DD@S Toolkit

Supporting, Inspiring and Empowering Schools & Teachers

Controversy in the classroom
Collection of good and promising practices, tools and projects

Project Title & Acronym: DD@S: Democratic Dialogue at School

Programme: Erasmus+ KA220-SCH - Cooperation partnerships in school education

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Countries: Belgium, Italy, Greece, Cyprus

Project Result 1: Toolkit DD@S including good practices

Result Leading Organisations: Erasmus University Brussels & Symplexis

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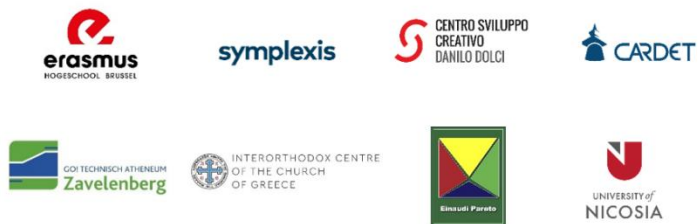   Dr Veerle Van Raemdonck (veerle.van.raemdonck@ehb.be)

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The DD@S Erasmus+ Project

The Erasmus+ project "Democratic Dialogue at School" or DD@S (https://ddasproject.eu) believes in the strength of dialogue to tackle intolerance and discrimination at school aiming to stimulate inclusive education all over Europe. It is implemented from 01/01/2022 until 30/06/2024 in four European countries (Belgium, Greece, Italy, Cyprus) with the participation of the following partners:

- ERASMUSHOGESCHOOL BRUSSEL (Belgium – Coordinator)
- CENTRO PER LO SVILUPPO CREATIVO DANILO DOLCI (Italy)
- ISTITUTO D'ISTRUZIONE SUPERIORE EINAUDI PARETO (Italy)
- CENTRE FOR ADVANCEMENT OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY LTD – CARDET (Cyprus)
- UNIVERSITY OF NICOSIA – UNIC (Cyprus)
- SYMPLEXIS (Greece)
- INTERORTHODOX CENTRE OF THE CHURCH OF GREECE (Greece)
- GO! TECHNISCH ATHENEUM ZAVELENBERG SINT-AGATHA-BERCHEM (Belgium)

DD@S aims at empowering European secondary school teachers in dealing with multicultural challenges at school. The project will contribute in the professional development of teachers -and educators in general, helping them to acquire effective dialogue skills to cope with ethnic, religious and multicultural conflict situations and discussions on various controversial issues at school.

Controversy in the classroom

Context

The school reflects the microsociety in which it is embedded. Different perspectives, values and norms merge. Within the metropolis and urban context, this also means a hyper-diverse mix of interreligious, intercultural and intersocial value frameworks, which all have specific characteristics (Pisarevskaya et al., 2021).

Seemingly innocent classroom situations or topics to teach, in combination with this combination and diversity in normative references and values, and combined with social sensitivities, sometimes result in hard discussions (Hess, 2009). These situations can lead to polarization in the classroom or school. If teachers do not immediately recognise and acknowledge the us-them dynamics or unintentionally become part of it, this threatens a safe school climate. The contradictions and conflicts that arise in this situation can escalate, creating a disrupted situation.

Controversial situations, are potentially conflictual situations fed by opposing views and us-them thinking. They often have their origins in differences in cultural, religious, social or political views.

Controversy in the classroom is also a learning opportunity. Preconditions for this are:

- an open and empathetic attitude of the education professional

- a mutual understanding in which dialogue and a multi-perspective are essential.

In short, reflective educational professionals.

This part of the DD@S toolkit aims to provide insights on the nature and origin of controversial situations at school. The toolkit describes in detail the context and nature of controversy in the four countries participating in the DD@S project. It provides an overview of successful methods for dealing with controversy in the classroom and a step-by-step approach to get you started in your school.

Challenges for teachers at school

Results of the DD@S survey

Diversity at school

Teachers in all four countries report a high diversity at school. Depending on the country, characteristics of diversity vary.

Total (N=162)
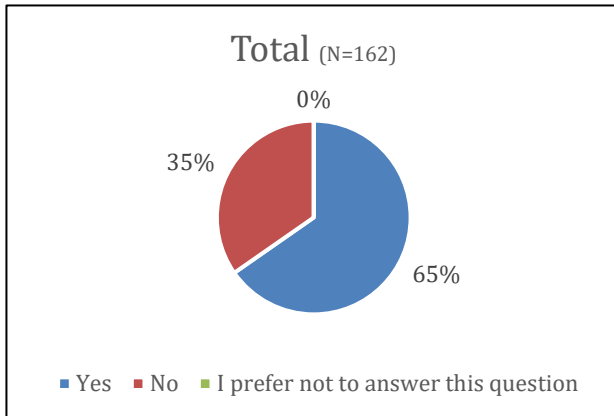
2 out of three teachers report social minority groups in their classes. Proportions vary between countries. All of the Belgian teachers that participated report social diversity, while in Italy and Greece this is 1 out of 2 teachers and one third for the Cyprus' teachers.
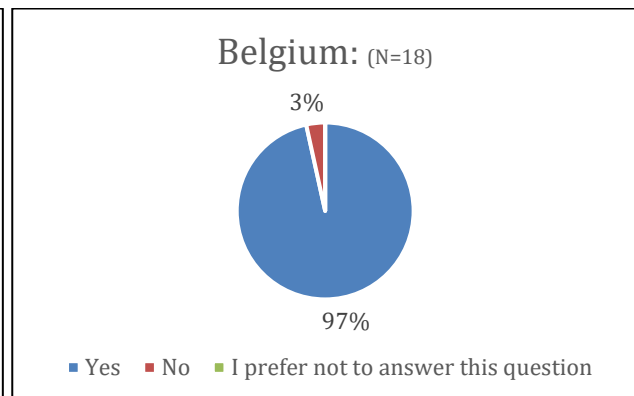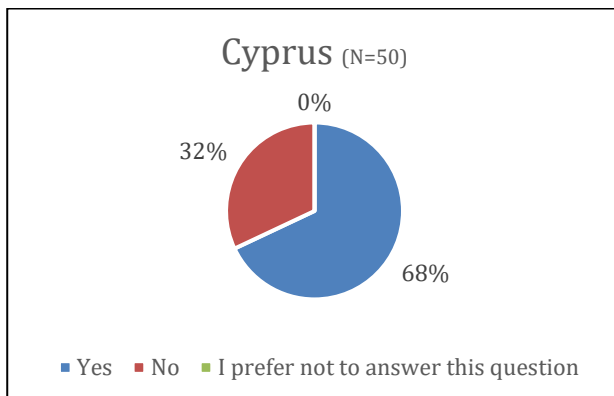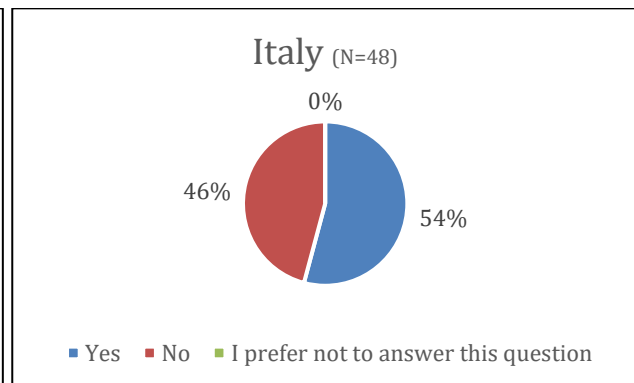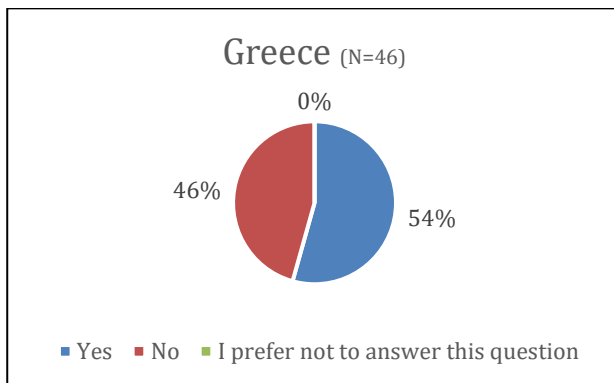
Fig. 1: Percentage of teachers that teach in classes with social minority groups at school

Differences between countries are significant. More teachers in Cyprus and Belgium report to teach in classes that include social minorities.

Total (N=162)

3%

40%

57%

- Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer this question
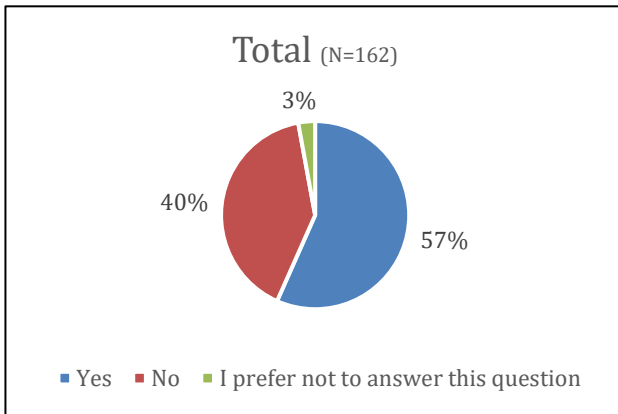
A little bit more than half of the teachers has pupils from linguistic minority groups in the classroom, but results vary between countries. Again, differences between countries were significant. Linguistic minority groups are more represented in the classes in Italy, Belgium and Cyprus, compared to Greece.

Greece (N=46)

2%

39%

59%

- Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer this question

Italy (N=48)

0%

35%

65%

- Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer this question

Cyprus (N=50)

0%

34%

66%

- Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer this question

Belgium (N=18)

14%

31%

55%

- Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer this question
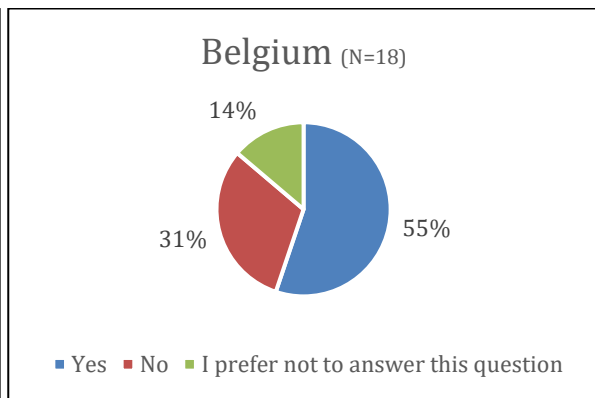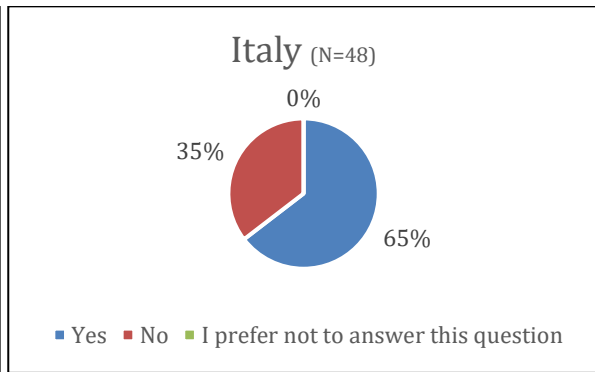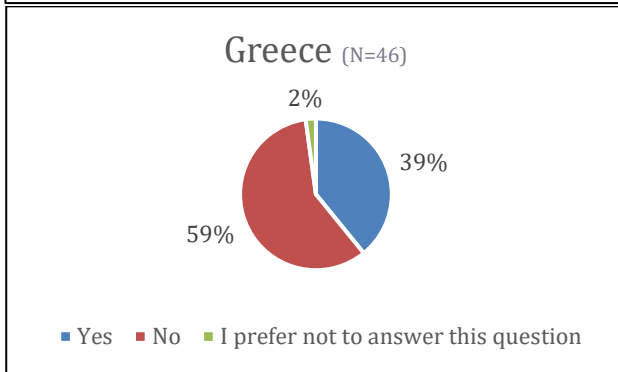
Fig. 2: Percentage of teachers that teach in classes with linguistic minority groups at school
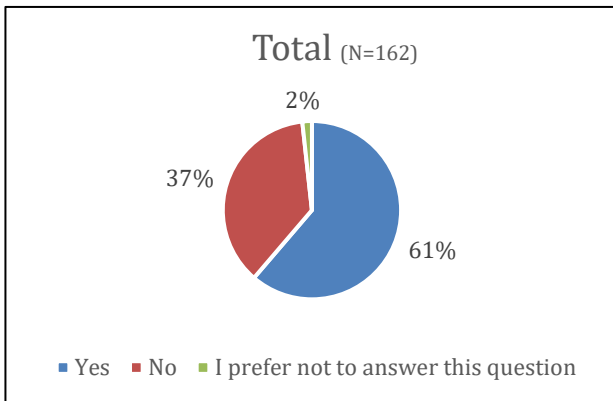
Two out of three teachers report ethnical diversity and minorities in the classroom. Again, proportions vary between countries, with Belgium the highest proportion of ethnical minorities in the classroom.

