

# **CARAVAN aisbl**

## **Annual Report 2011**



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# 1. Introduction

Although the association was founded officially in October 2008, members of CARAVAN have been working together since 2007. Together, we share the common objective to promote circus practice in youth education throughout Europe and to encourage its development, through concrete actions such as youth exchanges and trainings for trainers. The association is also committed to promoting collaboration and exchange in the field of youth and social circus across Europe.

The founding members of CARAVAN aisbl are: Circus Elleboog (Amsterdam, The Netherlands), Le Plus Petit Cirque du Monde (Bagneux/Paris, France), Belfast Community Circus School (Belfast, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom), Cabuwazi (Berlin, Germany), Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles (Brussels, Belgium), Zaltimbanq' (Luxembourg, Luxembourg), Sorin Sirkus (Tampere, Finland). An 8<sup>th</sup> member joined the association in 2009: Ateneu Popular 9 Barris (Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain).

In 2010, we were sad to learn that due to financial difficulties our German partner, Cabuwazi, had to go through a liquidation process, putting an end to their legal existence as an association. A new association, GrenzKultur, now manages their activities and we are in the process of analysing how they could join CARAVAN as a member. We also had the great pleasure to welcome a new member school, from a country that was not yet represented within CARAVAN: the PARADA Foundation from Bucharest, Romania.

At the end of 2011, after some meetings and discussions to assess the common interests and values, Cirkus Cirkör from Stockholm decided to join the CARAVAN network. CARAVAN is glad to welcome its ninth member.

CARAVAN received in the beginning of 2011 official support from the European Education, Audiovisual & Culture Agency (EACEA), by awarding us an operating grant for one year as a “body active at European level in the youth field”, in the framework of the Youth in Action programme. In November 2011, CARAVAN decided to submit a new application to the Youth in Action programme in order to renew the EACEA support for the 2012 CARAVAN’s activities in the youth field.

Enthusiastic by the success of its 2010 Leonardo – Partnership project on the creation of a “European Framework of Competences for Social Circus Trainers”, CARAVAN decided to take a step further in this initiative. After deep discussions and strategic evaluations, a new project called “Circus Transformation” has been conceptualised on the results of the Leonardo – Partnership. The objective is to create the first European training for social circus trainers. Consequently, CARAVAN submitted in February 2012 its application to the Leonardo – Transfer of Innovation programme in order to receive the necessary financial support for the implementation of this project.

## 2. History

# 2007

September 07, Brussels

**PREPARATORY MEETING**

*CARAVAN hits the road!*

December 07, Brussels

Approval of Networking Action  
by Belgian National Agency

*First grant for CARAVAN!*

October 07, Tampere

Announcement of the creation of  
CARAVAN during the 3rd N.I.C.E. Meeting

# 2008

February 08, Brussels

**NETWORKING ACTION**  
Introduction Meeting

July 08, Bagnaux/Paris

**YOUTH EXCHANGE**

*30 young people and 10 trainers*

October 08, Amsterdam

**BOARD MEETING**

*Preparation of the working plan,  
on the occasion of the 4th NICE  
meeting*

March 08, Amsterdam

**TRAINING FOR TRAINERS  
ON SOCIAL CIRCUS**

*In cooperation with Cirque du  
Soleil*

October 08, Brussels

Formal creation of  
CARAVAN as a legal entity!

# 2009

**February 09, Belfast**

**STUDY VISIT**

*Meeting between leaders and trainers of CARAVAN  
Genesis of the Leonardo Partnership*

