play

Podcast Launched
At YOUth

IO2: TRAINING COURSE

FRAMEWORK FOR YOUTH WORKERS ON DISSEMINATION STRATEGIES AND PODCASTS

WWW.PLAYPODCAST.EU

This output was developed as part of the Erasmus+ KA2 Project: "Play: Podcast Launched at YOUth", in which are involved the following institutions and NGOs:
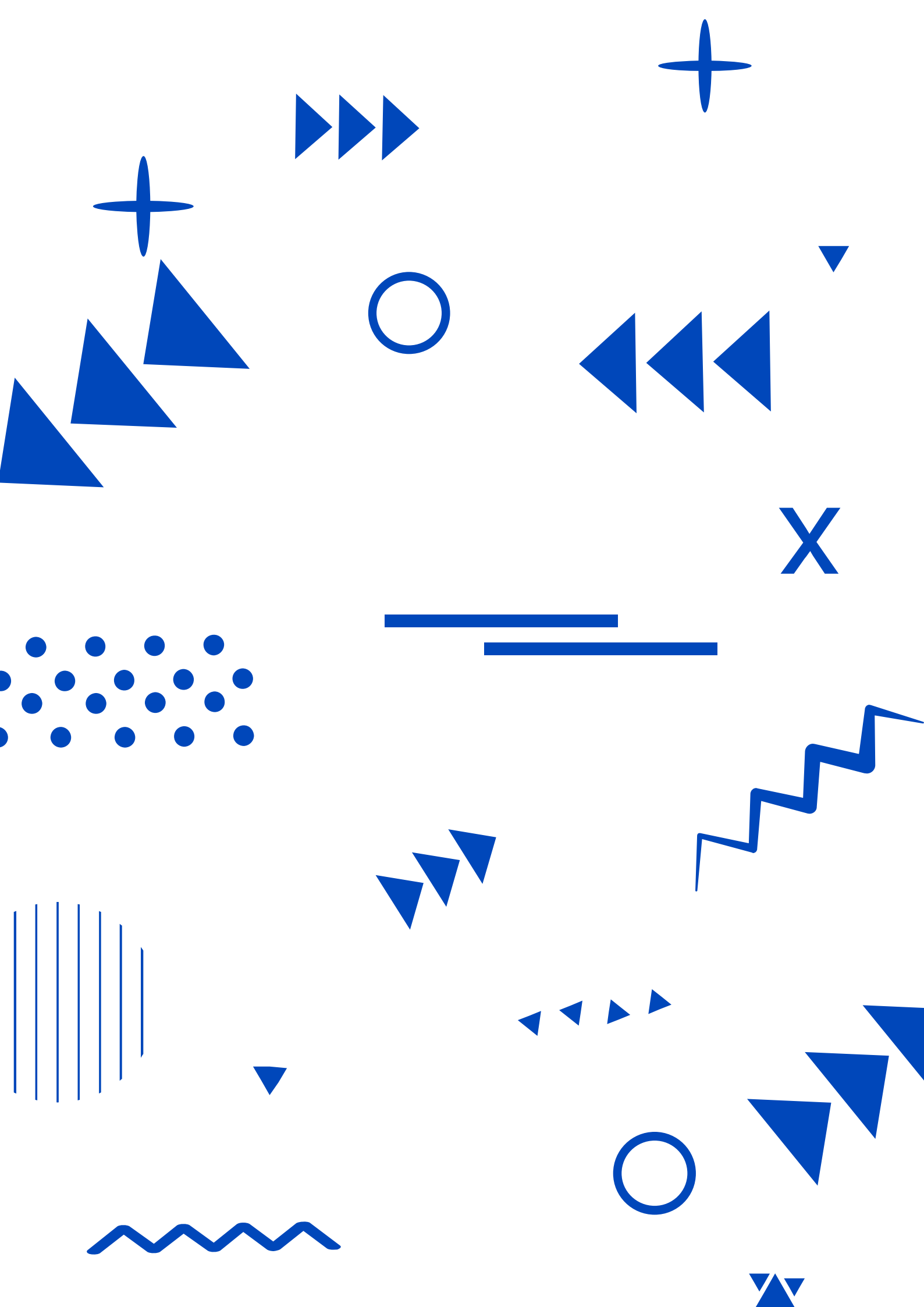

@2022

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1 INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1.1. PROJECT OVERVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

PLAY - Podcast launched to young people is an innovation cooperation focused on improving podcast establishments for young people, developed under the European Erasmus + program.

One of the main reasons that pushed the various partners to develop the current project is due to the fact that in many cases the dissemination of the activities and results of a project is not very effective and unable to achieve the established objectives. Starting from these premises, the consortium decided that a key factor to achieve the dissemination objectives in an easier way is that of the podcast.

Fig.1: Official website of the project: https://playpodcast.eu/

1.2. WHAT ARE THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT?

| KNOW-HOW FOR PODCAST PLANNING

The main objective is to provide youth workers with the know-how for podcast planning and the development of initiatives with young people and the improvement of their dissemination and communication skills.
The implementation of this strategy in each NGO wants to increase the impact of the dissemination activities implemented by the various youth operators in the various sectors of activity, at

a transversal level. Too many times a situation arises where, in the face of fantastic results obtained at the design level, the dissemination strategy does not allow for their dissemination and communication outside of the same.

| INCREASE THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROJECT LIFE CYCLE OF YOUT   H EXCHANGES

Another objective of the project is to enable a greater understanding of the whole life cycle of youth exchanges.
We want to deepen several aspects, such as needs analysis, objectives and activities, cooperation with partners, intercultural learning, learning evaluation, results, impact, evaluation and dissemination of the project.

| COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

Support the participants in putting into practice the acquired learning, sharing information and improving the communication and dissemination processes of NGOs.
Another goal is to involve over 325 youth workers from the 5 partner countries throughout the project. In this way, we want to provide them with a whole series of tools, support, skills, experiences to be able to implement their communication and dissemination strategies, both during and especially after the experience gained in the project.

| IMPROVEMENT OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION METHODS

The project aims to provide a series of methods and tools that can help youth workers in their work activities, allowing them to structure their activities and organize them through various non-formal learning tools. Therefore, one of the objectives is to underline the importance and the recognition of NFE learning (such as the production of podcasts).

1.3. PROJECT PARTNERS

The project is organized by 5 different partners, coming from different countries (France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Romania).

SOLUTION: SOLIDARITY & INCLUSION (FRANCE)

It is an NGO based in Paris carrying out educational activities to promote social cohesion through non-formal education. The

objective of the association is to boost social inclusion among young people by proposing several kinds of actions fostering creativity, intercultural dialogue, encouraging democratic participation among groups that are excluded from social dynamics, increasing young people's soft and hard skills, designing educational programs to open minds and strengthening fair dynamics between generations.

YOUTHFULLY YOURS GR (GREECE)

The NGO was born in 2011 by a company of friends interested in Non-formal Education, Youth Work & European Mobilities from Thessaloniki (Greece), with activity on local, national & European Activity Level. It is interested in Arts, Environment, Democracy, Unemployment, Sustainability, Creativity and Entrepreneurship, Volunteering, European and Balkan culture as well as urban and regional activities. YYGR promotes friendship, peace, respect for human rights, and antiracism.

ASSOCIAZIONE AGRADO (ITALY)

It is a local Italian organization which manages projects, activities and actions in order to promote personal development, skills and competences of Youth and Adults through Non-Formal Education. It works both al local level (running project about personal development, organizing national camps, workshops and Training Courses and creative/artistic projects and events), as well as at International level (organizing Youth Exchanges, Seminars, Training Courses and KA2 within the frame of Erasmus+ Programme).

ASSOCIAÇÃO CHECK-IN – COOPERAÇÃO E DESENVOLVIMENTO (PORTUGAL)

It is a non-profit organization, founded in 2010, based in Beja, also operating in Lisbon, Portugal. It works in close cooperation with public and private entities, actively participating in quality-of-life improvement activities. The NGO mainly focuses on youth and adult mobility, non-formal education, cooperation and development of organizations and individuals, working regularly with other

mobility, non-formal education, cooperation and development of organizations and individuals, working regularly with other promoting lifelong learning opportunities as well as encouraging and promote social integration, education for sustainable development, and social entrepreneurship.

GAMMA - THE ASSOCIATION INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND STUDY OF QUANTUM CONSCIOUSNESS (ROMANIA)

It is a non-governmental organization from Iasi (founded in 2011), whose purpose is the promoting, development, research and initiative for activities in the field of psychology, psychotherapy and mental health, in particular through training programs, workshops, psychological services and psychological assistance, counseling, psychotherapy and training of specialists; also, another aim is to facilitate the cooperation between Romanian specialists from the fields mentioned above and other specialists from international area.
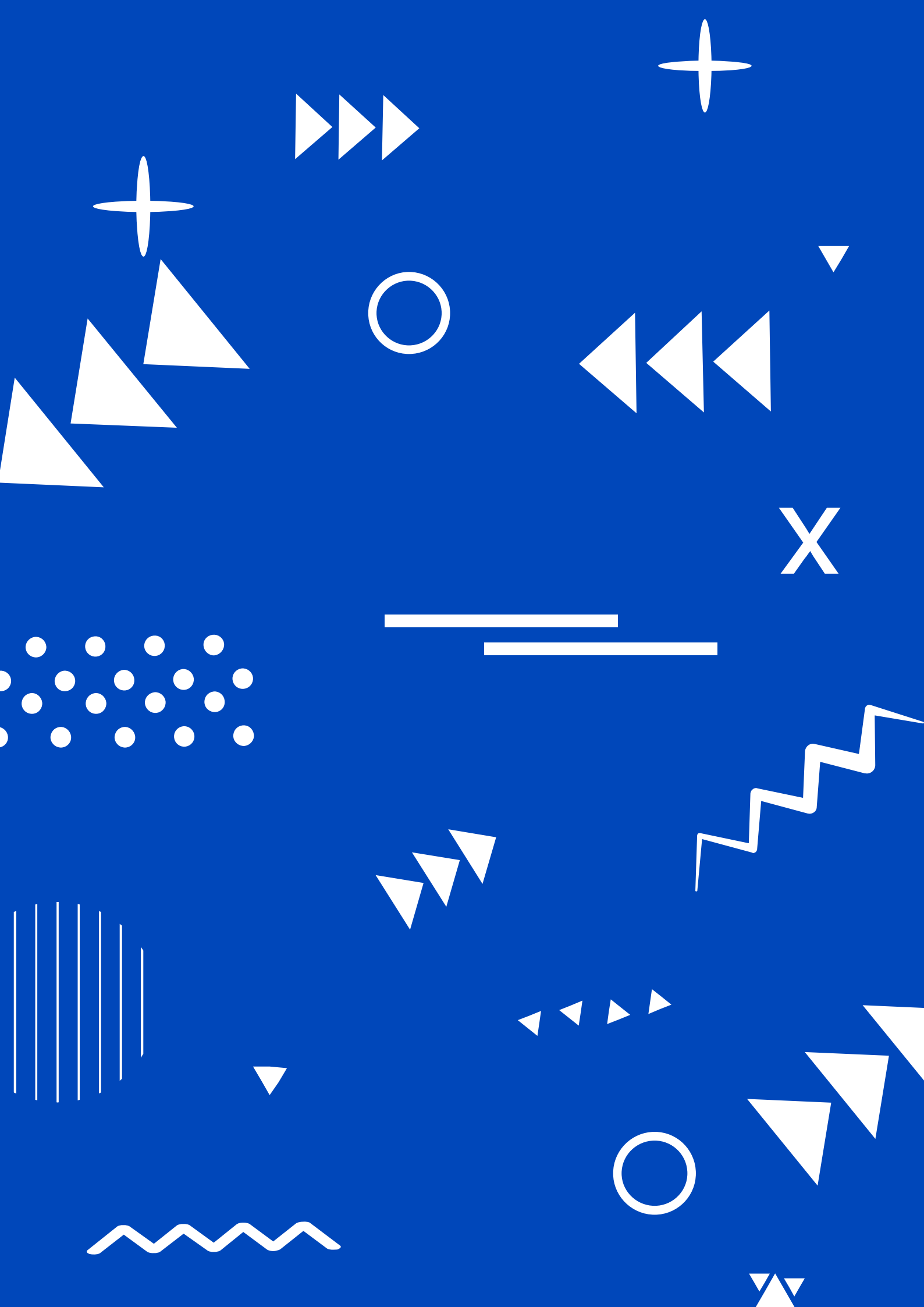
2 ▶ PODCAST

2.1. MAIN AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF PODCAST

A podcast is a broadcast on the Internet. Its particularity lies in the fact that listeners are not dependent on a specific broadcasting time, and that they can therefore access it at any time of the day. This makes the show very accessible to everyone. The word "Podcast" comes from the contraction of the words "iPod" and "Broadcast", and as such, its existence is relatively recent.

The podcast format has become more and more popular in recent years, especially among young people. The number of creators as well as the number of published podcasts is constantly increasing over the last few years. It is thus a format of dissemination which should be taken into account and used within the communication strategies toward young people. People are hearing podcasts in public transport, in their car, during their free time, during activities... It can be listened to anywhere, at any time of the day and this is the advantage of the podcast unlike the classic radio shows. Podcast production and publication can thus be used as a means to improve the dissemination strategies of youth workers, youth organizations. The use of the internet is the best way to disseminate project results and to spread information about youth NGO, projects or activities but also to share learning material and activities directly to the target population.

The objectives that can fulfill the realization and publication of podcasts in a dissemination strategy are multiple. Indeed, there are several types of podcast formats that can each meet different needs:

- Interview podcast: In the context of a concealment campaign, this format could be very useful to give voice to volunteers or workers of the organization, as well as to beneficiaries of the project's actions. This can help to inform on issues addressed, the actions of the organization and thus to make it known.

- Conversational podcasts: This podcast format can be used to debate these same themes, as well as to discuss new forms of action and thus offer reflective rather than informative content.

- Solo podcasts: In this podcast format, the host speaks alone and is the only person intervening.