Total (N=162)
- 2%
- 37%
- 61%

Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer this question

Greece (N=46)
- 2%
- 48%
- 50%

Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer this question

Italy (N=48)
- 2%
- 40%
- 58%

Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer this question

Cyprus (N=50)
- 0%
- 40%
- 60%

Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer this question

Belgium (N=18)
- 3%
- 10%
- 86%

Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer this question
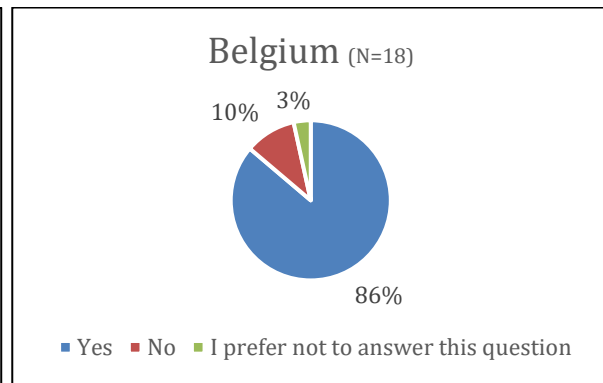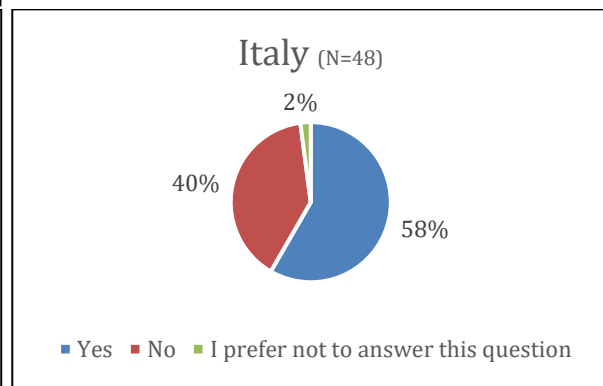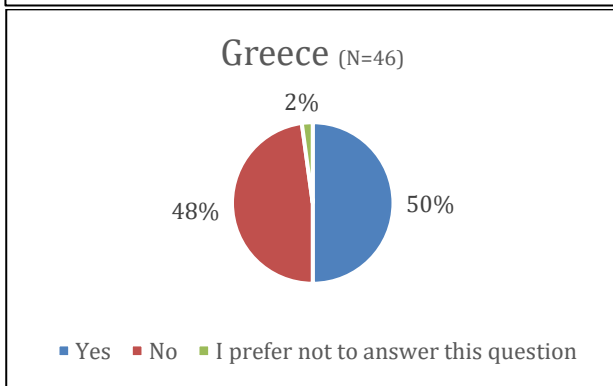
Fig. 3: Percentage of teachers that teach in classes with ethnical minority groups at school

Total (N=162)

3%
40%
57%

■ Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer this question
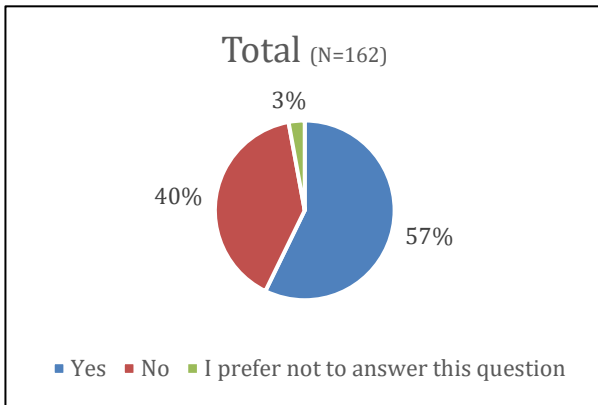
A little bit more than half of the teachers report religious minorities in the classroom. Which religions these are, depends on the country. In Greece and Cyprus, it refers to religions other than the orthodox catholic religion, in Belgium it refers to religions other than Catholic and Islam and in Italy it refers to other religions than Catholic religion.

Greece (N=46)

0%
57%
43%

■ Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer this question

Italy (N=48)

2%
40%
58%

■ Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer this question

Cyprus (N=50)

0%
36%
64%

■ Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer this question

Belgium (N=18)

14%
21%
66%

■ Yes ■ No ■ I prefer not to answer this question
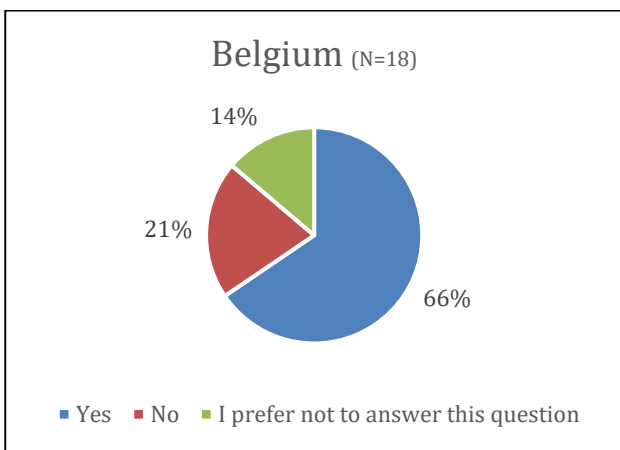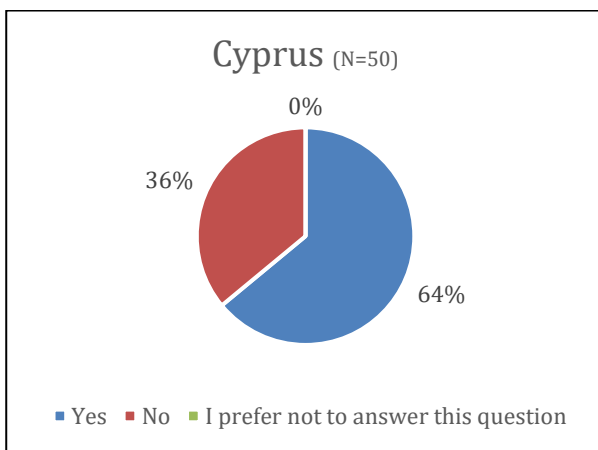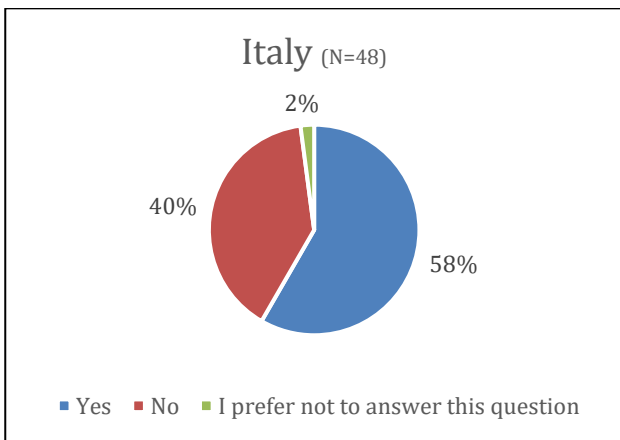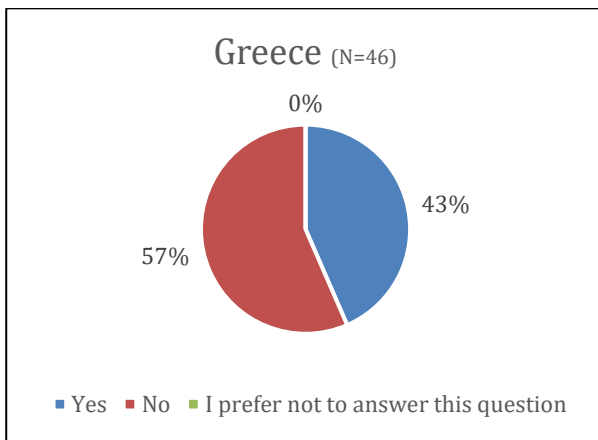
Fig. 4: Percentage of teachers that teach in classes with religious minority groups at school

The proportion of religious minorities is significantly higher for Cyprus and Belgium compared to Greece and Italy.

Controversial situations at school

Occurrence and frequencies

22 Indicate if you sometimes experience controversial situations at school during work with:		B		C		G		I		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
	Colleagues	2	11,1%	13	26,0%	10	21,7%	9	18,8%	34	21,0%
	Not applicable	4	22,2%	17	34,0%	15	32,6%	24	50,0%	60	37,0%
	Other	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	3	6,5%	2	4,2%	5	3,1%
	Parents	0	0,0%	3	6,0%	5	10,9%	1	2,1%	9	5,6%
	Pupils	12	66,7%	17	34,0%	13	28,3%	12	25,0%	54	33,3%
Total		18	100,0%	50	100,0%	46	100,0%	48	100,0%	162	100,0%

Table 1: Actors in controversial situations at school for teachers in Belgium (B), Cyprus (C), Greece (G) and Italy (I)

Approximately two out of three teachers have to deal with controversy in the classroom. If controversial situations at school occur, in most cases (33%), the second actor is a pupil, but it can also be another colleague.
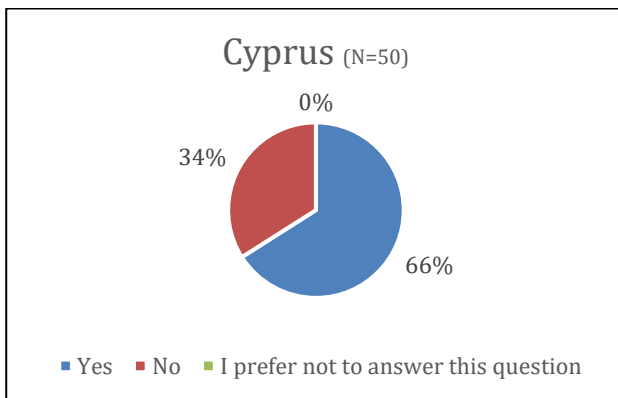
In general, differences between countries are not significant, however depending on the topic, some differences among countries are reported. Those are described in figures 8a-8e and 9.

	B		C		G		I		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
not applicable	4	22,2	17	34,0%	0	0,0%	24	50,0%	45	27,8%
Each day	0	0,0%	4	8,0%	1	2,2%	2	4,2%	7	4,3%
Each month	3	16,7%	11	22,0%	2	4,3%	6	12,5%	22	13,6%
Each period	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	11	23,9%	1	2,1%	12	7,4%
Each week	6	33,3%	10	20,0%	6	13,0%	4	8,3%	26	16,0%
Less	5	27,8%	8	16,0%	26	56,5%	11	22,9%	50	30,9%
Total	18	100,0%	50	100,0%	46	100,0%	48	100,0%	162	100,0%

Table 2: Frequency of controversial situations at school for teachers in Belgium (B), Cyprus (C), Greece (G) and Italy (I)

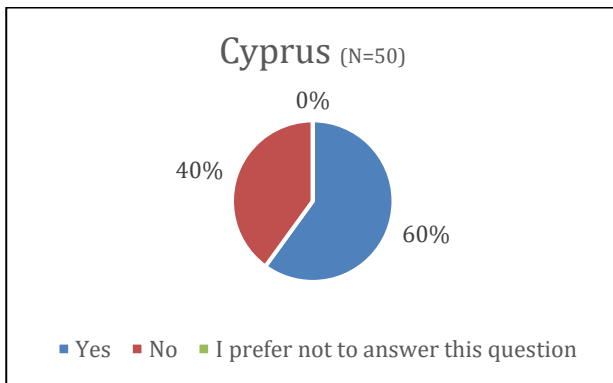For the frequency of controversy at school, there are significant differences. Belgian and Greek teachers report the highest incidence. It happens weekly for 1 out of 3 (Belgium), 1 out of 5 (Cyprus) and 1 out of 10 teachers (Italy). Almost 1 out of 4 Greek teachers say they have to deal with controversial situations each period.

Coping actions of teachers to deal with controversy in the classroom
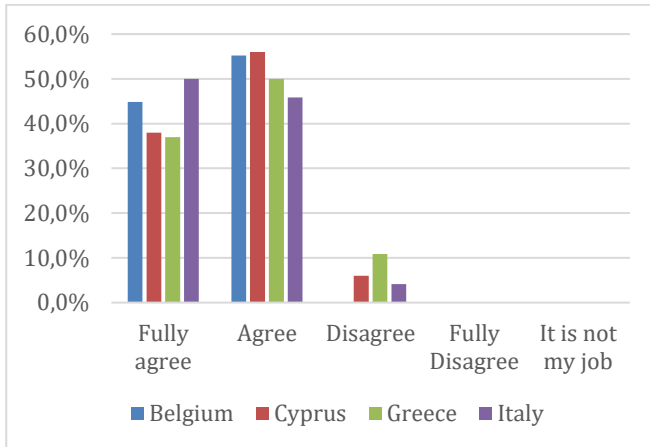
Italian and Belgian teachers feel rather competent in discussing controversial themes at school. Greek teachers feel the least competent. However, none of the respondents indicated that they don't feel competent. The differences were found significant.

Fig. 5: Perception of teachers to guide discussion successfully
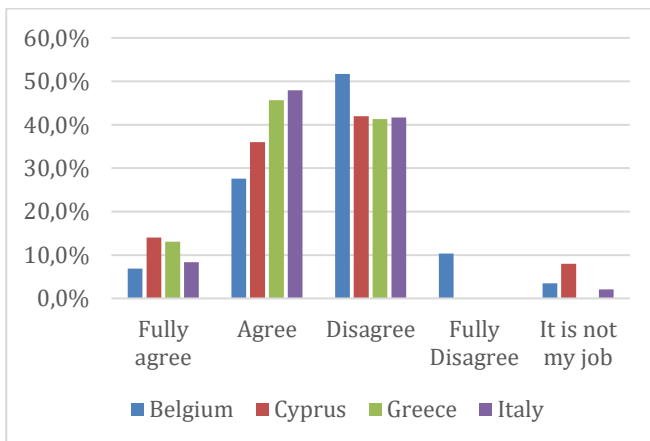
There were no significant differences. all participants showed consensus on the fact that discussions about difficult themes cannot take place autonomously and need a certain guiding from the teacher, but in some cases the teacher only facilitates and does not really intervene during the dialogue.

Fig 6: Allowance of teachers for students to talk about controversy without intervening
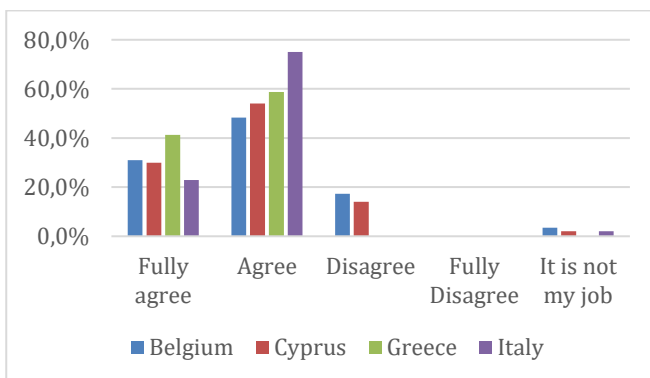
One out of five teachers in Belgium and Cyprus indicate that they feel difficulties to give a positive turn on a polarizing conversation. However, most respondents feel they are able to do so, with most of the Italian teachers feeling they have enough knowledge about this. Differences in perceived knowledge very for all four countries.

Fig. 7: Teachers perceived knowledge to turn a polarizing conversation into mutual dialogue

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In the following part, specific characteristics about a democratic dialogue were questioned to the participants.
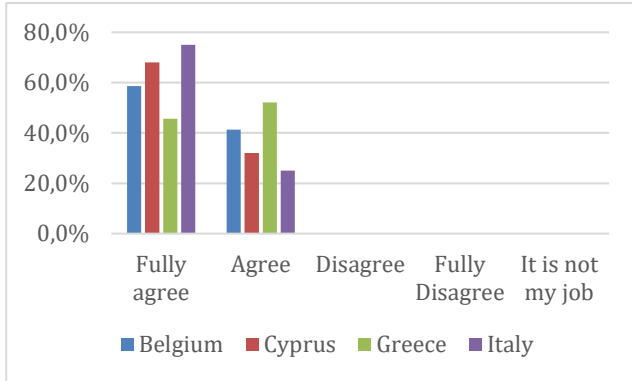
Despite differences that were found between groups, all responding teachers are aware of the fact that listening is an important condition in approaching difficult situations.

