



Learning
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From Religion 2



LIFETWO

Learning Interculturality from Religions towards Outreach Activities



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WP3 Piloting

- D3.5 Report of the Train the Trainers' sessions**
- D3.6 Report of the Piloting experiences at national level**

Developed by: **Center for Educational Initiatives - CEI (BG)**

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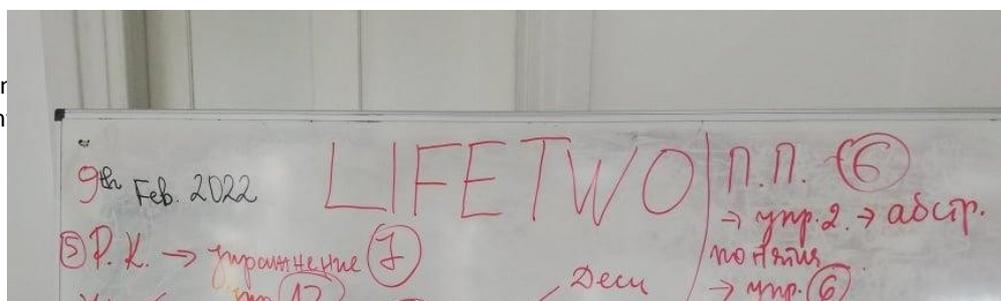


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1. PRE-PILOTING PHASE: THE TRAIN THE TRAINERS' SESSIONS

The pre-pilot phase included **training of trainers**. It was conducted by each of the project partners and has a direct and indirect bearing on the success of the piloting itself. The trainings took place in the months immediately before the start of piloting, i.e. in the period between **January and March 2022**, as each of the partners determined the appropriate time and format - in person or online. The trainings were an important moment so that the activities of the teachers in the schools could be planned. Only in Ireland was training conducted in 2021 with a wider range of teachers, from which in the second stage the participants in the piloting were selected.

In general, the selection of teachers to be included in the training followed a general principle, according to which the teachers from the pilot schools were selected on the basis of previously declared interest and opportunity to participate in the piloting of the pedagogical model and the game. From this point of view, in the trainings and mainly in the actual piloting, there were naturally teachers of humanities at school, because it was easier for them to include the piloting in their classes.

An exception to this model was Spain, which in a real sense carried out "training of trainers" and the included 5 teachers disseminated the experience of training in their school and thus

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expanded the base of pilot teachers. In the Bulgarian and Ireland cases, the number of trained teachers (18 and 15, respectively) exceeded that of those who took part in the piloting. In the case of Ireland, as already mentioned above, this is due to the training programs in 2 stages, while for Bulgaria one of the possible explanations for this discrepancy in numbers is the difficulty of finding place in the busy school curricula, as well as the time for conducting piloting in March, April and May, which made it difficult for schools in this direction due to the intensity of the school calendar in this period, as well as the holiday calendar.

The total duration of training is **8 academic hours** and most often the program was structured as a one-day or, as in Cyprus and Ireland, in two stages. The first stage logically went through a presentation of the Project, the Pedagogical Model and a discussion on its applicability in the respective country, and the second stage of the program was essential and included presentation of the learning activities selected by the partners, brainstorming for possible lesson and thematic scenarios. the game and its playback by the participants in the training. In this sense, this second part of the training for each of the partners was as close as possible to the idea of piloting at a later stage in a school environment.

At the end of the trainings, feedback was collected from the participants, which clearly shows the great interest and high appreciation they give to the pedagogical model and the relevance of the topics and selected exercises, as well as especially the game of the project.

Country	Number of teachers (trainings)	Number of teachers (piloting)	Number of schools	Number of students
Bulgaria	18	9	3	281
Cyprus	6	6	2	150
Greece	6	6	3	120
Ireland	15	5	3	130
Italy	7	7	3	180
Netherlands	2	2	2	35
Spain	5	7	3	190
Turkey	6	6	4	235
TOTAL	65	48	23	1321

Numbers of the training of the trainers and of the piloting at national level

Train the trainers in Bulgaria

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In the period **8th to 10th, February 2022** CEI held separate training sessions in schools, with which we had planned to pilot the pedagogical model of LIFETWO project and based on it examples of lessons, as well and 40 Answers game. **The total number of teachers participating in the trainings was 18, distributed as follows: from the 18th Secondary School in Sofia 8 teachers participated in the training, from 51 Secondary School in Sofia 6 teachers participated, and from the school in Brezovo - 4 teachers.** The pedagogical profile of the teachers was related with the humanitarian subjects as history, philosophy and civic education in high school.

The training program included two parts - presentation and workshop. In the first part CEI facilitators introduced the participants with general information about the LIFETWO project, presented the Pedagogical and Didactic Participatory Model (PD&P) for teaching and learning religious pluralism, as well as Didactic Exercises and examples of lessons addressed to the main Religions, which have been adapted to the specifics of the Bulgarian educational system: CEI reduced the exercises to 13, as well as the game 40 Answers - rules and the connection with the methodology of the project. In the second part the teachers and CEI facilitators discussed the individual examples of lessons and each teacher presented and argued his favorites from them. After we played together for test the game of the project - "40 Answers". In conclusion, we formed together with the teachers the main statements that will need to be checked during the piloting in school and to get feedback about them according to the scheme of *Likert* from 1 to 5, in which 1 is completely disagree and 5 fully agree.

