Ref. Ares(2022)7710514 - 08/11/2022

Religious Toleration and Peace

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D 6.2 Report on the results of the Docutube Demonstration Sessions for education policy makers.
D 6.5 Summary report on Webinars
D 6.6 Summary report on Roundtables

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Related project task:	T6.2
Type of document:	Deliverable
Document reference:	D 6.5 and D6.6
Version number:	[2]
Status:	Draft
Last revision date:	27 October 2022
Verification date & Verifying subject:	[…]
License:	CC BY-NC
Other, if applicable:	[…]

This project has received funding from the EU's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement n° 770309

WP 6 TASK DESCRIPTION

WP6 translated the results from Work Packages 2, 3 and 5 into policy reports and recommendations, and set up concrete actions to discuss these reports and recommendations in dialogue with policy makers. The WP was coordinated by UKIM with participation of project partners: KU Leuven (Patrick Pasture and Karel Van Nieuwenhuyse), UH (Päivi Salmesvuori), the whole team at OU, MLIMC/MCIC, UGR, and IEG. The recommendations aimed to pursue the following objectives:

(1) Promote concrete actions to be carried out in both formal and informal educational environments to encourage young people to think about present and future forms of religious coexistence in a more constructive way, engaging with ideas, problems, solutions and processes from the past.

(2) Formulate content-related, pedagogical and didactical suggestions for change in formal (both subject-specific curriculum and cross-curricular) and informal education, to improve educational systems, learning contents and learning and teaching strategies, particularly through adoption of tools such as the doctubes.

(3) Provide policy recommendations on the use of ideas, solutions and problems from the history of religious peacemaking to improve public dialogue and policy processes relating to religious coexistence.

One of the first tasks of the WP was to identify policy actors, which resulted in **D6.3 Database identifying relevant policy actors and policies in Europe on a regional, national and European level**. The database was regularly updated the reason why we have asked to reupload an updated version near the end of the project.

The main task of WP in the period under review was the drafting and discussion of policy reports on education D 6.1 and interfaith dialogue D 6.2. The delivery of these reports was delayed for various covid-related reasons, among which that it was partly dependent on the completion of WP 5. However, elaborated and well substantiated policy reports were produced and discussed with different stakeholders in webinars and roundtables, while presentation sessions were organized targeting policy makers as well as educators in formal and informal education. The GA stated that RETOPEA would first organize two webinars and then use the conclusions of the webinars for the policy reports and the roundtables. Moreover T 6.3.1 / D 6.2 foresaw demonstration sessions for educational policy makers. In reality, however, (though that was not intended) these categories mixed, as the policy webinars actually also functioned as demonstration or information sessions which did not really lead to profound content discussions, while the roundtables actually

involved policy makers, educators and interconvictional militants who engaged in very productive discussions with a real impact, not just on the final policy reports but particularly on the field in practice. That is why the final policy reports D 6.1 and 6.2 were actually uploaded on the portal at the end of the project, and we present the webinars, demonstration sessions and roundtables here in an integrated document, structured following the thematic division between education and interfaith dialogue. The policy reports are sent to the different stakeholders as identified in the database D 6.3.

EDUCATIONAL POLICY

The Policy report with regard to education (D 6.1) was drafted by Dr Päivi Salmesvuori (University of Helsinki) and Prof Karel Van Nieuwenhuyse (KU Leuven) and systematically presents what the RETOPEA studied, focusing in particular on perceptions of religion and religious diversity among young people throughout Europe, what the main findings were, and formulated conclusions on what the objectives of RETOPEA's educational policies should be:

RETOPEA aims to foster young people's

1) content knowledge of religious diversity in past and present
2) procedural knowledge (skills) of how representations of religious diversity are constructed (connected to digital literacy)
3) critical knowledge on the complex relationship between past and present: how are representations of religious diversity in the past (mis)used for present aims and to stir us-them-thinking, to foster stereotypes etc.? It aims to empower young people to critically deconstruct historical representations of religious diversity.
4) critical citizenship, and adherence to an open and democratic society: it aims to foster an inclusive sense of belonging, dialogue between diverse people, build a multilayered identity, overcome us-them-thinking etc.
5) creative and reflective engagement with the past, as an attitude as such, yet also in order to inspire/affect societal attitudes in the present.

RETOPEA developed its methodology involving the making of docutubes and working with clippings with that in mind.