Fig. 8a: characteristics of democratic dialogue in the teachers' behaviour: listening
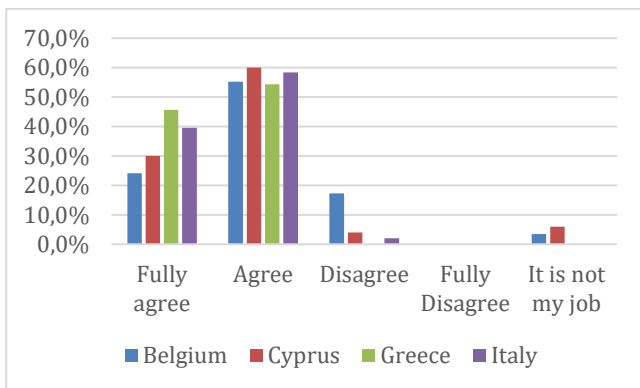
There is less consensus on the attitude to help pupils in exploring opinions and where they come from. Differences between countries are significant.

Fig. 8b: characteristics of democratic dialogue in the teachers' behaviour: exploring opinions
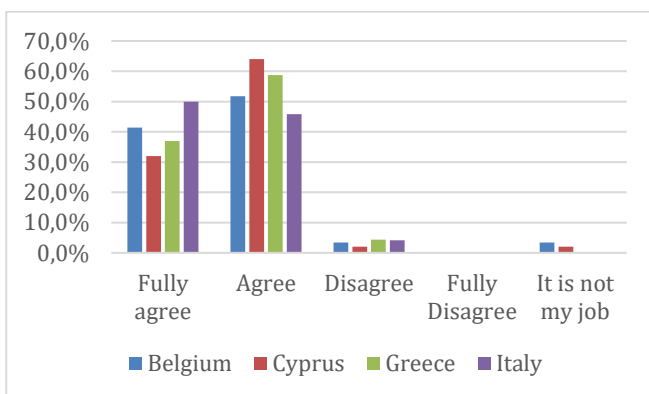
Teachers facilitate in distinguishing facts and opinions. The results do not show differences between countries. Only a smart proportion indicates that they do not facilitate in this aspect of a democratic dialogue.

Fig. 8c: characteristics of democratic dialogue in the teachers' behaviour: help distinguish between fact and opinions

Fig. 8d: characteristics of democratic dialogue in the teachers' behaviour: help recognise types of arguments
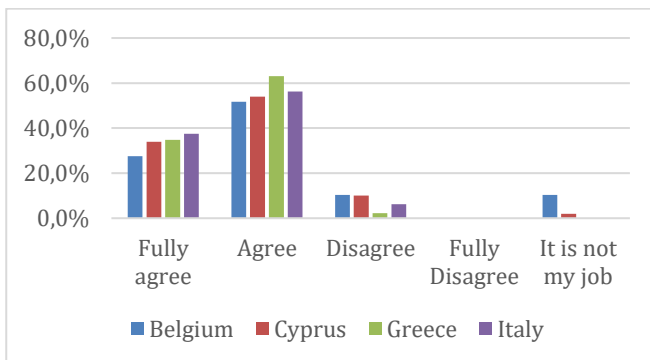
In general, one out five teachers helps pupils to recongnise the type of arguments. This is particularly reported by Greek and Italian teachers, but frequencies did not differ between countries.

Fig. 8e: characteristics of democratic dialogue in the teachers' behaviour: help searching sources and research
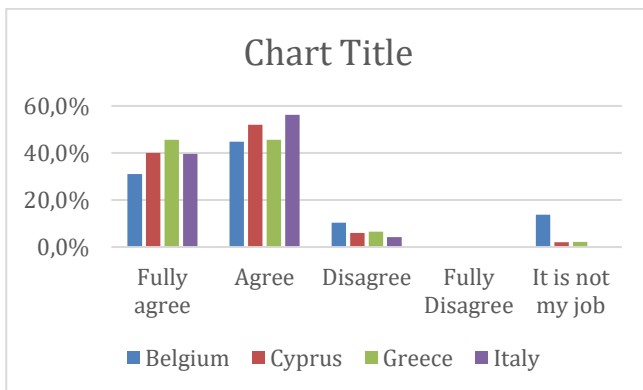
Guiding pupils to sources that support them in understanding the theme is a commonly used strategy in all four countries. Scores in Italy and Cyprus were significantly higher than in Belgium and Greece.

In general teachers in all four countries already use the main principles of a democratic dialogue. Except for philosophical themes, the perception of comfort or discomfort that were reported by teachers in the several countries vary significantly. Themes that are perceived within the comfort zone of most respondents are philosophical themes, discrimination, gender equality, racism, freedom of speech and cultural differences. In Cyprus, less teachers feel comfortable within controversial themes, compared to the other countries. Discrimination, gender equality, racism and freedom of speech are the themes that are the themes that feel most comfortable for Cyprus' teachers. In Greece, these themes are: philosophy, religion, discrimination, poverty, gender equality, racism, freedom of speech and cultural differences. Italian teachers report feeling comfortable with most of the themes. A minor proportion (1 out of 5 Italian respondents) reports some discomfort for the themes of religion, politics, philosophy and suicide. In Belgium, teachers feel comfortable with most themes, but some themes are also reported as difficult or uncomfortable. Those themes are politics and suicide.

DD@S

Perceptions of teachers in comfort to deal with controversial themes
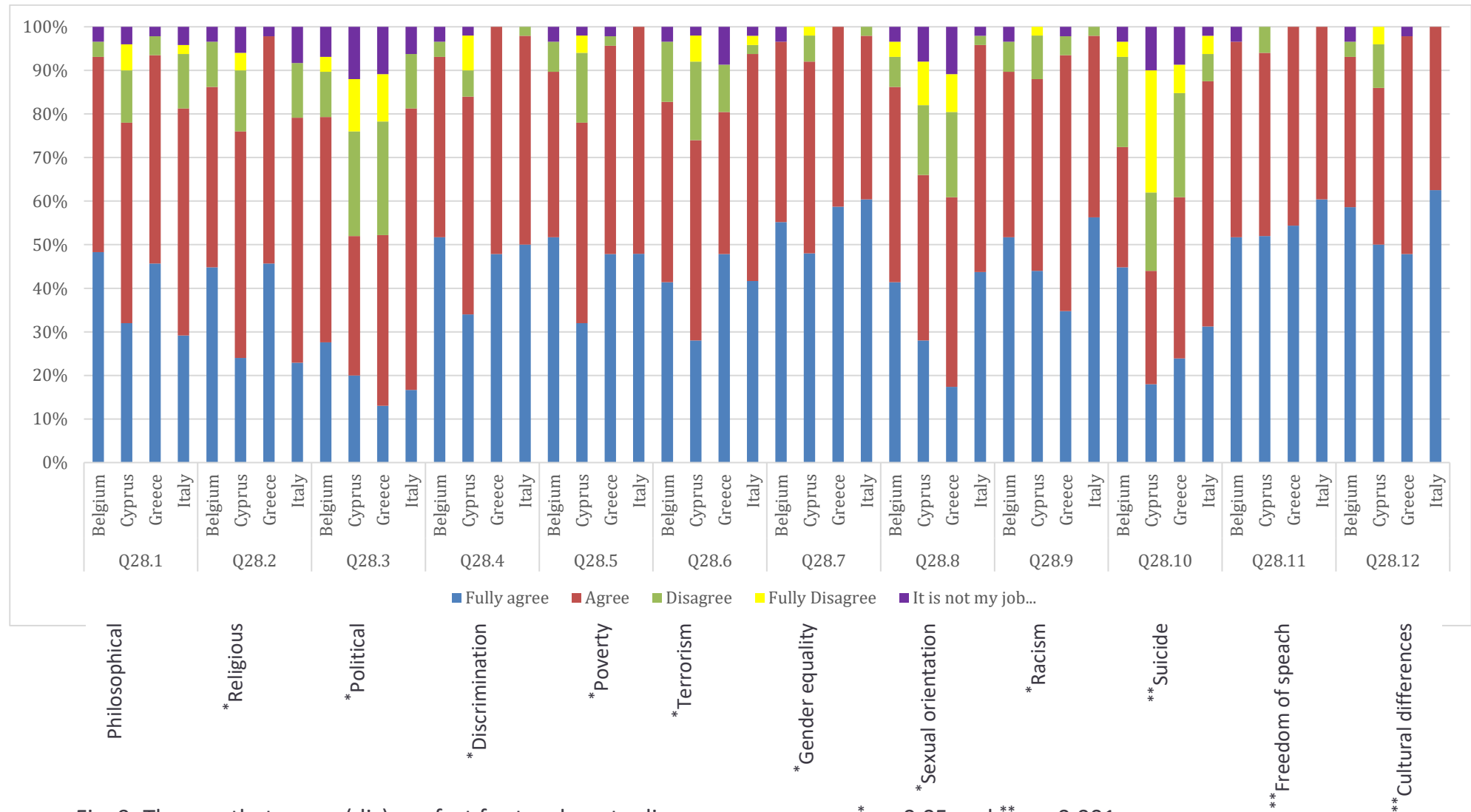
Fig. 9: Themes that cause (dis)comfort for teachers to discuss   *p < 0,05 and **p < 0,001

Results of the DD@S Focus group conversations

Focus Group Report per country

Italy

In a group comprising 9 teachers, 1 school coach, and 1 auditing teacher, with a majority of 8 women and 3 men, various teaching disciplines are represented, including foreign language, graphics, mathematics, computer science, Italian, economics, and support for the disabled.

The teachers shared their experiences and attitudes towards teaching controversial issues. They discussed instances involving topics such as euthanasia, migration stereotypes, femicide, mafia culture, war conflicts, and social controversies like homophobia and violence.

Teaching practices mentioned included engaging students in social campaigns, debates, and essay writing to foster constructive dialogue and critical thinking on contentious topics.

Teachers expressed a mix of confidence and uncertainty in handling conflicts, highlighting the need for specialized training and tools to manage controversial discussions effectively.

Professional development was deemed essential, with teachers seeking specific training to address controversial issues, foster democratic dialogue, and prevent conflicts in the classroom.

In conclusion, the teachers emphasized the importance of continuous training and support, including adopting informal education models, to navigate sensitive topics and promote peaceful resolution of conflicts among students.

The challenges of teaching controversial issues come under five broad headings:

 (a) Teaching style

 (b) Protecting student sensitivities

(c) Classroom climate and control

 (d) Lack of expert knowledge

 (e) Dealing with spontaneous questions and remarks.

The group relates to issues such as:

Teacher personal awareness and self-reflection;

Awareness of the nature of controversial issues and the challenges they pose;

Awareness of the make-up of the class and school environment;

Ability to use and apply a range of teaching styles;

Creation of an appropriate classroom atmosphere and supporting democratic school culture;

Introducing students to frameworks and strategies;

Eschewing the role of 'knowledgeable expert';

Training students to identify bias

Ability to plan and manage discussion effectively;

Ability to use and apply a range of specialised teaching techniques;

Involving other stakeholders and teachers.

Cyprus

Eleven female secondary school teachers with 3 to 20 years of experience participated in a focus group discussing their attitudes towards teaching controversial issues (CI) in schools. The majority expressed a strong willingness to address CI, considering it their duty as educators within open societal systems that affect schools.

Participants believe discussing CI enhances democratic thinking and teaches students to make informed judgments and take responsibility for their lives. They advocate for CI discussions to be integrated into the curriculum to develop students' citizenship competencies.

Students are willing to engage in CI discussions and benefit from dialogue, argumentation, and collaborative projects that encourage critical thinking and understanding of diverse viewpoints.

Teaching practices include setting ground rules for respectful discussions, presenting real-life scenarios, and engaging students in problem-solving activities to explore CI topics.

Despite their willingness, teachers face challenges such as lack of academic autonomy, knowledge, and time, along with concerns about parental reactions.

From the discussion, we can conclude that teachers face several challenges with respect to discussing CI in their classrooms. Participants stressed the need for ongoing and school-based in-service training of the staff. Participants also stated the importance of being able to support students' critical thinking skills in teaching controversial issues, design the classroom environment appropriately in line with instilling respect for different ideas, and approach controversial issues consciously by being aware of their own academic freedom. The most important step towards discussing controversial issues in schools is through a

planned and programmed way in the classroom environment. Schools must be places where students feel safe to engage in debates with people who have different opinions. Through the careful management of discussions on controversial issues, schools can promote freedom of expression, as well as inclusion, tolerance, and human rights, and prevent, or counter, the use of hate speech by students.

Greece

On November 4, 2022, the Interorthodox Centre conducted an in-person focus group with 17 teachers, coordinated by Dr. Christos Nasios and Mr. Sergios Voilas. The discussion began with an introduction to the project's aims, objectives, and expected outcomes. Participants were asked questions on teaching controversial topics, their practices, confidence levels, and professional development needs. The session lasted two hours and was recorded.

The teachers, predominantly female (15) with 5 to 30 years of experience, highlighted challenges in addressing controversial topics such as sexual orientation, gender identity, and extreme political ideologies. They noted the unpreparedness of the Greek school system for these issues. Religious and cultural controversies were less concerning to students.

Teachers felt inadequately trained to handle such discussions, often improvising classroom dialogue. They faced obstacles like curriculum constraints and limited school support. Some found success in addressing these issues through extracurricular projects.

Participants emphasized the importance of teacher personality and family support in managing student behaviors. They unanimously expressed the need for comprehensive and mandatory professional training on controversial issues, highlighting dissatisfaction with existing training programs.

In conclusion, teachers acknowledged the evolving social landscape and advocated for ongoing, high-quality training and a robust legal framework to support educators in navigating sensitive topics effectively. The discussions revealed a critical need for improved support systems to empower teachers in addressing complex issues within the school environment.

In conclusion, the discussion revealed the need for targeted training of teachers on issues related to sexual preferences, discrimination, violence, racial and religious discrimination, as well as extreme and radical political expressions. The training should follow modern

methods, presuppose the participation of teachers and meet the needs of modern democratic schools and enhance dialogue skills to handle difficult situations in schools.

For teacher training to be successful, it must be accompanied by appropriate teaching materials, pedagogical proposals and teaching methods that will reinforce a democratic and inclusive school.

Belgium

Teachers in Brussels frequently encounter and engage with controversial topics like the headscarf, homosexuality, religion, evolution theory, and social media and fake news due to the diverse population. While some teachers actively address these issues, others avoid them due to their complexity and potential to escalate discussions. To effectively handle controversial themes, teachers need confidence and a degree of freedom. Each teacher develops their own coping strategies based on comfort and experience. Discussions between students escalate more quickly in the post-COVID era.

Not all teachers feel confident addressing controversial themes; some courses are more suitable for these discussions. Teachers are advised to structure conversations effectively, providing frameworks for student debates without dominating discussions. Gender may influence student reactions, as some students exhibit less aggression towards female teachers due to cultural norms. Some teachers introduce controversial topics intentionally but stress the importance of thorough preparation and classroom safety.