Train the trainers in Cyprus

In **April 2022**, meetings with **teachers at two (2) private schools** were held to arrange the training of the trainer's sessions. **Six (6) teachers participated in the training: 2 from PASCAL secondary school and 2 from GCE secondary school.**

The training was carried out in two (2) parts: the first training was carried out on **April 6th, 2022** and during this training background information about the LIFETWO project was given, as well as information about the LIFETWO Learning Manual. The Pedagogical and Didactic Participatory Model (PD&P) for teaching and learning was also explained. Some of the exercises were presented and the rules and guidelines of the 40 Answers Game was presented to them.

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A follow-up training took place on **April 12th**, 2022 to provide more insights into the above topics but mainly to explain the exercises and the game in detail. The exercises selected were presented in depth and tested with the teachers. Also the trainers and the teachers played the game as a trial. Once the training was completed, the Teachers Post-Training Questionnaires were distributed in order to collect feedback. Finally, the teachers used *Likert* scale statements and open-ended questions provided to them for the evaluation of the exercises and the game.

Train the trainers in Greece

On Thursday, **March 3rd**, 2022, the Greek teachers were trained on the implementation of the LIFETWO program through the **Zoom platform**. The training was implemented by Kyriaki Triantafyllidou, theologian (MA Religious Education) and coordinated by Maria Kosma, European project manager of the EDRA organization. **Six teachers from three secondary and high schools in Athens participated**. The purpose of the training was the theoretical and practical preparation of teachers in order to effectively implement the "LIFETWO" program. The teachers, after getting to know each other, were informed about the work of "EDRA" by Mrs. Kosma. Then, the training program followed which included:

- Familiarity with the goals and work of the action "Life" and "LIFETWO"
- Reference to the teaching of Religion in Europe
- Presentation of challenges of religious diversity - inclusion
- Familiarity with the Educational tools proposed by LIFETWO
- Presentation of Exploratory and Participatory Learning: Theory and practice in teaching
- Examples of exercises - practical application
- Presentation of "40 Questions" Game

Finally, the teachers had the opportunity to ask questions. Reference was made to the initial and final evaluation questionnaire of the program, as well as to the LIFETWO Spring School trip to Italy related to LIFETWO project.

Train the trainers in Ireland

The training program in Ireland included two phases. In the first phase, NUI Galway experts introduced general information about the LIFETWO project, presented the Pedagogical and Didactic Participatory Model (PD&P) for teaching and learning religious pluralism, as well as some didactic exercises and lesson examples. The initial sessions also included discussion

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about teachers' experiences teaching religion in Ireland and we invited feedback on the exercises developed by NUI Galway for the handbook. Teachers discussed the design, appropriateness and implementation issues related to the activities. **A total of 15 teachers participated in these initial sessions. Three teachers from three different schools volunteered to formally take part in the LIFETWO project and implement the participatory model in their classrooms.** In the second phase, the teachers explored the concepts of interreligious dialogue and interculturality as well as the participatory model in more detail. They decided which specific exercises/modules they would deliver and prepared for the implementation in their classroom. This included preparation of lesson plans and resources as well as planning of team-teaching approaches, discussion of how to motivate and support students throughout the implementation and how to share experiences with colleagues.

As demonstrated on the evaluation results, feedback on the training was extremely positive. In particular, teachers were enthused about the opportunity to discuss religious education issues with interested colleagues. They were highly appreciative of the LIFETWO manual which they felt provided a very useful conceptualization of interculturality and religious pluralism. It also helped them to better understand inquiry-based learning methodologies and they were enthusiastic about honing their skills and trying out new methods in their classrooms. One benefit highlighted by teachers that is not captured in the feedback questionnaires relates to their enjoyment and learning from meeting and discussing teaching and learning issues with religion teachers from other schools.

Teachers felt that the provided modules/exercises were very appropriate for application in the Irish RE curriculum which has, only recently, been revised and is strongly focused on interculturality and the use of active learning methodologies. As Religious Education is, in many schools, taught as a compulsory but non-exam subject, Religious Education teachers often have more flexibility in Ireland regarding the curriculum and approaches they use in their classrooms. In this context, teachers were very grateful to receive such an extensive repertoire of activities which they can easily adapt in their practice. The manual, therefore, has the potential for significant uptake and influence in Ireland and the participating teachers were convinced that they would continue to use it in their future teaching.

Train the trainers in Italy

The training of teachers at local level has been organized by FCSVM **from January to March 2022**. The training has been addressed to teaching spirituality and religion in a multicultural educational context through an Inquiry approach and the development of a series of activities

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which are the base of:



- Preventing radicalization leading to violent extremism
- Preventing religious hatred and other form of social violence
- Prevent discrimination, intolerant attitudes, xenophobia
- Promoting shared and common values of freedom, tolerance, mutual respect

The recruitment of the teachers has been carried out at the end of 2021 and a total of **7 teachers has been enrolled.**

The LIFETWO train the trainers' course has been developed in 4 learning modules:

- Module 1: teaching and learning religions: the spiritual dimension in the educational context.** This module has been devoted to the understanding of the different dimensions linked to the teaching of religions in secondary schools. The different national models have been illustrated together with the related didactic approaches. In particular, the teaching and learning participative models have been explored – since it has been demonstrated that those methods are more effective to develop an inclusive dimension in the religious education.
- Module 2: the Inquiry-based Method as a model to foster social inclusion when teaching religions.** This module has been introduced starting from the main characteristics, explaining the benefits and related educational strategies. The IBM has been declined from the pedagogic and didactic point of view.
- Module 3: the LIFETWO participative didactic and pedagogic Model** has been the core of the third module, explained from a methodological point of view. The activities that composed the Model have been explored together with the possible subjects. More than this, also the five steps that compose the Model have been displayed and enriched with practical suggestions for teachers.
- Module 4: it has been devoted to the practical activities/ exercises developed in the LIFETWO Manual and to the explanation of the didactic cards game “40 Answers”** that has been developed in the framework of the project. The exercises have been introduced in practical and methodological terms. 40 Answers has been presented as a valid tool to support the practical activities. The scope of the game, together with practical instructions as well as the role of the teacher during the game have been illustrated.

