



Case Study on Impact on Student Well-being *Eduact – Greece*

(Set of pilots on the Well Being of Students and Teachers carried out by 8 educators in different classrooms/educational settings for a total of about 222 students, 42 clock hours of teaching overall + 25 staff members participating as beneficiaries)

DESCRIPTION

Aims:

to increase awareness on the current well being levels of students and educational staff as well as create for them a usable toolkit of resources, methodologies and techniques they can employ all together towards better well being overall.

Methods:

Project Based, Student centered teaching, collaborative workshops among staff

Findings:

Positive feedback arose from both teachers and students regarding the content of the modules. Certain comments were noted on the time accounted for each activity.

Context

As Eduact is an Educational Organization and not a school, we employed different piloting strategies than those of other partners. Our first piloting pool was that of our educational workshops. More specifically, we facilitate Skills workshops to disadvantaged children of all ages both in the city of Thessaloniki as well as neighboring areas. In these workshops we accounted for time to implement the pilots of the modules produced through this Erasmus+ partnership. Eduact's project team carefully translated and localized the material produced by all partners so that it would be introduced seamlessly to the students. Bearing in mind that those students get minimal international stimuli, introducing material that hadn't been localized would make their participation and engagement really difficult as the material would appear strange and 'foreign' to them. Especially given it's theme - Well Being - which is a term that is either unknown or taboo.

The next step was training the trainers who would deliver the workshops. These were Eduact's Educators, with experience in instruction, curriculum development and dealing with innovative educational material, working with it out of the box. They also have years' experience working with disadvantaged children, as Eduact's workshops have been going on for a while. The training went smoothly, with the project managers dealing with it from our side presenting the purpose and scope of the proposal as well as the material in detail to the educators. They were



given freedom to keep notes as they saw fit as well as fill in questionnaires as they went, noting how they localized the material even more, what were the student's perceptions and what aspects of the modules could be further modified for them to be even more user friendly and overall impactful. Consultation with Eduact's project managers continued even during the pilots, either in person or online, to solve questions, receive more in depth feedback and resolve implementation issues arising.

As those pilots were rolling, two schools, one private school was invited to participate in the pilots. For them, we followed the exact process detailed above but offered closer guidance with class observations and complementary consultation to ensure smooth operations.

Nature of the module incorporated

All modules were incorporated as described.

How many hours ?

The piloting team in Thessaloniki and neighboring areas consisted of : 5 educators, 140 children aged 10 to 17. They implemented 12 hours of workshops, with students even working a lot independently at home with the material provided as further study by the partnership.

The piloting team in the schools consisted of a total of: 3 educators, 82 children aged 13 to 15 years old. They implemented 30 hours of teaching the modules, with students sometimes working independently at home with the material provided as further study by the partnership. Additionally, it involved 25 staff members who engaged with the material not in the classroom, but as beneficiaries themselves implementing the modules and workshops directed to their target group.

Through which subject?

English, Citizenship Education, Eduact's Workshops

How was it presented to students?

The teachers firstly explained to the students the context of the material they will be using. They showed them the project website and newsletters, explained what Erasmus+ is, who developed the modules and why. Afterwards they dived into the modules following the introductory activities that were suggested for each main activity. The same procedure was followed for the staff who was considered to be beneficiaries.

Was any material handed out?

Yes. Any handouts prepared by partners in their respective modules, any newspaper articles, craft material needed and supplies were handed out, as well as tablets and computers. The students also had access to the 'Further Study' resources provided in modules.

Were parents/guardians informed?



Yes, they were informed and updated on the student's progress but they did not need to sign any document.

Was participation mandatory?

Yes

Aims and methods of your case-study

What did you attempt to find out about the effectiveness and impact of the modules regarding their incorporation to the curriculum?

We attempted to find out if the material was ready to be used by educators in the country or if it needed improvement, to locate and work on its weak spots, to see the extent to which our localization was effective and comprehensive and to understand if it tied in with the national curriculum and its subjects.

Did they smoothly blend with the rest of curriculum items?

Yes, the activities implemented blended seamlessly with the national curriculum and overall greek educational context.

Were there any issues/difficulties in students or staff accepting this incorporation and why?

We only got negative feedback on the time accounted for each module, which affected its incorporation to an extent.

Could this incorporation work in the long term - why/why not?

Yes, there is a great number of modules, activities, presentations, handouts and resources to be used in the future keeping the interest of both teachers and students high.

Findings from your case-study

Students appeared a tad reluctant to participate in the pilots although proved very welcoming of the material and their teachers instructions on its approach. Students from the disadvantaged areas of Thessaloniki, who do not receive much international stimuli in general, regard well being as a foreign concept or even as a taboo term. Hence, these workshops worked as a window to the global community as well as a means of communication, mindfulness and connection. They had never thought that well being was an important aspect of everyday life. They were particularly stunned that even grown up they admired, like teachers and educational staff were participating as beneficiaries in these pilots.

For the students in the private school of Thessaloniki, they showed great interest in the ways catering for their well being could be beneficial and useful in their learning as a group. They even employed practices and tools they learned through the modules, in classes with other teachers proudly displaying their newfound tools and methodologies. This way, they became active multipliers of knowledge



showcasing that they digested and used material immediately, practically and easily in their everyday practice.

What do these findings lead you to conclude about what can and cannot be incorporated in your region's mandatory curriculum and why?

The material was very fitting to the local mandatory curriculum. However, if introduced, it would be done as a unit under the umbrella of a pre existing subject e.g. English not as a subject on its own. The material based on the feedback would even be suitable for younger ages thus including both primary and secondary education.

What are some suggestions for improvement of the approach for future reference?

Regarding suggestions for improvement we would suggest overall shorter activities or providing options to teachers, if they want to extend the class they can add this or if they have to shorten the class they can extract that.

What seemed to work and what didn't in terms of curriculum incorporation?

In terms of curriculum incorporation what seemed to really work was the detailed description of activities as well as the provision of all resources to be used meaning presentations, links, online tools etc. The students really enjoyed activities that allowed for great input from them meaning create something, imagine something, craft something as opposed to activities that were more teacher center such as instruction, static presentation etc. What didn't seem to work was the estimated time accounted for activities. It was frequently reported that activities demanded more time, that students needed more time as they were asking questions, they needed to understand the material, create outputs etc. In other instances, as students were really familiar with the theme, the class moved very fast leaving a lot of spare time at the end.

SUSTAINABILITY

What are the activities and results that will be maintained after the end of the EU funding, and how will you ensure the resources needed to sustain them?

We aim to integrate the project's products to our practice, upgrading our services as an NGO to students. Resources created through the project, know-how acquired and ties/collaborations created will increase the impact of the work we are already doing for these target groups, give it a modern scope and open it up to a wider community of colleagues and beneficiaries alike.

As done in the past, we have one project building upon another to create experience, resources and of course research data. Data and mapping from this project will give us a greater understanding of the current situation and needs as well as tangible information to base our future ventures upon.

More specifically, we plan to continue providing regular well being workshops / interventions in schools using the project's modules and material. The schools involved will use the material once or twice per year as a well being awareness once off course for their students.