Based on this research and the experiences with clippings and making docutubes the report formulates a series of recommendations.

The webinars and roundtables presented both the methodology and experiences of making docutubes and the policy recommendations. The report itself was discussed extensively at the roundtables in Warsaw and Ohrid.

EDUCATION WEBINARS

The Leuven Cenbtre for Global Governance Studies organized two webinars on **Youth and Religion: Creative Learning with History** on 8 and 22 June 2022, one specifically targeting policy makers and secondary school teachers and one addressed to policy makers and educators in non-formal educational settings. They involved John Wolffe, Stefanie Sinclair, John Maiden, Karel Van Nieuwenhuyse and Patrick Pasture as well as young people sharing their experience with making docutubes. OU furthermore participated, together with Charlotte Jahnz from histoCON, in a webinar under the title "Can History Help? Creative Approaches to Peace-making and Tolerance organized by URI Europe and the international peace organization Baraza in Europe" on 24 February 2022 as a part of their joint webinar series on the occasion of the UN Interfaith Week (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DkC7xFFCMOg). They focused particularly on their experiences with young people making docutubes. During the webinar, several examples of resources used by the RETOPEA team were presented to the audience alongside a docutube made by school students engaged in the workshop; also a student could present her experiences with making a docutube.

The discussions in the webinars allowed considering possible new ways of helping young people engage with the past and establish a connection between history and the present.

- What do young people think about historical and present-day religious diversity?
- Can we learn for today from the ways in which historic peace settlements handled religious diversity?
- How do politicians or the media talk about religious diversity and coexistence today?
- How can findings of historical research be used in teaching and learning to help young people develop their skills in promoting religious tolerance and peace today?

OU and other partners also participated in a few other activities where the docutubes and BOC were presented at different audiences (see output).

EDUCATION POLICY ROUNDTABLES

In addition to the webinars also two roundtables on Educational Policy in formal and informal contexts were organized, one in Warsaw 16-17 May 2022 and one in Ohrid, September 15-16, 2022. It was decided to hold the roundtables integrated in the general meetings as it allowed a direct discussion between the makers of the report, advisory board members, external experts and the whole team.

On both occasions Päivi Salmesvuori (University of Helsinki) and Karel van Nieuwenhuyse (KU Leuven) presented the report D 6.1 (Summary report) **A policy report with regard to (formal and non-formal) education: integrated conclusions and policy**

recommendations. The roundtable in Warsaw, chaired by Mikko Ketula (Helsinki) consisted of Wilhelm Sabri Hoffmann (URI Global Council Trustee for Europe); Eszter Kodácsy-Simon (Lutheran University, Budapest; European Forum for Teachers of Religious Education EFTRE); Aleksandar Krzalovski (Macedonian Center for International Cooperation); Päivi Salmesvuori, Martin Liepach (Fritz Bauer Institute, Goethe University Frankfurt; EuroClio); Stefanie Sinclair (OU); and Tamara Sztyma-Knasiecka (POLIN). In Ohrid explicit reactions were solicited by Marjan De Groot-Reuvekamp (University of Amsterdam; Euroclio); Wilhelm Sabri Hoffmann (URI Global Council Trustee for Europe), Jürgen Mettepenningen (episcopal representative for Catholic Education Flanders); Marc Van den Brande (Catholic Education, Flanders); and Elies Van Noten (Thomas – Religious Education), but also other participants in the roundtable.

The **discussion** focused on the Report in general and the Recommendations in particular.

All participants first expressed their sincere appreciation for the work done, considering it very valuable very. Among others, they mentioned that:

- Innovative work has been done in terms of content. The project sheds new light on religious diversity in past and present, and how it was dealt with. This work offers opportunities to learn *with* the past.
- Many tools are provided to engage young people with the theme of religious diversity in a variety of educational contexts, and through different means, such as through clippings, and through the creation of a docutube.
- The engagement of young people in the docutube making process touches upon many areas: content (better and deeper knowledge of religious diversity in the past and present), dealing with diversity, dialogue and collaboration, strengthening cohesion in diversity, taking multiple perspectives and adopting an open worldview, gender balance (and the role of women in societies), dealing with sensitive issues, and critical digital and media literacy.
- It involves many actors: young people, teachers, educators, youth workers, general public, etc. (via clippings, docutubes, Badged Open Course).
- The activating didactics as well as reflective didactics (e.g., of crossing over and coming back, in religious education) constitute a tremendous strength.
- The project outcomes serve a bottom-up rather than top-down approach; young people are invited to reflect, and their reflection is nurtured, without imposing on them what to think, yet rather how to think. The approach of learning *with* the past (rather than learning *from* the past) is strongly appreciated.
- The materials developed can be used in many educational contexts, in many school subjects, and can be transferred to many and various topics. The docutube didactics are not only applicable within history and religious education, and within the theme of religious diversity.
- The project is entirely consistent with indicators of quality (history) education, see e.g. the 15 principles of high quality history education (https://euroclio.eu/wp-