For each module, a number of contents has been uploaded: video lessons, slides, related sections of the Manual and more.

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After the training, online Teachers Post-Training Questionnaires have been distributed among teachers to collect feedbacks about the effects the piloting training has produced at local level and the satisfaction of trainees. According to the survey results, our teachers who participated our training have been teaching for more than 15 years. 3 of them teach Religion at their schools, the others teach literature/classical subjects. Three of them are female and four are male, all of them have Italian nationality.

For the evaluation of the training experience as a whole, all the teachers agree/totally agree with the statements, thus confirming the importance and effectiveness of the received training. They confirmed the high value of multicultural dimension when teaching in secondary schools, especially when spiritual and religious dimensions are impacted more by the school curricula. For the evaluation of the contents of the training, the teachers appreciated the inquiry-based teaching method as a valid approach to enhance inclusion in teaching and learning. They found the exercises and 40 Answers game useful to support an open and engaging approach to the spiritual dimension of students. Most of the teachers said that adopt gaming as a teaching and learning strategy to religious subject would have been very effective and innovative in their schools.

Train the trainers in The Netherlands

Teachers were informed by mail and in talks about the idea behind the 40 Answers game and the manual was handed out to them. They clearly expressed they could not make extra time free for a more elaborate teacher training session, as most schools in the country are still struggling with delays in their curricula, due to longtime closures and only online education during any months. For the same reason (catching up with the regular program after suffering substantial delays) hardly any teacher was willing to participate in piloting the experimental approach. We were happy to find 2 well motivated teachers who introduced the game in their class. We had a brief oral instruction with them.

Train the trainers in Spain

The train the trainers experience in Spain has been developed via online tool on **20th January 2022**. **Five teachers participated to the training session** and five FUSJ staff members and external experts carried out the panels.

The agenda of the training sessions was focused on the main objectives of the LIFE2 project, presentation on the Learning Manual and Pedagogical model and we discussed them in the context of the current educational context in Spain and Aragon.

After then, we went through the activities and explanation of their implementation in class.

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For this reason, we made a Brainstorming to choose the most appropriate ones.

1. Introduction & Presentation
2. LIFE2: Main objectives
3. Current educational context in Spain and Aragon
4. Presentation of the Manual:
5. Religion in our current society
6. Pedagogical model of the LIFETWO Project
7. Activities' description and explanation
8. 40 Answers Game
9. Presentation of the survey & communication with the families
10. Brainstorming & Conclusions

Teachers' feedbacks about the training experience have been collected thanks to the Teachers Post-Training Questionnaires. According to the survey, teachers were happy about the experience and well-motivated to carry out the piloting experience in classroom.

Train the trainers in Turkey

On **15th-16th February 2022**, EGECED realized the training the teachers' sessions at Izmir Kâtip Çelebi University in Turkey. **6 teachers from different High Schools in Izmir participated to the training.** After giving a general information related to LIFETWO Project, EGECED staff informed Turkish teachers about how they should use LIFETWO Learning Manual. EGECED presented the principles of social constructivist methodology in learning and teaching. More, the Pedagogical and Didactic Participatory Model (PD&P) for teaching and learning religious pluralism has been introduced. The rules and guidelines of 40 Answers Game has been explained to the teachers and trial play sessions have been carried out.

At the end of the training, EGECED staff distributed the Teachers Post-Training Questionnaires. According to survey results, Turkish teachers who participated our training have been teaching for at least 13 and at most 18 years. 4 of them teach English at their schools. All the teachers are female, and they have Turkish nationality. 2 teachers described their ethnic and cultural background as Aegean, 1 as Turkish, 1 as Albania and 1 as Crete.

For the evaluation of the training experience as a whole, most of the teachers are totally agree with the statements indicated in the questionnaire. From their feedback, it is clear that, they found the training as useful and interesting. All of them think that understanding intercultural education is important for teachers. All of them declared that the materials shared during the training would be useful in their teaching and training would help them to improve their teaching approaches.

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For the evaluation of the contents of the training, all the teachers are totally agree with the statements indicated in the questionnaires. From their feedback, it is obvious that their understanding of the relevance of teaching and learning about and from religion in the secondary school has increased. They found educational activities proposed in the manual are useful to support teaching in the classroom. All of them declared that 40 Answers game is a useful resource to engage students in reflection about religions.

Most of the Turkish teachers found the Pedagogical and Didactic Participatory Model (PD&P) as the most beneficial subject. They declared that they would adopt social constructivist methodology to teach religious pluralism in their classrooms. One of our teachers indicated that 40 Answers Game is an amazing teaching tool, since it demonstrates how everyone gives different reactions for the same situation. Two teachers underlined the fact that it was stunning to learn that they can use religion as a teaching tool. One teacher declared that she really wondered how 40 Answers Game would work in a real classroom atmosphere. Most of the teachers would like to learn more about new teaching techniques based on different values of students. Most of them would like to implement the teaching techniques based on PD&P in their lessons. Two teachers would like to attend a workshop about interculturality which they believe that might be helpful for them.

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2. PILOTING PHASE

After the development of the preliminary activities in each country, the piloting sessions in European classrooms have taken place.

