# 11th International Week 3rd ATHENA International Week

## 27-31 OF MAY, 2024, CHANIA, CRETE

**Modern pedagogies & technologies in Higher Education**

*Applying soft-skills for coordinating major international programs and developing a culture of collaboration*

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IMPACT
Inter-Mediterranean Peace And CollaboraTion

Erasmus+

# Talk is based not on theory by on experience and "walking the talk"

Designing and coordinating 2 KA2 program

Designing and Coordinating a World Bank Project in the field of Education

Collaborating in at least 50 KA171 exchange programs over 10 years

Designing and coordinating 2 UNICEF programs in the field of education

# Examples of Programs: Number of Partners, Countries and Experts

DOIT: 21 Institutions in 7 countries- 80 active members

CURE: 17 Institutions in 6 countries active members

World Bank of Armenia:
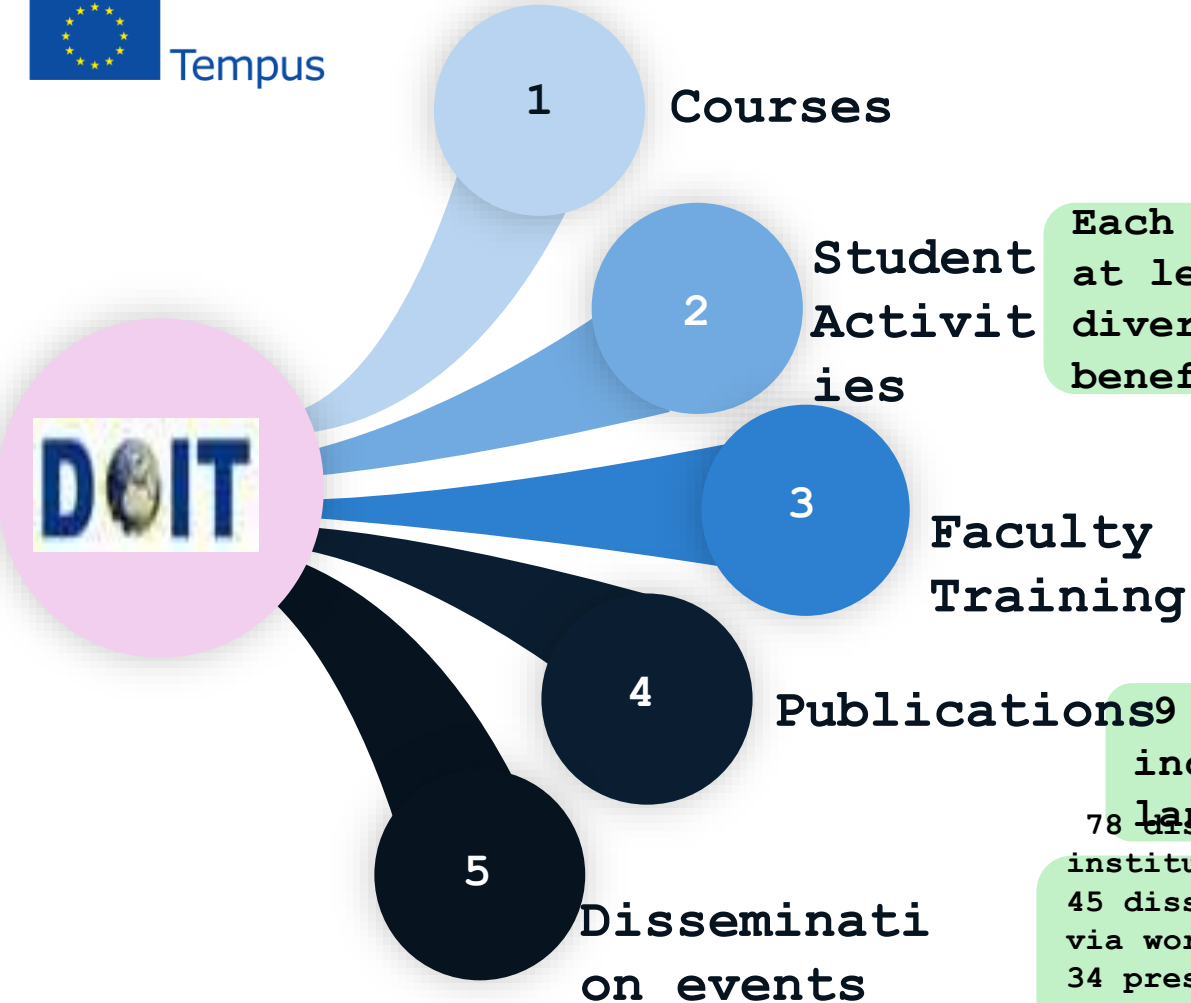3 institutions and 21 experts

