

NEWSLETTER

News and Updates on the Erasmus+ Project



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DISCOVERING A SUSTAINABLE MINDSET

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Editorial

The joint work on the Erasmus+ project SysMind is coming to a successful conclusion. The last online meetings take place. The partners of UTEM in Turkey organised a valuable 4th transnational meeting in Ankara in connection with the Multiplier Event. We report on this on pages 1 and 2. The World Environment Day campaign organised by the Fundación Monte Mediterráneo in collaboration with the municipality of Santa Olalla del Cala was a powerful symbol of sustainability combined with culture and history. Read more on page 3.

The MOOC programme was created as a result of the Erasmus project SysMind. It is already online. Many educational institutions in various European countries are seriously interested in using this tool. We report on the first experiences that educators are having with this programme.

The valuable SysMind project, which combines topics of sustainability and spirituality, is slowly coming to an end. It has already given rise to follow-up projects, such as the co-operation between highschools in Latvia and Austria. It is time to give feedback and draw conclusions. On the following pages you will find highlights from various partners on this 3-year Erasmus+ project, a quality management report and feedback from project management. We wish all our partners and your stakeholders an enjoyable and inspiring lecture.

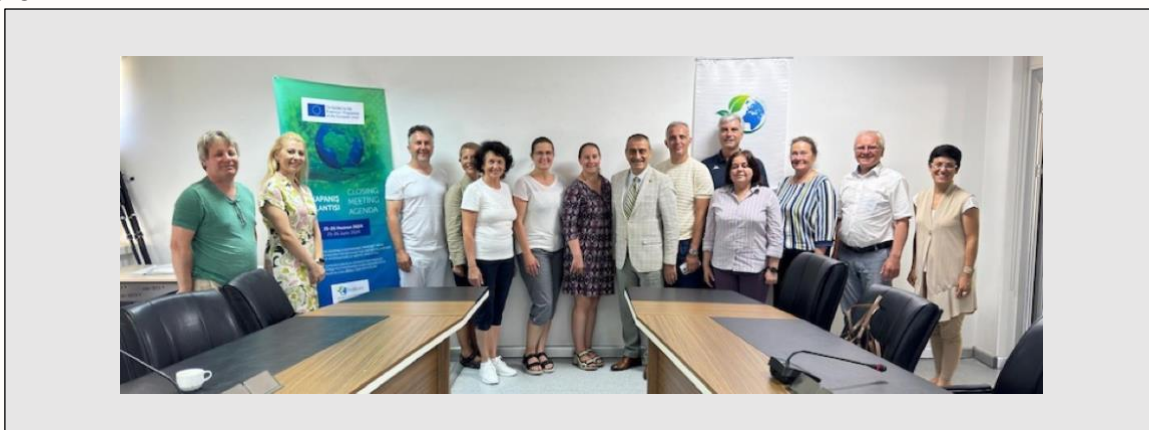
Your **Newsletter-Team**

of the University College of Christian Churches of Teacher Education in Vienna

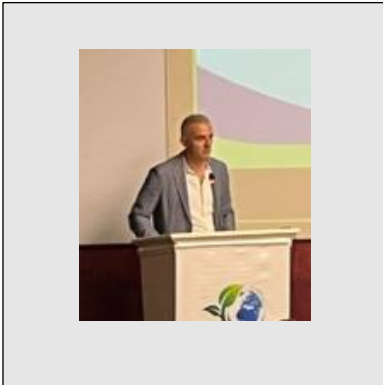
4th Transnational Meeting in Ankara

The last face-to-face meeting of our SYSMIND project and the last planned Multiplier Event organization was held in Ankara/Turkey between June 25-27, 2024. The event started on June 25, 2024 with the Multiplier Event organized with the participation of a wide stakeholder group. Around 120 representatives from Continuous Vocational Education Centers, Youth Centers, agricultural producer organizations, Farm Advisory System employees, and local governments attended the multiplier event held in the Ministry of Youth and Sports Training facilities in Ankara.

The three-day SYSMIND meeting continued with 2 separate sections specific to the project key personnel, including dissemination and financing, sustainability and project management issues. On the June 26, 2024, the project team came together in the Directorate of International Agricultural Training Center' meeting hall and discussed expanding the scope of the intellectual products, taking final measures regarding dissemination and financing issues. The project team reached a consensus on all issues discussed and the necessary updates were made to the work schedule.



Multiplier event in Ankara



SYSMIND project is an ERASMUS+ Key activity 2 project in the field of vocational education. Projects in this category are expected to produce intellectual output focused on an existing problem, organize transnational meetings, short-term trainings, plan effective dissemination and sometimes multiplier events that include intellectual outputs produced during the project. Multiplier Events are national and transnational conferences, seminars and other events organised with the purpose of disseminating the Project Results produced by the project. Community Support for Multiplier Events is provided only if they stand in direct relation to the Project Results of the project.