It would be useful to declare the piloting parameters: **8 European countries impacted, 1321 students directly reached by the piloting activities, 48 teachers directly managing the piloting from 23 secondary schools.**

In general, one can take into account the positive assessment given by all partners, teachers, students and stakeholders for the pedagogical model and for the game 40 Answers and the pedagogical exercises prepared by each of the partners, on which the piloting was mainly based.

The duration of the piloting stage was **on average 2 months and only in Italy it lasted longer - 3 month which included the preparation and conduct of the Spring school in May 2022.**

The workload of 1 or 2 lessons per week, depending on the chosen exercises, allows us to conclude that in the individual classes the piloting lasted between 8 and 24 lessons. Piloting in all usually going through 3 or 4 of the pedagogical scenarios/exercises and in the end the students dividing by groups and playing the game. An interesting example is the one in Bulgaria, where the 40 Answers Game was played both at the entrance and at the exit of the piloting.

The directions of the remarks and suggestions for editing and upgrading the model are in the following directions:

- the scientific and academic style of the LIFETWO Manual makes it difficult for the teacher to understand in deep some concepts;
- the need to adapt the selected pedagogical exercises according to the specifics of the individual country, age, maturity of the audience - for example, in Bulgaria the exercise was reduced to 13 only;
- the need for serious preliminary preparation and coordination of the activities within the curricular ones, which is a difficult task to be performed in the background of a busy curriculum;
- the lack of sufficient time was highlighted in the reports of colleagues from the Netherlands, Spain and Bulgaria.
- The 40 Answers' application for the smartphone can be improved: more clear and simple instructions are needed to play the game as well as better definitions of some

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of the concepts on the maps with explanatory notes.



Against this background, the position of the Dutch partner stood out who apparently encountered serious difficulties with the implementation of the Model in the Dutch learning environment. Reading REFLEXION notes makes us think that the reason for this is not rooted in the Pedagogical Model and in the Game, but rather lies in the *social preconditions and the imposed cultural and educational mainstream in the Netherlands, which hinder the greater impact of project tools*. It is also interesting to reason about the shared observation of the positive perception of the game by the students, but mainly as a tool for competition and fun but not as a tool that can provoke social or cultural transformation.

In general terms, the 40 Answers game enjoys widespread approval and success among partners, teachers and students, some of whom, even after an initial pessimistic attitude, have seen it as an interesting and provocative tool for meaningful classroom discussions.

The piloting action in Bulgaria

The scenario adopted here was as follows: the classes play the game at the beginning of the piloting time, after which each teacher selects and implements 3 activities from the didactic exercises and after their completion the piloting cycle ends with replaying the game.

The piloting took place among high school students and covered **over 250 students** from 8th to 11th grade (**15-18 years old**). This happened mainly in the classes in History and Civilizations, Philosophy and the classes in civic education. In some of the cases the colleagues realized interdisciplinary classes by brought together topics from History and Civic Education programs or respectively from Philosophy and Civic Education.

Before the pilot, we had conducted training in each school. The training program included two parts - presentation and workshop. In the first part we introduced the participants with general information about the LIFETWO project, presented Pedagogical and Didactic Participatory Model (PD&P) for teaching and learning religious pluralism, as well as Didactic Exercises and examples of lessons addressed to the main religions, which we adapted to the specifics of the Bulgarian educational system and we reduced the exercises from the collected 18 to 13.

The teachers report that the following of the exercises were be very useful for their pedagogical practice:

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- № 3. Religion peace and ethics (class discussion)
- № 4. Relating to abstract concepts and their real life significance
- № 5. Intercultural Understanding
- № 8. Discussion about the perception of the different religions
- № 9. The goal of this exercise is to provoke a confrontation of religious ideas coming from the personal education of the students."
- № 10. How the Major Religions View the Afterlife
- № 12. "Workshop with aims to facilitate the development of students' intercultural awareness and appreciation for intercultural dialogue by exploring a range of artistic representations of interculturality."
- № 13. Intercultural communication - iceberg model
- № 15. Intercultural understanding - simulating a court session in a life game or play.
- № 16. Promoting discussion and argumentation by placing issues in an ethical and social context.

Basing on what above mentioned, the participants have been involved in the process and encouraged to discuss and argue on specific topics and issues, in understanding of the historical context, as the lesson was focused on understanding how our judgments based on prejudice in historical context can become stereotypes and discrimination. The message was understanding and respect for differences, other cultures, religions, socio-economic minorities in society / different in ethnic origin /, as well as reflection on their own social, cultural affiliations; the development of a neutral position towards ideological, political and socio-economic judgments; recognizing the difference between opinion and prejudice.

Teachers unanimously believe that the methodological approach of the LIFETWO project is not only useful but also effective and contributes significantly to the development of social and civic competencies in students, their analytical and critical thinking. Knowledge of religions and society promotes empathy, tolerance of difference, respect for human rights, religious pluralism and solidarity in relationships.

All pedagogical exercises, which were conducted and based on discussions, workshops, real-life scenarios, ie actively engage students and give them the opportunity to express and defend their personal position, were unanimously accepted by students as interesting.

The students really liked the competitive and strategic element of the game. This made it easier for them, through the cards and reflections of their peers, to gain additional knowledge about religions and various rites and rituals.

The most difficult thing for the students was to deal with specific religious terminology. Ignorance of practices from the world of the "other" initially slowed them down, and at a later stage - provoked additional search for information.