- Educational podcasts: This podcast format focuses on teaching

about a specific topic. It is thus a format adapted to raise awareness and transmit knowledge and ideas to the listeners. The educational content of organizations can be transmitted through podcasts of this format, and thus reach a wider audience. It is particularly appropriate for teenagers as well as young adult targets. This type of podcasts can even be structured in an interactive way and thus make it possible to propose activities and/or workshop by its means

- Talk-show podcast: This format can be used to communicate creatively and artistically and does not limit the simultaneous sharing of ideas and information in an indirect way. This format can also be used to raise awareness or learn without the listeners necessarily realizing it.

2.2. METHODS TO FOLLOW TO DEVELOP A PODCAST

Launching a podcast is not that complicated and is accessible to everyone. However, the first steps of planning are important, because they allow to lay the foundations of the project and thus to advance more serenely, quickly and efficiently. In addition, the consistency of the form of a podcast is often highly appreciated.

Thinking from the beginning about the main guidelines of the content that will be proposed is thus an advantage. One of the first steps may be to choose a podcast format. To better understand all these categories of podcasts, their advantages and disadvantages, online videos like "7 popular podcast formats: Which one is right for you?" by Angel Marie, creator educator, can help :
https://youtu.be/ebMxjL7oCuk

Some questions can also help to better understand the type of content one want to create and share, and thereby understand which format fits best:
- How do you want to organize your podcast?
- What kind of topics would you like to share?
- Who do you want your target to be?
- Do you want to be a solo or co-host?
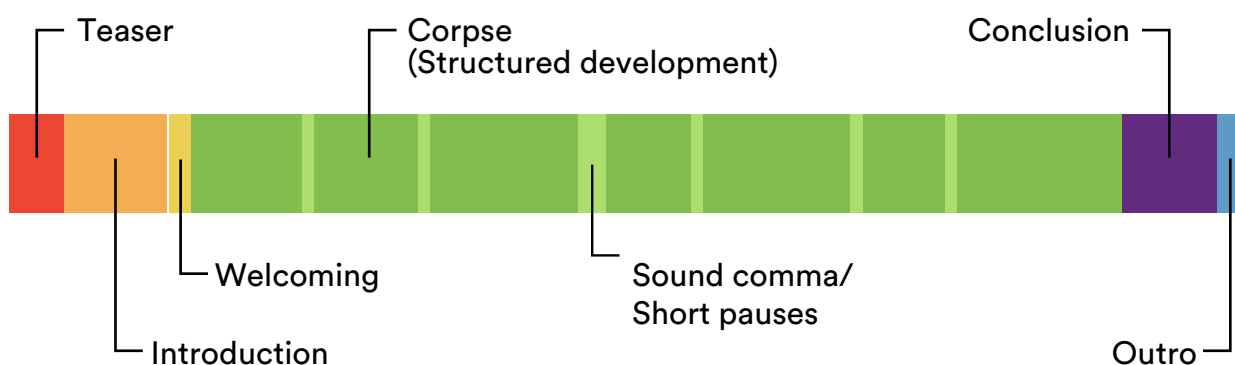- Do you speak the show alone or will you invite people to speak?

If learners are unable to define their podcast format in advance, they can also try to start with very concrete and/or technical ideas, such as an introduction/ outline idea, and then develop it into more pragmatic matters.

As mentioned earlier, consistency in the form and content of

podcasts is an important element for listeners that enables them to assimilate particular characteristics to the podcast and thereby helps to maintain the audience. Adding characteristics and specific details about the podcast that will regularly be repeated in the episodes can help! These elements can be implemented in the introductions, the transitions, but also to and in the structure of the podcast episodes. For example, choosing a specific music for the introduction, using a specific phrase to introduce all episodes, using an original structure. Below is an overview of the elements that are often integrated in podcast episodes:

Teaser   Corpse (Structured development)   Conclusion

Welcoming   Sound comma/ Short pauses

Introduction   Outro

(This list is neither exhaustive nor normative and only serves as a basis for project creation)

▶ **TEASER:** It can be anything, but has to be short (~10-20 sec)! An important or mysterious extract of an interview included in the episode, an extract of a speech the podcaster particularly likes and wants to include at the very beginning of each of her/ his episodes: this teaser is simply there to make the listener want to listen to the episodes and helps give the rhythm of the beginning of the latter. However, if the excerpt does not originate from the podcast creator, the latter should take care to use content that is free of copyright or has a legal time limit. (More on this in part 2.3.)

▶ **INTRO:** It is important in each of the episodes for the podcasters to take care of their regular listeners as well as to the new coming ones. The podcaster can include at the beginning of each episode a very short presentation of itself and the concept of the podcast channel. One or two sentences is enough: it has to be very concise. It can help the new coming listeners not feeling excluded or lost.

WELCOME: It is important in each of the episodes for the podcasters to take care of their regular listeners as well as to the new coming ones. The podcaster can include at the beginning of
▶ each episode a very short presentation of itself and the concept of the podcast channel. One or two sentences is enough: it has to be

very concise. It can help the new coming listeners not feeling excluded or lost.

CONTENT: This should be the heart of the podcast, where the content is deeply analyzed. The podcaster is free to be creative. If the podcast is long, the creator may want to include short pauses and so-called "sound commas" between the parts of the corps. A music can be played for a few seconds to provide a moment of musical breathing and offer a few instants to allow the listeners to think about what has been said and process the information. It is

▶ also advisable to vary the content formats in the body of the podcast. It is not recommended to talk for too long: musical breaks, insertion of interviews or recorded noises in nature or in a city place...

CLOSURE AND CALL TO ACTION: It is the conclusion of the episode. The podcaster can conclude on what has been said and

▶ accordingly call and give advice for actions that can be undertaken by them. This is the result of the information that was given and the argument that was made by the podcaster: empower the listeners to act in consequence!

OUTRO: To mark the end of the podcast, it is common to leave a background sound or music after the conclusion for a few seconds, so as not to let the episode end too abruptly.

When the format of the podcast is basically visualized by the creator, it is time to move on to writing the podcast. Indeed, recording a podcast will most of the time require research and global planning beforehand. This step is also called podcast writing. This writing phase is composed of many different steps. Indeed, the writing is done as much in the writing of the scenario as in the recording, editing and mixing. Unlike a live radio show, the creators can actually modify the structure and the effects of their podcasts afterwards, during the editing phase.

1. Whether one writes the whole script of the episode or just a few keywords, one needs a built-in plan to structure the content of the podcast. This obviously involves building the overall structure of the episode, as seen earlier, but also organizing the topics covered in the heart of the episode, as well as the main arguments to be developed. If the podcaster is interviewing someone the preparation also involves planning how and where he or she wants to take the guests during the interview. Preparing the script will allow the interviewer to save time during the editing and serenity during the recording.

2. In a podcast, all the communication passes through the voice and what is being said, and the podcaster does not have any visual support to back up what he or she is saying. It is therefore

necessary to remain concise and to build a simple and light speech. To do this, it is not recommended to write the entire script in advance because the podcaster will tend to read it during the recording and make the podcast too cold and literary. Simplicity and conciseness require more preparation than long developments, but it is much easier for the listeners to stay focused and thus makes the podcast more accessible and attractive. It is advisable to use everyday language when recording!

3. It is advisable before recording to read the script a few times out loud to make the speech clearer and more fluent during the actual recording. The podcaster then tends to express her or himself in a more natural and relaxed way.

4. Background music can help structure and reinforce the narrative of the podcast. However, it is important to choose neutral music so as not to attract too much attention from the listeners. It also has to be a background sound and thus has to be relatively quiet while it is being spoken.

5. Personalization of the script: it is highly recommended that the podcaster brings out her/his personality from the very first words, because listeners will get attached to her/him as much as to the podcast. It is therefore positive to embody a podcast with one's personality and not to be too discreet. This can be done by telling personal stories, incorporating emotions into the podcast!

In the specific case of a podcast interview, in addition to the preparation of the podcast script, the interview will have to be well prepared too. To do so, there are techniques of interviewing that can better and more easily achieve this exercise. An interview can be done with one or more guests. In general, the questions of the interview will be prepared in advance and sent to the guests before the actual recorded interview. These questions are themselves formulated on the basis of a prior research of these persons performed by the podcaster. This interview can be short and integrated into the podcast or can be the content of the podcast itself and can therefore have very varied lengths, from 3 to 45 minutes in general. The interview can be done in a conversational tone (an approach favored by podcasts and many radio shows), aiming to get to know the interlocutor and her/ his message, or in a more formal tone, in order to obtain information on a given subject. Below are listed some of the most important tips to guide the preparation and execution of a podcast interview:[1]

- Before the interview, it is very important to do research on the persons the podcaster is wanting to interview: about their profiles, their areas of expertise...

1 Université de Lausanne, 2016, Le podcast audio comme outil d'enseignement et apprentissage guide de production.

- Then the interviewer can get in touch with the person, introducing her or himself and her/ his project.

- While preparing the questions, the podcaster needs to consider that the questions must be asked in a logical order and continuity! Also, open questions should be asked rather than closed questions: start the questions with "why..." or "what do you think about..." rather than "is it...?" to avoid yes or no answers. However, if the interviewer wants a clear and concise answer, it is possible to use these types of questions!

  Finally, when the interviewer receives her/ his guest before the recording, it is important to put her or him at ease by explaining the course of the interview that has been planned.

2.3. WHAT ARE THE EQUIPMENT/RESOURCES NEEDED WHEN CREATING A PODCAST?

Podcast creation is much more accessible than video creation, both in terms of the skills required and the investment needed. Podcasters can have full control over the material they need based on their available financial resources. For example, some of the most popular podcasts are recorded by the phone of their creators. First of all, let's start with the equipment available for a very small budget.

A podcaster can theoretically produce a podcast from A to Z on a smartphone. Indeed, one can use a classic recording application for smartphones and record with a microphone-equipped headphones. The headphones generally allow a better audio rendering than with the original microphone of a phone. However, contact of the headphones with skin, clothes or breath should really be avoided to prevent saturating the voice recording. The recording should also be done in a place isolated from surrounding noises, especially when the recording is done with basic equipment. Interviews in noisy public spaces are possible, but will not be of high quality. To avoid echoes in the recording room, it is possible to place sheets or pieces of fabric in the room where the recording is taking place, on the floor and if possible on the walls, or even around the recording person. This will help to soften the sound space and make the sound cleaner. There are many free smartphone recording applications (Anchor, Speaker Studio and Podbean). These same apps will also allow the podcaster to edit the audio recordings and thus edit their podcasts. These edit functions are basic, but still sufficient for the first podcasts! These applications also offer hosting. Anchor and Podbean have free offerings but with very basic functionality. They are also podcast libraries like Apple Podcasts. One way to improve the sound quality of podcasts while still recording from a smartphone and on a small budget is to purchase a tie microphone or static microphone specially

designed for smartphones. By connecting it via cable to a smartphone, it will allow the podcaster to obtain a higher quality sound for a budget of 20 to 80 euros by this single investment.

Editing audio recordings, however, offers much more advanced functionality on a computer. If the creator has one, it is possible to import the audio recordings from their phone to their computer and edit them on programs. There are several free programs that allow the creator to edit podcasts with features that are not available on a smartphone. The most known one is probably Audacity (see fig.2). It is an open-source software that offers many advanced features that are most of the time only available on paid software. It is also possible to make a record on it, using microphone-equipped headphones or a higher quality one. The editing on Audacity allows us to find flaws in the audio and fix them. It makes it easy to remove hums, hisses, and other unwanted background noises. Audacity also allows to generate and insert noise effects such as tones and instruments to the podcast and thus offer wider possibilities. If the podcasters already have an Apple device (computer, tablet or even phone) they then also have free access to GarageBand, which allows them to use multiple functions on a very simple interface to edit podcasts. On youtube there are numerous tutorials in all languages to learn how to handle these softwares and recording techniques.
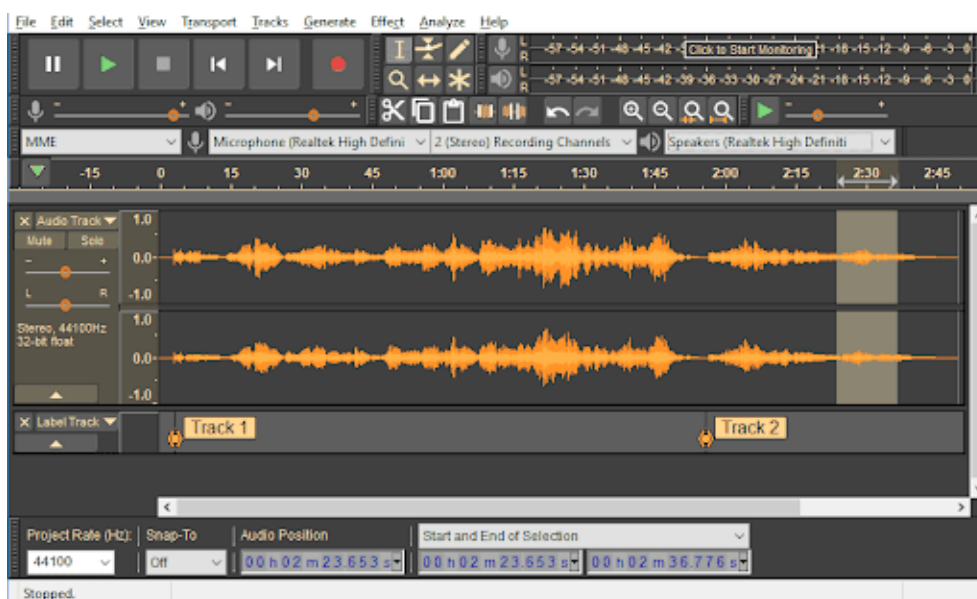
Fig.2: Overview of the Audacity software

If the podcaster aims to record better sound quality podcasts, which is recommended to offer content that is pleasant to listen to, he/ she can invest in a podcast microphone. However it is advisable to think in advance about the format of the podcast wanted. Indeed, if the person only wants to record podcasts indoors, a condenser microphone will be suitable, because they are of high quality and sensitive. On the other hand, if the person wishes to record outdoors too (to conduct interviews in noisy places such as bars or in the street)

2 https://www.thepodcasthost.com/equipment/the-best-podcasting-microphones-on-the-market/

it will be advisable to invest in a dynamic microphone which will pick up vocals whilst rejecting much of the sounds around and behind it. The condenser microphone Samson C01U PRO for ~100 euros is recommended for indoor recordings[2]. For this type of microphone, the podcaster may want to buy a pop filter in order to prevent wind and expiration noises to saturate the recording, as it is very sensitive. The Samson Q2U dynamic microphone, for an approximate budget of ~90 euros, will offer very good sound quality for outdoors recordings but can also be used for indoor recording[3]. And with an adapter the latter can even be driven by phones and tablets directly!