Teachers should leverage complementarity within teaching teams based on individual strengths and should develop mediation skills to navigate different conflict approaches. Teachers are encouraged to seek information if they lack confidence in addressing these issues. Suitable infrastructure in schools is crucial for structured activities promoting growth for both teachers and students. There are ample opportunities for professional development nationally and internationally to equip teachers with skills for handling controversial topics effectively in the classroom.

To conclude, teachers in Brussels experience a lot of controversial topics: Head scarf, Homosexuality, Religion, Evolution theory and social media and fake news are the most frequent.

Not every teacher feels as confident to deal with them, but it helps if teachers cooperate and make a strong complementary team to support each other. Infrastructure might also be a facilitator for both pupils and teachers to debate on those themes. There are a lot of opportunities to train the necessary skills, and you learn something more each time.

Conclusion

In examining the experiences and perspectives of educators across Italy, Cyprus, Greece, and Belgium regarding teaching controversial issues in schools, several key themes and challenges have emerged. Across these diverse contexts, teachers have demonstrated a strong commitment to fostering democratic dialogue and critical thinking among students, despite facing numerous obstacles.

One recurring theme is the importance of continuous professional development and specialized training to effectively navigate sensitive topics and manage conflicts in the classroom. Teachers express a mix of confidence and uncertainty in addressing controversial issues, highlighting the need for comprehensive support systems and the adoption of informal educational models.

Challenges faced by educators include curriculum constraints, lack of autonomy, and concerns about parental reactions. Teachers stress the significance of creating a supportive classroom atmosphere that promotes respectful dialogue and critical analysis of diverse viewpoints.

A collaborative approach emerges as a promising strategy, with teachers advocating for complementary teaching teams and peer support to address complex issues effectively. The integration debate around these topics into the curriculum is seen as vital for developing students' citizenship competencies and promoting a democratic school culture.

Furthermore, the role of infrastructure in facilitating structured activities and debates on controversial themes is emphasized, underscoring the need for suitable classroom environments that promote inclusion and tolerance.

In conclusion, the experiences shared by educators highlight the evolving landscape of education, characterized by the increasing importance of addressing diverse and challenging topics in the classroom. By prioritizing ongoing professional development, promoting collaboration among teachers, and fostering supportive school environments, educators can effectively navigate controversial issues and empower students to engage critically with complex societal issues. Through these efforts, schools can become spaces that promote freedom of expression, inclusivity, and respect for human rights, ultimately shaping informed and responsible citizens for our global society.

How to deal with controversy in the classroom with the democratic dialogue method?

What is democratic dialogue?

*A Democratic Dialogue is a **constructive** and **investigative dialogue** about a sensitive topic. By means of this dialogue, we aim to promote an **empathic attitude** amongst the participants, which can lead to encounters that highlight common ground whilst maintaining respect for differences* (Cornelissen & Yentür, 2017).

Origin and principles of DD

The democratic dialogue method has merged from several approaches that are well known. These are the Socratic method, Intercultural communication and nonviolent communication.

The **Socratic method** is a method in which a person really tries to understand another person by asking questions. It is a dialogue in which additional questions are used to explore the underlying beliefs of another person. Examples are: 'What do you mean by …?', 'Can you explain why you think that?' It helps mutual understanding instead of judging the other. It helps the persons involved in the dialogue to stay neutral.

Intercultural communication refers to communication between people of different cultures. Typically, this communication is directed by each persons' norms and values. The interaction demands a good understanding of the other persons' set of values and beliefs. Each person has an internal set of values that influences how he or she communicates with others. Understanding this unique experience of other and being open to it is of utmost importance for communication becoming dialogue. This method can show teachers and students which attitude(s) to adopt to enable open, meaningful and constructive communication.

Nonviolent communication teaches us the importance of understanding the reasons why a person experiences discomfort or conflict. Open questions help explore the other persons experience and aim to detect the true need of each actor involved in the communication. Then, mutual dialogue in a human and respectful way, even in difficult circumstances, can result in an approach or solution for the potential conflict. The method teaches us alternate forms of communication and listening skills. It goes beyond moralizing judgement but initiates communication from the perspective of each underlying emotional need.

DD@S

How to initiate a democratic dialogue?

Yentür & Cornelissen (2017) describe three phases that are important in a democratic dialogue: a secure and calm environment, observe and explore, reflection and feedback.

Secure and calm environment

Preconditions for a democratic dialogue are a safe environment in which participants can trust each other. Everyone should feel free to speak out about their opinion without fear of the consequences. Each opinion deserves recognition.
To provide a good context for this kind of dialogue, use following tips (Yentür & Cornelissen, 2017)

- Remain calm when hearing outrageous statements

- If necessary, guide the student to a peaceful spot where he / she can calm down.

- Create a secure class environment by making clear commitments. Use a constructive approach with the adolescents. Emphasize that we will talk about our thoughts on what happened without passing judgement. Each and every opinion counts and deserves attention to reflect on.

- Ensure a positive non-verbal communication (use a body language and posture that show openness and genuine interest).

- Project trust.

- Grant enough time and opportunities to voice all the opinions.

Dialogue tips

- Observe the students: In what way is the subject important to them? Who says what? Who is the most (or least) affected by what is being said?

- Grant the students enough time and opportunity to tell their story, and to substantiate with arguments.

- Show respect by listening actively.

- Grant everyone, including the quieter students, the opportunity to speak.

- Dig deeper: identify the underlying arguments on which the student bases his/her reasoning. What are the real grounds?

- Request clarification if you do not understand something.

- Review with a critical eye the discourse held: understand the underlying reasoning by asking questions such as 'What do you mean by?', 'Is that always the case?', 'can you give an example please?' etc.

- Paraphrase / check your interpretation regularly with questions such as 'If I have understood you correctly, you mean the following ... ?'

- Point out the difference between emotional and rational reasoning.

- Pay special attention to the reliability of the source of information and reference frameworks by asking e.g. 'What is your point of view based on?', 'Where did you find this information?' etc.

- Show empathy. Imagine yourself in somebody else´s situation and motivate the students to act likewise by asking e.g. 'Can you imagine that …?', 'Can this be compared to …?' etc.

- Allow for pauses by summarizing regularly: 'So till now, we have heard the following perspectives / points of view / thoughts …'.

Reflection and feedback

- Summarize briefly what the debate was about. What were the most important insights? Ask the participants what they have remembered.

- Ask the participants about their expectations on how they would like to proceed. This gives them joint responsibility, which can motivate them to actively seek a solution.

- Which questions remain unanswered? Does this debate lead to new questions? Do the students need a follow-up session? If so, try to plan a dialogue session together.

Summary to handle controversy in the classroom

Conclusion

Themes that trigger conflict and controversy in the classroom might differ slightly between countries, but there are a lot of similarities.

Dealing with these kinds of topics have some common characteristics:

- Remain calm and listen to all persons involved
- Inform yourself on the topic and support pupils in informing themselves
- Use empathic communication strategies (such as mediation techniques, democratic dialogue, non-violent communication)

Teachers' collaboration as a team is an important fact. This strengthens teachers because they can act as a complementary team. Furthermore, there are a lot of opportunities to train the skills that are needed. All teachers benefit from these skills somehow. It strengthens the teacher team, which is an important asset for the school and the facilitation of well-being of pupils at school.

References

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The DD@S Toolkit

What is the aim of the DD@S Toolkit?

The term "educational toolkit" refers to a collection of related resources or tools that, either individually or collectively, can guide and support users in their work, e.g., in developing a plan, organising efforts, implementing activities, following evidence-based recommend-dations or meeting evidence-based standards of practice to achieve a desired outcome.

The DD@S Toolkit, developed in the context of the DD@S 1st Project Result, aims to offer useful instruments for schools who feel the need to **empower** teachers and pedagogical professionals in democratic dialogue, **upskill** teachers in teaching/discussing controversial issues in their classes, **promote** an inclusive climate at school and **help** school teams built their own training strategy and policy to implement at school.

All project partners contributed to the collection and presentation of good and promising practices related with the scope of the DD@S project which is the empowerment of European secondary school teachers in dealing with controversial issues and multicultural challenges at school.

The toolkit is the result of an iterative, double ADDIE cycle (standing for Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate). The first cycle started with the DD@S focus groups where teachers, school heads and educators shared their experiences about discussing and teaching controversial issues in class.

Then, a template for the collection and presentation of promising practices was provided by Symplexis, along with relevant guidance, and all partners collected and presented best, good or promising practices, based on the results of their DD@S national fieldwork, their own organisations' experience and further research where appropriate.

The feedback of participating teachers in the project's 1st LTTA (Learning, Teaching and Training Activity) has been the starting point of the second ADDIE cycle. The final evaluation of the toolkit was performed by the two leading partners in this result: Erasmus University Brussels and Symplexis.

What are "good practices"?

"Good practices" can be defined in multiple ways. However, a thread common to most definitions implies strategies, approaches and/or activities that have been shown through research and evaluation to be effective, efficient, sustainable and/or transferable, and to reliably lead to a desired result[1].

For the purposes of the DD@S project, the term "practice" has been expanded to include projects, practices and tools as well as strategies, approaches and activities. There was particular interest in other EU projects (with national participation), practices and tools (e.g. online courses, teaching materials, educational games) which can contribute in one or more aspects to the professional development of teachers to acquire the necessary skills and/or to deal effectively with ethnic, religious, multicultural or other conflict situations in schools (e.g. developing effective dialogue skills, tackling gender discrimination, welcoming migrant pupils, etc.).

Promising, good or best practices?

The difference between practices that are **promising, good and/or best** is explained below:

➢ *Promising*: A program, activity, strategy or technique for which there is sufficient evidence to claim that it is proven effective at achieving a specific aim or outcome, consistent with the goals and objectives of the activity/program/intervention etc., however there is not enough generalizable evidence to label it "best practice". A promising practice however holds promise for becoming a best practice with long-term sustainable impact for other organisations and entities that wish to adapt the approach based on the soundness of the evidence.

➢ *Good*: A program, activity, strategy or technique that meets most of the following criteria: leads to an actual change, has a considerable impact, demonstrates an innovative or replicable approach, and demonstrates sustainability.

➢ *Best*: A program, activity, strategy or technique that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means in a given situation by evidence provided by subjective and objective data sources, and that could be adapted for other situations.

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[1] European Commission (n.d.). European Website on Integration. What are "good practices"?
https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/page/what-are-good-practices_en

What are the main criteria for selection of projects, practices and tools?

The promising, good or best practices included in the DD@S toolkit have been identified and assessed according to the following criteria[2]:

Criterion	Description
1. **Relevance to the target groups**	The selected practices concern and address secondary school teachers. However, partners could also include practices that concern school leaders or other stakeholders involved in school education and relevant policy.
2. **Relevance to the issue**	The proposed practices are related to the aim and purpose of the DD@S project, which aims at the professional development of school teachers to acquire necessary skills and/or to manage ethnic, religious, multicultural or other conflict situations at school.
3. **Technically and administrative feasibility**	The practices are technically feasible and easy to learn and to implement.
4. **Effectiveness and success with measurable impact**	The selected practices demonstrate their relevance as an effective way of achieving their specific objective(s). Ideally, they should have a measured and explained impact (supported by evidence, data, statistics, etc.).
5. **Efficiency**	The practices produce results with a reasonable level of resources and time.
6. **Replicability and adaptability**	The proposed practices have potential for replication and adaptation to other contexts.
7. **Sustainability**	The practices are implementable over a long period of time without extensive additional resources. Social sustainability, i.e. impact on people and society, has also been taken under consideration.

[2] Adapted form COME RES 953040 – D5.1: Methodological framework for good/best practices selection, 29.09.2021, Version 2. Retrieved 22 May 2022 from https://come-res.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Resources Deliverables/COME_RES_Deliverable_WP5.1_Methodological_Framework_for_good_practices.pdf

Promising, Good & Best Practices

Game cards to
guide a democratic dialogue on controversial topics
PRACTICE – Preventing Radicalism through Critical
Thinking Competences – Module on Controversial Issues
Report: Equity and Inclusion in
Education: Finding Strength through Diversity
Teaching controversial issues Training
Pack: Developing effective training for teachers and
school leaders   Erasmus+ project: Enhancing active
Teaching controversial issues Training   citizenship through debate
Pack: Developing effective training for teachers and Game cards to
school leaders   guide a democratic dialogue on controversial topics
Report: Equity and Inclusion in   Report: Equity and Inclusion in
Education: Finding Strength through Diversity Education: Finding Strength through Diversity

Teaching controversial issues Training
Pack: Developing effective training for teachers and
school leaders
Erasmus+ project: Game to   Managing Controversy: A   Erasmus+ project: Enhancing active
EMbrace INtercultural education (GEM IN) Whole-School Training Tool   citizenship through debate
UNESCO's e-Platform on Intercultural Dialogue
UNESCO's e-Platform on Intercultural Dialogue Project: Io la   Game cards to
mafia non la disgerisco ("I dont digest mafia") guide a democratic dialogue on controversial topics
KAICIID Dialogue   Theory into Practice   Project: Io la
Centre   Strategies: mafia non la disgerisco ("I dont digest mafia")
Inclusive Practices for Managing Controversial Issues in the Classroom
"Children of Abraham Strategy" PRACTICE – Preventing Radicalism through Critical Managing Controversy: A
Thinking Competences - Module on Controversial Issues Whole-School Training Tool
Managing Controversy: A   Teaching controversial issues Training
Whole-School Training Tool Pack: Developing effective training for teachers and KAICIID Dialogue
Centre
"Children of Abraham Strategy" Report: Equity and Inclusion in "Children of Abraham Strategy"
Project: Io la   Education: Finding Strength through Diversity
mafia non la disgerisco ("I dont digest mafia") Game cards to   KAICIID Dialogue
guide a democratic dialogue on controversial topics Centre
UNESCO's e-Platform on Intercultural Dialogue Erasmus+ project: Game to   Erasmus+ project: Enhancing active
EMbrace INtercultural education (GEM IN) citizenship through debate
Managing Controversy: A   Erasmus+ project: Enhancing active
Whole-School Training Tool   citizenship through debate   Reciprocal Maieutic Approach of Danilo
Dolci
KAICIID Dialogue   Reciprocal Maieutic Approach of Danilo
Project: Io la   Centre   Dolci   Reciprocal Maieutic Approach of Danilo
mafia non la disgerisco ("I dont digest mafia") "Children of Abraham Strategy"   Dolci
PRACTICE – Preventing Radicalism through Critical
Thinking Competences – Module on Controversial Issues
Erasmus+ project: Game to   Theory into Practice UNESCO's e-Platform on Intercultural Dialogue
EMbrace INtercultural education (GEM IN) Strategies:
Inclusive Practices for Managing Controversial Issues in the Classroom
Erasmus+ project: Game to
EMbrace INtercultural education (GEM IN)
PRACTICE – Preventing Radicalism through Critical
Thinking Competences - Module on Controversial Issues
Reciprocal Maieutic Approach of Danilo   Theory into Practice
Dolci   Strategies:
Inclusive Practices for Managing Controversial Issues in the Classroom
Theory into Practice
Strategies:
Inclusive Practices for Managing Controversial Issues in the Classroom