**July-August 09, Belfast**

**YOUTH EXCHANGE**

*28 young people and 8 trainers*

**June 09, Bagneux/Paris**

**TRAINING FOR TRAINERS ON SOCIAL  
CIRCUS, HIP-HOP AND URBAN CULTURES**

*In cooperation with Cirque du Soleil*

**October 09, Brussels**

**LEONARDO PARTNERSHIP  
Introduction Meeting**

**NETWORKING ACTION**  
Conclusion Meeting



# 2010 (1)

February 10, Brussels

**LEONARDO PARTNERSHIP**  
Study Meeting 1

June 10, Bagneux/Paris

**TRAINING FOR TRAINERS  
ON CIRCUS AND URBAN  
CULTURES**

July 10, Amsterdam  
July 10, Reichelov

**YOUTH EXCHANGES**

*16 young people and 4 trainers  
40 young people and 6 trainers*

March 10, Luxembourg

**EVALUATION MEETING**

**+ 1st GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

July 10, Berlin

**LEONARDO PARTNERSHIP**  
Study Meeting 2





# 2010 (2)

October 10, Barcelona

**TRAINING FOR TRAINERS ON  
SOCIAL CIRCUS**

*In cooperation with Cirque du Soleil*

November 10, Amsterdam

**LEONARDO PARTNERSHIP  
Study Meeting 3**



September 10, Stuttgart

**YOUTH EXCHANGE**

*60 young people and 16 trainers*

October 10, Brussels

**PARTICIPATORY FORUM -  
"A Circus Against Exclusion"**

*In partnership with the European Commission*

December 10, Tampere

**STUDY VISIT**

*Meeting between leaders and trainers of CARAVAN  
Genesis of the Leonardo Transfer of Innovation*

# 2011 (1)

February 11, Bagneux/Paris

**LEONARDO PARTNERSHIP**  
Study Meeting 4

June 11, Bagneux/Paris

**GRUNDTVIG WORKSHOP**  
Hip-hop and youth cultures

July 11, Brussels

**YOUTH EXCHANGE**  
*40 young people*

May 11, Brussels

**2nd GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

July 11, Brussels

**LEONARDO PARTNERSHIP**  
Conclusion meeting

July 11, Luxembourg

**YOUTH EXCHANGE**  
*44 young people*



**E-YOUTH INFO DAYS**

# 2011 (2)

October 11, Guadeloupe

**TRAINING FOR TRAINERS**

Oct. – Nov. 11, Brussels

**GRUNDTVIG WORKSHOP**  
*handicirque*

November, Barcelona

**TRAINING FOR TRAINERS**  
*handicirque*



**E-YOUTH INFO DAYS**

To be continued...

October 11, Amsterdam

**TRAINING FOR TRAINERS**

November 11, Brussels

**TRAINING FOR TRAINERS**  
*In cooperation with Cirque du Soleil*

Sept. 11, Barcelona

**Extraordinary GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

### **3. Operating grant (EACEA)**

At the end of 2010, CARAVAN applied for an operating grant from the Executive Agency for Culture, Education and Audiovisual (EACEA). The work and actions of the association over the years was acknowledged by this European agency, since it granted support to CARAVAN in the framework of the Youth in Action programme, and officially recognised it as a “body active at European level in the youth field.”

Concretely, the EACEA awarded CARAVAN with an operating grant for one year, enabling us to hire our first employee for the following year (2011).

This recognition and direct financial support allowed us to expand our programme of activities, and to further professionalise our working methods thanks to the employment of a Development Manager.

Among the many new actions that we will be able to realise with this grant, we can mention the creation of “Young CARAVAN,” a network of young people and volunteers involved in the daily life and activities of the member schools. For the launch of this informal network, we will create a new event gathering young people from across Europe. The content and organisation of this event will be made by and for the young people taking part in the activities of CARAVAN.

At the end of 2011, CARAVAN submitted its application to the 2012 EACEA call for proposals. Hopefully, thanks to this new operating grant, the association will receive support in the implementation of its future plan of actions in the youth field.

# 4. Leonardo Partnership

CARAVAN went on in 2010 with its research project entitled “Youth and Social Circus Training – A New Spirit for Europe,” started in 2009.

Over the years, in Europe and in other parts of the world, circus has been developed as a tool presenting many pedagogical assets, which can be used to reach out young people with special needs or fewer opportunities. The development of this rapidly growing social circus sector has led to a new profession: social circus teacher. The time is now right for the sector to move towards agreed standards of good practice.

Consequently, through this project, CARAVAN members prepared successfully an international frame of reference that will form the foundation of a European training programme for social circus trainers.