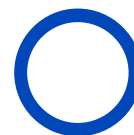When it comes to searching for music to use as a background in a podcast, podcast creators can't use any song or recording they like. Using copyrighted music without permission can result in their podcasts being banned from platforms like Apple Podcasts or Spotify. But they still can use music for their content, and even for free when it is a royalty-free music production. Unlike the commercial copyrighted music one might hear on the radio or listen to on Spotify, royalty-free music isn't subject to the same license. This means creators don't have to pay for a music license to use it in their podcast[4]. One can find, download and use such royalty-free music on platforms like Podcast.co, Pixabay Music, Freebeats.io, Free Music Archive. For extracts of interviews, films or programs that podcasters would like to integrate into their podcast, the legislation varies greatly depending on the country. However, it is quite easy to find the answers to these questions, especially from sites of information sciences or specialized in podcasts. And in many legislations, it is possible to use short clips when they are integrated into the argumentation of the podcast.

Last but not least: the distribution of podcasts. It is a very crucial step as it will directly impact the audience, where they will find the podcasts, how much the podcast can be downloaded and how much podcasts can be uploaded... The distribution begins with choosing a podcast host platform. As with any digital content, the creator will have to find a host in order to have a medium on which she/ he can share content with an audience. There are a few free options for hosting podcasts : Anchor, Buzzsprout and Podbean are the most known. But as the options are very restricted and the advertising and growth features are very limited, many podcasters settle for a paid subscription and suggest investing money in this step[5]. Buzzsprout and Podbean also offer paid subscriptions, with costs ranging from 12 to 25+ euros monthly. Once the podcast is hosted, the creator can choose to publish it on many platforms like spotify, apple podcasts with a so-called RSS feed which they will get from the podcast host.

2 https://www.thepodcasthost.com/equipment/the-best-podcasting-microphones-on-the-market/
3 https://www.thepodcasthost.com/equipment/samson-q2u-podcasting-review/
4 https://blog.podcast.co/create/royalty-free-music-for-podcasts
5 https://riverside.fm/blog/choosing-a-podcast-hosting-platform

GRAPHIC SUMMARY OF THE EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES NEEDED TO PRODUCE A PODCAST:

NO BUDGET MATERIAL:
Smartphone + headphones

SMARTPHONE FREE RECORDING APPS: Anchor, Speaker Studio, Podbean, GaragBand...

FOR ROYALTY-FREE MUSIC:
Podcast, Pixabay Music, Freebeats.io, Free Music Archive...

NO BUDGET PODCAST HOST:
Anchor, Buzzsprout and Podbean...

RECORDING **EDITING** **DISSEMINATION**

FREE PROGRAMS FOR COMPUTER:
Audacity, GarageBand (for Apple computer)

MEDIUM BUDGET PODCAST HOST:
Buzzsprout and Podbean's paid subscriptions

MEDIUM BUDGET MATERIAL:
Computer and entry-level USB microphone (100 eur)
- Indoor recording: condenser microphone
- Outdoor recording: dynamic microphone

EDIT SKILLS:
Youtube tutorials to learn how to use programs for podcasts

INSERT RSS FEED FROM YOUR PODCAST HOST ON STREAM PLATFORMS:
Spotify, Apple Podcasts...

Fig. 3: Equipment and resources to make a podcast

2.4. EXPERTISE AND SKILLS OF THE TRAINERS ORGANIZING TC ON PODCAST

A trainer operating in a creative - and yet technical - topic as podcasts has to possess a wide variety of skills ranging from aesthetic taste, technical knowledge, organizational and editorial skills and artistic skills as well.

In addition to that, it would be also nice if such a specialized trainer also has expertise in the field of non formal education and

We can divide the required skills in 5 main macro-areas.

▸ Technical Skills
▸ Aesthetic, Creativity and Artistic Skills
▸ Soft Skills
▸ Editorial & Content Creation Expertise
▸ Organizational & Training Method

TECHNICAL

Technical knowledge of music, audio engineering and acoustic is a must and shall not be traded for other skills. In fact an excellent audio product needs strong competencies in recording, acoustic treatment, editing and postprocessing. All of that is obtained by using specialized software and audio plugins.

Note: Audio plugins are pieces of specialized software that can process the audio signal to remove noise, raise the audio level, add special effects, create space and atmosphere and in general they contribute in having a professional product and a pleasant audio for the listeners.

In particular a trainer expert in podcast production should have the following characteristics.

▶ **INFORMATIC COMPETENCES:** this is an intrinsic and essential skill to have. Almost everything from the recording phase on will happen on a computer so a good trainer will have a broad knowledge of informatic and computer related technology

▶ **ELECTROACOUSTIC COMPETENCES:** this also includes knowledge of acoustic and psychoacoustic which means to have knowledge on how sound waves behave in the environment, how they are perceived by the human hearing and how the sound is transduced and replicated in both analog and digital realms.

▶ **ELECTROTECHNIQUE:** More often than not something will happen to the equipment. Usually it's not something good like worn out wires, broken headphones and plenty of other unexpected failures that can strike all kinds of equipment. This skill, if owned, will save a lot of time and money and probably will also save a live show or a recording day. It's not mandatory to have it, but it will turn a trainer into a superhero when things will get complicated.

▶ **AUDIO PRODUCTION COMPETENCES:** mixing techniques, equalization, compression, fading and automations, finalization and mastering aren't activities that you can improvise. It needs a lot of experience and working hours to transform an average audio recording in an excellent podcast. Fortunately nowadays we can find on the internet AI tools and platforms that can easy out the work of editing and processing. Nevertheless it's important to understand at least the main concepts of audio processing because that will also provide to the trainer extra tools for creativity and problem solution.

▶ **BROADCASTING STANDARDS:** If you plan to stream or to publish your podcast you need also to know what kind of file to submit. Each platform will have different requirements about file

formats, loudness levels and equalization.

▶ **ACOUSTIC TREATMENT:** What's one of the worst enemies of the podcaster? Reverb. Reverb is that echoing effect present in empty rooms or rooms with poor acoustic design. It creates reflections of sound in the room raising up the level of background noise. Reverb makes your voice sound weaker and drowns it inside the sound reflections. This is something to get rid before recording. There are no methods to eliminate it in post production so better to be aware of reverb before recording and take care of it moving in a better sounding room. It's also possible - and advisable - to create a fixed recording position and treat the environment around with sound absorbing material.

▶ **EQUIPMENT:** a good trainer should know the equipment alternatives on the market and be able to give advice based on equipment budget and case of use. Especially if dealing with neophytes, this is a skill very appreciated as it may help saving a lot of money and research time to someone new to the topic. This means also to be able to give advice on how to use the equipment and how to wire it properly for the intended use.

AESTHETIC, CREATIVITY & ARTISTIC SKILLS
To be a good trainer implies to be also a good producer. You won't be able to teach theater if you're not an actor yourself.

▶ **PUBLIC SPEAKING:** a trainer will have to teach how to use the voice and the narrative. A podcast is in fact a vocal storytelling act and because of that wannabe podcasters will have to learn and practice acting competences, public speaking skills and also vocal training.

▶ **STORYTELL:** most of the podcast formats will require a dose of storytelling and the ability of creating story nodes and developing a plot for each episode. A good storytelling approach will make the podcast more engaging and interesting thus sparking its success and building an audience. Trainers should be able to give at least some general advices on storytelling

▶ **LISTEN TO PODCASTS:** a general knowledge of what the market offers in terms of podcast published it's essential for a trainer, both to evaluate the podcast produced by trainees and to be able to teach the rhetoric and etiquette used by the professional podcast producers. Knowing what are the trending podcasts and how they are structured can also help in the creative phase to develop new ideas.

▶ For the same reasons above a good trainer must have an **ARTISTIC AND AESTHETIC TASTE** for the final product and be able to advise trainees on how to improve their podcast ideas.

CONTENT & EDITORIAL

Producing and running podcasts it's not just a matter of creativity. A strong capacity of building a growth strategy and being constant in the publishing is equally essential for the success and the longliving of the project.

THE RIGHT CONTENT FOR THE RIGHT TARGET: a trainer should be able to train about how to identify the target and how to address it with interesting content. It's fundamental to know exactly which content to provide for a podcaster to be relevant in its niche. Trainees should be able to do this research autonomously so they can proceed with content creation and modulate it accordingly to trending topic or niche changes.

PODCAST FORMATS: For each kind of audience there is a format that works better and each podcaster is best suited for a format according to its personality. That's why a trainer should know the vast majority of podcast formats and be able to create one, and also to advise trainees on what format is most-advised for its character and its goals.

EDITORIAL PLAN AND CALENDAR: Which content to publish and when? That's a question that can greatly impact the listening statistics of a podcast. The audience will be more engaged if you make it easy for them to listen. This means to choose a day of the week to release new episodes and to stick to the plan as much as possible. Trainees will need to know how to compile an editorial calendar to place the new releases and respect it also in the content provided which is established in the editorial plan. A trainer should provide trainees with those editorial tools and mindset.

PROMOTION: A podcast without promotion will most probably be listened to just by friends and family and also in this case you will have to tell them about, which is already an act of promotion. Whether the promotion will be made by word of mouth, posted on social networks or advertised on billboards, a trainer should be able at least to advise trainees on the proper media and promotion strategy to implement. Most of the time a website, social networks, newsletter and direct invitation to listen will be enough to start.

PUBLISHING: What's the best platform to publish a podcast? As most of the time the answer is: "it depends". Because of that a trainer should provide the tool to understand what is the best platform to publish in the mid-term. Changing platforms after an audience is already built is problematic, so better to start with the right step. According to the needs of the podcaster there are limitless options but usually free alternatives are more appreciated. A trainer shouldn't forget to advise on the
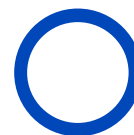
convenience of a multi-platform approach to improve the diffusion of the podcast.

SOFT SKILLS

▶ Must have experience in **NON FORMAL EDUCATION** and learn by doing or experiential learning approach.

▶ Technical trainers must have the **CAPABILITY TO SUMMARIZE** complex audio related topics to not-tech people. They must have a way to explain complex things in an easy way using metaphors and easy to understand examples.

▶ **CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT** where participants can play and explore their own voice and get the best out of it. Often the voice is perceived as very intimate so not everyone is capable of using it at 100%. A safe environment will also encourage shy people to give it a try and it will promote a more creative vibe between participants.

▶ **PROBLEM SOLVING:** if something goes wrong or not as planned.

▶ **IMPROVISATION:** It is important to experiment with improvisation, both to boost creativity and for live public speaking, infact not always a podcast is recorded in studio, sometimes it's a recording of a live event or show.

ORGANIZATIONAL & TRAINING METHOD

▶ Trainers will benefit from a consistent method to train, for example the **PODCAST TOOLKIT** proposed by Play - Podcast Launched at Youth project.

▶ Use a **LEARN BY DOING** approach for the technical things like speaking in front of a microphone, recording and mixing.

▶ Use a **STEP-BY-STEP** approach that also allows people not used to speaking in public to feel comfortable while speaking in front of a microphone.

2.5. EVALUATION OF YOUR PODCAST: LEARNING SELF-ASSESSMENT AND ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Here is explained a method to measure and analyze the performance of a podcast in order to collect data to retrieve insights on quality and create feedback for improvement. The assessment method consists of 3 main steps and it can be both qualitative and quantitative.

1. DEFINE ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES AND APPROACH

a) First of all determine what aspects are important to assess and set the assessment criterias.

b) You can determine both quantitative and qualitative criteria to assess your podcast.

c) Define how measurement will happen and from which source you will collect data. If your publishing platform has a dashboard for analytics you can access those insights and use them for your data harvesting.

d) For quantitative variables you may set different KPIs (Key Performance Index) on what to base the measurements (i.e. the number of subscriptions to your podcast).

e) For qualitative variables you may set a scale from a minimum to a maximum value (i.e. from 1 to 5) and give a score based on your feeling or ask other people to answer so you can have an external unbiased opinion.

2. COLLECT AND ANALYZE DATA AND EVIDENCES

Once you have set all the data sources from where to retrieve information, you have gathered all data on one platform so you can do an easier analysis. One of the easiest ways to do that consists in copy-pasting all the relevant measurements in one Google Sheet and disposing them in columns. You can use rows to divide the data in time frames that can be weekly or monthly.
Each week or month you have to remember to update data and start the analysis of the previous period. In this way you are also able to consider the time-based evolution of your insights and compare the difference between weeks or months. If you set aims and goals to reach you can evaluate if you succeeded or not.

3. REPORT AND FEEDBACK
Once you have analyzed your podcast data you can highlight your podcast strengths, spot the weakness and formulate hypotheses for new ideas to implement in your workflow. It is also time to evaluate all the internal and external feedback you received and determine changes and adjustments to your podcast. It's a good idea to create a brief document reporting just the main important results you got and take note of the changes you are going to make to your workflow.

ASSESSMENT APPROACH

You may use different ways to track results for your assessment. The most advisable of them is to create a Google Sheet to track general

information about your podcast. You can use a Google Document to create an assessment canva to be used to take note for each episode you publish.

With Google Sheets you can also create infographics to have a better sight over your progress.

You may want to create a SWOT analysis to better understand how you can improve your product.