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Here is the formulated statements and the results obtained after piloting from the teachers for the acquired key competencies and skills from their students:

1. The Exercises help students understand how was build and what beliefs in different religions are based on - **4/5** ;
2. The exercises help students to develop positive attitudes and behavior towards the representatives of the "other" - **5/5**;
3. The exercises encourage students to find a common language of communication by understanding cultural diversity and respecting cultural and religious differences - **4/5**;
4. The exercises support intercultural education and educate in values as part of the socialization and education of students - **5/5**;
5. The exercises contribute to the formation and development of a democratic culture in students - **4/5**;
6. The exercises develop the skills for reflection and self-reflection through the tasks of conducting analyzes, debates, discussions, etc. - **5/5**;
7. The exercises fully engage students - **5/5**;
8. The exercises provide an opportunity to activate the cognitive potential of students through project development - **5/5**;
9. The exercises help students form knowledge and skills for key concepts and skills - **4/5**;
10. The exercises can be easily applied in the classroom - **4/5**;
11. The exercises allow students to transfer theoretical knowledge into practice - **5/5**;
12. The exercises support the application of the competence approach in the training and the formation of transferable (soft) skills - initiative, critical thinking, teamwork, problem solving, taking responsibility - **5/5**;
13. The exercises are useful for involving students in the problems of social exclusion - **4/5**

The piloting action in Cyprus

With the conclusion of the Training of the Trainers, teachers implemented the project in their classes and started piloting the LIFETWO Manual, the related exercises and the 40 Answers game in their classrooms.

Background information was given to the students about the LIFETWO project and the participative approach. **2 private secondary schools were involved and 6 Teachers devoted 2 hours per week for 2 weeks piloting student experience in 6 classes involving a total of about 150 students.** Through teaching tools, activities and methods suggested by the LIFETWO manual, the students were engaged and collaborated on concepts such as

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coexistence, understanding, and religious freedom through the piloting and testing of the didactic exercises and 40 Answers Game

The activities utilized were:

- The cultural rucksack
- Democracy

In addition, the 40Answers game was played by the 4 groups of students, who were further divided in small groups of 5-6 students. There was active participation and engagement by the students who showed great interest in participating in an atmosphere of respect and mutual support.

Overall, it was a pleasant experience and an occasion for cooperation, reflection and experiential learning. Students were enthusiastic with their involvement in all activities. As a final reflection, students claimed that the issues of religious freedom, coexistence and dialogue were fruitfully reflected and evaluated with a different perspective. The exercises gave many opportunities to students to develop their thoughts and arguments. They recognized respect and understanding as values that must be systematically cultivated and applied on a daily basis through dialogue and meaningful communication.

Some of the students that participated in the piloting were selected to take part in the LIFETWO Spring School (May 2022).

At the end of the piloting the effectiveness of the implementation of these exercises and the game was evaluated by the teachers through the use of the following *Likert* scale survey.

The piloting action in Greece

The program was implemented through activities that served the Expected Learning Outcomes of modules of the Religious Studies course.

Through teaching tools, activities and methods suggested by the LIFETWO manual, the children collaborated and through exploratory learning focused on concepts such as coexistence, understanding, communication, solidarity.

We started with a questionnaire in which the 40 children of the program answered questions about diversity and religion and explored their knowledge and attitudes towards these issues. Then the children conducted their own research by browsing all the religious textbooks (Primary, High School and Lyceum) looking for the number of pages, images that refer to religions other than Christianity and judging by the titles of the books. The results of the research were presented diagrammatically after completing a questionnaire and were commented by the children on a worksheet.

Last, with worksheets and class discussion, we explored the concepts of right,

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multiculturalism and interculturalism.

The children also played the 40 Answers game.

We watched videos of the historical evolution of religions, their prevalence around the world, and took on the role of a school girl who experienced racism at school, continuing her narrative, placing them in her shoes. There, the children were given the opportunity to express what they had gained from the previous work by the Program, but also their personal point of views.

School by school

Testing in Pikermi Secondary School

The LIFETWO program was attended by two groups of the B class of Pikermi Secondary School, a total of **43 students**. The program was implemented through activities that served the Expected Learning Outcomes of modules of the Religious Studies course.

Specifically the sections 'action and struggle for the transformation of life and the world' (belongs to the material of A class of Secondary school, but due to the pandemic was not taught last year), and 'discussing our limits: who knows and who determines what is right' - 'when and why decisions are needed'. Through teaching tools, activities and methods suggested by the LIFETWO manual, the children collaborated and through exploratory learning focused on concepts such as coexistence, understanding, communication, solidarity. The activities utilized were:

- 2 (*teaching scenario with Zorg residents*)
- 5 (*religious freedoms - role play with Erim*)
- 8 (*cultural rucksack*).

A total of 5 teaching hours were dedicated

The students collaborated with interest and active participation in an atmosphere of respect and mutual support. In the final reflection, they stated that the issues of religious freedom, coexistence and dialogue were fruitfully reflected and evaluated with a different perspective. They recognized respect and understanding as values that are systematically cultivated and applied on a daily basis through dialogue and meaningful communication.

It was generally a pleasant experience and an occasion for cooperation, reflection and experiential learning.

Testing in Zefyri Lyceum

Overall, the program went smoothly and the majority of the children showed particular interest in it. We started (in February) with a questionnaire in which the **40 children** of the program answered questions about diversity and religion and explored their knowledge and

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attitudes towards these issues.

Then (in March), the children conducted their own research by browsing all the Religious textbooks (Primary, High School and Lyceum) looking for the number of pages, images that refer to religions other than Christianity and judging by the titles of the books. The results of the research were presented diagrammatically after completing a questionnaire and were commented by the children on a worksheet.

In April, with worksheets and class discussion, we explored the concepts of right, multiculturalism and interculturalism. The children also played the 40 answers game. The content of the cards was related to the needs of the believers that cover each sacrament / ceremony each time. The children found many commonalities, but also differences between religions.