CARAVAN trainers and pedagogical coordinators met three times in 2010, for Study Meetings taking place in Brussels, Berlin and Amsterdam. Working under the supervision of the Education Science Faculty of *Université Libre de Bruxelles* (University of Brussels), they wrote together the first European framework of competences for social circus trainers. At the end of the project, partners wrote a definition of social circus as it is practiced in the seven youth and social circus schools of the consortium. They also established the European Framework of Competences for Social Circus Trainers.

In 2011, they met for a Study meeting in Paris in February and a Conclusion meeting in Brussels in July in order to finalize the project. The publication and the conclusions of the project were delivered in July 2011.

CARAVAN along with its partners aim to use these results to create a curriculum and a teacher's manual, which will be the basis for the implementation of the first European training programme for social circus trainers. In that framework, CARAVAN submitted its application to the Leonardo "Transfer of Innovation" programme beginning of February 2012.



# 5. Leonardo Transfer of Innovation

During the year 2010 and 2011, CARAVAN members wrote together a new project, which was submitted beginning of 2011. The idea is to follow up on the Leonardo Partnership started in 2009, with which they established a European framework of competences for social circus trainers.

Now CARAVAN wants to go for a Leonardo Transfer of Innovation, in order to transfer the result of the Leonardo Partnership into the participating countries, using it as the basis for the implementation of the first European training programme for social circus trainers.

This project will be carried out with the Université catholique de Louvain (UCL), in charge of developing and supervising the methodology, and the University of Paris-Sud 11, in charge of the evaluation.

At the end of the project, partners will have established the curriculum and the teacher's guide for a European training programme for social circus trainers, which will be ready to be implemented and organised at national and European level. This is a necessity for the sector, since no specific training exists at the moment to develop the competences of new social circus trainers, or to validate the competences of those already working in the field.

This will have an impact on the national and European Vocational and Educational Training (VET) systems, and will also contribute to the dynamics and the economic growth of the social circus sector all over Europe.

The selection results for this project will be announced by the Belgian Leonardo agency in the course of 2012.

# 6. Workshops – Training for Trainers

Members of CARAVAN organised sessions of workshops and training for trainers in 2011, which were opened to both CARAVAN members and non-CARAVAN members. For these four events, the participation of young people was strengthened, by allowing them to take an active part in the preparation and the development of the sessions.

Plus Petit Cirque du Monde – **Bagneux/Paris, June 2011** (25 trainers, 10 countries)  
*Organised with the support of the Grundtvig programme*

*“Festival Hip Cirq Hop”* – This innovative event included the discovery and practice of crossing circus with urban arts such as hip hop, reflection on, and exchanges of, education methods in the fields of youth work and circus arts; as well as workshops organised for the young people of Bagneux.





Circus Elleboog –

**Amsterdam, October 2011** (25 trainers, 10 countries)

*“Training for Trainers in Social Circus”* – For the third edition of their training programme, gathering international experts, Elleboog invited participants from CARAVAN member schools to take part in the event, aimed at developing creative education methods and promoting social circus towards circus trainers.



Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles – **Brussels, October 2011** (24 participants)  
*Organised with the support of the Grundtvig programme*

The “*Handicirque*” programme offers a great diversity of activities such as: artistic workshops between participants and adults with special needs, observation of artistic activities and practical workshops for the preparation of activities aimed at adults with special needs, meetings and exchanges, visits of centres offering activities aimed at adults with special needs, and cultural encounter evenings.



Plus Petit Cirque du Monde – **Guadeloupe, October 2011** (25 participants)

“*Dialogue between France, its Overseas Departments and Territories and Europe on urban and circus arts*” – The project is based on the promotion of youth cultures, which have been for too long despised and stigmatised as an expression of young marginalised people. It aims at using the emerging cultures and circus arts for the benefit of a dialogue between Europe, France and its Overseas Departments and Territories.



Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles – **Brussels, November 2011**  
*Organised in collaboration with Cirque du Soleil*

The “*Training for trainers in Social Circus*” is aimed at developing the teaching skills of social circus instructors and community workers in order to create workshops on Social Circus for people living in precarious personal and social situations. The main goals are to facilitate the understanding of the global context of intervention in Social Circus and to develop the necessary skills to intervene adequately with partners in various multicultural contexts.