STRENGTHS Describe what your podcast excels at	WEAKNESSES What stops your podcast from performing at its optimum level
OPPORTUNITIES Refer to favorable external factors that could give your podcast better results	THREATS Factors that have the potential be harmful for your podcast

Table no.1 : SWOT chart

DATA COLLECTION

Where will you collect your data from?

Depending on what your publishing platform provides, you can access general listening data for each episode of your podcast. Platforms like Apple Podcast, Google Podcast and Spotify amongst the others, include an internal dashboard with stats. If you are releasing your podcast on multiple platforms you will have to join all the data together or analyze the stats for each platform separately. This is up to you.

This is a not complete list of sources to get data and insights:

- Podcast platform dashboard
- Social media network: ask your audience for feedback
- Create a survey with Google Forms and send it to selected people from your audience.
- Peer review: ask your colleagues or podcaster friends for an advice on how to make it better and find the weakness and the strength points
- In some cases you can use Google Analytics to track the accesses to your podcast web page.
- If you have social accounts related to your podcast you can use the insight dashboard of that platform.
- You can set a Google Alert to be notified when someone is speaking about your podcast online.

PERFORMANCE INDEXES AND ANALYSIS

As said we can divide data in quantitative and qualitative variables. Here you find a list of the major KPI and variables you can use to analyze your podcast progress.
You can measure the engagement and the impact generated on the audience with the following quantitative metrics.

QUANTITATIVE KPI:

- Number of unique listeners
- Number of subscribers or followers on podcast platforms
- How many times your podcast is shared on social networks
- Social media engagement (how many shares, comments, likes, follows etc.)
- Number of downloads
- Listening time: this is the total time listened by your audience, you can also split this stat in:
    - Average session listening time: it indicates the average length of a listening session.
    - Average length per episode listened: you can use this metric to establish the average percentage of people that listen to an entire episode.
- Retention rate: this is the ratio of returning listeners vs your total audience and it gives you an idea of what is the fidelization of your public.
- Reviews: this is how many stars your podcast is rated on streaming platforms.
- Website and social media traffic: how much traffic is coming from podcast platforms to your website and social media. This is a metric that helps you understand the engagement of your audience.
- Conversions: it's a metric of engagement with the promotional materials or call-to-action you made during the show. A conversion can be a donation, a social media follow, a patreon subscription, reserving a spot for an event, and so on.

You can as well determine trends: is your podcast growing, stagnating or dying? You have to evaluate the change referred to in the time-frame of your analysis.

> % change in subscribers
> % change in listens/downloads
> % change in traffic generated to the website
> % change in minutes listened

QUALITATIVE METRICS

Qualitative metrics are less analytical and more descriptive about the attributes of your podcast. To get insights you can ask someone to answer the next questions or you can self-assess them.

- Content quality:
  - Is the topic well explained?
  - Is it clear for the audience to understand?
  - Does the content provide value to the listener?
  - How much is it entertaining, informative, inspiring, educational?
  - Is the length of an episode ok or should you modify it?
  - Is the editing good enough?
  - Are the speaking skills appropriate?
  - Is the format structure well designed?
  - Is the speaker engaging enough?

- Audio quality:
  - Listening to the podcast is pleasant for the ears?
  - Can you spot distortions or clippings in the recording?
  - Loudness levels consistent?
  - Equalization is balanced enough?

- Impact:
  - Does it have an impact? How much and on who?
  - Does it have any added values? For example community building, professional education, etc…

- Networking, referrals and reviews:
  - How often is your podcast recommended by other people?
  - What does the critic think about your podcast? Check on online magazines or podcast charts.
  - How do people talk about your podcast? You can check on audience reviews or put a trigger on Google Alert.

You can check those questions periodically by answering yourself or ask your peers and your audience to take a brief survey so you can also track your qualitative progress during this journey.

Don't forget also to self assess about your own engagement in the project and how much you are enjoying this activity and your level of satisfaction. You have to be the first one to be happy about the results you are creating.

TIPS BOX_ Developing a Podcast

In case of difficulty with the technical aspects of recording, editing and broadcasting podcasts, one can use the many free tutorials available on youtube to familiarize yourself with these tools in a concrete way! Many online blogs are also dedicated to these issues, specifically for podcasts.

Before one starts producing their podcasts, it is recommended to listen to several podcasts from different creators in order to become aware of the diversity of practices and techniques. It may give inspiration and ideas!

Before investing money in equipment, the podcaster should identify his needs by finding the podcast format corresponding to their needs and envies, as these investments need to be made according to the latters.

It is important to mention the importance of regularity in the production of episodes of the same podcast. Consistency in the length of each episode is important. If the listener knows in advance how long a new episode of a podcast will be, it will be easier for that person to find a time to listen to it. (If each episode of a podcast is 20 minutes long and a listener regularly makes routes of that length, then that person will know in advance that they can listen to an entire episode on their route.

Audio quality must be more than good: audio must be pleasant for the listener's ears, especially if they listen to it with headphones. An audio which is overcompressed or unbalanced in equalization can tire very fast our earring and so provoking a drop in focus or the abandonment of the listening session.

It is better to work from the source on. Instead of overprocessing and editing your podcast after recording has happened, it's better to start with the right recorded material. This means that the recording has to have a very low level of noise and very low reverberation. If you cannot obtain those conditions it's better to start recording from the beginning in a better environment.

Right after recording remember every time to check the audio material you have recorded, if it's not good enough make a second take.

Pops, thuds and sibilances are difficult to get rid of after recording so pay attention and use anti-pop filters in front of the microphone.

Learn how to use the distance from the microphone and your vocal loudness. Doing this will avoid clipping, difference in audio levels, room noise (reverb) and proximity effect (bass boost).

When recording it's better to take notes or put markers on the recording to recall very fast which are the good takes and which are not. This speeds up the editing phase very much.

It's a good idea to have a written plot to recall all the main points of the show and take notes on it. It's not a good idea to read directly from a script if you are not able to do it properly, so you should practice both in reading and speaking off the cuff.

Don't forget to add metadata to your podcast tracks and to use a standard way to name each episode. You may include the season number, the episode number, the episode's title, the podcast's name and eventually the names of guests.

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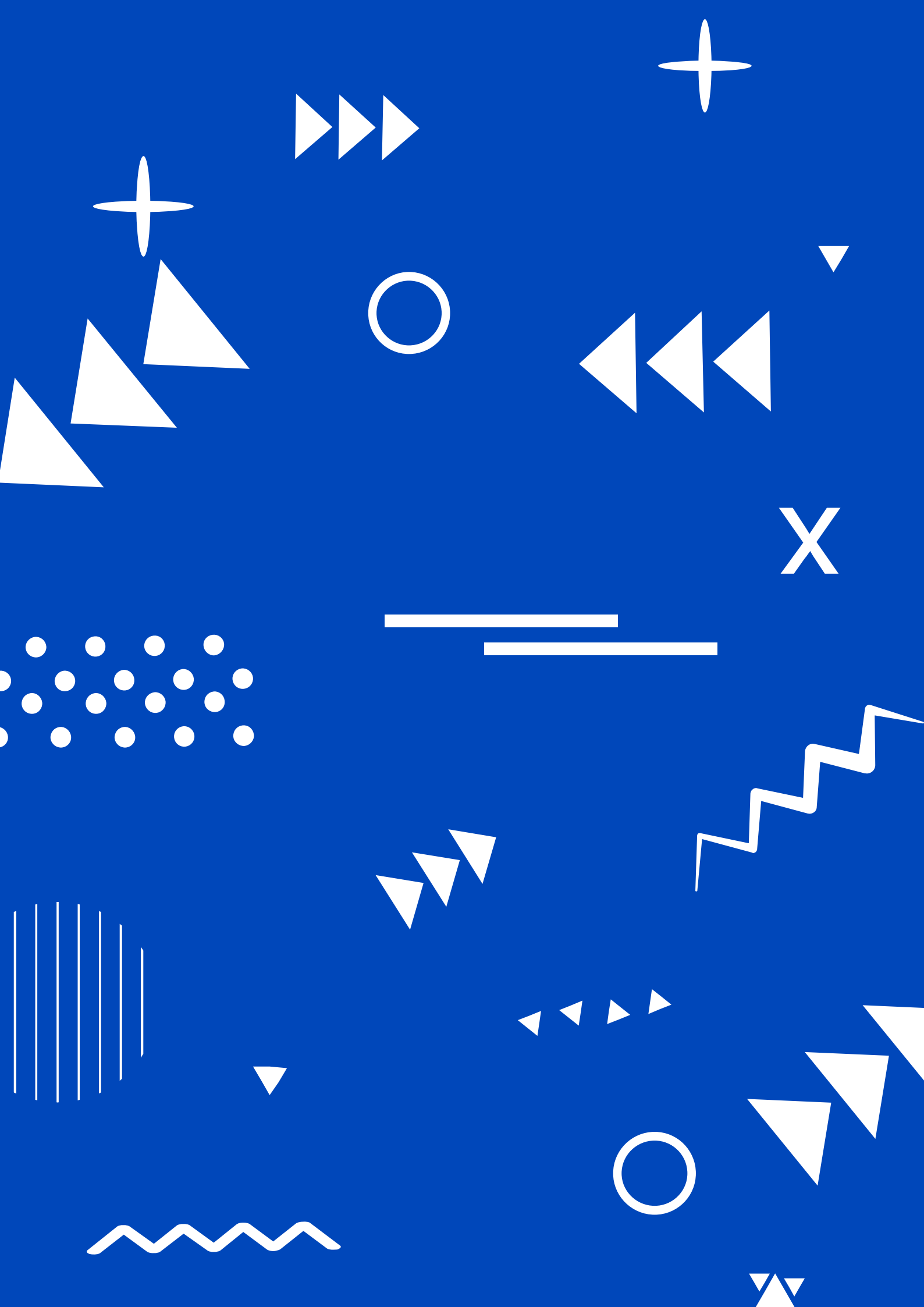
3 ▶ TRAINING COURSE ON PODCAST

3.1. WHAT KIND OF PREPARATION IS NEEDED FOR ORGANIZING A TC ON A PODCAST? WHAT ARE THE BEST

The design of the training, should include at least some of the following items:

> well structured;
> varied training methods;
> logical flow;
> used appropriate models or concepts;
> ideas I can take back and use straight away;
> appropriate balance of theory and practice;
> good handouts, visual aids or workbooks.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO FOCUS ON, IN ORDER TO PREPARE A TRAINING COURSE, NOT ONLY ON A PODCAST?

1. Define the general information about the training on podcast
Make a description about:

- The main aim of the training, taking in consideration your target group (participants) and what is their previous knowledge and experience about podcasts - if they are beginners, if they have a theoretical preparation, but not a practical one or if they are used to work with podcasts and the training is focused on deepening their know-how.

- The specific objectives and the results you want to obtain. Don't forget about knowing what the participants want to obtain, in terms of knowledge/ information, abilities, competencies and attitudes. To be sure that you will know what aspects regarding podcasts you need to focus on, make a questionnaire to find out the needs of the participants and their background. The objectives will be defined in a SMART version, taking in consideration all the information we talked about above.

2. Clarify key topics and related concepts

▶

Topic selection - to make an all covering podcast topic is an idealistic purpose, so you need to decide the exact topic of the training. Regarding the topic, you need to define:

a) The main concepts that participants need to know

b) The related concepts. In this part, it is important to think on the specific of your participants, because every podcast elaboration process has 2 main components:

- The message - what the participants want to transmit to their auditory through the podcast episodes they will produce. For helping them define that, you can include in the training some sessions in which they clarify in their mind what and how they want to communicate with the auditory and what they want to remain in the auditory's mind after listening to their podcasts.

- The technical process of producing a podcast - about equipment, technical skills, editing programs and all the information that can be related with the producing process.

What is another important element regarding the information and concepts transmitted in the training course is that each training on podcast should focus on:

Basic knowledge about producing a podcast (both on content and technical part)

Specific knowledge of the target group (participants), related with their activity field.

3. Define the general information about the training on podcast
About organizing the material, we should take in consideration 2 elements:

- The theoretical sessions - and for these, it is important that besides the presentations on the sessions, the participants have some handouts to use also after the training. In the handouts, it is important to have also images, because most of the times, in podcast topic, there are some technical details that needs to have screenshots (especially on the recording and editing part)

- The practical sessions - podcast cannot be teached only theoretical , but the participants need to develop their skills on producing a podcast and learn by doing, even if the results of the training will not be a final podcast episode, but a collection of several examples of what the participant can do with the know-how gained in the training course.

4. Plan presentation techniques

In every training, the learning methods are the key of a successful training, because through the methods, the participants can integrate

the knowledge about producing podcasts. The methods selected should take in consideration the key and related concepts you want to transmit as a trainer, but also the learning styles of the participants. In each group of training, there are people with different learning styles and one of the most popular theories about the way people learn, starting with the work of David Kolb. He proposed that people progress round a cycle of learning events, the starting point being determined by their own preferred style. The four elements are:
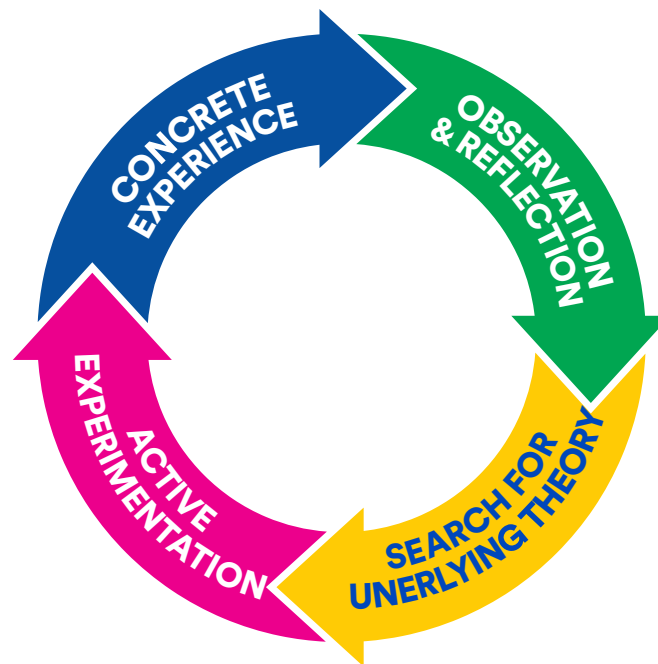

Fig. no.4: Learning style cycle

- Many people like to learn by having a concrete experience, often with limited preparation. Example – many people when faced with a new software programme for podcast editing will say: 'Just let me try it myself – I shouldn't need any help if it's good software.

