innovative tools, SCOPE website and application, will provide effective research and analysis of documents in a new, standardized database. SCOPE tools allow quick searching of all available documents using keywords or phrases; classification of results according to geographical position/dates/types/historical impact; and graphical illustration of activities against the socialist/communist regimes through the defined period of time. The novelty of the project is the use of the ‘citizen science’ approach to acquire personal testimonies of cultural opposition movements during the communist period through SCOPE tools. An interactive part of SCOPE application will collect users’ feedback in order to analyze if the documents serve the purpose of awareness raising on the anti-communist past among EU citizens.

## KEYWORDS

Cultural heritage  
Socialism  
Communism  
Opposition movements  
SCOPE

## AUTHORS

ÁRGYELÁN Tímea, from Corvinus University of Budapest (HUNGARY)  
BECCALLI Chiara, from University of Trieste (ITALY)  
BERTUZZI Stefano, from University of Trieste (ITALY)  
GUEORGUIEV Tzvetelin, from University of Rousse (BULGARIA)  
SZALÁNCZI József Krisztián, from University of Pécs (HUNGARY)  
TERNÉNYOVÁ Viola, from Alpen Adria Universität Klagenfurt (AUSTRIA)  
TRALIĆ Dijana, from University of Zagreb (CROATIA)

## CONTEXT OF RESEARCH TOPIC

### BACKGROUND

After 1945, as one of the main consequences of the Second World War, Europe was divided into two great parts: the capitalist Western and the communist Eastern Block. The Soviet Union seized its political, ideological and in most cases, military control over the eastern part of the continent. During the Cold War, many countries in the Danube Region (such as Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia) and in a wider sense the German Democratic Republic were under the full influence and governance of communist regimes, while Yugoslavia followed a special type of socialism. There were numerous cultural opposition movements against the regimes in socialist countries, despite of the “all-seeing” eyes of secret police and the high risk of persecution.

After the collapse of the Eastern Block in 1989, and the fall of the Soviet Union two years later, the former socialist countries (FSC), begin to re-evaluate their communist past in various ways. Because of sensitivity of this issue, this process is not completed even nowadays when most of the FSC are part of the European Union (EU). There are many politically motivated disputes about the assessments of great historical events and anti-communist resistance in the communist era (e.g. the revolution in Hungary in 1956 or the Prague Spring in 1968), which *became the most popular research topics after 1989* [Mark 2005, p. 963.]. However there are also cultural activities from this historical period, unknown in the EU and other FSC. Huge parts of the cultural heritage (CH) of the anti-communist cultural opposition movements never got significant publicity, because lots of the documents about this topic were not available for research for many years after the system change [Miller 1998, p. 313.]. As a consequence documents regarding the CH of the FSC are widely dispersed and as such are unknown and neglected to the general public even they could serve to understanding of the new democratic reality and the formulation of the new societal identity in Europe.

### LINKS TO EUSDR AND HORIZON 2020 CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES

The project Former Socialist Countries Open their Past to Europe (SCOPE) addresses Horizon 2020's call (REFLECTIVE-4-2015) “Reflective Societies: Cultural Heritage and European Identities” to tackle the broader societal challenge “Europe in a changing world – inclusive, innovative and reflective societies”.

SCOPE recognizes the cultural opposition in European FSC as a valuable CH and as a factor that shaped and still has an influence on the identities of a significant part of European society. The project integrates the research and innovation actions with the aim to promote this CH and make it easily accessible to the wider public, especially to young generations.

At the same time, SCOPE will trigger a cooperation of a number of research and heritage institutions such as universities and museums. Because it targets the wider EU society, the project contributes to the Priority Area 7: “Knowledge Society”, Pillar “Building Prosperity” of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) [COM (2010) 715 final]. One of the key factors for sustainable development of the Danube Region is the society’s ability to create and exploit knowledge. SCOPE will provide the necessary infrastructure and information and communication tools for competitive research and education in the CH field of the FSC [SEC (2010) 1489]. As an innovative project that contributes to the promotion and dissemination of the unique CH of European FSC, SCOPE will enhance the prosperity of the Danube Region and the fulfillment of EU’s commitments within Europe 2020 [DR: Project and Innovations].