Teaching controversial issues: Developing effective training for teachers and school leaders	
Country	Cyprus, Ireland, Montenegro, Spain and the United Kingdom with the support of Albania, Austria, France and Sweden
Actors and stakeholders	Project Partners: • Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, Ministry of Education and Culture, Cyprus • Curriculum Development Unit, City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETB), Ireland • UNESCO Chair in Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights, Montenegro • Centro Nacional de Innovación e Investigación Educativa, Spain • Citizenship Foundation (now Young Citizens), United Kingdom Associated Partners: • Institute for Development of Education, Albania • Demokratiezentrum Wien, Austria • Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur, de la recherche et de l'innovation, France • Swedish National Agency for Education, Sweden
Target group	Teachers and school leaders
Short description	"Teaching controversial issues – developing effective training for teachers and school leaders" is a Pilot Project for teachers, produced in 2014, under the scope of the Joint Programme "Democratic and Inclusive School Culture in Operation (DISCO)," launched in May 2013 and ended in December 2021, under the name "Human Rights and Democracy in Action" by the Council of Europe and the European Commission.
Type	Training Pack for Teachers
Objective and main aspects/ elements	The overall objective of this pilot project was to develop effective training on teaching controversial issues and strengthen the capability and confidence of teachers and school leaders in this area in several Council of Europe member states and beyond. The main resource developed during this

Funded by the European Union

	pilot project is the "Teaching controversial issues" Training Pack: a professional development programme for teachers designed to support and promote the teaching of controversial issues in schools in Europe. The programme seeks to address the challenges of teaching controversial issues through the development of a comprehensive package of training and professional development material.
Results, challenges and impact	Partner countries in this Pilot Project reviewed existing literature and training approaches - to ascertain the key challenges for teachers and school leaders in teaching controversial issues in classrooms and schools. They also produced a scoping paper on why teaching controversial issues in EDC/HRE is important and establishing the key principles and processes underpinning effective teaching approaches. They developed and piloted a training programme for teachers and school leaders, based on effective principles and processes, to build capability and confidence in teaching controversial issues. Finally, an international conference was organized to share the learning and outcomes with other member states and European and international partners.
	This project was notable for the large number of teachers involved in developing and refining the training materials. The Pilot training took place in 6 partner countries: the full partner countries of Cyprus, Ireland, Spain, Montenegro and the UK (England) and the associate partner country of Albania. Over 350 education professionals, including teachers, teacher trainers, student teachers, assistant teachers, officials and NGO representatives were involved in the training within and across countries.
Replicability and upscaling	The "Teaching controversial issues" training Pack for Teachers is designed primarily for the benefit of classroom teachers across all educational settings and in all subjects - from pre-primary to tertiary, and from Citizenship Education and Social Studies to Languages and Science. It has been devised for use in professional development sessions and/or pre-service teacher training under the guidance of an experienced trainer or facilitator. It is also useful for school leaders and senior managers since controversial issues cannot be restricted to

	classrooms: they invariably spill out into other areas of the school, corridors, cafeterias, playgrounds and staff rooms. The Pack is not country-specific and is suitable for use on a Europe-wide basis since it has already been successfully piloted with teachers, trainers, and facilitators in a number of European countries. Moreover, the material has been translated into English and 21 other languages reinforcing its replicability and adaptability by education professionals in the school sector (i.e., teachers, teacher trainers, student teachers, assistant teachers, officials and NGO representatives). Resources, e-publications, training, workshops and podcasts developed for the projects funded under the scope of the Joint Programme by "Democratic and Inclusive School Culture in Operation (DISCO)", are freely available online to be further disseminated and adopted by public entities.
Sustainability	Since the beginning of the Joint Programme "Democratic and Inclusive School Culture in Operation (DISCO)" in May 2013 as a pilot scheme under the name of "Human rights and democracy in action", the Programme funded projects in 38 countries and supported 102 organisations. DISCO supported the 50 States Parties of the European Cultural Convention in integrating the CoE education acquis, policies, and tools in education systems and promoting Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE). Projects have been actively sharing best practices and cooperating with each other, but also with local, regional and national authorities, and even with international stakeholders in some cases. Several results are being brought to the policy level, to ensure their sustainability. Many follow-up actions are already planned for the coming years from the created resources and new partnerships established. These will further contribute to the promotion and continued development of citizenship and human rights education in Europe, beyond the scope of European Union/Council of Europe Joint Programme DISCO.

	All programme Publications since 2013, including the **Teaching controversial issues Toolkit**, are available online in many languages.
Link	https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/charter-edc-hre-pilot-projects/teaching-controversial-issues-developing-effective-training-for-teachers-and-school-leaders
Other relevant info or related resources	Teaching Controversial Issues - Professional development pack for the effective teaching of controversial issues: in English & in 21 more languages. The Joint Programme Publications.

Managing Controversy: A Whole-School Training Tool

Country	Austria, Cyprus, Ireland, Montenegro, and the United Kingdom with the support of Albania, France and Sweden
Actors and stakeholders	Project partners • Democracy Centre, Austria • Federal Ministry for Education and Women's Affairs, Austria • Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, Ministry of Education • and Culture, Cyprus • City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee Curriculum Development Unit, Ireland • University of Montenegro, Montenegro • Citizenship Foundation, United Kingdom Associated Partners: • Institute for Development of Education, Albania • Ministère de l'enseignement supérieur, de la recherche et de l'innovation, France • Swedish National Agency for Education, Sweden
Target group	School leaders and Senior managers
Short description	"Managing controversy" is published in the framework of the European Union/Council of Europe Pilot Projects Scheme "Human Rights and Democracy in Action" which aims to implement the principles of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education.
Type	Toolkit: a self-reflection tool for school leaders and senior managers.
Objective and main aspects/ elements	The pilot project "Managing Controversy: A Whole-School Training Tool" was conducted in 2015 and aimed to develop a training tool on Managing Controversy in Schools which offers practical support to school leaders/senior managers on how to proactively manage and react to controversial issues in and beyond the school. During the implementation of the pilot project a publication was developed to help strengthen the managing of controversial issues at whole-school level. This

	publication benefits young people and also help contribute to more effective Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE), and the protection and strengthening of our democratic societies.
Results, challenges and impact	Partner countries in this Pilot Project produced the following results: - A whole school training tool on handling controversial issues. - A scoping paper - on why school leaders/senior managers in schools play a crucial role in managing controversial issues in schools. - A practical 'How to' guide - on providing answers and guidance in relation to the FAQs for school leaders/senior managers concerning managing proactively and reactively controversial issues. - An on-line self-evaluation matrix – on key aspects of school policies and practices that impact on how well schools manage controversy so that school leaders/senior managers (primary and secondary) can see where their schools are 'at' and plan for further actions. - The training tool is integrated into existing Education for Democratic Citizenship / Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE) activities by the Council of Europe, including Pestalozzi training, member states and partner organisations, such as the European Wergeland Centre and the Summer Academy programme. All project deliverables have been designed and piloted by representatives of countries from all reaches of Europe that were involved in this pilot project.
Replicability and upscaling	This training pack is a self-reflection tool for school leaders, leadership teams, and teachers, offering guidance on how to handle controversial issues in schools and educational settings. The tool helps practitioners reflect on the way controversy is managed in their schools/settings and offers practical suggestions on how it might be handled more proactively and strategically.

	This tool can be used alongside the companion training pack, "Handling Controversy". It is aimed at school leaders and teachers but can also be used by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community organisations. The tool is a response to a call from policymakers and practitioners in a number of European countries for more effective training for school leaders and teachers in the handling of controversial issues, as a matter of educational urgency.
	The tool contains nine sections, each dealing with a different area of school life or setting that could have an impact on the management of controversy and controversial issues. It helps strengthen the role of education in promoting the core values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It also advances the concept of education being on the frontline in countering social evils such as violent extremism and the radicalisation of youth, xenophobia and discrimination, as well as violence and hate-speech.
	All programme Publications since 2013, including the **Managing controversy Toolkit, are** available online in many languages.
Sustainability	The development of this training tool highlights the importance of helping children and young people to learn to live and to work together peacefully and equitably, however diverse their backgrounds, beliefs or identities, and of the part that formal, non-formal and informal education can play in achieving this. There is a wide range of factors stimulating the use of the manual across Europe including the need to tackle extremism, terrorism and hate crime; the need to provide newly arrived refugees and migrants with access to education; the need to respond to current challenges to democracy (e.g. the rise of nationalism and populism at the expense of European unity); etc.
	The use of this tool to help address a wide range of contexts and issues across the different regions of Europe underlines its flexibility and adaptability. It is proving a helpful starting point for training those who work in schools and other education settings to feel more comfortable in handling controversial issues. It also encourages them to see handling controversial

	issues as a natural part of their efforts to educate children and young people across Europe so as to promote, as well as protect and defend, democratic societies in the 21st century. This self-reflection tool has been used by a range of organisations, trainers and facilitators in different training settings across Europe. Moreover, the Council of Europe is also actively incorporating the manual into its ongoing programme of activities to support the promotion of Education for Democratic Citizenship / Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE).
Link	https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/charter-edc-hre-pilot-projects/project-1-managing-controversy-a-whole-school-training-tool
Other relevant info or related resources	Managing controversy: developing a strategy for handling controversy and teaching controversial issues in schools in English & in 4 more languages. The Joint Programme Publications.

Equity and Inclusion in Education: Finding Strength through Diversity

Country	Paris
Actors and stakeholders	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
Target group	Teachers, school leaders, education policymakers, governments, those interested in diversity, equity and inclusion issues
Short description	Governments and education policy makers are increasingly concerned with equity and inclusion in education due to several global trends such as demographic shifts, migration and refugee crises rising inequalities, and climate change. Over the past few years, the OECD "**Strength through Diversity Project"** has developed a rich evidence-base to help countries identify and support the needs of diverse students and promote more equitable and inclusive education systems.

The project was conducted in two phases. The first phase of the OECD Strength through Diversity Project, The Integration of Immigrants and Refugees in Schools and Training Systems, provided evidence to help countries put in place or scale up integration policies to support immigrants and promote social cohesion. However, migration is only one of the many dimensions of diversity that can affect the well-being of students and that require consideration in education systems. The second phase of the project, Education for Inclusive Societies, establishes one holistic framework that allows analysing a wider range of diversity dimensions, their intersections with one another, and within the diverse parameters of socio-economic status and geographic location. |
| **Type** | Report |
| **Objective and main aspects/ elements** | The "Strength through Diversity: Education for Inclusive Societies" project aims to identify how education systems can be equitable and inclusive by supporting the learning and well-being outcomes of diverse populations, and ensuring that all individuals are able to engage with others in increasingly diverse and complex societies. The objective is to ensure that |

	all education systems are more accessible, acceptable, adaptable and affordable to the needs of all learners.
Results, challenges and impact	A number of outputs were designed to assist with policy making and the examination of different approaches in the area of inclusive education: - A stock-take of current policies and practices in countries - Policy fora and proceedings - Working papers addressing specific policy aspects of inclusion and equity in education - Country background reports - Country review reports - Meetings of country representatives to review progress and share experiences - A typology of approaches to examine inclusive education in as many countries as possible - A comparative synthesis report or a series of thematic comparative reports On 31 January 2023, the Strength through Diversity team released the "Equity and Inclusion in Education: Finding Strength through Diversity" report.
Replicability and upscaling	This report by the Strength through Diversity project examines how education systems can respond to increasing diversity and foster greater equity and inclusion in education. Based on a holistic framework for studying diversity, equity and inclusion in education, the report examines five key policy areas (i.e., governance; resourcing; capacity building; school-level interventions, and monitoring and evaluation), provides examples of policies and practices, and offers policy advice on promoting more equitable and inclusive education systems. Policy makers, educators, schools, government parties and anyone interested in this field could benefit from this publication. One can use this document to understand the factors that shape equity and inclusiveness in education and how to support a diverse population, the associated challenges and possible policy responses. Moreover, this publication shares knowledge on how to build the capacity to foster equity and inclusion, how to promote, monitor and evaluate equity

| | and inclusion through school-level interventions and a series of key steps towards an equal and inclusive education.

All project's materials are designed focused on six major themes: migration; ethnic groups, national minorities and Indigenous peoples; gender; gender identity and sexual orientation; special education needs; giftedness and five key policy areas: (1) governance, (2) resourcing, (3) capacity building, (4) school-level interventions and (5) monitoring and evaluation. This makes the material flexible and adaptable in any context or level of education, while anyone interested could use this as a reference to adapt practices in his own activities.