In May, we watched videos of the historical evolution of religions, their prevalence around the world, and took on the role of a school girl who experienced racism at school, continuing her narrative, placing them in her shoes. There, the children were given the opportunity to express what they had gained from the previous work by the Program, but also their personal point of views. Students were explicitly expressed in favor of multiculturalism.

Particularly popular students expressed their views in favor of tolerance of religions and respect for rights. All participating students completed a questionnaire to assess their participation. The educational multi-day visit to Italy in May closed the Program in the best way, offering the participating students valuable experience.

Testing in Standard High School of Anavyta

The program took place throughout the High School (**4 groups of 25 students each**). We worked mainly with **exercises 5, 8, 9 and 15**. A total of 6 teaching hours (3 two-hour lessons) were dedicated.

The first phase of the application took place before the Easter holidays and the second after. In the first phase, the students answered in large numbers on the questionnaire. In the second phase, the participation in the questionnaire was obviously lower, due to a busy schedule of exams held in the Lyceums.

The participation of all students was enthusiastic in all activities. There was active and fruitful reflection, dialogue and interest on issues of intercultural communication with emphasis on religious diversity. The exploratory / experiential approach of the above issues, gave many opportunities to each one individually to develop his / her thoughts and arguments, but also to the working groups to collaborate and co-decide.

Piloting: Ireland

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Teachers participated in training in preparation for implementation of art/culture remix pedagogy having chosen this topic from a selection of 17 modules. Students were given a presentation outlining the literacy content involved in participating in the pedagogical area of interreligious and intercultural education. Prior to implementation teachers participated in a focus group and all students completed an online questionnaire. Teachers collaborated in the development of PowerPoint presentations for each phase which they shared with one another to ensure their implementation, task descriptions and data collection mirrored each other.

The module implementation took place over a 4-8 week period with all schools meeting student groups twice each week (average duration of 8 hours). Teacher led workshops were broken down (as outlined in the module description) into five phases:

Phase 1: Understanding Interculturality

The teacher introduces the workshop and explains the theme and its significance. In so doing, the teacher may link their explanation to a presentation or fact file on International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (see: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/erad-racism-day>) OR World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development (see: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/cultural-diversity-day>) OR International Day for Tolerance (<https://www.un.org/en/observances/tolerance-day/>).

The teacher split the class into groups of 4-5. Each group will be asked to appoint a timekeeper, scribe, and reporter. All members of the group will participate in all tasks. Each group is given two blank spider diagram templates and a Venn diagram template (the word 'interculturality' is printed in one circle, the term 'intercultural awareness' is printed in the other).

Task 1: the teacher writes the word 'Interculturality' on the whiteboard, or displays it on a PowerPoint presentation or poster. Groups are given 5 minutes to discuss their understanding of the term 'interculturality', with the appointed scribe taking notes on the discussion. After this, the group completes the first spider diagram template, labeling it 'interculturality'.

Task 2: the teacher will write/display 'intercultural awareness' and the above steps are repeated with this concept in mind. Upon completion of the second spider diagram, students are provided with an opportunity to ask questions or raise any concerns (if they have any).

Task 3: each group will now complete the Venn diagram, using the information which they have already recorded in their spider diagrams. They will be given approximately 5 minutes to do so. Upon completion of their Venn diagrams, each group is asked to focus on the middle section. The students are asked: 'what did you identify as the commonalities between interculturality and intercultural awareness?' The reporter from each group then reports back on their group's findings to the class.

Task 4: Class discussion on the theme 'barriers to interculturality and intercultural

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awareness'.



Phase 2: Exploring Artistic Representations of Interculturality

Students were assigned to new groups (4-5 students) by the teacher. This is to ensure that students encounter as many different peer perspectives as possible as well as to ensure that students have an opportunity to experience different roles within their groups. Each group is provided with an artistic representation of interculturality to explore. They are asked to conduct some research about the artist(s) and their work, discuss how different cultures are represented in the intercultural piece of art. After discussing the impact the piece of art is having on them individually they will collaboratively reflect on the message and merit of the intercultural piece of art.

Groups will present and discuss their findings with the class.

- Group 1: 'N17' by Tolü Makay and the RTÉ Concert Orchestra (available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k6sD1i3M0qY>)
- Group 2: Peter Praxmerer, 'Languages of Peace' (full text of poem available at: <https://centerforinterculturaldialogue.org/2013/10/27/languages-of-peace-poem/>)
- Group 3: Felispeaks, 'I Am the Heart That Will Warm Yours' (spoken word poem available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r371S7mVRno>)
- Group 4: Carl Milton's poster, 'Sydney' (available at: <https://carlmilton.com/posters/>)
- Group 5: Amanda Gorman, 'The Hill We Climb' (full text and video available at: <https://www.cnb.com/2021/01/20/amanda-gormans-inaugural-poem-the-hill-we-climb-full-text.html>)

Phase 3: Design, Create, Discuss

During this phase of the workshop, the students are presented with the opportunity to design and create their own, individual piece of art intercultural artistic expression. Students may choose to design and create a poster, a poem, a painting, a song, a short dramatic performance. Students create and prepare to present their work to the class.

Phase 4: Share, Perform, Discuss

Groups take turns presenting their intercultural artistic expression to the class, followed by feedback and questions from their classmates. Whole class discussion follows to identify the common themes which have emerged from the students' artistic creations. Students will be encouraged to reflect upon why particular themes emerged and what they have learnt from the experience.