- Others learn by watching someone else performing the task or reflecting on what they've seen. Using the software analogy, many people will say: 'Would you show me how to do it before I try myself?'

- Yet others will need to understand the underlying theory before attempting the task themselves. Back to the software: 'Can you let me read the manual first please…'

- Finally there are those who prefer practical experimentation in order to learn. 'I wonder how it might help me to complete that task…?'

While most people progress round all four stages in the cycle, we tend to spend more time at some stages than others, depending on our own preferred learning 'style'.
Have in mind to include all these elements during the training sessions, in order to cover the style of all participants.

One of the most important things in a training course on podcasts is that, after the training, each participant to have clear:

> Why does he/she want to produce a podcast - what is the vision?
> What is the audience on which is focusing?
> What wants to transmit to that audience?
> How is going to make the content in order to achieve the goals?
> How to record, edit and promote the podcast?
> How to evaluate the final result and develop the podcast further?

For all these to be achieved, the trainer should help the participants to make their own Podcast Project, in which to include at least the answers from the questions above. The process can include the following elements, that are interconnected:

5. Include evaluation

6. Focus on timing

IDENTIFY YOUR STAKEHOLDERS

You've been asked to design a course – where do you start? It's tempting to get stuck into the detailed design of the course, but there are more important aspects to get to grips with. First of all, you need to establish your training design team. Start by identifying all the key people who have an interest in the project – in current jargon, the 'stakeholders'. This sounds so obvious but, if you don't involve all the right people, you can end up wasting days of effort. Not to mention damaged reputations! (Bray, 2009, p. 21)

3.2. MAIN ASPECTS TO CONSIDER IN THE SELECTION OF TRAINERS/PARTICIPANTS OF A TC

SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

Depending on the topic, you may need input from acknowledged experts in the field to provide up-to-the-minute advice or guidance on the way the topic is being implemented, or how it may change in the light of future technological developments or legislative changes. This may be you or, depending on the topic, someone in an operational department.
You also have another issue to consider – do you employ internal or external people?

Internal people:

▶ **They will have extensive knowledge of current initiatives, be soaked in the culture and need no introduction to current processes or procedures.**

▶ **They will be less expensive than external subject matter experts or designers, but may not have so much flexibility in terms of availability.**

External people:

▶ They bring a fresh approach and are able to share best practice from other companies, unencumbered by all the internal politics or 'baggage'.

▶ The downsides are that they will need to spend time familiarizing themselves with your internal procedures or initiatives and, of course, they generally cost more than internal people.

So the choice may simply come down to costs, time or just availability to enable a project to be completed in a given timescale. (Bray, 2009).

PARTICIPANTS SELECTION

When organizing a training course on podcasts is important to take in consideration several aspects:

● The background of the participants - age, studies, technical/content related skills and previous experience regarding podcasts

● The needs of the participants and how these needs can be fulfilled by the topics of the training about podcast

It is important that, before selecting the participants, to have clear the purpose of the training, the specific objectives and the indicators in terms of knowledge, abilities, competencies and attitudes. EVen all these are settled, after the participants selection, it is important to link the needs of the participants and the 2 aspects mentioned above with the aspects included in the training curricula and make some adaptations.

For having enough information about participants, in the selection phase, the organizer of the training can send a questionnaire, through which to collect the following information:

> Personal data and contact data

> Educational background

> Professional background

> Previous knowledge about podcast

> Technical skills about using and developing podcasts

> Previous knowledge about podcast

> Technical skills about using and developing podcasts

> Motivation to participate in the training

> Specific topics/subjects of discussion - targeted by the participants

Taking in consideration that a training course on podcasts is very specific, it is important that the group of participants be homogeneous. In this way, the trainer can set the exercises and interactive presentations from the same level of information or skills.

If the group is heterogeneous, it is important for the trainer to set the activities from each session in such a way to involve everyone and the participants to make exchange of know-how and good practices one from another. For example, the trainer can put in an exercise about editing podcasts, different people, including a person who is technical, another one who has skills on promotion and dissemination and another one on content and speaking.

3.3. HOW TO SCHEDULE A TC ON PODCAST: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TC DRAFT

A training course on the topic of podcasts is tailored around the skills and the competences you develop during the process of creating a podcast. Those skills are focused on organizational matters such as preparing the podcast, the implementation of it as well as the final touch after the implementation.

Some of the skills that are essential for creating a podcast hence are important to involve in a training course are:

- **Speaking skills:**
  - ▶ Voice exercises
  - ▶ Breathing exercises
  - ▶ Public speaking
  - ▶ Interview skills
- **Digital skills:**
  - ▶ Audio settings and production
  - ▶ Sound technology
  - ▶ Video filming
  - ▶ Familiarity on uploading and sharing content
- **Marketing skills**
  - ▶ Social media

- ▶ Social media
- ▶ Podcast advertising
- ● **Organizational skills**
  - ▶ Clear planning
  - ▶ Record your ideas
  - ▶ Set up a schedule
  - ▶ Stay true to deadlines

Creating a podcast requires multiple skills to integrate altogether and bring into the content creation of this new and promising tool. It is important to start with finding your core reason by creating the outline of your podcast episode and include in the training course a process of creating an outline, tools and methods as well as practical examples. The topic is also crucial to make the podcast stand out and be targeted to the specific audience you aim at. It is important to create a method of choosing your topic and bring some tools that will make the process more clear and concise.

Additionally, format is essential to bring the message and the medium into alignment. There are various formats a podcast can take such as: solo host monologue, co hosted show, interviews, storytelling scripted narratives, documentaries etc. And create a planning and a task list on the format, the time length, the frequency, the layout of the podcast so it actually conveys the message and the values you put as a goal from the beginning.

In training about a podcast it is important to practice and experiment with different and various tools on how to plan and organize a podcast episode, so all the preparation for the actual recording as well part or the whole recording. You can try different tools according to the equipment of your project and to the capacity of your target group to work on complex or not tools. There are ways of creating podcasts solely from your phone using specific applications (Canva and Anchor) or by experimenting with specific practical tools (Podcastle) in order to create a common tool to work in smaller groups.

It is also essential to understand the medium of podcasts better by breaking down and analyzing in detail the podcast as a tool, its history and its uses so far, its audience and outreach in the last couple of years as well as the different possibilities it can have and give to an organization to reach and work on its goals. A training course consisting of five days excluding the travel days will include the introduction of the topic of podcasts, the various tools and methods on approaching the steps of creating a podcast, experimentation and creation and reflection and feedback on the practical approaches implemented.

DAY 1 Intro on the project and the group dynamic and first understanding of the topic of the podcasts, what it is and how it started. How people are using podcasts in the last couple of years and what are the various types. What are the expectations for the training and the goals youth workers will put for the podcast creation.

DAY 2 Planning and Preparing for your podcasts, acquaintance with different digital and marketing skills around podcasts. Finding your voice and your values as well as defining your target group.

DAY 3 Start the process of step by step planning of the podcast, the topic and the format. Finalizing the small working groups and creating the script according to the skills and process analyzed in the previous days.

DAY 4 Experimenting the tools on how to prepare for a podcast and work in the small groups to implement the steps towards the implementation. Practice the tools and create the content by recording part or the whole podcast.

DAY 5 Analyze and showcase the results of the practice and the content created. Self reflect on the process and the group dynamic, give and get feedback on the final result and put your final goals into the use of podcasts for your organization's purpose and goals.

How to schedule:

1. Brainstorm list of topics
2. Get inspired by others' podcasts that spark your creativity
3. Keyword research based on your target audience
4. What is your audience asking? Try to answer those questions with your podcast.
5. Ask your audience
6. Keep generating topics that come to your mind, make it a habit
7. Use a tool to create your editorial calendar/schedule (Trello, Notion, Asana)

In a training course on podcasts it is essential to practice and experiment the tools through trials and examples that will help youth workers to break down the process into more tangible steps that are easier to comprehend when they are practiced within some case studies groups.

3.4. ANALYSIS OF THE PHASES OFPLANNING, RECORD, EDIT, PUBLISH, PROMOTE

All phases are equally important and each one should be given ample

time and focus during the TC for the participants to develop a complete picture of what it means to start your own podcast. The suggested division of the work process includes the following phases presented in a chronological order: planning, recording, editing, publishing and promoting. The only exception might be promoting which has been put last, in order to meet the needs of the TC structure, but in practice, it can already be launched earlier, simultaneously and in increasing intensity with the editing and publishing phases, which is something that should be made clear to the participants. The content of each phase enriched with practical approaches and tips can be found below.

PLANNING

It is a crucial step in the podcast creation process since it sets the basis and the backbone of the whole project. Your role as a trainer includes, among other things that will follow suit, to develop a friendly and motivating atmosphere as well as structured guidelines that will accompany the participants throughout the planning process preferably in smaller working groups. It is relatively easy to get demotivated in this phase since many questions arise and numerous decisions have to be made in order to solidify the idea and the practicalities of the overall process. Therefore the trainer should insist that the participants have patience and that although discussion is key, final decisions have to be made so that the podcast starts getting a more concrete shape, which is deemed necessary before moving on to the next step.

Some important questions that the participants should be provided with and which they should address within their working groups are the following:

What will the exact topic of their podcast be?

It should be something that excites and motivates them so that it is sustainable and keeps them interested in the long run. A good exercise to test that is by suggesting that they come up with a list of 20 episodes so that they can verify in practice if their topic is suitable for a podcast.

What will the name of their podcast be?

The name is an important and effective way to catch people's attention and get them interested in the podcast. It can be something smart, funny and representative of the participants and their organization's field.

▶ You can browse different podcasts on Spotify for inspiration.

What will the format of the podcast be?

▶ Key parameters they should define include the number of hosts,

whether they want to do interviews, the frequency of the episodes and the duration. Something extra the participants could be invited to do is to come up with the artwork of the podcast (main image/logo, music with free copyrights).

RECORD

The equipment that can be used to record a podcast vary greatly according to the budget of the organization or the individual that initiates the idea.

In order to facilitate the young people and prevent them from starting worrying about the cost of an expensive equipment set, you can point out that even though during the training they will be using a rather professional set, they can start by recording their podcast with the help of their phone. They will have good quality results and as beginners they will be able to take the process one step at a time, both in terms of budget and technical skills.

TIP: No matter if they own an iPhone or Android device, they can record the podcast using the standard recording app or one of the following free apps: Voice Recorder, Voice Notes, Easy Voice Recorder and Smart Voice Recorder.

When it comes to recording, the participants might be interested in approaching their podcast a bit more professionally since the beginning. In this case, it is advisable that they get a microphone which they can connect through a USB portal to their phone or computer. The quality will undoubtedly be better and the budget won't be raised too high. Some really good and long lasting USB microphones include the Samson Q2U, Blue Snowball iCE USB Mic, Samson Meteor Mic and Blue Yeti USB Mic.

If they want to take a step further, you could advise the participants to invest in a set of headphones. Some budget podcast headphones are: the Audio-Technica ATH-M20x, Superlux HD 681 and Sennheiser 280 PRO.

EDIT

This part is also crucial to the podcast production and your role as a trainer is to underline that the recording and editing phases might be overlapping. To be more precise, should the participants decide to use their phone as a recording device (which is the most basic option, as presented above) they will be able, in most cases, to edit the audio file on the same app and therefore delete and rearrange specific parts of the recording.

In case they choose to invest in a USB microphone, the wisest technique to recommend is for them to use a recording / editing software so they work more efficiently and without wasting too much

time. This type of software will be able to recognize their microphone as an inbound sound recording device and they will immediately have access to the audio file, which they have the possibility to edit straight away without requiring any advanced knowledge or skills. The features vary again but there are good and free software options that have been widely used by podcasters of all levels and experiences. Below you can find some top recommendations:

▶ **AUDACITY:** good quality, free-of-charge audio recording and editing software, easy to download and access. It caters to almost all podcasting needs and offers a variety of features but it can be slightly hard to navigate for absolute beginners.

▶ **ALITU:** great tool for beginners as it facilitates a lot of the podcast making process. It offers the possibility to add music, clear the sound and much more. Although there is a free trial provided, Alitu requires a fee.

▶ **ANCHOR:** popular and free choice for podcast recording which features a browser-based software and a mobile app version. Contrary to Audacity, it is possible to record with guests in case of interviews, which can be very handy. However, Anchor falls a bit short in editing features.

▶ **RIVERSIDE:** both free and paid version. Ideal for recording remotely as it is possible to invite up to 7 guests. It offers a wide range of features and many automated tools.
In one of your relative TC sessions, you can devote some time to exploring and getting familiar with one of the software options.

In order to be able to edit a podcast episode correctly, it is important to listen to it carefully, remove long pauses and background noise, equalizing noise levels particularly when it comes to voices and finally add some music at the beginning (into), the end (outro) or at any other moment deemed necessary.

PUBLISH

This phase of the podcast - creating process requires clear explanation from the trainer's side because there are a few existing misconceptions. There are two important concepts to be determined: the Podcast Hosting Platform (or Podcast Host) and the different Podcast Directories. The first is the virtual place where the podcast episodes are stored and the second one pertains to the platforms that distribute the podcast to the listeners (Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, TuneIn). Therefore the podcast is not directly uploaded to the directories but it has to pass through the podcast hosts.

Below you can find the process explained step by step:

1. Choose a Podcast Host and create an account (ex. BuzzSprout, RSS.com, Anchor, Speaker, Libsyn, Springcast, Podbean).
2. Upload the podcasts details like name and description and the audio files.
3. It is necessary to upload at least one episode on the podcast host and then the show can be submitted to various directories like Spotify and Apple Podcasts. This needs to be done only once and after the respective directory approves the request, the episodes will be posted there automatically as soon as they are released on the chosen podcast hosting platform.