This report analyses data from the most OECD member countries to describe equity and inclusion in education; to present the differences in diverse student groups gaps, the groups receiving special provision within the school curriculum, the education systems that include policies targeting intersections of students gaps etc. This information could help education systems all over Europe to identify specific needs and focus on targeted groups of students when dealing with equity and inclusion in schools. |
|---|---|
| **Sustainability** | The "Equity and Inclusion in Education: Finding Strength through Diversity" report is freely available online in a Read only version. Webinars, blog posts and podcasts are implemented throughout the project for further dissemination of the project activities and results. |
| **Link** | https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/equity-and-inclusion-in-education_e9072e21-en |
| **Other relevant info or related resources** | Promoting inclusive education for diverse societies: A conceptual framework

Webinar Presentation on how can education systems and schools support vulnerable students during school closures and school re-openings

Analytical framework for equity and inclusion |

Theory into Practice Strategies:
Inclusive Practices for Managing Controversial Issues in the Classroom

Country	Australia
Actors and stakeholders	Flinders University
Target group	Teachers and school leaders
Short description	A tip sheet prepared by Flinders University outlining strategies and tips for managing controversial issues in teaching.
Type	Tool/Strategy
Objective and main aspects/ elements	The purpose of this document is to support educators in finding inclusive ways of dealing with controversial issues and help their students to recognize and think critically about various aspects of an argument, separating their own values, beliefs and emotions from its analysis and evaluation.
Results, challenges and impact	Raising controversies and helping students work through them is an important part of (higher) education and students' intellectual development. However, because of the discomfort discussion of controversies may cause both staff and students, the temptation may be to avoid controversy. This resource shares a number of strategies and tips for the management of controversial Issues in teaching.
Replicability and upscaling	This TIPS folio is on culturally inclusive ways to manage controversial issues in classroom discussions; however, the strategies may be applicable to any learning context or level of education with the aim to develop: (a) the capacity to challenge assumptions and embrace new thinking, (b) social, cultural and economic understanding, and (c) international perspectives that enrich experience.
Sustainability	The "Inclusive Practices for Managing Controversial Issues" tip sheet is freely available online for anyone interested in dealing with controversy in classroom discussions.
Link	https://taylorinstitute.ucalgary.ca/sites/default/files/Content/Resources/Teaching-Controversial-Issues/Inclusive-Practices-for-Managing-Controversial-Issues-Flinders-University-Australia.pdf

"Game to EMbrace INtercultural education" – GEM IN, Erasmus+ project

Countries	Italy, Greece, Portugal, Cyprus, Austria, France
Actors and stakeholders	CESIE (Italy), Symplexis & Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education in Western Greece (Greece), INOVA+ & Casa do Professor (Portugal), CARDET & The Grammar School Nicosia (Cyprus), Compass GmbH (Austria), ALDA (France)
Target group	Secondary School teachers, non-formal educators, Students/ young people aged 14-18
Short description	The GEM IN Erasmus+ project (https://gem-in.eu) was implemented from January 2020 until May 2022 to support intercultural education at school and in non-formal youth environments as a vehicle to foster social inclusion, cross-cultural dialogue and active citizenship by promoting European values. The project has scaled up a set of results and approaches developed in the framework of its predecessor: the "Game for EuroMed – GEM" project (https://gameforeuromed.eu). Its rationale was based on the use of a board game and of a series of tested tools, practices and methodologies able to reach out and to motivate disadvantaged learners, and those at risk of social exclusion and early school leaving. Within this process, meticulous upscaling and exploitation, policy impact and follow up interventions have taken place in the 6 targeted EU countries.
Type	Erasmus+ project providing a board game and complementary tools (educational programme & pedagogical kit), as well as policy recommendations.
Objective and main aspects/ elements	The GEM IN has aimed at supporting intercultural education at school and in non-formal youth environments. The project's objectives have included the following: To introduce innovative approaches to teachers and non-formal educators so as to be able to discuss about citizenship education under an intercultural perspective;

	• To enhance the acquisition of social and civic competences among young people (students); • To promote the ownership of shared values and • To encourage critical reflection. At the same time, the project intended to provide inputs and policy recommendations for intervention strategies to promote intercultural education and active citizenship through an innovative educational framework.
Results, challenges and impact	The project's 3rd Work Package 3 (WP3) involved the piloting phase of the GEM IN board game and complementary tools that were developed in the framework of a comprehensive education programme enabling critical reflection about multi-level and variegated concepts, such as EU common values, social and civic competences, intercultural dialogue, in favour of the target groups. The feedback gathered through the envisaged activities was of fundamental importance for the consistency and the upscaling of the good practice identified (the methodological approach and the pedagogical tools) while finalising the renewed products. The main activities of WP3 included the following tasks: A3.1 Setting up a national working groups of teachers and non-formal educators, contributing to the content update of the GEM good practices A3.2 Training of teachers and non-formal educators using the pedagogical kit A3.3 Piloting phase with students A3.4 Finalisation of the GEM IN Pedagogical Kit and Program. • Preparatory training for teachers: o During the implementation of this phase each organisation set up a national working group of 10 teachers and non-formal educators, in view of promoting a bottom-up, shared and participatory process of tools and resources during the piloting of the pedagogical kit and the methodological approach proposed and took part in a preliminary training to ensure

effective implementation of the GEM IN pedagogical kit in class. Is it mentioned that the implementation of the GEM IN pedagogical kit has been either in-person/ or virtual because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the governmental measures taken in each partner country.

● Piloting of the GEM IN pedagogical kit:

o Training of 50 teachers and non-formal educators in total (10/5 implementing countries, i.e. all countries represented in the partnership except from France). The project delivered the piloting sessions and provided teachers and non-formal educators with the knowledge and competences to effectively implement the piloting students' workshops and achieve the learning outcomes.

o The goal was to address a total of 1000 students and young people (200/implementing country, i.e. 5 countries in total) in schools and youth educational centres during piloting months to allow for the testing of the Pedagogical Kit within the intercultural education program.

- The GEM IN Educational Program supporting the piloting

The educational program used during the pilot implementation included the following:

- GEM IN Educational Framework as a tool for teachers and non-formal educators to implement the GEM IN activities in school contexts;
- Pedagogical Kit including 3 interconnected components:

1) GEM IN Guide, providing also a series of instructions (e.g. lesson plans) to guide educators in the implementation of the program;

2) GEM IN Board Game;

3) GEM IN Common Values Archive.

	The GEM IN WP3 Implementation results have included the following:
	In in-person indoor, outdoor, virtual and hybrid activities that took place in 5 EU countries:
	- More than 40 schools and educational institutions were involved 9 workshops for educators were organized 82 professionals/educators implemented the kit 1146 students (14-18 years old) played and learnt (506 of them were 14-15 years old) 620 game questions were answered 82 organizations participated in the working groups
Replicability and upscaling	Since the project is transnational, it has already been designed and implemented with the potential to be easily replicated and easily adapted by other schools in other countries. The project's material has already been translated in the partners' languages.
	The core of the project is embodied in an adaptable board game and relevant educational material tested during a piloting phase, and upscaled from the GEM project - all accessible online.
	GEM IN is a game that promotes social inclusion through its ludic methodology that translates into "Learning by doing". It is a non-formal tool that can be used in various intercultural contexts and by different actors: the only prerequisite for its use is the intention to enable an exchange between participants and the will to open a dialogue among them.
	The non-formality of the game makes GEM IN a tool that can easily bring young people together by lowering all those barriers due to cultural differences and the unknown that often create disparities or impede cultural communication between young people from different backgrounds.
Sustainability	Intercultural education can help young people in making sense of their own position and gain knowledge and mastery of it while understanding of both the European and national circumstances that shape the world.

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	The project has aimed to provide practical and theoretical materials which can be adapted and used by educators, trainers, youth workers and teachers in informal education.
	The project's 4th Work Package's goals have been linked to sustainability and the involvement of a number of stakeholders at national level. The project has generated an impact at systemic level enhancing awareness and visibility of activities and outputs to an effective exploitation and long-term sustainability which has been guaranteed through a set of strategic activities for its transferability and scaling up at system and policy levels, especially with the establishment of National Stakeholder Advisory Committees supporting and monitoring the implementation of the GEM IN piloting phase.
	The project's "Strategic Exploitation Plan" & operational pack are available online at https://gem-in.eu/en/results.
Link	https://gem-in.eu

UNESCO's e-Platform on Intercultural Dialogue

Country	International (available in English)
Actors and stakeholders	UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Target group	Organizations, individuals, experts and influencers from diverse backgrounds in entertainment, government, and academia. Policymakers, civil servants, academics, international bodies, corporations and non-profit organizations.
Short description	UNESCO's e-Platform on intercultural dialogue facilitates the sharing of knowledge and networking among people from diverse backgrounds who have a common goal of sharing ideas for peaceful and inclusive societies.
Type	Global collaborative hub dedicated to Intercultural Dialogue
Objective and main aspects/ elements	The e-Platform aims to bring together people from diverse backgrounds, allowing them to learn from one another while contributing to the e-platform on various themes such as inequalities, artificial intelligence, racism and discrimination, gender mainstreaming citizenship, youth and gender empowerment, religious tolerance, cultural traditions, languages, migration and assimilation, and supporting the inclusion of marginalized groups. Cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue are key to reaching consensus on the universal foundation of human rights. The e-Platform promotes good practices through initiatives such as projects, programs, publications, artistic expressions, and training materials which also contribute to sustainable development. The e-Platform will promote action on the ground by inspiring, empowering, and channelling a global energy online. The e-platform includes the following sections: ● About (about the e-platform, what is intercultural dialogue, who we are, donor) ● Good practices

- Knowledge hub (concepts glossary, publications & articles)
- Opinion (videos)

Quoting Gabriela RAMOS, Assistant Director-General for the Social and Human Sciences of UNESCO: *"UNESCO's e-Platform on Intercultural Dialogue is designed to respond to the current 'mutual understanding gap', which occurs when communication between culturally diverse groups fails, ultimately impeding good will and collaboration. This space serves as a global hub for knowledge sharing, networking, and learning about best practices delivering impact and accelerating change daily. The e-Platform brings together a wide diversity of stakeholders who engage with new ideas and share innovative approaches on how to integrate vulnerable and marginalized communities, promote gender equality, empower youth, enhance understanding between different religions or cultures, and even more"*.

Results, challenges and impact	The e-platform aspires to have a significant contribution to the 2030 Agenda. Dialogue is essential to building trust between communities and strengthening unity. Intercultural dialogue is a means to build and sustain peaceful societies. This crucial role is defined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Dialogue fosters cooperation, social inclusion, and is essential to keeping the promise of leaving no one behind while confronting global challenges. Notably, dialogue contributes to achieving all the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals.
Replicability and upscaling	The project's map of good practices can be replicable and implemented in various languages and national contexts (https://www.unesco.org/interculturaldialogue/en/good-practices/map). Good practices collected from around the world present a variety of initiatives such as projects, programs, publications, artistic expressions, and training materials. Each permits a clearer understanding of the concept and practice of intercultural dialogue and its adaptation to local needs and contexts. UNESCO's e-Platform's Good Practices not only promote mutual understanding and respect for diversity

	through intercultural dialogue, but also support inclusive and peaceful societies.
Sustainability	The UNESCO e-Platform on intercultural dialogue is a collaborative global hub, showcasing a great variety of good practices on the promotion of intercultural dialogue, from around the world. It serves as a first reference to keep informed of new innovations in the area of intercultural dialogue, working as a one-stop shop for those wanting to get involved in this important area of work by providing a comprehensive, user-friendly overview of core concepts and promising resources on intercultural dialogue. It can become a source of inspiration for diverse audiences including students, NGOs, governments, private sector companies, cultural organisations and many more. In addition, inspiring people and organizations share their publications on how Intercultural Dialogue has and can continue to help our communities build peaceful and inclusive societies. These publications come from diverse audiences and cover various topics, including strengthening intercultural dialogue, measuring intercultural dialogue, and moving assumptions to research investigations. The fact that users can use the submission forms and contribute to the platform, by sharing good practices, suggesting articles and publications and joining the dialogue, is an asset to the sustainability of the tool. The hashtag #WeNeedToTalk contributes to the dissemination of the platform as well.
Link	https://www.unesco.org/interculturaldialogue
Other relevant info or related resources	Video on Youtube: UNESCO e-Platform on Intercultural Dialogue

PRACTICE – Preventing Radicalism through Critical Thinking Competences Module 1: Controversial Issues	
Country	Italy
Actors and stakeholders	The organisations which developed and implemented the project are the following: Centro Sviluppo Creativo Danilo Dolci, BLINC – Blended Learning Institutions Cooperative, Expanding Horizons, KMOP – Social Action and Innovation Center, Mhtconsult ApS, Compass gmbh and Fondazione Hallgarten Franchetti Centro Studi Villa Montesca.
Target group	Secondary School Teachers
Short description	The PRACTICE project addressed the need for teachers to acquire new skills and competencies to effectively navigate complex classroom realities and confidently engage with diverse groups of students. A "Radicalisation Prevention Programme" has been developed representing an innovative tool for teachers and educational support staff for strengthening critical thinking skills and resilience of students, discussing controversial issues openly. It wants to support the school sector and the professionals working in it to improve their capacity to exploit the potential of new approaches, methodologies and international perspectives, for the prevention of radicalisation through the development of critical thinking and related skill and competences as well as effective practices and knowledge related to the topic.
	It is an Open Educational Resource (OER), guaranteeing flexibility and adaptability to its future users. Through this innovative format, it provides theoretical contents, strategies, innovative approaches, practice exercises and non-formal education activities.
	The Programme is organised in two parts: 1 includes theoretical information and learning materials for teachers on the following learning areas:
	● Critical Thinking
	● Digital Awareness

	• Active Listening and Open Communication • Open Mindedness and Creative Thinking • Intercultural Awareness • Conflict Resolution The second part includes a catalogue of more than 50 non-formal education activities to be used with students on specific topical issues, that are: • Migration • Gender • Culture and Identities • Online Life, Hate speech and Cyberbullying • Discrimination and Rights • Global Conflicts and Human Rights Particularly, one module is dedicated generally to "Controversial Issues", highlighting the challenge for teachers in deciding how to approach controversial topics in class and including suggestions and methods for teachers. The Module aims to create safe spaces where controversial topics can be discussed, ensuring the safety of both teachers and students. For teachers, this means being able to address controversial topics without risking their safety or creating a difficult situation. For students, it means having the opportunity to explore multiple perspectives on an issue without feeling pressured to disclose personal information or exposing their views.
Type	Training Module
Objective and main aspects/ elements	The main aspect of the Module is to provide teachers with the opportunity to reflect on a number of aspects associated with teaching controversial issues related to citizenship and rights in the classroom, providing practical approaches and activities which allows students to explore delicate topics which can arise in the daily debates in classrooms, at home, with friends, but in a safe and critical way.

	The learning objectives provides teachers with practical activities to support students in:
	- Exploring controversial issues in a "safe way" - Stimulating Reflection about their own pre-exsting knowledge and perspectives on a specific topic - Creating a safe space to stimulate a critical analysis of sensitive topics and an open exchange and confrontation between ideas and opinions. More particularly, the proposed activities aim at: - Encouraging discussion - Facilitating the debate - Developing critical thinking
Results, challenges and impact	Over three years the partners were working on PRACTICE, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions the project managed to reach its goals. Based on the Project and the specific Modules objectives, result and impacts it can be considered a *Good* practice as it meets the following criteria: leads to an actual change (providing practical approaches and activities for teachers to address controversial issues in the classroom), has a considerable impact (engaging 120 teachers and more than 300 students from around 40 schools in 6 EU countries, as well as other education professionals), demonstrates an innovative approach (providing a safe and critical space for students to explore delicate topics), and demonstrates sustainability (by among several things, providing a Teachers Handbook and Policy Recommendations for prevention work).
Replicability and upscaling	The education sector worldwide faces challenges in terms of addressing and discussing controversial issues, some more than others. Therefore, creating safe spaces where controversial issues can be discussed is essential. Many schools and educational institutions would benefit from such projects, especially those in areas affected by conflict and polarization. The project's success and impact can be measured through qualitative and quantitative data, making it easier to replicate in different contexts.

	Additionally, the project can be customized to suit the specific needs of different communities, ensuring its relevance and sustainability.
Sustainability	The module appears to be sustainable across institutional, social, and financial dimensions. Institutionally, the project has garnered interest and support from numerous teachers and education professionals across multiple countries. Socially, the module addresses the crucial need for safe and critical spaces to discuss controversial issues, contributing to a more open-minded and respectful society. The project's results show promise in promoting peaceful coexistence and defusing social tension between opposing groups, both in schools and the wider community. Additionally, the module's financial accessibility as a free training program increases its potential for replication and scalability.
Link	https://practice-school.eu/part2
Other relevant info or related resources	PRACTICE project involves modules which go more in depth in controversial issues. They can contribute to the development of DD@S in terms of content and how to address different topics in relation to ethnicity, religion and multiculturality: migration, gender, culture and identities, online life, hate speech and Cyberbullying, Discrimination and Rights and Global Conflicts and Human Rights.