Ateneu Popular 9 Barris – **Barcelona, November 2011** (25 participants)

“*International course: The Social Circus – An educational tool for working with people with physical and intellectual disabilities.*” Learning teaching skills for intervention with people with disabilities or at

risk of social exclusion through the circus is framed as an innovative experience that helps to establish new educational models. This course is aimed at artists, trainers, and educators in Catalonia and elsewhere in Europe who want to learn practical tools to approach the concept of social circus and also deepen the educational work with people with physical and intellectual disability. The course will be made by Delphine Tollet, educational coordinator (1993-2004) of “L’Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles” where she created and developed the project "Handicirque" to work with people with disabilities through the circus.



# 7. Youth Exchanges and volunteers

CARAVAN always puts young people at the centre of its activities, from their conception to their completion and evaluation. In 2011, for instance, CARAVAN members organised two **youth exchanges** directly aimed at and conceived with young people:

Zaltimbanq' –

**Luxembourg, July 2011** (26 participants)

*“Focus on Circus”* - During this exchange, the young participants were invited to create performances in circus arts as a reflection of the development of intercultural Europe. The main method of “Focus on Circus” is to work a lot together to learn to know each other through working situations. Working in a circus-way means training, rehearsing, doing workshops, watching others, imitating, communicating.



Pictures of Luis Montero Garcia –Manjarón

Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles – **Brussels, July 2011** (40 participants)

Called “*P’tit Cirque en Palc*”, this event promotes the intercultural dialogue between young participants (coming from areas with less opportunities) through the practice of circus arts. The young participants created small performances interpreted during the conclusion festival of the event.



### **Volunteers:**

Since 2007, with the support of **EVS** and **Eurodyssée**, CARAVAN members have put in place a network of exchange of volunteers, to promote the mobility of young people between their institutions.

Here are the statistics of the volunteers hosted and sent by each school, both from 2007 and in 2011:

- **Elleboog** (Amsterdam)
  - Since 2007: **17** volunteers hosted and **3** volunteers sent abroad
  - In 2011: **5** volunteers hosted (from France, Finland and Germany)
  
- **Le Plus Petit Cirque du Monde** (Bagneux/Paris)
  - Since 2007: **13** volunteers hosted and **8** volunteers sent abroad
  - In 2011: **4** volunteers hosted (from Germany, Macedonia, Belgium and Spain) and **1** volunteer sent abroad (to Spain)
  
- **Ateneu Popular 9 Barris** (Barcelona)
  - Since 2007: **2** volunteers hosted and **1** volunteer sent abroad
  - In 2011: **1** volunteer hosted (from France) and **1** volunteer sent abroad (to France)
  
- **Belfast Community Circus School** (Belfast)
  - Since 2007: **2** volunteers hosted (from Germany and The Netherlands)
  
- **Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles** (Brussels)
  - Since 2007: **15** volunteers hosted and **2** volunteers sent abroad

- In 2011: **2** volunteers hosted (from France) and **2** volunteers sent abroad (to France and Germany)
  
- **PARADA Foundation** (Bucharest)
  - Since 2007: **6** volunteers hosted
  - In 2011: **6** volunteers hosted (from France, Italy and Spain)
  
- **Sorin Sirkus** (Tampere)
  - Since 2007: **3** volunteers hosted

**Total since 2007:**

- **57** young people were hosted as volunteers by CARAVAN members
- **14** young people were sent abroad as volunteers by CARAVAN members



## 8. Future plans

In the future, CARAVAN wishes to ensure the continuity of its activities, and keep on developing and improving the central management of these activities.