## STATUS QUO

The analysis of the state of art indicates that the predominant approach used to study CH is a “top-down” approach. Most of existing databases (e.g. Piredeu [FP-7 Piredeu, 2012]) contain solely official documents for experts or people deeply involved in a specific research field. Specific CH projects and studies implemented in the Danube Region normally refer to material heritage (e.g. monuments, churches, archeological remains, fortress, and castles). Technologies are used mainly to promote regions with material heritage and not to explore the regions or as an educational and pedagogical tool [Co-Cu-Co OBP, 2004]. Several projects are devoted to the linguistic and religious minorities in the Danube Region countries (e.g. Plurel, [Plurel, 2014], Respect [Respect, 2013]). The methodological approach applied in those projects is based on qualitative instruments such as interviews, depth-interviews, content analysis of private diaries, letters, etc. This approach reinforced the discourse within some regions of FSC and had important impact on the pluralism in the EU. A disadvantage of such projects is the limited dissemination that is caused by insufficient access to data and inability to use collected knowledge for educational purposes or tourism development. Also, projects are usually focused on CH of a specific minority group.

Research of socialism and anti-socialist movement is already widely explored [Lipset, 1983], [Balažić, 2009]. However, there are two main limitations of this type of research: the focus on a particular geographical area and the bias caused by the influence of the author's attitudes. Previously conducted research projects did not provide a standardized and reusable DB of CH documents and tools for research and analysis.

## SOLVING THE PROBLEM

In order to raise public awareness on opposition actions against the socialist regimes, the project proposes a strategy of combining publicly available documents with personal testimonies. Publicly available documents will be collected and evaluated by a group of historians from different universities across FSC. Their task is to select and to briefly describe significant, history-changing events that should be presented to the general public. Data revised by historians will serve as a base to build an extensive and standardized collection of easily accessible CH documents.

The database of scientific data will be integrated in an innovative tool called SCOPE in order to make the collection easily available to the general public. SCOPE will be designed as an application for smartphones and will display information (selected by historians) related to the geographical location of the user. An important feature of SCOPE is the possibility to extend the collection of currently available documents by allowing users to upload personal testimonies in the form of comments, images or documents. Newly acquired findings will be examined by historians to evaluate their significance and impact to the current knowledge about anti-socialist movements. Additionally, SCOPE will provide simple analysis and research functionalities for an innovative exploitation of gathered data in education and CH sector.

Those actions will result in the better promotion of anti-socialism actions in Europe in order to preserve CH documents and use them for education of young generations about anti-socialist past. A standardized collection of documents, complemented with new findings, would foster cooperation among different historical and educational institutions allowing them to focus on lessons learned from socialist past of today's and potential future EU members.

## HOW CAN THIS IMPROVE THE ROLE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DANUBE REGION

As outlined in the specific challenge of the call 'Reflective-4-2015', the CH of FSC *'has shaped - and still influences - the attitude of several generations of today's EU citizens towards their political and social participation, understanding of the new democratic reality and formulation of the new societal identity.'* The EUSDR underlines the fact that *'the Region possesses a striking cultural, ethnic and natural diversity.'* Therefore it is necessary to preserve and disseminate the CH of the partner countries while balancing the official view, as expressed in governmental publications, with the alternative view of the cultural opposition from the socialist age.

The availability and use of specifically developed tools will improve the awareness of researchers and the new generations of countries in the Danube Region. Producing a self-perpetuating system for obtaining CH documents will enable the scientific community to find unconventional research topics, which have never been explored. In the same time it will make research results available to all stakeholders and interested parties.

### **METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

#### SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT

The project SCOPE requires an interdisciplinary approach for further exploration of the CH of opposition movements in former socialist countries. The following scientific disciplines will be necessary in order to achieve the main aim of the project: cultural history, sociology and public relations, art in all its manifestations, religion/theology, data mining and analysis, didactics and pedagogy, information and communication technology (ICT), etc.

#### DATA AND METHODS

The first step of the SCOPE project is to create an international network of selected institutions (universities, museums, public and private libraries, public and private archives, etc.) from the FSC, interested in sharing their documents in an open and public database. An international group of historians from part-

ners' universities will collect and manage the documents (written documents, photographs, documentaries, music, etc.).