Phase 5: Reflecting on Interculturality and my Intercultural Awareness

During the final phase of the workshop, students will be asked to complete a journalling activity. Students will record three points under the following headings:

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- 1) What I thought about interculturality and intercultural awareness before.
- 2) How interculturally aware am I?
- 3) What can I do to become more interculturally aware at a personal level?

Students are invited to share some of their responses, but they are free to decline this invitation.

In pairs, students are asked to construct an 'Intercultural Awareness Action Plan' for their school. The action plan should consist of four key action points which could facilitate and support greater interculturality and intercultural awareness in their school.

The piloting action in Italy

Slightly after the conclusion of the Train the Trainers' sessions, teachers started piloting the LIFETWO Manual and related exercises in their classrooms. Some introductory information about the LIFETWO project, the topics afforded during their training and the participative approach has been given to the students. Teachers devoted 2 hours/weekly per 3 months piloting experience in three classes each, for a **total of 180 students** that performed activities in **9 classrooms of 3 secondary schools**.

Teachers implemented 3-4 exercises each, plus playing sessions of 40 Answers game.

The last session has been devoted to collect students' feedbacks and impressions about the work performed during the piloting.

As a final activity of the piloting, selected students actively participated to the LIFETWO Spring School (May 2022) performing the international team tournament of 40 Answers game together with students of the other partners' countries.

We have received very positive feedback from both our teachers and students. Students expressed their satisfaction about the exploitation of "game" as a tool to develop soft skills when dealing with spiritual and religious dimension. They appreciated the exercises, especially the ones that forecast role playing and simulations. They noticed as topics that are not directly linked with religion teaching and spiritual matters can be used as a lever to trigger discussions, and confrontations also about and around religious topic.

40 Answers game has been particularly appreciated due to the possibility to play easily using the smartphone. Satisfaction has been expressed also for the structure of the game that forecast a "hosting" player with some "facilitating" responsibilities during the play session that contribute to trigger a confrontation among players after each round.

Teachers expressed their appreciation about the non-formal educational activities proposed by LIFETWO manual. The set of exercises has been valued positively also because it has

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been developed at European level, including exercises less known in our local context – regarding methodology, subjects, tools. Teachers agreed on the importance of such kind of activities to foster critical thinking, mutual understanding, active and empathetic listening among students – all preconditions to prevent marginalization and exclusion phenomena in the classroom. Teachers were initially less confident with the 40 Answers game functioning, especially because the game did not set right or wrong associations between cards: the players themselves “decide” the value of each combination, depending on how many players do the same match. Once applied, this mechanism ensured diversity between a match and another and contributed to keep the experience enjoyable and interesting.

Students performed well and in a collaborative perspective, sharing their positions and points of view in a democratic and open way. Teachers prepared the ground setting a code of conduct to make the environment safe and fertile. More, teachers self-preparing themselves and performing preparatory activities to minimize the risk of discrimination, marginalization and/or application of stereotypes, prejudices and cognitive bias. In some cases, confrontation between teachers and FVM staff was required in order to clarify some activities’ steps. When required, students performed autonomously the preparatory activities (also at home) thus being able to learn even before the exercises’ development. Particular attention has been given to ensure that each student can participate to the activities in relation to her/his personal background and previous knowledge.

The piloting action in The Netherlands

Teachers were informed by mail and in talks about the idea behind the 40 Answers game and the manual was handed out to them. They clearly expressed they could not make extra time free for a more elaborate teacher training session, as most schools in the country are still struggling with delays in their curricula, due to longtime closures and only online education during any months. For the same reason (catching up with the regular program after suffering substantial delays) hardly any teacher was willing to participate in piloting the experimental approach. We were happy to find 2 well motivated teachers who introduced the game in their class. Pupils had a brief oral instruction. Both teachers were pleased with the game, one of the two, an expert on theology saw strong potential in the game and expected impressive results. The other teacher was working with pupils in vocational training and perhaps those learners are more interested in practical issues, rather than philosophical/theological discussions. In both classes students reported that playing the game hardly made a difference for the impression they had of people with other religious beliefs.

At this point, we should note that the importance and function of religion in society and

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certainly in education has been reduced dramatically over the last four decades in the Netherlands. Nowadays there's just a small number of schools where religious functionaries still have that role, notably in a small region of the Country. Apart from that, only Jewish and Muslim schools have real religious education: in most schools, religious education has been replaced by 'Citizenship' and 'General Ethics'. Religious topics may also be dealt with in History and Geography (when talking about what's at stake in the Middle East, for instance).

The ongoing process of playing the game, subsequent discussions and filling the questionnaire again was not interrupted by taking notes or other forms of reporting. The teachers were enabled the learners to go through an authentic and undisturbed process of experiencing the game, engaging in discussions and evaluating the impact of it all on themselves. Therefore, no interruptions for notes and other forms of reporting were applied.

The teachers saw clear benefits for the pupils in thinking aloud and discussing what content belonged to a certain religion. Both teachers showed little interest in the Manual that relates a specific educational theory to religious education. Teachers and most educational experts in the Netherlands are not aware of the PDP model, despite its underlying thorough and well-documented research of educational theories.

The size of the model description is also an obstacle for teachers: it takes too much time to read it. It belongs in the scientific arena and it needs summarizing to essentials in order to make the model attractive and easy usable in secondary schools.

Nowadays in the Netherlands youngsters have little knowledge of the Bible, the Koran and other religious books: religion in any form is not a major subject in school anymore. The country and the educational system underwent a thorough secularization process in the past 5 or 6 decades: many churches have been closed or turned into cultural sites (libraries, theatres) and religious celebrations are scarce; even large religious festivities like Easter and Pentecost are for some just holidays without a clear religious meaning. Political parties with a religious signature that once dominated the parliament, are now trying to survive in the shadow of liberal and pragmatic parties that have taken the lead in ruling the country. The once prominent role of religion in society has almost vanished.