content/uploads/2015/10/EuroClio-Manifesto-on-high-quality-history-heritage-and-citizenship-education.pdf).
- They see a lot of possible connections to be made between the project outcomes and existing curricula and curricular requirements.

In addition, participants formulated a number of comments and points of attention, and made a number of suggestions:

On content issues:

- For history education, disciplinary modes of reasoning can be further (explicitly) highlighted, e.g., continuity-change, cause-effect, similarity-difference.
- Make well clear the link between the 400 clippings and the goals they serve when used in education (in terms of historical understanding, reflection, engagement etc.).
- It would be good to make a publication for a broad audience in which religious diversity in the past is presented in a more nuanced (and qualitatively better) way than it is now presented in many (educational) media. The shape in which that best appears is important: a paper version or rather something online? The latter allows more flexibility in use, and allows better connection of historical issues to topical issues.
- An important document that fits perfectly within the theme is the 2019 declaration in which Pope Francis and Grand Imam Ahmed Al-Tayeb call for no longer using the name of God "to justify murder, terrorism and oppression." By contrast, they call for dignity, tolerance, peace, reflection, dialogue and cooperation. It would be good that the project contacts the Holy See and Al-Azhar for collaboration.

On didactical issues:

- Put even more effort into strengthening teachers in dealing with sensitive issues. Especially when sensitive issues are raised (e.g., historical or topical situations addressed when religious diversity leads to violence and was/is addressed through violence), it is necessary for teachers and educators to deal with them appropriately. How should they deal with problematic representations of a religious tradition? How should they deal with fundamentalism? Because there is no question, of course, that sensitive topics should be discussed in education.
- Try to emphasize even more the flexible use of what has been developed through a didactic toolbox: providing further insight into how to connect what has been developed in the project with existing curricula, how best to deal with sensitive themes, how to connect past and present in a meaningful way, how best to involve historical contexts? Emphasize also that it is not merely the outcomes, but especially the process (of deepening knowledge, of reflection, of dialogue, of collaboration) that is important. State clearly that it is important to involve local contexts, and that there are many ways to involve young people with the theme (e.g., setting up your own museum).

On education in general-related issues:

- In the education policy report, have an eye for the different policy levels involved in education. Also be mindful of formal and informal educational contexts.
- It is important not to make recommendations in the sense of asking authorities to impose compulsory content. Given the importance of 'freedom of education', and valuing teacher professionalism, other strategies are more desirable.
- Thinking about a transfer to primary education would be very valuable. The need there is great for support on issues on religious diversity. This does, however, require a new project, in order to do it well. For the target group has significantly different characteristics....
- The project outcomes fit perfectly within the concept of the 'Catholic Dialogue School'. They also contribute to the ideal of *Bildung* pursued in education. The project could probably best make more explicit how it also contributes to this (that it does so is beyond dispute).
- This project demonstrates once again that education cannot and should not focus solely on economic benefit. Martha Nussbaum wrote in 2010 *Not for Profit: why democracy needs the humanities*. From this project, it is best to articulate again very clearly how important the formation of informed and critical young people is for the survival of democracy.
- Connect the world of museum/heritage education and formal education better. A structured literature review on instructional practices in history museum contexts clearly shows that all educators (of museums and schools) acknowledge that success can only be met, if museum activities and the formal curriculum are closely linked and related; the problem, however, is that in practice this is often absent. So a policy recommendation could to foster the establishment of such networks, and bring them together (e.g. in summer schools). One could work here with 'ambassadors', who take initiatives to further disseminate the project.