Standard methods of historical and social sciences [Shafer 1980; McCullagh 1984; Howell & Prevenier 2001; Berg, et al. 2004; McCormack 2004] will be used in order to analyze the contents of the documents and to prepare them for the database. Short description with additional materials (photographs, documents, etc.) of significant events will be prepared for all geographical areas of interest (cities/villages in the FSC).

A relational database, based on the relational model of data, will be created in order to categorize all collected CH documents and to be connected with a brief description defined by group of scientists. Database normalization will be used to eliminate the redundancy (duplication) of data, which prevents data manipulation and loss of data integrity. A relational database management system will be used to query and maintain the database using SQL (Structured Query Language).

An on-line website and a smartphone application SCOPE will be implemented using programming language Java. Functional testing will be done to ensure that website and application are working according to requirements. Performance testing will assure proper behavior under certain conditions (e.g. bad network coverage, low available memory, and simultaneous access to application's server by several users). Memory leakage testing will be conducted to check managing of the allocated memory. Usability testing will be carried out to verify users can use all functionalities of website and application.

The Citizen Science approach will be applied to collect additional CH documents in a form of personal testimonies of users. This approach, also called "crowd science", is a scientific approach in which citizens, not necessarily experts, collect and/or process data as part of a scientific enquiry [Silvertown 2009]. Science and research are activities potentially available to everyone: the combination of historical data and assembly of a large, dispersed team of observers can therefore create a large amount of opportunities for historical researches at unprecedented spatial and temporal scales.

A specific protocol based on a new interdisciplinary approach will be developed in order to analyze user data collected that will be continuously reviewed by team of historians. Moreover, even though the content will be uploaded in different languages, the most relevant data will be translated in English and in the other languages of the involved countries. All uploaded data and comments will be monitored by a moderating team composed by historians and sociologists in order to evaluate their quality. The "double check" made by the researchers and by the users (through their comments) will improve the data evaluation process.

The application will be firstly tested by some selected institution and volunteers and will be open to the public by the most used digital distribution platforms for mobile apps (e.g. Apple store, Android market). The promotion of the application will be implemented by each university in our consortium through a network of contacts among schools, libraries, museums tourist promotional public and private office, etc., of their city/province/region.

Collected CH documents will be analyzed to extend current knowledge about anti-socialist movements in FSC, and to provide a set of recommendations for raising awareness of socialist regime of citizens of current and future EU members. An innovative methodology implemented in interactive part of SCOPE, that allows users to express their own attitude about specific anti-socialism movements through direct testimony, will ensure the continuity of this project and applications of developed methodology/tools in the similar historical context.

## CONSORTIUM

### INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT AND THEIR EXPERTISE

Project SCOPE requires involvement of higher education institutions and their background research groups, whose main interest refers to the CH in the selected period. Partners in SCOPE are mainly young researchers and specialists in the field of history, sociology and computer technologies. Nevertheless, it is a goal of the project is to involve museums and NGOs by sharing the incoming documents, testimonies, photographs.

| UNIVERSITIES   | Abbreviation | Expertise             |
|--|--------------|-----------------------|
| Eötvös Lóránd University of Budapest<br>(Faculty of History) | ELTE         | History/<br>Sociology |
| Comenius University in Bratislava<br>(Faculty of Philosophy) | CUB          | History               |
| University of Novi Sad<br>(Faculty of Philosophy)            | UNS          | History               |

| UNIVERSITIES  | Abbreviation | Expertise                             |
|---|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| University of Trieste<br>(Dept. of Political and Social Sciences, Dept. of Life Sciences) | UNITS        | Citizen science                       |
| University of Ljubljana<br>(Department of History)  | ULJ          | History /<br>Social science           |
| University of Zagreb<br>(Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing)                 | UZE          | Information<br>technologies           |
| Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca<br>(Department of History)                         | BBU          | History                               |
| University of Sofia<br>(Faculty of History),  | US           | History                               |
| University of Leipzig<br>(Faculty of History, Arts and Oriental Studies)                  | ULZ          | History /Art                          |
| Charles University of Prague  | CUP          | History                               |
| EXTERNAL AGENCY<br>(administrative company)   | EAG          | Management – technical administration |