UNICEF of Georgia:
2 institutions and 25 experts

UNICEF of ZAMBIA
2 Institutions and 22 Experts
(just kicking off the

*Development of an International Model for Curriculum Reform in Multicultural Education and Cultural Diversity Training:  DOIT*

Tempus

1  Courses

2  Student Activities

3  Faculty Training

4  Publications

5  Dissemination events

# SUMMARY POSTER OF DOIT's PROJECT
## RESULTS

**DOIT Developed 5 courses**

1. *Children's Rights in and through Education.*
2. *Pedagogical Approaches that Promote inter-cultural/ethnic understanding in the classroom.*
3. *Identification Formation in a Multicultural Environment.*
4. *Multicultural and Multi-Ethnic Georgia*
5. *Multicultural and Multi-Ethnic  Israel.*

➢ **97 pilot courses in IL + GEO  + EU countries.**
➢ **5,235 students benefitted from these pilots.**

**Each university in Israel and in Georgia implemented at least 6 events (36 totally) that promoted diversity on campus and in the community.   Thousands benefitted from these events.**

**425 faculty were trained in 36 different workshops in 12  partner universities in Israel, Georgia and EU.**

**This project was coordinated by Gordon Academic College of Education**

**9 handbooks were published including 4 in the Georgian language.**

**78 dissemination events WITHIN our institutions
45 dissemination events at other institutions via workshops
34 presentations at National Conferences and Symposiums
29 presentations in 8 different countries**

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# Curriculum Reform for Promoting Civic Education and Democratic Principles in Israel and in Georgia

https://cure.erasmus-plus.org.il/

CURE developed 5 courses:

1. Global Challenges and Promoting Active Citizenship in the 21st Century
2. Civic Education for Sustainability
3. Promoting Active Citizenship
4/5. Civic Education and Democracy in Israel/Georgia: Challenges and Pathways

117 pilot courses in IL + GEO integrated modules from CURE's 5 courses into existing courses. 28 pilots of CURE courses ran as whole courses in IL and GEO. 4416 IL + GEO students benefitted from these pilots. 12 pilot courses ran in 2 EU HEIs (215 students). TOTALLY: 4631 Students benefitted from these pilots.

CURE's course kits & readers and SMS handbook are available at website

**Cure**

1. Courses

2. SMS Trainings

3. Centres of Social and Civic Involvement

4. Institutional Faculty Training

5. In-service Teacher Training

132 academic teaching faculty were trained in 11 different training sessions:
2 sessions at: Jagellonian U: Use of Public Spaces; U of Salzburg: Value and Knowledge Ed; Canterbury Christ Church U: Narrative Approach; Tallinn U: Technology and Civic Education Pedagogy;
3 sessions at: University of Education Upper Austria: Community and Service Based Learning

**104 different student activities implemented through the Centers.**

66 faculty training workshops
Total number of faculty trained: 860

1421 In-Service teachers were trained

This project was coordinated by Gordon Academic College of Education, Haifa, Israel

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...are very concrete and "hard" and not soft at all

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The Results are a product of applying SOFT Skills and Diversity Management processes to coordinating the projects

Successful coordinating major international projects requires a mix of administrative know-how and strong soft skills to effectively manage diverse teams, challenges that arise and complex programs

Good management and Soft Skills contributed to the results of these projects.