CARAVAN will propose a number of exciting events in 2012<sup>1</sup>, building on the work of its members to date:

**February** (Stockholm) – Pedagogical Lab on contemporary circus for people with disabilities

**March 2012** (Bagneux/Paris) – European seminar: Circus and Hip-hop for inclusion

**May 2012** (Barcelona) – Circus Workshop for elderly people

**June 2012** (Bagneux/Paris) – Culture Programme: 1<sup>st</sup> residency of the “Hip Cirq Europ” project

**July 2012** (Tampere) – Youth exchange

**July 2012** (Brussels) – Youth festival

**September 2012** (Brussels) – Culture programme: 2<sup>nd</sup> residency of the “Hip Cirq Europ” project

**Sept – Oct 2012** (Bagneux/Paris) – Leonardo “Transfer of Innovation”: Kick-off meeting

**October 2012** (Amsterdam) – Seminar on Social circus

**Oct – Nov 2012** (Bagneux/Paris) – Artistic workshops on African dance and Hip-hop

**November 2012** (Barcelona) – Social circus training for young trainers

**November 2012** (Brussels) – Caravan for Volunteers

**November 2012** (Belfast) – Social circus and intercultural training for young trainers in cooperation with Cirque du Soleil

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<sup>1</sup> Events planned at the time of writing this report

**2012** – European Voluntary Service

**2012** – Local actions

**December 2012** (Tampere) - Leonardo “Transfer of Innovation”: Head trainers meeting

**April 2013** (Brussels) – Artistic tightrope training

## 9. Members

Amsterdam (The Netherlands) – **Circus Elleboog**



Elleboog’s long history as a youth circus started in 1949. The school has now two buildings in Amsterdam (in the centre and South-East), and employs 35 staff members, plus 55 volunteers and interns.

Circus classes and workshops are organised every year for about 14.000 children and youngsters, from 4 to 22 years old. More than 40.000 people attend the shows and performances of the school every year. The numerous activities of Elleboog include:

- “Circusclubs” (for children and teenagers)
- “Trainingclubs” (for teenagers and young adults)
- Projects with primary and secondary schools (whether at Elleboog’s or their school)
- Special projects with disabled children
- Birthday parties for children
- Circus festivals
- Youth performing groups (touring theatres all over the country)
- Parent-child activities

- Teambuilding for companies.

### Bagneux/Paris (France) – **Le Plus Petit Cirque du Monde**



Founded in 1992, Le Plus Petit Cirque Du Monde (PPCM) - Centre des Arts du Cirque Sud de Seine develops and promotes circus arts in the field of youth and social circus, vocational training for trainers and international exchanges. Its structure is located in Bagneux (a suburb in the South of Paris), in the heart of a disadvantaged area. PPCM was born thanks to a group of people having a passion for the universal values and language of circus. The core of this group of volunteers has been active for seventeen years.

Its public is mainly composed of children from three years old and above, and young adults. About 420 students attend the weekly courses, 300 participants take part in the holiday workshops, and an average of 600 persons per week join in the outreach projects (workshops in schools, collaboration with social and leisure centres, projects with disadvantaged suburbs, workshops in jails, regular courses with handicapped children and young people).

### Barcelona (Catalonia, Spain) – **Ateneu Popular 9 Barris**



Ateneu Popular 9 Barris considers that cultural and artistic action is a tool for social development. Artistic and social training is hence a pillar of Ateneu's project. Their "Circus School for Children" was created in 1996 and, subsequently, they founded the "Circus School for Teenagers" in 2003.

They also organise a wide range of activities related to circus teaching, such as trainings for trainers, workshops for youngsters (on their premises or in hosting schools), workshops for mentally disabled students and open workshops.

### Belfast (Northern Ireland, United Kingdom) – **Belfast Community Circus School**



Founded in the midst of Northern Ireland's conflict, Belfast Community Circus School has more than twenty years experience of working with circus as a means of bringing together young people from different cultures.

In 1999, Belfast Community Circus School took possession of the only circus building on the island of Ireland. Since that time, the organisation has expanded into providing professional development for circus artists; running an agency for performance and staging street theatre events including a five day international Festival of Fools.

The work with young people now includes a regular Youth Circus with 140 members between the ages of 8 and 18; Itty Bitty Circus with 80 members aged 2 to 7 and an extensive outreach programme working with young people from disadvantaged communities across Northern Ireland and with cross community groups. The outreach programme works with around 120 young people each week. Young people learning circus have opportunities to participate in a range of shows and parades.

The organisation currently has 6 staff and 25 freelance teachers.

### Brussels (Belgium) – **Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles**



Founded in 1981, the Ecole de Cirque de Bruxelles teaches circus arts with the aim to favour personal development. It has developed over the years its own philosophy, methodology and pedagogy.