For this reason, the agenda of the SYSMIND Multiplier Event consisted of; short opening and welcoming speeches, sustainability in Islam presentation, the project's rationale, story and activities carried out in summary, characteristics of all intellectual outputs in the project and a short discussion & conclusion section with the participating stakeholder group. In order to facilitate participation in the event and overcome the language barrier, Turkish-English-Turkish simultaneous translation service was provided free of charge to the participants. Key personnel who could not attend the Multiplier Event, which took place as a hybrid event, connected to their sessions via ZOOM and fulfilled their duties. The participants showed a very interested approach in the discussion section, and it became difficult to end the event within the planned time due to the questions received. At the end of the event, there was a noticeable increase in the number of participants on the SYSMIND open access mass course (MOOC) platform. The Multiplier event ended with a lunch with the entire participant group.

Bülent Sezer, UTEM

Multiplier Event – photo insights



The participants showed a very interested approach in the discussion section...

World Environment Day - Fundación Monte Mediterráneo



On June 5th, on the occasion of the World Environment Day, Fundación Monte Mediterráneo in cooperation with the municipality of Santa Olalla del Cala, Huelva, both entities presented their activities and projects related to environment. The event inaugurated the fortress as an event location for Santa Olalla del Cala and is a representative for “sysminded” spirit: the foundation of the fortress goes back to prehistoric times and was improved during many centuries by Roman (about 600 years from 218 B.C. to 19 A.C.) and Morish-Muslim (711 - 1492) reigns.

The amazing part of the succession of different cultures in Andalusia is, that the elements of the relevant preceding cultures were not destroyed by the successors but improved – that is how this wonderful cultural mosaic which now is characteristic for Spain and, especially Andalusia, could be created and survive. The contribution of Fundación Savia during the event – a Spanish foundation dedicated to the defense of the values of the rural environment and the cooperation in its social, economic, patrimonial, landscape and cultural development – focused on the fact that only cooperation and communication, even between different points of view, can lead to a peaceful and successful future. Another important activity of the Fundación Monte Mediterráneo as part of World Environment Day was the awarding of prizes for the work of the pupils at the Ruta de la Plata elementary school in Santa Olalla del Cala and the presentation of the ongoing projects at an event organized by the Ayuntamiento de Santa Olalla del Cala.

Ernestine Lüdeke
Fundación Monte Mediterráneo



Erasmus Projekt SysMind – personal highlights of the partners

The Sysmind project was a refreshing and innovative experience for me after many Erasmus KA2 project experiences: it brought an ethical aspect into the work which has not been taken in account in former projects. It focusses on awareness and consciousness - aspects that are lacking so much. Thanks to the partners who initiated the project and thanks also for all the contributions which can help to "make a better world".

Ernestine Lüdeke - Fundación Monte Mediterráneo

My projects' portfolio includes several projects focused on sustainability. What distinguish this project from others? First of all, quite unique focus on spiritual and multicultural dimensions in teaching. Second, practice-based oriented methods of learning. And last but not least, first time I am contributed to the MOOC course development which allowed to share the vision of Ecological Economics.

Ihor Soloviy - Ukrainian National Forestry University

Participation in the SysMind project within the Erasmus+ program was a great achievement for me, enriched with new experiences and filled with a sense of gratitude to all project participants for the opportunity to jointly develop and implement new ideas and solutions to improve education for sustainable development. The atmosphere of goodwill, mutual assistance and trust contributed to the achievement of the project goals, which we owe, in particular, to the excellent management of Prof. Klaus Karpf, Dr. Silke Schaumberger, Prof. Veronika Hager, Gertrude Plank. Michael Prodingler also contributed to the successful start of the project. I wish all my colleagues success in their personal and professional lives and new interesting projects.

Lyudmyla Maksymiv - UNFU, Lviv

The intricate process of collaborating with diverse partners on the SysMind project activities cultivated a rich tapestry of professional experiences. This collaboration not only broadened my horizons as an expert, but also facilitated the exchange of innovative ideas and best practices. The resultant professional satisfaction stemmed from the successful integration of varying perspectives contributed to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of project outcomes. Engaging with partners from different backgrounds provided invaluable insights and fostered a deeper understanding of multifaceted approaches to problem-solving, ultimately enriching the professional journey. I am extremely grateful for engaging with professionals from different fields and enhancing professional satisfaction.

Elena Rizova - UKIM, Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje

For me, the cross-cutting focus on spiritual and cultural values that determine goals and whole behavior was the most important in this project. I hope that the SysMind project will help students navigate modern challenges and embark on the path of transformation for sustainability. In my portfolio of projects, the SysMind project was also the first experience with the Erasmus programme. It was the first time I worked on creating a MOOC. It was the first time I worked for vocational training. And all this was a very interesting experience.

Lyudmyla Zahvoyska - Ukrainian National Forestry University

For everyone involved in the Sysmind project, it will be first and foremost about the results - the LTT workshops, the excellent iMooX course. However, I would like to highlight the people I met - both project partners and LTT participants. The people - professional, enthusiastic, friendly, supportive. It is people like this who can inspire and change mindsets towards sustainability.

Sandra Iriste, Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies

The Sysmind project has been the perfect opportunity for me to combine all my research topics and work on them with a great international and interdisciplinary team. Sustainability, online teaching and learning, diversity and environmental education, and adding spiritual aspects were important building blocks for me personally in my own research practice. I can make good use of the Mooc for courses and training and recommend it with a good feeling!