**IMPORTANCE OF MORAL PURPOSE AND SHARED VISION:**

1.**Moral Purpose-**--"values-driven leadership" is critical to long-term success. (Fullan  (2001)

2.  **Sharing the vision**   (Lavagnon el al 2010)

**DOIT promoted Diversity and Children's Rights**
**CURE promoted Active Citizenship and Democratic Principles**
**IMPACT---is promoting** *Inter-Mediterranean Peace and Collaboration*
*UN programs—promotes improving different aspects of education (inclusion-Georgia); teacher training (Armenia and Zambia).*

Examples of Soft-skills that contribute to coordinating international projects:

1. Leadership
2. Basic Management Skills
3. Communication
4. Cultural Sensitivity
5. Culture of collaboration and cohesion on among members who may never meet face-to-face.
6. Empathy
7. Adaptability
8.  Problem-Solving
9. Conflict Resolution
10. Negotiation Skills

**These soft skills, coupled with relevant technical skills and an understanding of the international context of the projects, are key to successfully managing large-scale international projects.**

# LEADERSHIP:  One cannot have a successful project without developing ENGAGED LEADERSHIP

Leaders who have skills to inspire and motivate a geographically dispersed team.



➢  Committed to the concept note.
➢ Empower Others to Lead and are not threatened by excellence in others.
➢ Make decisions based on what is best for the project as a whole;
➢ Understand specific political dynamics in partner countries and participating institutions
➢ Provide models for the work that needs to be completed;
➢ Competent Communicators
➢ "Reachable"---must be accessible and respond to questions and inquiries.
➢ Has basic management skills

# Basic Project Management

- **Clearly defined tasks and work plan— conceptualization---planning--- implementation---closure--- impact -sustainability**
- **Good communication**
- **Involvement of Key Stakeholders**
- **Collaborative Approach**
- **Setting up website for dissemination and also joint work (or another platform for joint work).**

# COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPARENCY

Clear, concise, and effective communication, both written and verbal, is essential.

This includes the ability to communicate across cultural and linguistic boundaries.

Transparency: Communication is open and visible

zoom meetings, what's up groups, common work platforms, face to face meetings, etc.

Website contributes to communication and transparency

# Cultural Sensitivity:

- Understanding and respecting cultural differences and norms is crucial in international settings.

- This skill helps in building trust and smoothing interactions among team members from diverse backgrounds.

Example: role of woman varies in different cultures—need to know how to interact with men in power positions---

# DEVELOPING A "CULTURE OF COLLABORATION"

The ability to foster team cohesion and collaboration among members who may never meet face-to-face. :

- **Delegation of tasks** and sharing responsibility to engage partners;
- Setting up **heterogenous groups** for performing tasks;
- *Delegate Leadership Roles* among different institutions and countries.
- *MUST BE INCLUSIVE*—involve all members so that they can "buy into the program".
- **Enabling all voices to be heard and flexibility** in development and implementation of the program—**program needs to belong to all institutions.**
- Creating a common working area for joint work (google docs, Microsoft teams, etc.)

Course development examples + social activities that unite the group examples

# Adaptability

Flexibility in handling unexpected changes and challenges.

This could involve adjusting to different work cultures, or institutional policy regarding curriculum changes, time zone consideration, etc.

Example of integrating courses developed into the curriculum at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

# Problem Solving

The capacity to identify and resolve issues quickly and effectively, often with limited resources or in complex scenarios.

Changes in personnel working on the project and bringing new members up to date with the project

# Conflict Resolution

Skills in mediating disputes and finding amicable solutions to disagreements within a team or with external stakeholders.

Example:  College in Israel that felt it did not need to  integrate new modules developed into their curriculum since they were already doing it.

Best strategy---prevent conflicts—make sure partners are engaged and committed.

# EMPATHY

Understanding and being considerate of the feelings and perspectives of others.

Very important when dealing with team members from varied cultural backgrounds

Example: Mandela Proposal with African partners—asking for a prayer before we begin our meeting

# NEGOTIATION

Important to have the skills for negotiating terms and conditions, resources, and timelines with partners and stakeholders across different countries.