| MUSEUMS   |
|---|
| The House of Terror in Hungary<br>The National Archive of Hungary                   |
| The Museum of Communism in Prague   |
| The National Socialism Documentation Center of Cologne                              |
| The Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb<br>The Institute for Art History in Zagreb |
| Museum of Communism of Bucharest  |
| Museum of Communism of Bratislava   |
| The Museum of Socialist (Totalitarian) Art in Sofia                                 |



## SOLUTIONS / OBJECTIVES

### LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX

| Project description |  | Objectively Verifiable Indicators   | Sources of Verification   | Assumptions  |
|---------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Goal                | To enhance the political and social participation, understanding of the new democratic reality and formulation of the new societal identities in FSC | Participation of citizens from FSC in EU programmes, initiatives and administration.  | Census, Database (DB), Statistical analyses done by external institutions.  | Open access to EU, national and regional DBs and statistical data.                                       |
| Purpose             | To collect testimonies and documents as part of the cultural heritage (CH) from opposition movements in FSC  | DB of testimonies and documents.  | Archives, web sites, personal testimonies collected in a specific database.<br>Methods: historians and ICT specialists.   | Cooperation from citizens who dispose of knowledge about the cultural opposition and/or their relatives. |
| Outputs             | 1. A DB of collections of independent cultural movements and activities against the regimes in FSC.  | 1.1. A DB enriched from each partner.<br>1.2. A structured DB for each opposition movement identified.  | 1. A DB and a register.   | 1. Willingness of citizens and institutions to share knowledge.  |
|                     | 2. A tool (an application) to utilize and contribute to the DB.  | 2. A free application for smartphones.  | 2. An application, feedback from users.   | 2. Existence of documents.   |
|                     | 3. A set of recommendations and guidelines for valorization and dissemination of CH in FSC.  | 3.1. A set of recommendations based on research findings proposing methods for preservation of CH in FSC.<br>3.2. Guidelines on good practices for preservation of CH from opposition movements in FSC. | 3.1. A Whitepaper of recommendations.<br><br>3.2.1. A whitepaper to be used by non-member countries in the process of joining the EU.<br>3.2.2. A handbook of best practices and lessons learned for EU countries which are not participating in the project. | 3. Widespread usage of smartphones.  |

|            |  |  |  |   |
|------------|--|--|--|---|
| Outputs    |  |  |  | 4. The application is updated with the development of technology, hardware, and software.<br>5. Cooperation from European and national authorities, as well as from all potential stakeholders. |
| Activities | 1. TRANSVERSAL ACTIVITIES:<br>1.1. Project Management<br>1.2. Dissemination, Lessons Learned, and Exploitation<br>2. SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES:<br>2.1. Data Acquisition and Gathering<br>2.2. DB Creation<br>2.3. Application Development<br>2.4. Testing and Improvement (DB maintenance). | PERSONNEL: researchers, teachers, museum staff, ICT specialists, volunteers.<br>EQUIPMENT: a server, smartphones for testing the application.<br>SUPPLIES: wi-fi hotspots, software platforms (open source), internet subscription fees. | Gantt chart, Intermediate and final reports, Preliminary (2.4 million euro) and actual budget. Meetings. | A consortium of research institutes, universities, schools, museums, NGOs from EU FSC, non-EU FSC, and countries who are influenced by the CH of FSC.   |

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES

The *general objective* is to preserve cultural heritage and raise awareness of anti-socialist movements through innovative exploitation of documents and objects from the socialist area.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES are:

1. Collecting publicly available and currently unknown CH data in order to make them easily available to the general public, and to enhance their promotion as an important testimony of anti-communist opposition movements;
2. Creating new technological instruments to enhance quality of research and exploitation of the CH documents for research and education of young generations;
3. Establishing a network and cooperation infrastructure among involved universities and other governmental and non-governmental institutions;
4. Providing a set of recommendations based on research findings for raising awareness and preservation of lessons learned from the socialist past of today's and potential future EU members.