Reciprocal Maieutic Approach of Danilo Dolci

Country	Italy
Actors and stakeholders	The Reciprocal Maieutic Approach (RMA) is a popular dialectic methodology of research and self-analysis tested by Danilo Dolci starting from the 50s and by the present Centre for the Creative Development within the educational and sociological field nowadays.
Target group	The methodological approach can be used with any type of target groups and has particularly been used in the educational sector.
Short description	Reciprocal Maieutic Approach (RMA), a dialectic method of inquiry and "popular self-analysis" for empowerment of communities and individuals. RMA promotes a sense of responsibility among people contributing to the development of a common idea to make a change in the individual and collective social/political/economic/educational spheres (Mangano, 1992). RMA fosters the development of everybody's potential to discover, analyse, imagine and experiment the capacity to change reality and act non-violently.
	It generates in the people the awareness of how to identify their own problems and a desire to participate in planning and carrying out possible solutions.
	RMA has been used by Danilo Dolci from the 50s' to late 90s' to improve the living conditions of poor people in Sicily, addressing issues of social exclusion, poverty, low education and corruption. He aimed to make people aware of their own power and possibilities through a democratic and nonviolent method, which he called "maieutic" and integrated into social, educational and civil practice.
Type	Method for democratic dialogue and self-analysis
Objective and main aspects/ elements	The Reciprocal Maieutic approach (RMA) is a "…process of collective exploration that takes the departure point, the experience and the intuition of individuals." (Dolci, 1996).

	Danilo Dolci's RMA is centered on the sharing process of answering, exploring, and creating through a reciprocal process between at least two individuals, typically in a group setting where one person poses questions and others collaborate to find answers. RMA aims to involve and directly engage the people concerned, rather than imposing ready-made truths. Dolci believed that the resources for change are present in people themselves and considers educational and maieutical commitment as essential to creating a more responsible civil society. Dolci's approach promotes a sense of community and individual responsibility, experience, and intuition.
Results, challenges and impact	The RMA method, developed by Danilo Dolci from the concept of the Socratic Maieutic, considers dialogue as a dialectic tool to reach the truth, but also adds the idea that knowledge comes from a reciprocal relationship and experience. In the RMA, all participants learn from each other through dialogue and through the shared reflection on specific topics.
	Dolci used the RMA in poor contexts, bringing people living in difficult areas to come together and discuss openly what affected them and what could be changed on personal and community levels. It can be described also as a group communication strategy, a holistic self-analysis approach that has the potential to provide such intervention and as it has a key role not only in the community empowerment but also in strengthening a process self-analysis and communication skills in group, allowing the expression of needs and a critical analysis of the context of lives.
	The approach promotes such a sense of responsibility among people that can be defined as "a process of collective exploration that considers the experiences and intuitions of individuals as points of reference".
	Thus, not only is the focus on the current skills of adults, but also on their potential and on effective ways to make them feel responsible for their future.
	Impact:
	- Concrete impact has been reached by the use of RMA in Sicily from the 50s'

	- The learning outcomes in various national contexts demonstrated a growth in cognitive and relational/cultural competencies, which is a characteristic feature of RMA. - The learners not only gained new knowledge on certain topics but also developed meta-knowledge on communication, understanding others' perspectives, questioning their own biases, and building relationships to better understand and address problems. The RMA has been shown to be effective in achieving specific aims and outcomes, by co-designing solutions to common issues. For instance, after a collective reflection process through RMA, the local population acknowledged lack of water resources as one important reason preventing the area's economic development. After several demonstrations and advocacy actions, the Italian State financed the construction of the infrastructure in the 1960s. In the 1970s, after consultation with parents and children through the RMA workshop, an innovative school was built in the countryside, exactly as they imagined and wanted it, the Mirto Educational Centre. The curriculum was also decided by the children after they were asked what they wanted to learn every day. The approach has consistently yielded positive results in terms of developing cognitive and relational/cultural competencies in adult learners, as well as facilitating the development of meta-knowledge on communication, understanding others' perspectives, and building relationships to better address problems. Furthermore, the approach has been adapted to several contexts also outside Sicily by CSC, indicating its potential for long-term sustainable impact and widespread adoption.
Replicability and upscaling	Some possible conditions that may be required for organizations or schools to replicate and adapt RMA in different contexts or geographical areas: ● Trained facilitators: The RMA approach requires trained facilitators who are skilled in posing questions, fostering collaboration, and guiding groups through the exploration and creation process.

	- Supportive organizational culture: To successfully adopt RMA, organizations or schools will need to have a culture that supports collaboration, creativity, and exploration. - Contextualization: RMA may need to be adapted to suit the specific needs, cultural context, and learning styles of different groups or geographical areas. - Evaluation and monitoring: Organizations or schools will need to establish systems to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of RMA in achieving their goals and objectives. These are just a few possible conditions that may be required for organizations or schools to replicate and adapt RMA in different contexts or geographical areas. It is important to carefully consider the unique needs and circumstances of each organization or school and to develop a tailored plan for implementing RMA that takes these factors into account.
Sustainability	Institutionally, RMA can be sustainable if the organizations and schools that implement it are committed to integrating it into their culture and values. This requires long-term planning and support from leadership, as well as ongoing training and development opportunities for staff. Socially, RMA has demonstrated sustainability by promoting an open-minded attitude of inquiry and facilitating discussions on controversial issues. This can help build a more inclusive and tolerant community and defuse social tensions between opposing groups. For RMA to be replicated successfully, it is important for organizations and schools to foster a supportive environment where individuals feel comfortable sharing their perspectives and engaging in productive dialogue. Overall, successful replication and upscaling of RMA requires a commitment to long-term planning, support from leadership, a supportive environment, and ongoing investment in training and development.
Link	https://danilodolci.org/en/reciprocalmaieutic Final Manual: Reciprocal Maieutic Approach in Adult Education

Io la mafia non la disgerisco ("I dont digest mafia")

Country	Italy
Actors and stakeholders	The organisations which developed and implemented the project are: Istituto Compensivo Statale Sandro Pertini
Target group	11-15 years old students
Short description	The project covered "addressing controversial issues which was a theme of the Council of Europe campaign "FREE to SPEAK, SAFE to LEARN – Democratic Schools for All". The project was created in order to bring awareness of the challenges regarding the mafia in Italy. There is a longstanding issue of the Mafia's influence on Italy's social and economic development. As a criminal group that relies on intimidation to gain control over businesses, services, and public contracts, the Mafia has had a major negative impact on Italy's progress and prosperity for several decades. Therefore, it's highly important to raise awareness about the challenges posed by the Mafia, prevent them from recruiting new members, and reduce their hold on economic activities and territory.
Type	Project
Objective and main aspects/ elements	The objectives and main aspects of the project are explained through the competences from the Reference Framework for Democratic Culture (CDC): ● Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law ● To establish a culture of lawfulness through the fight against the mafia ● Civic-mindedness ● To establish a sense of civic duty and the respect for law in the life of the community ● Respect ● To encourage students to listen and respect the ideas of others.

	Moreover, the aim of the project was to encourage the students in class by reading law books, watching films and by the help of a teachers and a professional videomaker, draft a short script which should be used in a movie. In the movie there should be some corrupt cooks competing for the best course, but the cook that makes the "Lawful Pizza" is the winner. All the students should take part in creating the video and everyone will be invited to express his/her opinion.
Results, challenges and impact	Moving from the parody of a famous TV show "Io la mafia non la digerisco" ("I don't digest mafia") the project aims at fighting the mafia and similar criminal organizations while spreading a culture of lawfulness. The video is the final result of the project submitted to a national competition "Diamo forza al nostro impegno" ("More strength to our commitment") promoted by the Falcone Foundation. Thanks to the project students could: improve their knowledge of the mafia and related topics; develop their creativity; work as a team; learn some techniques for creating videos. The project won the first prize in the 2016 edition and were awarded a prize by the Tuscany Region in 2017. Thanks to their winning the prize, some students were invited to Palermo on 23 May, lawfulness day, to meet many personalities from Italian politics and society. The project proved to be a real success both for teachers and students. Istituto Compensivo Statale Sandro Pertini states the following "Let's hope our efforts for a better understanding of criminal organizations such as the mafia could improve the culture of respect for the law and honesty. School is the right place to begin". Based on the results the practice appears to be Good. The project was successful in achieving its objectives. The project also provided students with opportunities to improve their knowledge of the Mafia and related topics, develop their creativity, work as a team and respectfully listen to co-students' opinions. It may not be considered a best practice, as there may be insufficient evidence to support its long-term sustainability and impact for other organisations and entities wishing to adapt the approach. Same goes for a promising practice as the project has not held a promise for becoming a best practice with long-term sustainable impact.

Replicability and upscaling	There is no data on how possible required conditions to replicate and adapt the practice by other organsations or schools. However, some of the conditions which might be required for further adaption of the project would be: clear objectives, access to resources, collaboration with local partners, community involvement, adherence to local regulations and policies and monitoring and evaluation. By following these steps, the project can be replicated and scaled up in other schools and communities, increasing awareness about the challenge posed by the Mafia and promoting a culture of lawfulness.
Sustainability	The project appears to have the potential to be sustainable institutionally, socially and financially: Institutional Sustainability: The fact that the project won a national competition and was recognized by the Falcone Foundation and the Tuscany Region suggests that the project has institutional support and recognition. This can be a positive indicator for its sustainability, as it shows that the project has gained credibility and validation from key stakeholders. Social Sustainability: The project's focus on promoting a culture of lawfulness and fighting against criminal organizations like the Mafia is a socially relevant issue that can generate interest and engagement from the broader community. The project's success in raising awareness among students and teachers suggests that it has the potential to continue to have a positive impact on the community in the long term. Financial Sustainability: There is no information provided about the project's funding sources or budget, however, the fact that the project was able to win a national competition and receive a prize from the Tuscany Region suggests that it had sufficient financial resources to carry out its objectives.
Link	https://www.coe.int/en/web/campaign-free-to-speak-safe-to-learn/istituto-comprensivo-sandro-pertini-

Game cards to guide a democratic dialogue on controversial topics

Country	Belgium
Actors and stakeholders	Erasmushogeschool Brussel and School zonder Racisme Brussel
Target group	Teams of school teachers and school board
Short description	This game provides a case-based discussion method to develop a bottom-up school policy concerning perceived controversial issues at school. Most of the topics originate in sociocultural and religious values. The game is based on the Democratic Dialogue method and provides the opportunity to discuss issues that are perceived as difficult and controversial at school from a multi-perspective.
	An increasing mix and diversity of values and norms in society is also reflected in school society (KBS, 2014). As a result, teachers and students might experience some topics as controversial issues within the classroom setting. These controversies tend to be ethnically-religiously-inspired topics or themes that do not have general social acceptance. This results in polarization among both students and teachers, and is detrimental to an inclusive and open educational climate.
	The Democratic Dialogue (DD) strengthens teachers in prevention and dealing with conflicts at school. This multidisciplinary method is based on Socratic dialogue, intercultural dialogue and nonviolent communication (Göregen & Cornelissen, 2020; Göregen & Van Raemdonck, 2020). Dialogue skills are essential in the development of intercultural literacy of students and teachers (Rapanta, 2020). This facilitates conflict management by making controversial issues visible. It also helps in discussing these themes and in remediation in case of conflicts. How this process occurs is guided in several case-based discussion cards.
Type	Tool
Objective and main aspects/ elements	The aim of this tool is to provide supportive discussion questions for teachers in dealing with sensitive topics in the classroom. Within several case-based scenarios, teachers can

	co-create action strategies, and consider each other's and pupils' perspectives.
Results, challenges and impact	Democratic Dialogue facilitates by visualising frameworks (values, norms) and framing that may lead to controversy in the classroom. It especially supports dialogue regarding controversial topics using conflict management methods to avoid difficult situations for both teachers and students.
Replicability and upscaling	This game was developed in a European Project (AMIF) fund and replicability and/or adaptation should consider the agreement of the former project. This is to be discussed with the project partner of this former project.
Sustainability	Extent to which the practice is sustainable institutionally, socially, financially, and potential conditions (institutional, financial, social etc.) necessary for the practice to be replicated/upscaled successfully (especially by local businesses).
Other relevant info or related resources	A similar tool was developed for caregivers (nurses in long term care facilities, hospitals) in the online platform Ziedet, which was also European funded. This can be a great inspiration ziedet.be.

"Children of Abraham" Strategy	
Country	Belgium
Actors and stakeholders	KTA Zavelenberg - Erasmushogeschool Brussel - KU Leuven
Target group	Teachers of Religious Education (RE)
Short description	There are several barriers that hinder a better interreligious dialogue and mutual understanding between the teacher of RE and pupils. The arrogant attitude of pupils as well as a lack of empathy towards each other during interreligious group discussions. Pupils often give unnecessary comments and use harsh language towards each other, which makes the interreligious dialogue not so easy. It even goes further when some pupils are labelling others with a different opinion as non-believer because of their vindication.
They have a literal religious belief and a very narrow view of religion and truth, while other beliefs are labeled as "false". Furthermore, teachers encounter difficulties to facilitate an interreligious dialogue when the critical thinking ability among the pupils is not enough. Skills such as arguing; questioning; clarifying; etc. are clearly missing. Due to this lack, self-reflection -as an essential stage of the dialogue will not succeed either.
It is clear that the teacher of religious education should have the knowledge in order to remedy such unfounded beliefs on the one hand and manage the dialogue in the right direction on the other hand. Another problem is the prejudices and biases towards Judaism and Jewish culture, which makes the interreligious dialogue very difficult.
Type	Strategy (i.e. interreligious/integrative curriculum of Religious Education)
Objective and main aspects/ elements	Despite the encountered problems, there are various good practices and opportunities for interreligious dialogue during the courses of Religious Education. These examples can be seen as an incentive in order to stimulate interreligious

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dialogue. It can be categorized on the one hand as interreligious topics such as:

1) The Ten Commandments: Texts from the Hebrew Bible, the Christian Bibles, and the Qur'ân are placed next to each other, allowing for associations and reflections. As a result, pupils are discovering similarities as well as differences by themselves. On the other hand, it will draw attention in order to initiate an interreligious dialogue;

2) The sacrifice of Abraham: The starting point of this lesson are the thoughts; experience, and living environment of the pupils in order to initiate an interreligious dialogue. Asking questions such as "What are you doing during the Feast of Sacrifice?" and "Why are you doing this?" addressing the experience of the pupils in order to arouse curiosity. Afterwards, associating their answers to Biblical texts to show that there are practically no differences with the exception of the name Isaac or Ishmael. However, the symbolic significance and underlying meaning; faithfulness and trust towards God is the same;

3) The creation story (Genesis): The story of creation is also a recommended topic because it has many similarities among the Abrahamic traditions. By using texts from the Bible and the Qur'ân next to each other in order to make a comparison to find similarities and differences in the creation of heaven and earth. The teacher provides the necessary explanation and knowhow for interpreting those texts. Afterwards, an interreligious class discussion will follow;

4) The attributes of God: Finally, the interreligious dialogue about the attributes of God was experienced as a successful lesson. They searched for the etymological origin of the names of God. For example, the merciful God: They started with the Arabic name, Raḥīm, and continued with the Hebrew R-H-M; Rehem and Rahamim originated in the Bible. This is also a method that allows the pupils to bridge the prejudices against Judaism. In addition to the fact that they experience the similarities among the Abrahamic tradition.