On general societal level issues

- A key policy recommendation seems to be that meetings should be held with 'big tech' players to critically review their algorithms. A change in those algorithms is needed. When you type 'christian muslim co' on google, you first get conflict, and only then cooperation or coexistence.
- Related to this: it is important to also inform journalists and influencers about the project outcomes: they too can help spread positive news, rather than some negative connotations with religious diversity.
- Retopea provides young people/adults with a tool to experience filmmaking themselves, and in so doing face all the challenges of audiovisual news/storytelling; but it would be good to be accompanied by a knowledge clip / course form the

sector itself, in which it is explained how it works (they should reveal their own audiovisual grammar): this could be an assignment for the state subsidized broadcasting companies
- It is very important to remain constantly vigilant not to speak in generalizing terms about "the" Muslim, "the" Jew, "the" Christian, because they do not exist.

Toward the project (reports, website):

- As regards the report, pay a little more attention to the focus group discussions with young people. What was their background? What questions were asked? What worldviews did they hold?
- On the website, refer very clearly to the docutube methodology and the step-by-step plan. Make sure that the user immediately finds the necessary information.
- Put sufficient effort into connecting the (historical) clippings to current events.
- Provide translations of clippings, BOC, etc.

These suggestions and comments were implemented as much as possible, both in the educational policy report and in the implementation of the project components.

INTERCONVICTIONAL DIALOGUE

The Report on interconvictional dialogue 6.4 focuses on developing appropriate ways to use and represent processes of peacemaking through the use of historical, conceptual, empirical and practical results of WP 2, 3 and 5. Initially scheduled to be completed in month 28, it was considerably delayed and finally completed by the end of the project, among other because the results of WP 5 were not completed before then (a first version of D 5.4 was only delivered in September 2022 to be discussed at the Ohrid general meeting). Nevertheless a first version was uploaded on the portal in in February 2022, but we asked to change it with a much more elaborated version, which has been uploaded and also is sent to policy makers.

The text is the work of an intense collaboration of Lidija Georgieva, who drafted a first version inspired from contemporary peace studies, and Patrick Pasture, who included the results of an extensive review of different literatures on religious freedom and toleration and integrated the text in a new version that combined peace studies with applied history and builds upon the 'learning with history' approach that also inspired the educational aspects of RETOPEA. Although D 5.4 was only delivered in September, the informally could actually be included (via the results of the pilot studies and intense contact with the colleagues of OU.

The report, characterized by an etic approach towards religion, adopts an unusual format as it consists of an extensive historical analysis on which conclusions and interpretations are based. It emphasizes the complexity of reality and in that perspective invites reflection and hopes to offer inspiration, but it hardly contains traditional concrete 'policy

recommendations' that are (at least on paper) easy to be implemented. As some conclusions may be controversial the text moreover contains a substantial amount of references to sources and literature so to demonstrate the origin and motivations of the conclusions as deeply grounded in research. The text is also academically at the vanguard of current research. We did not really see another possibility than this format, but we were very unsure about it and considered it as very risky.

It was presented at the **RETOPEA general meeting in Warsaw on 16 May 2022 in a roundtable/ webinar format**. Patrick Pasture presented the general themes and approach of the report, while Lidija Georgieva presented introduced the discussion focusing on the following topics: Religion, peacemaking and youth; Conflicts, crisis and peaceful change; Peacemaking processes and religious actors; Peace settlements and Peace agreements; Youth and peace. The report was then discussed with panellists Petar Gramatikov (Global Interfaith University; Chairman of the "Dialogue Centre - Bulgaria", society for inter-church and interfaith dialogue and research on neo-sectarian and cult front-organisations, Plovdiv, Bulgaria; URI Global Council Trustee for Europe); and Michal Matlak (Managing Director *Review of Democracy*; Fellow CEU Democracy Institute; Policy Advisor at the European Parliament).[1]

Merve Kayikci (KU Leuven) presented also some conclusions with regard to cultural policy on which Dariusz Stola (Polish Academy of Sciences) and Tamara Sztyma-Knasiecka (POLIN) reflected. The issues related to cultural policy were largely included in the report on educational policy.

- The Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies organized a second Webinar "Religion, peace and toleration in public dialogue: an exercise in imagining policy with history," 29 June 2022, with Merve Reyhan Kayikci; Patrick Pasture; Lidija Georgieva; Michał Matlak; Petar Gramatikov (35 registrations). The webinar discussed extensively topics as academic versus practical points towards religious issues in the past and present; the need for a multidisciplinary approach in defining and analysing complexity of religious dialogue and relations on different levels of communication; the relation and the role of religious peace-making in history and lessons for the future; the public presentation of religion and toleration in museums, textbooks and TV series and the impact for cultural policy today.