# Good Practices for Coordinating International Programs

- **Applying Diversity management Processes (especially soft-skills):**
  - Communication
  - Inclusion
  - Sharing of tasks
  - Flexibility
  - Transparency
  - Shared Responsibility
  - Internal capacity
  - Adequate analysis of risk factors
  - Understanding cultural/social/political/economic contexts of implementation

# SUMMARY: Good Practice for International Programs

- Moral Purpose
- Good leadership
- Applying Soft Skills in coordinating the program.
- Basic good management practices.
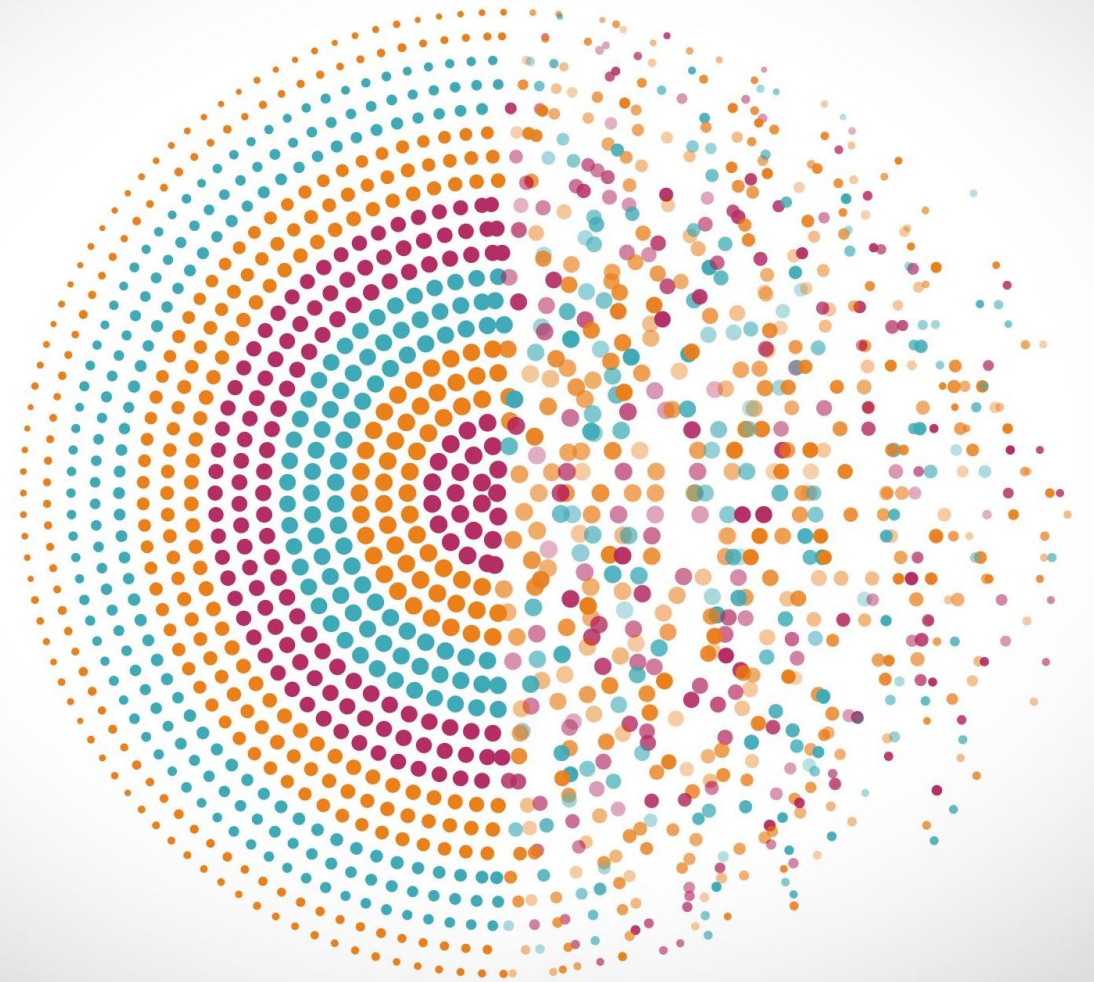
# Great things can happen when a project comes together and people from different cultures collaborate

An example of student activity in Israel which conveys a social and civic message of our multicultural society

https://vimeo.com/533432678/1f8ea0271b

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