PROMOTE

The participants and future podcasters should also be given some tools and guidelines on the final and ongoing process of podcast promotion in order to reach as many listeners as possible and communicate their message. The promotion phase, either in a mouth-by-mouth fashion or through social media, can take off even before the publishing phase in order to inform potential listeners of the upcoming launch of the podcast. In the following list you can find different suggestions that can be applied depending on your Training Course structure and your participants' needs.

GENERAL ADVICE:

- Present the launch of the podcast as a big event by communicating it to your network both individually and on social media.
- Ask people to subscribe to your podcast and thank everyone to shares the info with their own network.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS:

- The participants can create an account on different social media platforms for the podcast where they can post news, upcoming episodes, quotes and important information. The accounts can function as a communication channel with the audience as the latter can be encouraged to send messages and reach out if they have questions or suggestions. However, this option requires some additional time and energy directed to the accounts management.
- In case some of the participants want they can even create a website where the episodes will be stored.
- One or two days before every episode release they should be advised to make posts on social media (Facebook posts or Instagram stories) to remind their audience of the upcoming episode.

- They can add the Spotify link (as it is one of the most popular) to their social media bio, email signature or organization website, practically everywhere they present themselves.

3.5. EVALUATION OF THE TRAINING COURSE: LEARNING SELF-ASSESSMENT AND ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

As in each training course from the field of non-formal education (and not only), also on training regarding podcasts it is important to make an evaluation, on different levels.
First, it is important to evaluate the achievements of the participants, taking in consideration the targeted dimensions (that the trainer established when designing the curricula). From this point of view, you can evaluate:

a) Information/ knowledge

b) Abilities

c) Competencies

d) Attitudes

The methodology of evaluation can be focused on 2 types of evaluation:

a) Individual assessment

b) Group assessment

Another typology of evaluation can be:

a) Self-evaluation - is the ability to examine yourself to find out how much progress you have made. It requires trainees to monitor their own abilities and evaluate strengths and weaknesses. It puts employees largely in charge of their own development.

b) External evaluation - made by the trainer or made between participants

There are also 5 Levels of Training Evaluation

LEVEL 1: Reaction, Satisfaction, and Intention - Center the learner by assessing their satisfaction with the training and their motivation to apply what they've learned.

LEVEL 2: Knowledge Retention - focuses on what the learner retained from their training program. A learning test is helpful to ensure that learners understand how to apply their new knowledge. Although the learner knows how to implement a skill, there's no guarantee that they will apply their new skills on the job.

- **LEVEL 3:** Application and Implementation - we use a variety of follow-up methods to determine whether learners are applying new skills on the job, like behavioral assessments and assignments followed by in-depth knowledge checks. While Level 3 evaluation may prove that the learner is successfully applying training, it doesn't guarantee the impact

  LEVEL 4: Impact - focuses on the actual results achieved from a training program and how these results impact the organization. This is done by measuring output, quality, costs, time, and customer satisfaction.

  LEVEL 5: Return on Investment - The reinforcement scorecard provides an overview of the evaluation levels 1 to 4 from the reinforcement course. Based on these values, the ROI (Level 5) calculation is determined by the organization.

| TIPS BOX_ Training Course on Podcast |
|---|
| Every podcast episode should be released on the same day of the week and even better on the same hour (Extra Tip: the beginning of the week is considered the best moment). |
| The participants should be trained on how to position themselves in front of the microphone while recording. |
| The podcast can have its own jingle, which functions as a memorable feature and gives a sense of familiarity to the listeners. |
| The tone of voice should be underlined as highly important. It should be engaging and inviting but without sounding too artificial or unnatural. In relation to that the host/hostess can have some notes in front of them while recording but they shouldn't be just reading them out loud because the result will be lacking energy and authenticity. |
| While recording, if the speaker makes a mistake a good way to act on it is to pause briefly and clap once in front of the microphone. Later on the person who takes care of the editing will be able to identify the spots they need to erase as there's going to be a peak in the sound on the audio file. |
| Point out to the participants that it would be wise to check on google if the name they chose for their podcast isn't already being used by someone else. |
| Highlight the importance of using music, jingles and artwork in general that are copyright free. |
| Stress sufficiently that they shouldn't get discouraged by the technical part of editing and recording! There's always a solution: they can ask for someone's help or they can try multiple software/platforms in order to see what works best for them. |
| If they want to do remote interviews they can either use Skype to record them or one of the platforms suggested above that include the feature in the first place. |
| The participants should be the ones to decide the length of their episodes but they should be advised to keep it under 1 hour and have an overall consistency among them in terms of duration. |
| In order to help them decide on the language style they want to use, you can suggest that they come up with a listener persona that represents their target group. This will also help them sound natural while recording as they can imagine addressing the listener persona they have created. |

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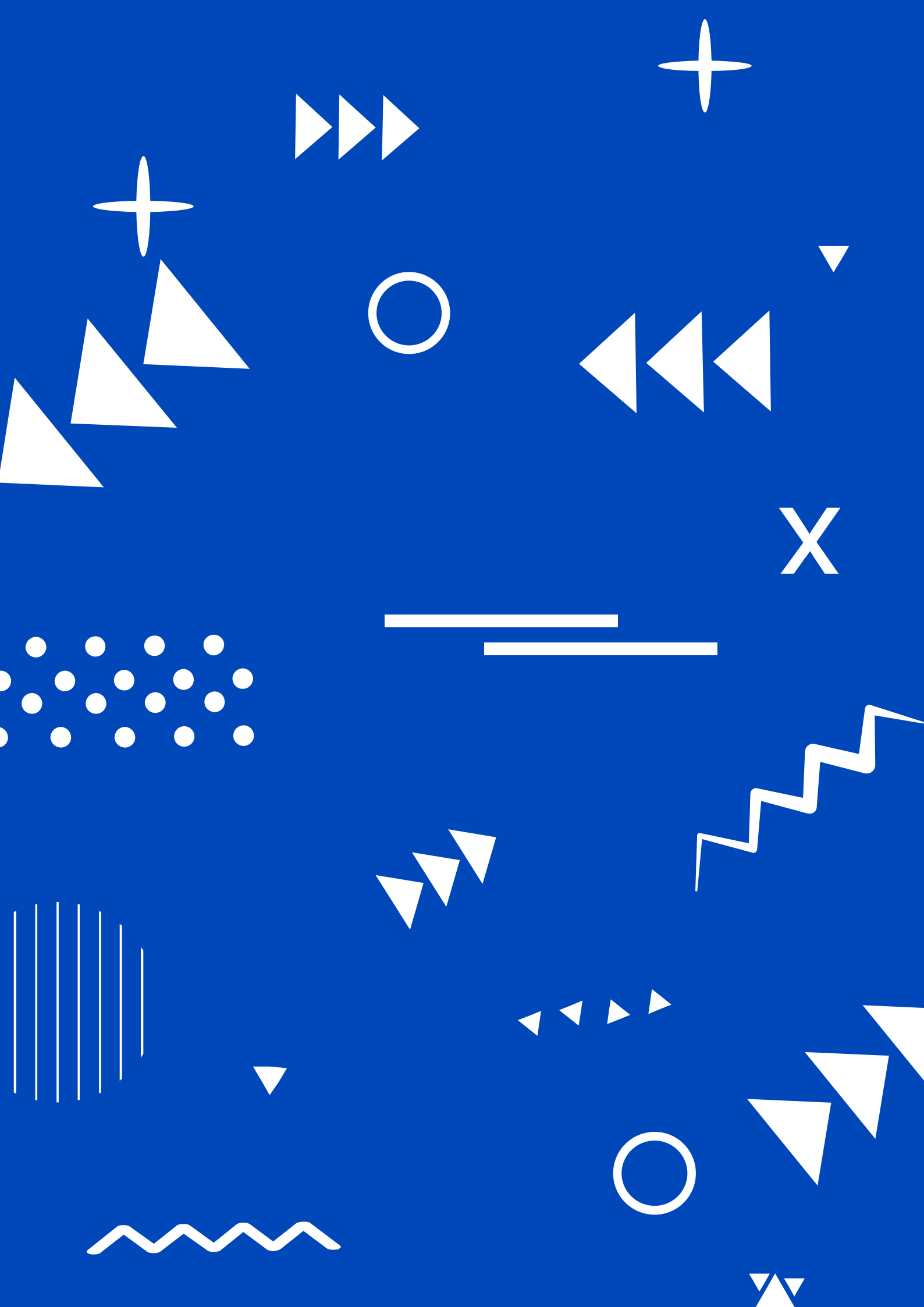
4 DISSEMINATION PLANNING

4.1. WHAT IS A DISSEMINATION STRATEGY? WHICH ARE THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF A DISSEMINATION PLAN? CONDITIONS TO ORGANIZE IT (LOGISTICAL, ENVIRONMENTAL, ETC)

The dissemination activity of a training course requires a detailed plan that takes into account various aspects: to develop an effective and efficient strategic plan, it is necessary to take into account several variables, which are interconnected and complementary between each other.

If the planning and implementation phases of a training course play a key role, the same can be said for the dissemination phase.

How to communicate the objectives to be achieved externally? How to involve the different stakeholders in the different phases of dissemination?

These are just a few questions that must be defined in advance, even before the official start and preparation of the training course itself.

4.1.1. WHICH ARE THE STEPS TO BUILD A DISSEMINATION STRATEGY?

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO FOCUS ON, IN ORDER TO PREPARE A TRAINING COURSE, NOT ONLY ON A PODCAST?

There are 5 stages in the development of a dissemination strategy, which are:

> Define the structure
> Define the objectives
> Define the target groups
> Define the tools and channels
> Evaluation and adjustment

Figure no. 5: Stages in the development of a dissemination strategy

DEFINE THE STRUCTURE

What should the structure of a dissemination plan include?
It is essential the key role played by all partners, each of which is able to make its own contribution in defining it; once defined, it is important to clarify the role and tasks of each partner, in order to plan each individual task. Once the objectives have been defined, we move on to the analysis of the target groups and the key messages that must be transmitted to them, through the appropriate tools and channels of dissemination.
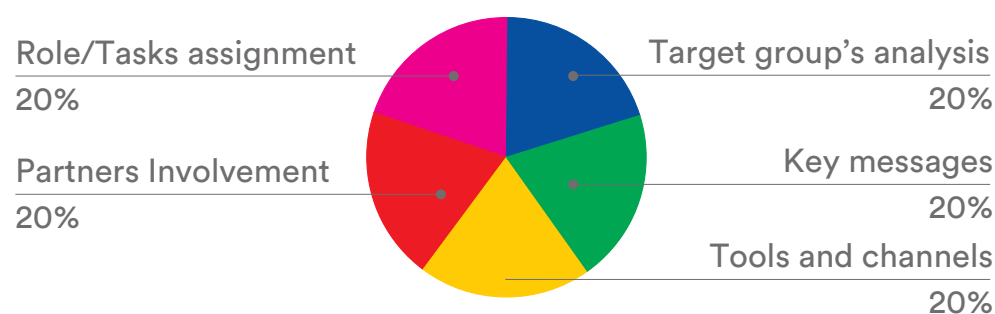
STRUCTURE OF A DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

Role/Tasks assignment
20%

Partners Involvement
20%

Target group's analysis
20%

Key messages
20%

Tools and channels
20%

Figure no. 6: Elements of the structure of a Dissemination Plan

DEFINE THE OBJECTIVES

What should the structure of a dissemination plan include?
Firstly, the structure must contain the general and more specific objectives of the strategy. It is important to take into consideration each project objective and link it to the dissemination strategy: in this way it is easier to develop a common vision.

As an example of dissemination objectives:

- build and execute an effective and tailored communication and dissemination plan to involve the identified target groups and ensure the best impact of the project in each community and across the network
- communicate and disseminate the results within the project to identified target groups, through relevant dissemination channels, to ensure effective positioning of the project, the display and delivery of its results and through the network - to create the basis for a solid legacy and sustainability beyond the end of the project, to ensure good internal communication between partners, with regular updates on progress and results.

DEFINE THE TARGET GROUPS

Another aspect to include in the structure is the identification of the primary and secondary target groups (also defining their detailed analysis): it is essential to know who our strategy is aimed at, in order to combine our needs with those of the stakeholders concerned and develop a message that is consistent and compatible with all the stakeholders involved.

EXAMPLES OF TARGET GROUPS	Young people, youth workers, trainers, young adults, people facing geographical, economical obstacles, institutions, universities, radio, TVs, newspaper, NGOs, public authorities (local, regional, national, international level), general public

Figure no. 7: Examples of target groups

DEFINE THE TOOLS AND CHANNELS

Once the detailed analysis of all the target groups has been carried out, it becomes essential to define the most appropriate tools to reach them. Here it becomes important to choose the best channels to reach all our recipients, by carrying out online and offline

dissemination activities.
What are the main social media channels used by your consortium?

EVALUATION AND ADJUSTMENT

Finally, the structure should include an evaluation phase, to see and measure the effects of the strategy, making adjustments and modifying small details to better respond to any unexpected need. It is essential to keep the plan flexible, in consideration of the significant variables that can have an impact on it, during the whole project's life cycle.

4.2 MAIN METHODS OF DISSEMINATION

Once the different objectives of the dissemination strategy and the different target groups (direct and indirect) have been identified, it is necessary to move on to the identification of the message to be conveyed and the most appropriate methods to share the developed content.
At the basis of everything, there must be a total agreement with the other partners of the project, in order to join forces and generate synergies to reach the recipients of the project and promote its visibility, both locally and internationally.