The Brussels school is a pioneer in providing training for circus teachers. It offers a specific training programme unique in Europe, called the « Formation Pédagogique », aimed at bachelor and master students in the field of pedagogy. The school offers as well circus lessons, in the form of weekly classes and holiday workshops, for children and youngsters. It has also put in place many social projects, such as “Cirq’ de Quartier” (circus for youngsters from underprivileged areas) and “Handicirque” (circus for mentally and physically challenged people). The school is hence, in the image of Brussels, a real melting pot...

### Bucharest (Romania) – PARADA Foundation



PARADA Foundation is a Romanian NGO created in Bucharest in 1996 by a French clown, Miloud Oukili. The aim of the organisation is to provide assistance to street children and young people, as well as to homeless families, thanks to various services like integration, social assistance, education and “socioprofessional” integration.

The Foundation was awarded several prizes for its activities, such as: Prize UNICEF 2000, Prize ARTUSI 2000, Prize CLOWNUL SPERANTEI 1999 or Prize Albert Schweitzer 2000. For his action in favour of street children, Miloud received the title of *Doctor Honoris Causa* of the University of Bologna, in 2007.

As part of its artistic project, PARADA has founded a “social circus”. This artistic programme was the basis for the development of the other activities of the foundation. Its main axes are:

- attracting children and young people, by inviting them to attend circus performances
- offering a framework to the children and young people, with a focus on the respect of discipline
- enabling children and young people to put on a circus show, to be performed both nationally and internationally

## Luxembourg (Luxembourg) – Zaltimbanq'



Luxembourg's only circus school has over 200 students, aged between 4,5 and 50 years old, taking part in one (or more) of the 20 weekly classes. These classes include parent-child circus, multidisciplinary classes, specific classes (acrobatics, unicycle, trapeze...) and performing group workshops. Furthermore there is an open training class once a week.

The school also provides workshops for children and/or adults with foreign teachers during school holidays and on weekends. In May, Zaltimbanq' organizes the festival "Cirque sous Chapiteau". During 10 days a number of international artists visit the big top to perform on stage and to work with the youngsters of the school. The festival also gives the students the possibility to show what they have learned to their parents and friends.

In 2009 Zaltimbanq' launched with the Service National de la Jeunesse (Youth division of the Ministry of Family and Integration) a training programme to become assistant trainer. This programme is opened to youngsters from 16 years old onwards.

## Stockholm (Sweden) – Cirkus Cirkör



Cirkus Cirkör is Sweden's first and largest contemporary circus and was founded in Stockholm in 1995. Built upon art and pedagogy, Cirkus Cirkör has grown rapidly. As of today more than 340 000 children and young people have trained circus at Cirkus Cirkör and over 1,3 million people have seen the shows in all continents except Antarctica. Cirkus Cirkör consists of shows touring Sweden and the world, circus events for companies and organizations, lectures, research and development, circus training and internationally renowned secondary school.

Since 2005 Cirkus Cirkör has been an artistic institution with the mission to secure contemporary circus as an art form and Cirkus Cirkör's future growth. This is visualized every day in the Cirkör Lab – our artistic laboratory to which we

welcome circus performers, companies and creators from all over the world. Together we explore the contemporary circus in order to develop the art form.

### Tampere (Finland) – **Sorin Sirkus**



Sorin Sirkus was founded in 1985. Recognized by the Ministry of Culture and Education as a national service and development centre for youth work, Sorin Sirkus offers Basic Education of Circus Arts in Finland based on national curriculum. 320 students, aged from 4 to 20 years old, attend the classes every week. The school employs five full time teachers, plus ten part time trainers. Other employees include: producer, financial manager, stage manager, costume designer and cleaner. Sorin Sirkus also hosts or sends volunteers through the European Voluntary Service and welcomes conscientious objectors.

Sorin Sirkus offers about 2300 m<sup>2</sup> as rehearsing, learning and performing space. It organises more than one hundred performances every year, and collaborates with different circus and art schools around Finland. Sorin Sirkus was awarded the State Award for Children's Culture in 2010.