- At the General Meeting in Ohrid in **a Roundtable** chaired by Michal Matlak with as panellists representatives of different religious communities and experts in interconvictional dialogue, either more academic or at grassroots level: Stefan Cvetanovski (Orthodox Church of North Macedonia); Emina Frljak (Program Coordinator, Youth for

[1] Anjum Anwar MBE (well-known public intellectual, "the only Muslim appointed to work for a Church of England Cathedral"; teacher at the Workers' Educational Association and Presenter Umma TV, London) unfortunately withdrew at the very last moment for medical reasons.

Peace CC/ Religions for Peace RfP; European Interfaith Youth Network); Wilhelm Sabri Hoffmann (URI Global Council Trustee for Europe, former President of the Christlich-Islamischen Gesellschaft, the oldest and most important association for Islamic-Christian dialogue in Germany); Irsal Jakupi (Islamic Community of Macedonia); Zoran Ilievski (Director of the Global Council for Tolerance and Peace; President East-West Bridge International; Ass. Prof. Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje); Ina Lushka (Head of EU Sector Municipality of Kavaje, Albania; RfP); Eric Roux (President of the European Interreligious Forum for Religious Freedom, Vice-President of the European Office of the Church of Scientology for Public Affairs and Religious Freedom, URI Global Council Trustee); Goran Sadikarijo (Director Holocaust Memorial Center Macedonia); Marjan Nikolovski (TV Sitel); Jovan Tegovski (IHRA National Coordinator/Special Envoy on antisemitism, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of North Macedonia); and Johan Vrints (Vice-Coordinator at ORBIT, Belgium). Also other participants at the general meeting, including three young people, engaged in the discussion

The reactions and observations can be divided into three categories:

General comments on content: The report was very positively assessed as very rich, balanced and impressive. The approach of 'learning with history' was in particularly much appreciated. One reviewer noted that the report adopted an unusual, even innovative, critical approach than the 'liberal' one most studies on religious toleration, without, however, promoting 'illiberal' proposals, which he found original and refreshing. In this respect several speakers highlighted that the report did not adopt a condescending tone towards religion, and also refused 'judging' religions or convictions (including non-religious). It is a sense also not surprising that the implicit secularist normative bias that one finds in much research on religion is not very appealing to people engaged in interconvictional dialogue. There were, however, also a few critical comments and observations. The focus is more on issues of religion – state and toleration than on (international) peace-making and diplomacy – there might be some room for improvement there. It was observed that actually little attention went to religious diversity, in the sense that many religions and spiritualities were not actually presented, but also that their particular contribution was not further explored. It was particularly regretted that the different ways other cultures dealt with religious diversity were not included. In this respect still more attention could have been given to the Islamic world.

In addition there were some specific comments on content, mainly about representations of (or alleged missing or less developed) historical 'facts', developments and interpretations, in particular on the attitudes of the Orthodox churches, the causes of the Holocaust, the assessment of religious freedom, the French 1905 law on the separation of church and state, the attitudes of the Bulgarian Orthodox church towards Jews in WW II.

The document was adapted to respond to the comments, keeping the overall balance right (there are always issues that some will find more important than others). As regards the

significance of non-European religions, that certainly is a valid comment but the project was focused on Europe, and it was impossible to assess systematically non-European cultures within the framework of the project. This being said, it is a dimension that should be further explored in future research. It would be a vast and challenging task though.

As regards the format, there were some panellists who considered the report 'dense' and academic, and who preferred a more accessible style; some also argued for concrete 'bullet points' with recommendations. In general though, particularly the respondents most engaged with interconvictional dialogue, were extremely positive and found the report very useful, notwithstanding or perhaps even because of its format and the 'learning with history' approach, which invites reflection and acts rather as source of inspiration (which was also illustrated during the last roundtable, as it provoked interesting discussions on freedom of religion and the universality of human rights). We hence decided to keep the format, but to emphasize the 'executive summary' a bit more. The technique of highlighting certain elements by writing in bold and/ or coloured 'boxes' was also appreciated as an effective way in this case to guide readers though the text.

Some comments referred to the need to translate the conclusions into educational activities and recommendations, but that is done in a separate document (D 6.1).