Results, challenges and impact	During the lessons we found that the effectiveness of interreligious dialogue among teachers and pupils are intrinsically linked with certain conditions. Pupils want to be accepted with their own religious identity and express their opinion in freedom. Imposing any view about religion will undermine the dialogue. The second condition is the participation of pupils. In this sense, there should always be room for other traditions. The main subject of the dialogue will have a broader approach. It's crucial that interreligious participation is not limited to what they know about values and norms regarding their own traditions but also what they have experienced and how they deal with spirituality. Thus, spiritual experience is an essential aspect of interreligious dialogue. Hereby, another teacher recommends asking questions such as how is this experienced within your tradition? How do you experience it? Can you compare it with your tradition? in order to initiate an interreligious dialogue. Furthermore, the teacher and pupils have to make a list of communication rules. This list of dialogue rules will include enough time for reflection; listening to each other; have an open attitude towards other participants; dissent from prejudices; do not shout; etc. By doing this together, everyone who participates knows which attitude is required, what is allowed, and what is not allowed during the dialogue. In addition to the dialogue rules, the number of pupils is also important. One of the teachers is clear enough by mentioning the impossibility to have an interreligious dialogue with a large group of 30 pupils. Usually, the same pupils are more likely to participate in such a situation. The last condition is related to pupils' level of education: the same level of education, as far as possible, will make the interreligious dialogue easier. Various teachers reported that pupils in interreligious projects or merged classes are not always at the same educational level. Sometimes teachers have to explain words or definitions that

	other pupils already know. They clearly say that, as far as possible, the same level of education will make the interreligious dialogue easier. However, the same teacher has a solution. If the pupils are not at the same educational level, you can work in the form of written exercises which can be easier and more efficient. This could be possible in case of interreligious skills. This will be in favor of the pupils and the teacher.
Replicability and upscaling	Several teachers proposed a revision of the curriculum of Religious Education in order to fulfil these conditions. The current curriculum in Belgium is made for schools with a low concentration of religious and cultural diversity. The emphasis on inter-religious topics is often absent, and therefore, teachers working in schools with a heterogeneous pupil population are facing difficulties in order to find interreligious themes and possible educational content. They also mentioned the shortcomings of handbooks and workbooks. Both are not suitable for education in an urban context such as Brussels. New teachers had problems with the interreligious aspect of teaching in a metropolitan context. These teachers indicate that they had to search for interreligious themes and possible educational content while teachers who have been working for more than fifteen years already have experience regarding interreligious dialogue. This good practice was developed as a part of an interdisciplinary study at the University of Leuven. It can be used as a backbone for interreligious curriculum revision.
Sustainability	The current curriculum of RE does not have a focus on the interreligious aspect. Considering the reality of a diverse pupil population in Brussels, possible inter religious themes and topics could be emphasised. In addition, some teachers have made their own syllabus with different themes, names, and situations considering the context in Brussels.

Enhancing active citizenship through debate – Erasmus+ project

Countries	Italy, Greece, Bulgaria, Poland, Turkey
Actors and stakeholders	● Istituto D'Istruzione Superiore Einaudi Pareto Via Brigata Verona, 5 90144 Palermo Italy (coordinator) ● Cumhuriyet Anadolu Lisesi Hasan Efendi Mah. Kültür Cad. No:7 09100 Aydın, Turkey ● High School of Trikala - Katsimidou 7 421 00 Trikala, Greece ● High School of Natural Sciences "Academician Metodiy Popov"-Varna Vladislav Varnenchik blvd 80 9000 Varna Bulgaria ● Zespol Szkol Poligraficzno-Medialnych im. Zenona Klemensiewicza os. Tysiąclecia 38 31 610 Kraków Poland
Target group	High Secondary School teachers and students aged 15-18
Short description	The Erasmus project Enhancing Active Citizenship through debate gave the possibility to bring together learners and teachers from Italy, Bulgaria, Turkey, Slovenia, Greece, Poland to empower them with active citizenship skills; to strengthen the ownership of European policy issues by focusing on the youth's lived experience through DEBATE methodology. The conceptual framework of the project was centred on four citizenship education competence areas: 1: Interacting effectively and constructively with others, including personal development (self-confidence, personal responsibility and empathy), communicating and listening; and cooperating with others. 2: Thinking critically, including reasoning and analysis, media literacy, knowledge and discovery, and correct and aware use of internet sources. 3: Acting in a socially responsible manner, including respect for the principle of justice and human rights; respect for other human beings, for other cultures and other religions; developing a sense of belonging; and understanding issues relating to the environment and sustainability, to the respect for the value of cultural heritage.

	4: Acting democratically, including respect for democratic principles; knowledge and understanding of political processes, institutions and organisations; and knowledge and understanding of fundamental social and political concepts.
Type	Erasmus+ project aiming at implementing the International Debate in the curriculum.
Objective and main aspects/ elements	This project has certainly contributed significantly to the achievement of the following objectives: • Increase the level of proficiency in the English language. • Develop and enhance Media Literacy knowledge. • Increase reading comprehension skills. • Acquire argumentative literacy skills. • Increase social and cultural skills. Particularly -fostering sensitivity to prejudice by helping students develop critical thinking skills). -Develop the ability to speak in public (the debate helps students to develop an optimal mix of improvisation and the ability to speak extemporaneously. - Increase digital skills In addition, the project aimed to improve the social inclusion of learners through mobility, new social contacts and intercultural exchange, overcoming xenophobia, discrimination, segregation, racism, bullying and violence. Finally, the project aimed to raise the profile of the teaching profession through training by supporting the adoption of collaborative and innovative practices, both digital and non-digital, and new methods of assessment.
Results, challenges and impact	THE TRAINING COURSE: DEBATE IN DEBATE CLUB AND IN THE CLASSROOM. The teachers were instructed to the Debate in a full immersion course lasting two days. THE BOOKLET with guidelines for the implementation of DEBATE in the curriculum THE REPOSITORY of the lesson materials, the guide to the search on the Internet; exercises for debate, evaluation sections

	DEBATE IN FLIPPED CLASSROOM: All the partners created video clips on activities carried out in class with students who document the preparation stages for the meetings. Six debate tournaments concerned migration, gender, responsibility towards cultural heritage and the environment, all of which contribute to making schools better and more inclusive.
Replicability and upscaling	The replicability of the debate is represented by its very nature. It is possible to vary the model to apply it to different levels of education (even primary school children practice DEBATE), change the number of team members (if you want to involve more students), choose motions of different types according to needs. There are motions of FACT: Something is or is not, of VALUE: Something is of inherent worth or not, of POLICY: Something should be done or should not be done.
Sustainability	The project is sustainable because it helps: ● To overcome the logic of study intended as mere rote learning of written texts. ● To favor the dialectical approach & encourage the practice of a critical use of thinking. ● To contextualize the contents of training for civil society. ● To facilitate the integration of digital tools with traditional ones. ● To experiment with innovative methods of knowledge representation. ● To encourage teamwork.
Link	https://sites.google.com/iseinaudipareto.edu.it/debateforactivecitizens/home

KAICIID Dialogue Centre	
Country	Saudi Arabia, Austria, Spain, Vatican
Actors and stakeholders	Influential leaders from world religions, religious and cultural institutions across the world
Target group	Educators of religious leaders, school teachers, policy makers
Short description	"KAICIID - DIALOGUE CENTRE" (King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for interreligious and intercultural Dialogue) established in 2012 as an intergovernmental organization dedicated to promote intercultural and interreligious dialogue. Member States are the Republic of Austria, the Kingdom of Spain, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Holy See as a founding Observer. Moreover, a Board of Directors stand as guarantors of the independence from the interests of any one country, or any one religious' denomination. Convenors and facilitators work together aiming to bring religious leaders, policymakers and experts to the dialogue table so that they can find common solutions to shared problems. The organization promotes and employs interreligious dialogue to support conflict prevention and resolution, sustainable peace and social cohesion; to promote mutual respect and understanding among different religious and cultural groups; and to counteract the abuse of religion to justify oppression, violence and conflict.
Type	Learning platform, webinars, online resources, tool, policy.
Objective and main aspects/ elements	KAICIID -DIALOGUE CENTRE, through various initiatives, intend to provide intercultural and interreligious dialogue and for this purpose has developed numerous educational projects all over the world in order to reduce religious and cultural conflicts, stereotypes and misunderstandings. The International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID) seeks to bring religious leaders and political decision-makers together to develop and implement multilateral social cohesion building and conflict resolution initiatives. KAICIID supports experts, trainees and organizations working in this area

	through capacity building programs, workshops, training and partnerships. Additionally, aspires to cultivate the mentality of coexistence and solidarity among representatives and influential members of different cultural and religious traditions. In order to achieve these objectives, the educational dimension of the participants is very important and for this reason special attention is given to the training of teachers, religious workers, educators and young people.
Results, challenges and impact	KAICIID includes a hub of networks and provides international training seminars, thematic webinars and online courses in interreligious dialogue, publications and resources, a library of promising practices, and a database where you can get to know the major figures in dialogue around the world. Additionally, the *Connect2Dialogue* online networking platform fosters best practices and knowledge exchange by connecting interreligious dialogue practitioners and experts from across the globe Particular interest to teachers is the online moderated or self-paced courses and the educational materials on topics such as: ● key concepts of interreligious dialogue ● intercultural communication ● Integration through Dialogue ● using Interreligious dialogue to reduce religiophobia ● using interreligious dialogue to strengthen Peace, Reconciliation and Social Cohesion ● Using Education to Counter Anti-Refugee and Migrant Hate Speech in Europe
Replicability and upscaling	The educational material that the KAICIID Centre has developed in various formats over the last ten years is very useful for teachers and educators and can be reproduced and upgraded. It can be used as a training material on the scientific documentation of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, its proper preparation as well as the conditions for conducting it. Either as such or after adaptation the material can be adopted for teacher training and for use in the school environment.

Sustainability	The KAICIID Centre as an intergovernmental organization has a continuous development and commitment to the objectives of promoting social cohesion and sustainable development through dialogue. The Knowledge Hub and the training material that is provided is constantly enriched with the support of experts and is freely accessible so that it meets the criteria of sustainability.
Link	https://www.kaiciid.org/dialogue-knowledge-hub

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Signposts – Policy and practice for teaching about religions and non-religious world views in intercultural education

Country	Norway
Actors and stakeholders	The European Wergeland Centre (EWC), Council of Europe, Robert Jackson (Author)
Target group	Education policymakers, School teachers, Trainers
Short description	In western countries religion was regarded for a long time as a matter for private life. This view was changed after the events of 11 September 2001 in the United States and their analysis and public discussion worldwide. Gradually, it became apparent that religion was increasingly a topic of concern also to the public sphere and subsequently, all young people should have an understanding of religions and beliefs as part of their education.
	Thus, the Council of Europe began its first project on the religious dimension of intercultural education in 2002 under the supervision of the Steering Committee for Education. After further discussions in 2008, the Committee of Ministers issued its recommendation CM/Rec (2008)12 on the dimension of religious and non-religious convictions within intercultural education.
	The European Wergeland Centre (EWC) established by the Council of Europe and Norway in 2008 is a resource centre on education for intercultural understanding, human rights and democratic citizenship. With the support of Wergeland Centre in 2014 was published the manual *Signposts* (Author: Robert Jackson) which provides advice on tackling issues arising from the Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec (2008)12.
	The *Signposts* manual and its proposed activities could upskill teachers and educators especially in the areas of: ● developing competencies for teaching and learning, and working with different didactical approaches; ● creating safe space for moderated student-to-student dialogue about religious issues in the classroom;

	- helping students to analyze media representations of religions; - discussing non-religious world views alongside religious perspectives; - handling human rights issues relating to religion and belief The practices and the activities contained in the handbook are suitable for secondary education, many of them are game-based learning activities, easy to adopt and could be used as they are or to modify and combine with other similar ones.
Type	Manual for teacher trainers and education policymakers
Objective and main aspects/ elements	"Signposts – Policy and practice for teaching about religions and non-religious world views in intercultural education" aims to give policymakers, schools and teacher trainers in the Council of Europe member states, as well as others who wish to use it, the tools to work through the issues arising from the need to deal with the religious and non-religious world views within education. The manual gives advice on clarifying the terms used in this form of education; developing competencies for teaching and learning, and working with different didactical approaches; creating safe space for moderated student-to-student dialogue in the classroom; helping students to analyze media representations of religions; discussing non-religious world views alongside religious perspectives; handling human rights issues relating to religion and belief; and linking schools (including schools of different types) to one another and to wider communities and organisations.
Results, challenges and impact	"Signposts – Policy and practice for teaching about religions and non-religious world views in intercultural education" is free to download, available in 13 different languages and includes clear guidelines for teachers and teacher trainers on how to use it as an educational tool. The manual can be used constructively and usefully in some very different educational contexts, including those where religion, or a combination of religion, ethics and/or non-religious life views, appears as a

	separate subject and those where education about religions is not dealt with at all directly in the curriculum. A great advantage is that for each topic it proposes specific activities with detailed step-by-step instructions, which are suitable both for teacher training and for the implementation of them with students in the classroom.
Replicability and upscaling	Since this manual was designed from the beginning with the help of experts to be an aid in teacher training and in dealing with issues related to religion in the classroom, it is absolutely replicable and upscaling. It is not required any special conditions to replicate and adapt the practices by another organization or school and is easy to use in another context/geographical area.
Sustainability	The practices contained in the handbook are to a very large extent sustainable institutionally, socially and economically because they have taken into account the conditions prevailing in the European school environment in general. If they are enriched with other good practices and adapted accordingly, they will create the possible conditions (institutional, economic, social, etc.) necessary for the successful replication/growth of the practice (especially in each local education system).
Link	https://theewc.org/resources/signposts

Democratic Dialogue at School:
An online game-based training tool on democratic dialogue for teachers

ddasproject.eu