As a logical consequence, the content of the cards was experienced as abstract and difficult to understand, especially for pupils in vocational training, most of whom are not interested in theology and do not care too much about social ethical values. For them job related practice is key in education.

The piloting action in Spain

Previously trained teachers developed different sessions according to the schools. The

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average was 6 sessions although there were some who developed 8 different sessions. They developed some of the activities from the manual and then had the students reflect about those activities.

The main feedback from the teachers was that many of the activities from the Manual were hard for the students and it took a lot of time to prepare them. More than what it was described on the Manual. They had to adapt some of the activities to the age and maturity of students. **The students enjoyed the activities a lot and the experience has proved to be incredibly positive.**

The experience was positive, although they highlighted that they needed to use a lot of time for coordination. There is lack of “free” time in Spanish schools right now for any kind of innovation. Team work was essential for some of them. Others had to do it on their own because it was difficult to coincide with class timetable.

They gave a different focus to their classes. They could reflect about certain topics. The interest the students’ showed. Also, teachers liked the methodology of some of the activities. The students saw certain topics with a different perspective. They could reflect about diversity and religions in a different way. They saw how their perspective changed from the 1st survey to the 2nd one.

The piloting action in Turkey

Key results of the piloting sessions in Turkey are as follow:

- Teachers gave detailed information to their students about the objectives of LIFETWO Project;
- teachers implemented almost all exercises in their classrooms;
- they played 40 Answers Game as well.

4 Schools in Izmir (Turkey) with 235 students have participated in piloting and testing of didactic exercises and 40 Answers Game. To evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of these exercises and the game, we prepared firstly a *Likert* scale survey. By using the following statements for each exercise, we asked our teachers to determine the degree to which our teachers agree or disagree.

1. This exercise helps most students to understand how beliefs in the various religions are constructed.
2. This exercise helps most students to develop positive intergroup attitudes and behaviors.
3. Most students seem engaged throughout the exercise.
4. Most students acquired the target key concepts and skills.
5. It is easy to implement this exercise in classroom.
6. Most students are able to transfer their knowledge to practice.

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7. I would use this exercise in my future classes.

After the implementation of these exercises in their classrooms, we received the following feedback: All teachers are either strongly agree or agree with the statements which demonstrate the great quality of the impact of exercises.

We also asked the following open-ended questions:

1. Which part of the exercise do students like the most?

The students learned how to express their beliefs, cultures, and ideas freely.

Exercises raise awareness of the students in terms of learning new cultures and growing empathy towards new cultures.

They learned to respect different cultures and beliefs and ideas.

Students worked collaboratively to explore new ideas.

The students learned how to negotiate in challenging situations.

As a game-based approach has been used in this exercise, it was fun and enjoyable for the students.

Students learned new information about different religions.

2. What challenges have you experienced during the implementation of the game?

A few of the students were reluctant to speak up.

Some students had difficulty in finding the proper terms when they were talking.

There is not enough time for the implementation of some exercises on time.

There are some technical terms in exercises which require a preparation before applying them in the classroom setting.

3. What changes can be made to the exercise to improve it?

Teachers may tell students to do some research on the topic given before doing the exercise.

Not only the teacher but also the students may evaluate and give points for each other

Students may present and moderate the exercises instead of teachers

For 40 Answers Game, the following points are stressed by our teachers:

Game is fun and educative. Students really enjoyed playing it. They learned new information related to diverse religion. Yet, the application for the smartphone can be improved. More clear and simple instructions are needed to play the game on the smartphones. Before playing the game in classroom settings, teachers should ask their students to make some previous research related to basic religious terminology.

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3. CONCLUSIONS

Of particular interest are the pedagogical practices developed in the LIFETWO project, whose methodology can be successfully applied by teachers as a basis for developing curricula for civic and intercultural education and promoting the creation of a teacher community, including networks of teachers who exchange good practices and experiences. All proposed exercises include the field of knowledge and skills for which they are intended, age range of students, level of difficulty, duration of training, goals, tasks and expected results for acquired key competencies and skills from the exercises, preliminary and organizational training, stages of implementation, practical application and opportunities for reflection on the acquired competencies in students.

Valuable in the exercises are the developed technologies for understanding key concepts related to democracy, freedom, interculturalism, human values. Tools and ways to deal with conflict and congruence, to promote respect for other cultures and religions are presented. Practical tools are given to improve intercultural dialogue (worksheets, discussion ideas). Approaches and methods for dealing with religious prejudices have been developed (inquiry method, simulation maps, etc.).

By realizing the tasks provided in the exercises on the main topics / aspects of the training, important goals in the training of the students are achieved:

- Understanding the key concept of culture, cultural diversity and intercultural understanding.
- Awareness of cultural stereotypes.
- Development of communication culture, oral and written.
- Acquisition of prosocial empathy skills.
- Knowledge and skills to identify different religious, social and / or political beliefs and values.
- Develop skills in formulating conflict resolution strategies or mediation programs.
- Knowledge of human rights and skills to respect the rights of others.
- Formation of skills for recognizing stereotypes, empathy, creative thinking, creativity, critical thinking.
- Development of skills for reflection on one's own social, cultural and ideological biases.

In this context, the training of trainers and the piloting in schools demonstrated strongly that LIFETWO pedagogical model is invaluable, as it outlines a framework for intercultural

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education and is practically focused on specific training exercises. Therefore, it can be considered as a kind of training program to improve the competencies of teachers in the field of civic and intercultural education.

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