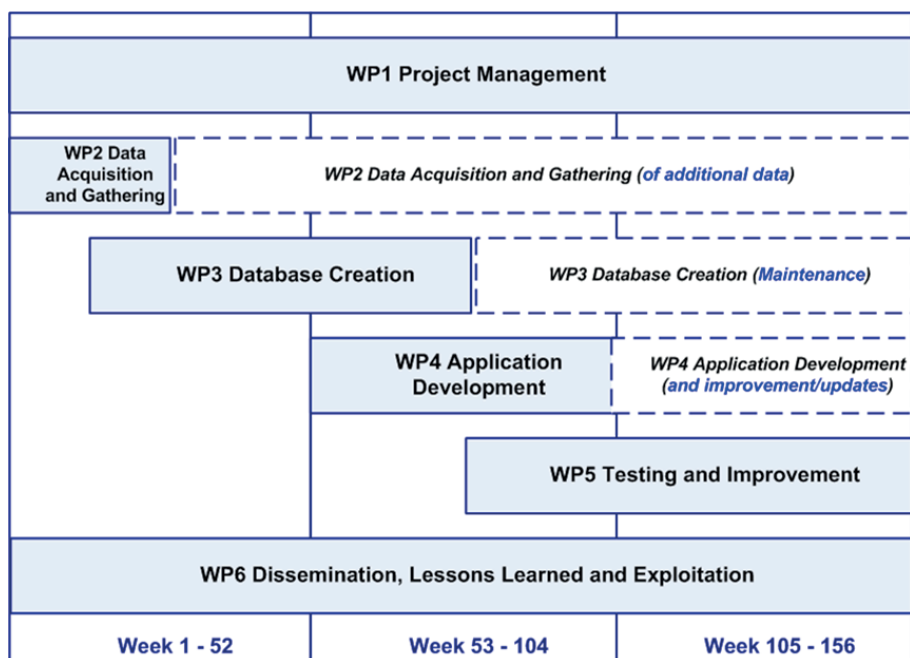
## EXPECTED RESULTS

The deliverables of project SCOPE are:

1. A standardized database of the cultural heritage documents of anti-socialist movements in Danube Region countries,
2. An innovative infrastructure for collecting personal testimonies about opposition movements,
3. A website and an application for analysis, and research of documents collected in the CH database,
4. A set of recommendations for preserving of the CH and better promotion of anti-socialist movement in Europe as a tool for education of young generations,
5. Reports about project works.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE PROJECT WORK AND BUDGETING

### WORK PACKAGE AND TASK STRUCTURE, LEADERS, INVOLVED PARTNERS



**Figure 1 – Work Packages**

## WP1 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The project management will be carried out by one manager assigned by the leading partner ELTE.

### 1.1. PROJECT MONITORING

The implementation of the project will be continuously supervised and consulted. In addition, it will be evaluated during the meetings, approximately once in 8 months.

### 1.2. REPORTING

Partner institutions will issue two intermediate reports and one final report of the project.

## WP2 DATA ACQUISITION AND GATHERING

The data will be acquired and gathered in a collaboration of all partner universities utilizing “citizen science” approach. This way, knowledge will become available for the end-users as well as inputs for further research will be provided.

### 2.1. COLLECTING PUBLICLY AVAILABLE DATA ABOUT ANTI-SOCIALIST MOVEMENT

Universities will provide basic scientific information about geographically relevant historical events.

### 2.2. PREPARING DATA FOR GENERAL PUBLIC

On the basis of scientific data, the partner universities will prepare simple and compact summaries (max. 200 words) for each topic and location that will be utilized by the SCOPE application.

## WP3 DATABASE CREATION

A basic server will be developed by the ICT partners for the database (DB) for the information set collected by the above mentioned scientific partners.

### 3.1. DEFINING DATABASE STRUCTURE

The ICT partners from UZE will provide a frame for the DB content that will be in line with the instructions of the leading partner (ELTE).

### 3.2. ORGANIZING DATA IN DATABASE

At this step, the partners from UZE will integrate the frame and the information content and will further organize, administer and update them.