4.2.1 WHICH ARE THE MAIN METHODS TO USE TO DISSEMINATE YOUR TRAINING COURSE?

The dissemination methods of a training course can be divided into online and offline: based on the type of project, you can think of using only some of them, of using only those online, as well as of making a balanced mix that helps to achieve the objectives of the agreed dissemination strategy.
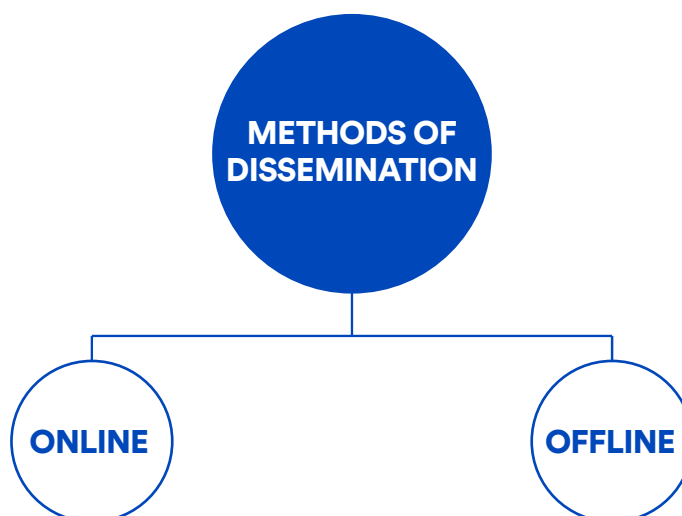

Fig. no. 8: Methods of dissemination

Following the breakdown of online and offline dissemination activities, we can analyze different methods that can be used in disseminating the dynamics of the training course to the target groups (primary and secondary), in the phase that goes from its preparation to its conclusion, passing through the implementation of the same.

4.2.2. OFFLINE DISSEMINATION METHODS

As offline dissemination methods, we have:

▶ **CREATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF PROGRAM MATERIALS (SUCH AS FLYERS, GUIDES, BROCHURES)**
In the preparation phase of the training course, this method can be considered important as it aims to reach a very large number of potential recipients (those who show a direct interest; those who have an indirect interest; those who do not have an interest of their own, but could want to deepen the topic). An electronic version (e.g. PDF file) can also be circulated electronically;

▶ **CREATION OF TOOLKITS OF TRAINING MATERIALS AND CURRICULA**
One of the results of a training course on the topic of podcast could be the creation of a toolkit, a manual, a guide developed during the course by the participants and intended for educators, trainers, youth workers or subjects interested in various capacities. same;

▶ **PRESENT THE RESULTS OF THE TRAINING COURSE LOCALLY**
One way to disseminate the results of the training course is to organize a presentation (in a school in a university, in a project partner) where to involve local community groups and other local stakeholders;

▶ **PUBLICATION OF THE PROJECT RESULTS IN NATIONAL JOURNALS**
In the event that the impact of the training course wants to be brought to a wider level than the local and regional one, it is possible to think of getting in touch with magazines that operate on a national scale, in order to potentially reach a much higher number of users and stakeholders in various capacities interested in the results of the project;

▶ **DISCUSS PROJECT ACTIVITIES ON LOCAL RADIO OR TV**
Before, during and after the podcast training course, part of the dissemination activity could be carried out via local radio and / or TV, in order to increase the chances of being known in one's community of reference. Developing long-term partnerships with the media (through a series of radio contributions, interviews, participation in different radio / TV programs, issue of a press release) can be a factor to be developed;

▶ PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION IN THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER
Why not publish the activities that will characterize the training course in some local newspaper? Why not write an informative article on the results that the project aims to achieve?

▶ ORGANIZE A LOCAL WORKSHOP
Once the training course is over, you can think of disseminating the results of the same through the organization of a workshop at a local level, where you can involve participants in various capacities interested in the world of podcasting and training, to acquire skills and knowledge that can help them develop them at a future time.
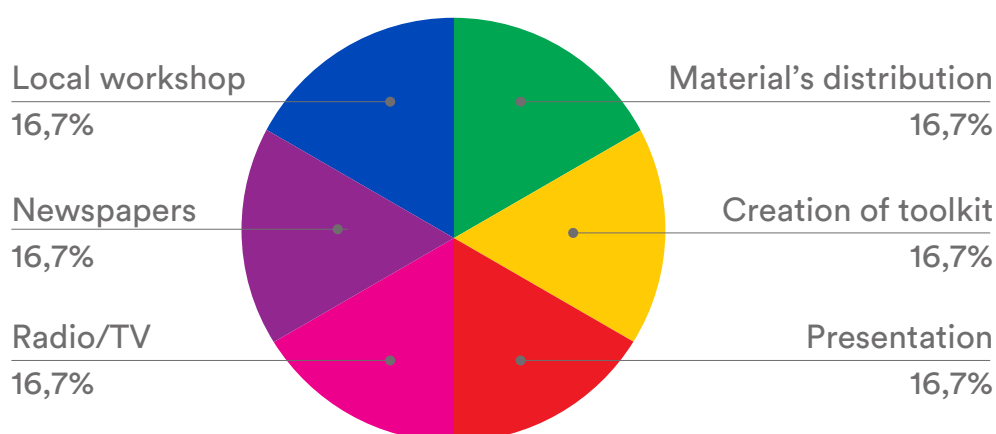
OFFLINE DISSEMINATION METHODS

Local workshop	Material's distribution
16,7%	16,7%
Newspapers	Creation of toolkit
16,7%	16,7%
Radio/TV	Presentation
16,7%	16,7%

Figure no. 9: Offline Dissemination Methods

4.2.3. ONLINE DISSEMINATION METHODS

As online dissemination methods, we can consider:

▶ SHARING OF INFORMATION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA (SOCIAL POST)
One of the main ways of disseminating the objectives, activities, results and impacts of the training course is through the creation of posts on the social media most used by the coordinator. For example, it may be ideal to invest a part of the capital in the online promotion and dissemination of the training course before its start, managing to attract greater interest in it and its developments. Similarly, in the implementation phase of the same, you can think of disseminating the results through the participants, partners and other interested parties, by creating a post on Facebook, a story on Instagram, a Twitter post;

▶ DISSEMINATING INFORMATION ON AN ORGANIZATION WEBSITE

The website is of fundamental importance. Entering a well-structured, clear and intuitive website brings added value to the training course itself. Playing such an important role, one can think of writing articles, publishing results, posting updates and keeping the coordinating organization's website constantly active. If this is the case, it could also be thought of translating the results obtained into each official language of the project, in order to favor the multiplier effect;

▶ BLOG ARTICLES

Similarly, you can think of writing a series of purely informative articles in the blog section of the site. You could give a detailed description of the activities of the training course, providing a series of tips and suggestions that may be important for all those who want to organize the same in the future;

▶ ORGANIZE AN ONLINE WORKSHOP

Covid-19 has brought about significant changes at the organizational level, favoring the development and implementation of various online activities. At the dissemination level, you could organize an online seminar to share the results of the training course. The online seminar is a collaborative discussion in which you and your participants could address the topic of the training course, discussing podcasts in detail, providing tips and much more.

▶ ORGANIZE AN ONLINE WORKSHOP

A further dissemination opportunity is that of reports and other documents, where the result of the training course is summarized, analyzing it in greater detail. Writing a report is also important for the organization itself, so you can evaluate what worked and what to improve in organizing future events.
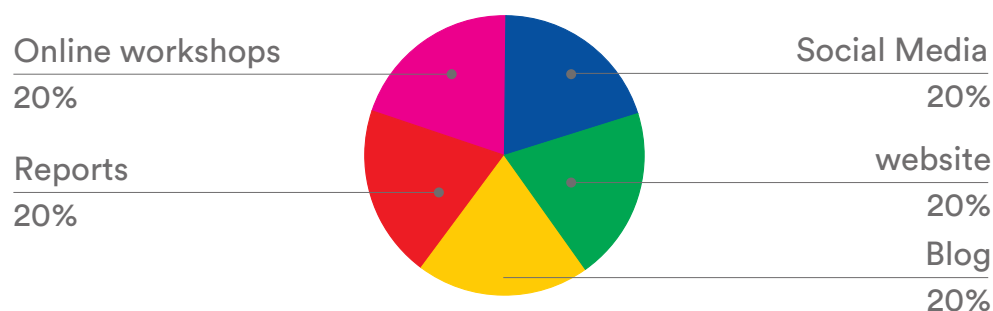
ONLINE DISSEMINATION METHODS

Online workshops
20%

Reports
20%

Social Media
20%

website
20%

Blog
20%

Figure no. 10: Online Dissemination Methods

4.3 HOW TO DISSEMINATE PODCASTS?

Once your podcast product is complete, it becomes essential to carry out its distribution. What does it mean to distribute a podcast? Publishing and promoting your podcast consists in the action of communicating to the listening platforms that our podcast exists and is available online for the users.

In order for your podcast to reach as many listeners as possible, you need to make sure it is available on all platforms where listeners search for various podcasts.

Figure no. 11: Steps for the dissemination of a podcast

4.3.1. HOW TO DISTRIBUTE AND PROMOTE A PODCAST

Once you've recorded your podcast and shared it through different dissemination methods (such as social media posts, articles on the website, etc) you will probably want to spread it further.

To distribute your podcast you can use hundreds of platforms to share it on: what makes this possible is your RSS feed. This acts as a bridge between your podcast and a platform: it is essentially a link, within which all the information regarding our podcast is contained (the title, author, description, episodes, images, etc.). If you distribute your RSS feed across multiple platforms, you will create more funnels for your podcast that more listeners can tune into.

Hosting your podcast via third party hosting platforms is the best and most preferred way for podcasters around the world, since professional hosting platforms offer reliability, ease and the features they provide will always help a lot more than doing it yourself.

Here are some examples of platforms.

▸ ANCHOR.FM
  Anchor.FM is mainly used to host podcasts and distribute them, since it offers all the basics to easily share your podcast. It is easy to record audio and edit it before releasing your episodes all on this same platform. Once you hit the publish button, your podcast is automatically distributed to various channels like Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, Overcast, Stitcher, and Radio Public.

▸ PODCAST DIRECTORY

Other podcast directories like Blubrry, iPodder, and DigitalPodcast are better ways to get more listeners for your podcast episodes. Uploading your podcasts to these will ensure that the number of your listeners increases every week.

▸ SOUND CLOUD

Another great option for distributing your podcast could be soundcloud, which is one of the most visited audio listening platforms on the Internet. It boasts a large social community, which means the target audience could be really wide.

▸ HUBHOPPER

This is a great tool if you already have an existing podcast on other platforms. All you need to do is to send an email to Hubhopper with your RSS feed and they will do it for you. The benefits of Hubhopper include the ability to expand your distribution network beyond just podcasting platforms.

▸ IHEARTRADIO

iHeart radio is a popular online radio and podcast streaming service, with a large audience. This will certainly benefit your podcast in numerous ways. With their weekly Top Podcasts chart and personalized listener recommendations, there are several opportunities for new people to test out your show.

▸ SPOTIFY

Spotify is a profitable service for getting your podcasts out there. All you need is good audio quality and some specific requirements, which we will delve into in more detail below.

▸ APPLE PODCAST

Apple Podcast distribution is really important for every podcaster. Apple requires some basic requirements from you before using their services.

These are some of the major networks that you should consider or use to distribute your podcasts. Even when your podcast is released, you will need to focus on the advertisement to let potential listeners know it's available on all of these platforms.

What about Youtube? If your organization has a Youtube channel, you can also consider uploading your podcast to YouTube. You don't even have to have a video of yourself podcasting, you can just have a graphic or image playing as your podcast plays over it. It's just one more way to get more visibility.

Once you've chosen a podcast hosting platform and directory, these are the general steps to publishing your podcast:

● Create a podcast RSS feed on your hosting platform

- Submit the RSS feed to your podcast directory
- Wait for your RSS feed to be approved
- Publish and view your podcasts.

| TIPS BOX_ Dissemination Planning |
|---|
| Know your audience niche and create content for them |
| Participate in online communities |
| Use a podcast hosting platform |
| Join or create a podcast platform |
| Create shareable social media content |

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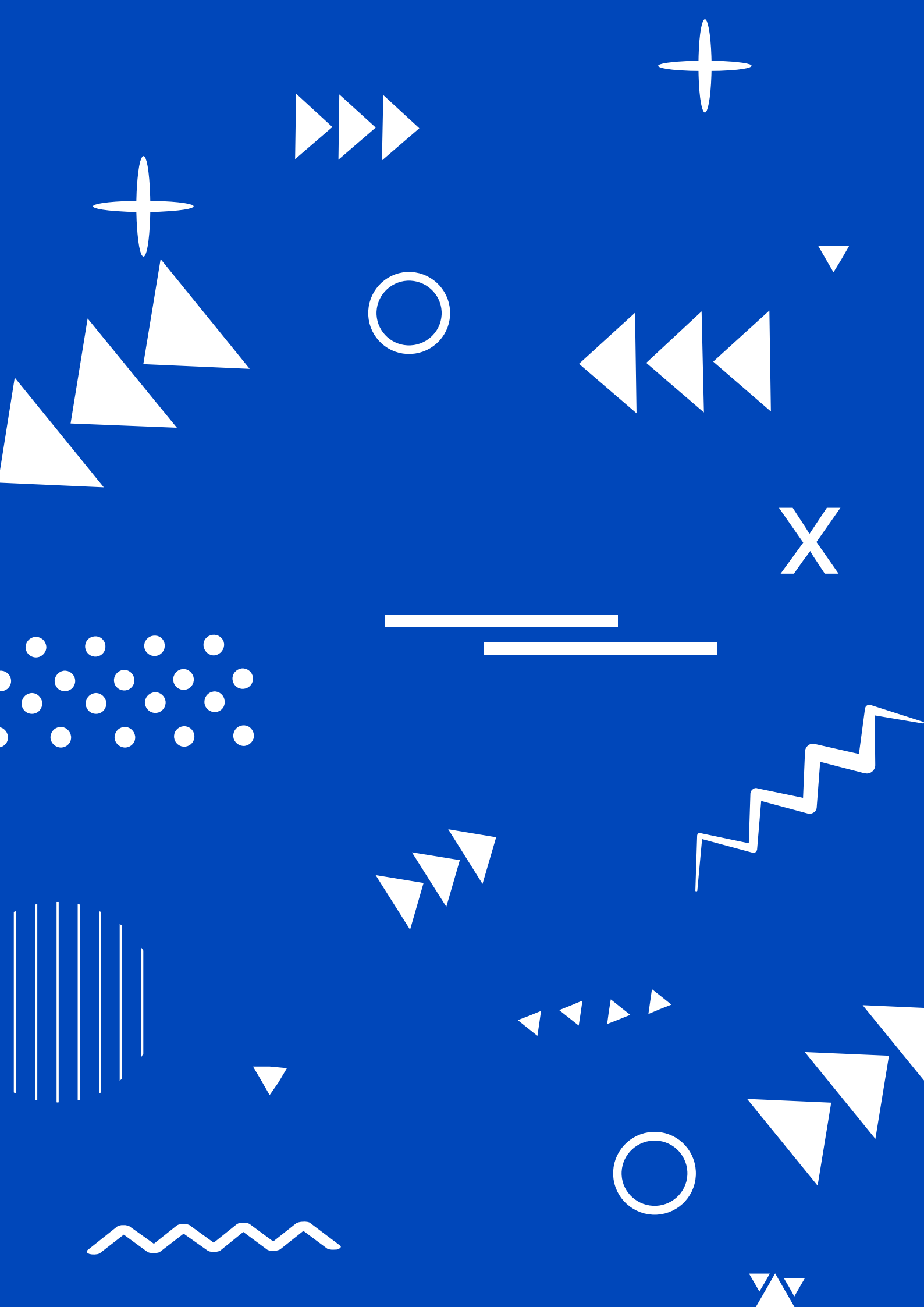
5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. CONCLUSION AND TIPS

Developing and organizing a podcast-focused training course requires proper and structured preparation. Firstly, it is necessary to have clear what the main purpose and objectives of the podcast are, in order to consequently be able to choose the best methods to follow to develop it adequately.