## WP4 SCOPE APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT

Following the previous steps, the ICT partners will develop a tool (SCOPE) to explore and enhance the content of the DB.

### 4.1. IDENTIFYING MAIN FUNCTIONALITIES

An advantage of the SCOPE application will be the free access to the DB content for the wider public, especially the young generation. The application will be able to detect the current location of the user and provide

relevant content from the DB. When the user opens the application, simple information (max. 200 words) about certain highlighted opposition movements of that particular place will appear on the screen.

Example 1: A tourist at the II. János Pál pápa Square (former Köztársaság Square) in Budapest will be informed about the siege against the headquarter of the Hungarian Workers' Party on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1956 conducted by the insurgents.

If the user is interested, 'Read more' links will be available. At the same time, users will be able to browse the database and find information about other locations as well.

Users will have the chance to upload any documents, pictures, testimonies, songs and other digitalized artwork assigned to specific places through their smartphones. These objects will eventually serve as CH from the opposition movements in FSC. This way a 'win-win' situation beneficial to the users as well as researchers will emerge and will allow a continuous growth of the DB. Uploaded files will always be reviewed and approved by quality managers (one person per country) before becoming visible in the application.

Regularly, the content of the DB will be analyzed and can be utilized for various scientific purposes. Statistical analysis about e.g. frequency of uploads and number of users will be made. The application will allow (via a voting scale) users to evaluate how they perceive the usefulness of the information given by SCOPE.

#### 4.2. IMPLEMENTING MAIN FUNCTIONALITIES IN SCOPE

The ICT department (UZE) will have the main responsibility to develop, organize and administer the application SCOPE.

### WP5 TESTING AND IMPROVEMENT

#### 5.1. Application Testing

Before the application is launched, its features, practicability and usability will be tested by the project team and groups of students selected by the leading partner ELTE.

#### 5.2. IMPROVEMENT OF APPLICATION

During the duration of the project, all identified errors of SCOPE application will be corrected and the application will be constantly updated.

### WP6 DISSEMINATION, LESSONS LEARNED AND EXPLOITATION

As one of the two transversal work packages, this WP is managed by CUB and will be implemented by all partners. All partners as well as museums and tourist information centers will display project information and the QR code

of the SCOPE application. The dissemination will use the SCOPE application along with established communication channels and media such as: newsletters, a web site, leaflets, brochures, posters, social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn), YouTube, Vimeo, events (scientific conferences, seminars, workshops, SCOPE-cafes).

The 'Lessons learned' segment of this WP will concentrate on collecting feedback (both positive and negative) via comments from users and developers. The most important part is to analyze the effects that the updates in the SCOPE application have on improvement of the awareness of EU citizens on the CH of FSC.

The results of the project will be used in order to improve the SCOPE application and the newly acquired findings will serve as a base for deeper research of the CH of FSC. The research results will then be fed in the DB and subsequently in the SCOPE app.

The app will perpetuate its life in:

- the activities of museums and art exhibitions,
- merging with augmented reality apps,
- connecting of people who were oppressed by the former socialist regimes and who have natural motivation not to forget and to inform society.