As highlighted in previous chapters, an important part is also choosing the best equipment/resources needed to create a podcast: while some are valid for all podcasts, others may be more specific to a given context.

From the point of view of preparation, the competence and skills that must be possessed by the trainers who organize a training course on the podcast are also very important. Thinking about developing a podcast focused on podcasts requires adequate preparation, where the choice of place of recording and acoustic conditions play a fundamental role.

To create a quality podcast, the training course must include several sessions to be dedicated to the various main phases, such as:
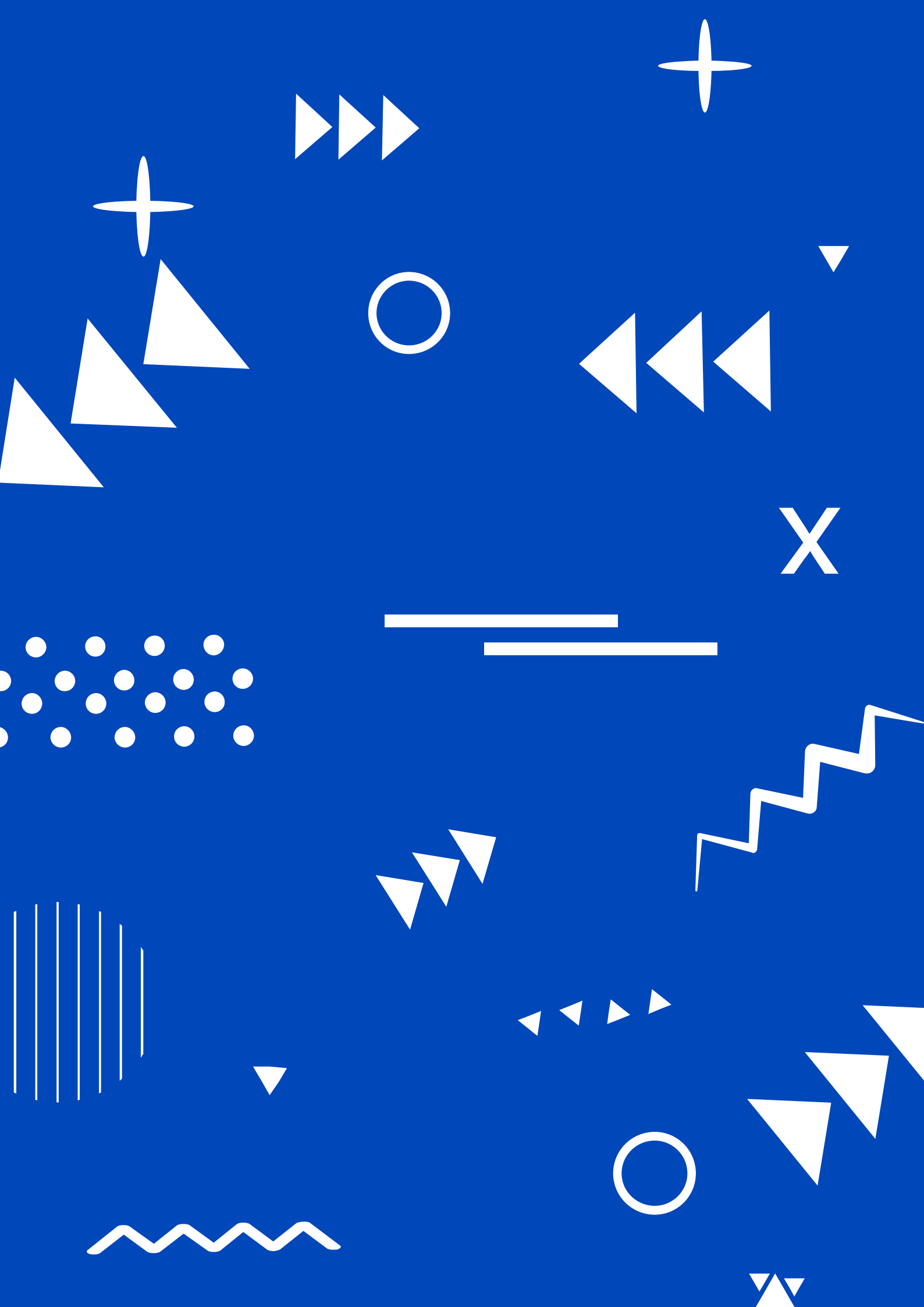
- Planning
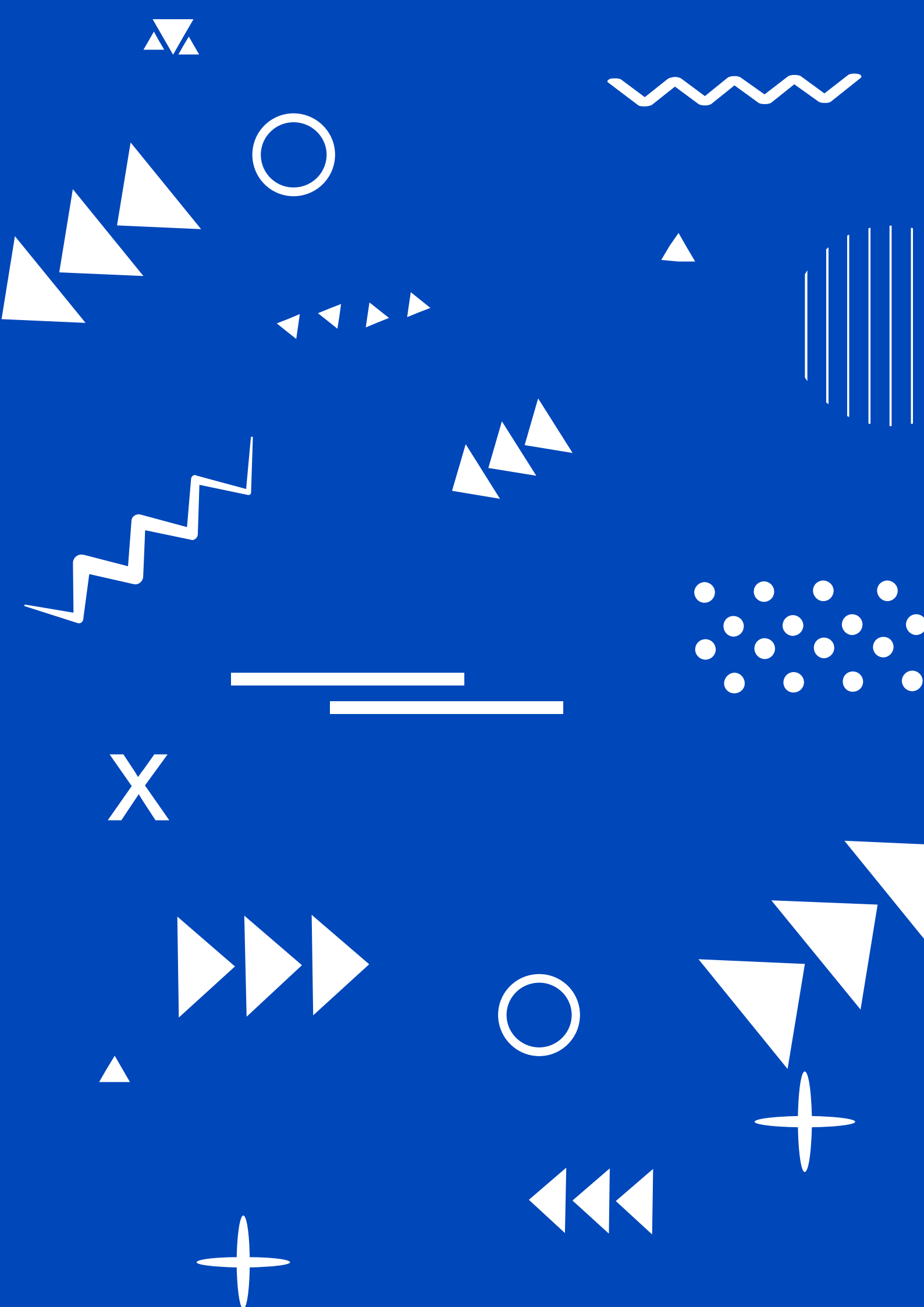- Record
- Edit
- Publish
- Promote

In each training course, a fundamental phase is also that of evaluating the work carried out, in order to have a general and clear vision of its development, underlining the points that need to be improved.
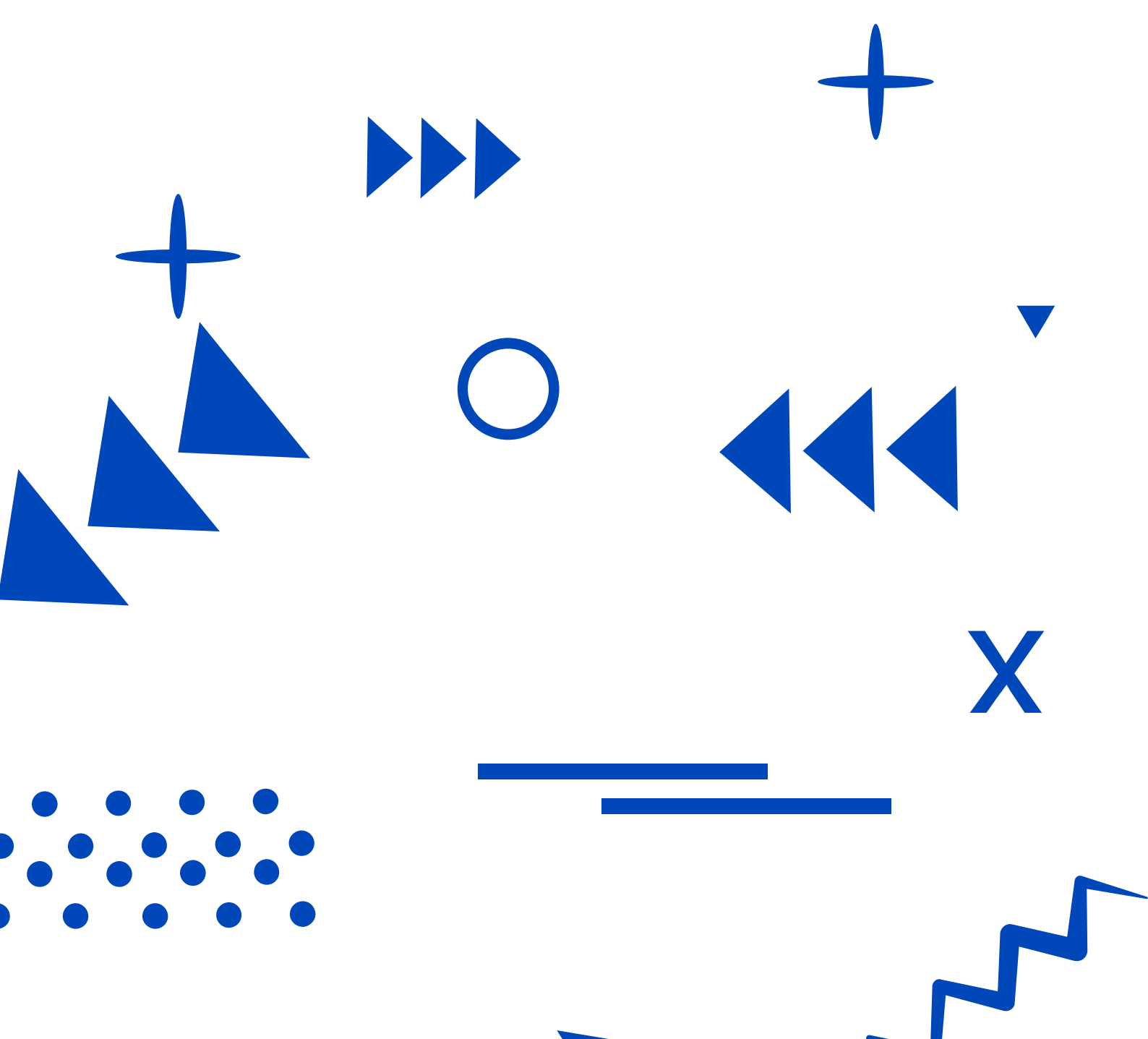
Finally, one aspect that should not be underestimated in carrying out a training course is that of developing a detailed dissemination strategy in order to favor its dissemination before, during and after the implementation of the training.

For the creation and implementation of a dissemination strategy, various tools (online and offline) can be used to reach all target groups and various stakeholders and allow for considerable visibility at all stages of the training course.

play

Podcast Launched
At YOUth