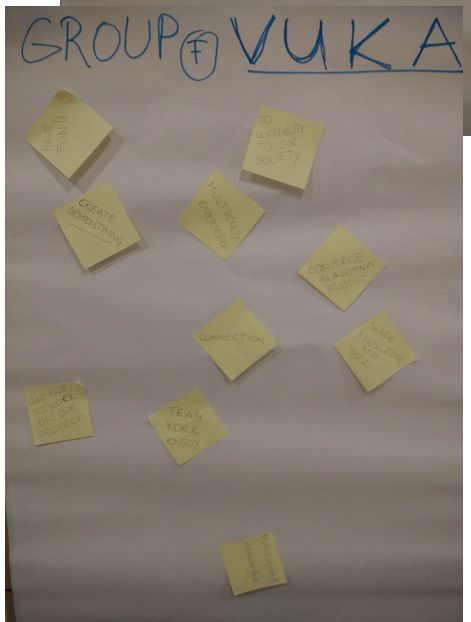
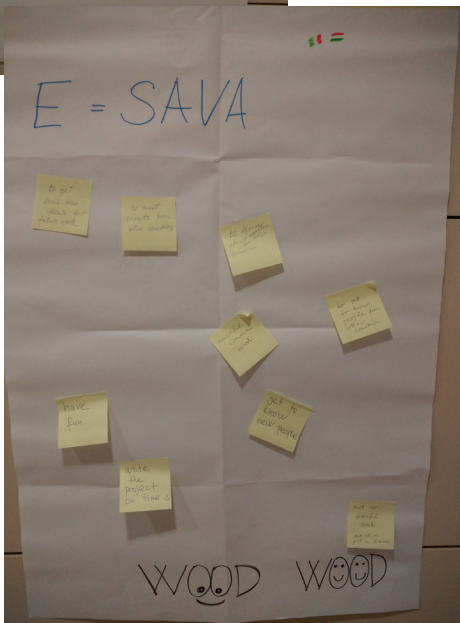
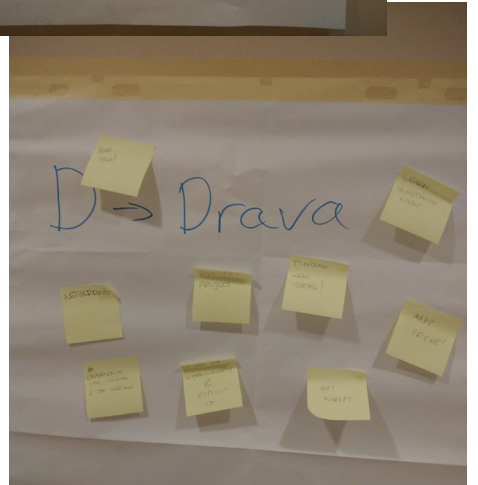
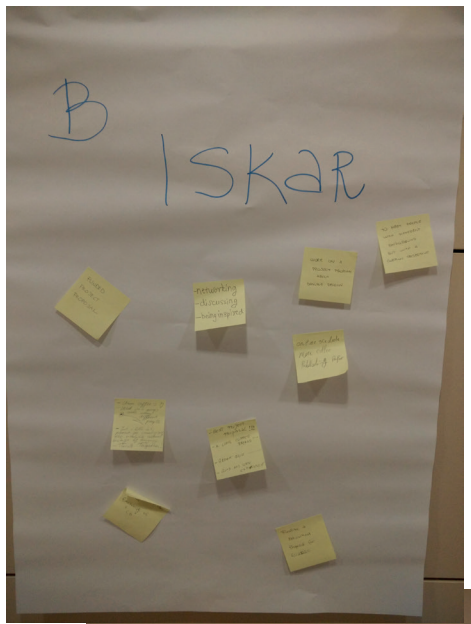
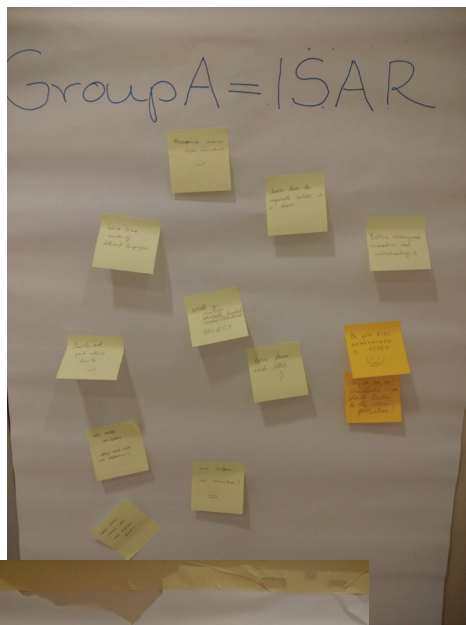
## BUDGET

Corresponding to the limits set in REFLECTIVE-4-2015, the budget amounts for 2030375 EUR and is presented in an additional file. The reimbursement rate for the project is 100% and the requested grant will completely cover the total estimated eligible costs. Various specific tasks (for example the work of experts on marketing, editing and translation) will be subcontracted.

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**Photo of participants to the Trieste excursion, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

**Group photo of participants and teachers, Gorizia Conference Center, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2015**