Elke Szalai - Landschaftsplanung und Unternehmensberatung / Austria

The "SysMind" project was my first experience of international Erasmus projects. All my colleagues who were involved in the project were a great enrichment for me. I was impressed by the transnational meetings in Skopje, Spain and Ankara. Good project management gave us a common thread. The MOOC program is a concrete product of the project that can be used by many educators in Europe. In conclusion, I can say - it was a very valuable time and a valuable project - thanks to all partners!

Piotr Kubiak – KPH Wien/Krems

The MOOC program Sustainable Mindset - already online



The SysMind project partners have dealt intensively with the topic at an international level and jointly developed an online course that is offered free of charge via the iMooX platform of Graz University of Technology. This MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) is primarily aimed at vocational and adult education teachers, but all interested parties are welcome to participate. The journey towards a more sustainable way of thinking begins with an introduction to sustainable development. To illustrate the many perspectives that play a role even in seemingly simple things, the next lesson looks at the four elements of fire, water, earth and air from a scientific and religious perspective, before taking a closer look at the role of mindfulness and spirituality across all denominations. A joint chapter is also dedicated to the importance of values, dealing with diversity and the green pedagogy approach, before considering how we could move towards a more sustainable way of thinking towards the end. The course concludes with some best practice examples and suggestions.

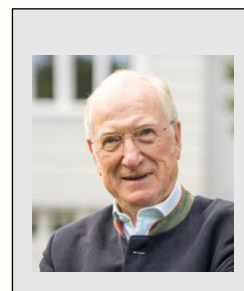
The course is available in English and German and is designed so that individual parts or lessons can be completed or, if necessary, incorporated into lessons. We cordially invite you to join us on the journey to a more sustainable mindset, because this is the basis for more sustainable action. And it takes all of us to make our shared world a better place for everyone and fit for the future!

Subscription for the course: <https://imoox.at/course/SustainableMindset>

Further information about the project: <https://www.sustainablemindset.eu/>

The MOOC program Sustainable Mindset – users' reflection

The five lessons of the MOOC programme provide comprehensive and fundamental information on the topic of sustainability and possible courses of action. The individual lessons are characterised by their clear language - in German and English - and concise, entertaining elements - text, film or work assignments. The respective terms are made understandable through precise definitions and comprehensible information. In this way, scientific, economic and theological presentations can be easily understood. The information ranges from presented elements to literature and media references.



In their presentations of the pillars of sustainability, experts from the various specialist areas describe their points of view and encourage personal exercises. This opens up fields of action that offer suggestions for concrete sustainable behaviour. The evaluation of spiritual experiences and suggestions is open and reflects an ecumenical and interreligious appreciation in the presentation of the religions. This is particularly evident in Fr Lumnesh's presentation of the religions. The examination models are easy to understand and can be completed after the entire programme has been completed. In addition to the Green Pedagogy models, elements from the PILGRIM programme are also offered, opening up a wide range of approaches. This opens up all individual possibilities for activity and encourages new behaviour.

Dr. Johann Hisch,
Founder of the "International Education Network PILGRIM"



Technical preparation of the course

The course is divided into five lessons. All lessons are designed according to the same principle, making them easier to use. Each lesson contains an introductory video of varying length. An indication of the average completion time per lesson is given. Badges provide an overview of the activities completed.

Materials and literature sources provided

The sources provided are up-to-date, comprehensive and can be customised for use in educational work. The file size of the course materials in the download is indicated. These are available in Word and PDF format and can be downloaded individually or as a complete ZIP file.

Linguistic presentation

All lessons are presented in English and German and from different scientific perspectives. They can therefore be used across several subject areas. New terms are clarified so that they can be used as a basis for further study. For example, Prof Rosenberger approaches the term "spirituality" from different scientific/theological perspectives and encourages a personal examination of the term.

Didactic design

The introductory core information, materials and sources of each lesson have different levels of sophistication. They enable teachers to prepare comprehensively and offer numerous sources for the creation of materials for learners. The tasks are varied and are based on the didactic concept of "green pedagogy", which aims to develop a "sustainable mindset" and attaches central importance to the development of values.

Practical use and possible applications

Specific examples for practical classroom work offer a variety of ideas and enable a diverse and site-specific preparation process. Videos are short and concise but can also be used in extracts. The sequences designed by pupils are particularly inspiring. The interdisciplinary orientation of the course is emphasised by the "Whole Institution Approach". The quiz offers suggestions for collegial exchange and the preparation of teaching settings. Technical instructions in the course promote expertise in the digital preparation of lessons.

Mag. Christine Wogowitsch
Former Vice Rector of the HAUP
President of PILGRIM

Some dissemination/multiplying activities of SysMind

- The SysMind project and the upcoming MOOC were presented to multipliers in a presence setting on 24 May 2024. Additionally, the project was introduced to the general public during the “Long Night of Research” in Vienna. An online multiplier event was also held that addressed teachers and trainers. Apart from that, more dissemination has already happened and is still going on, for example at the Austrian Summer Academy for Education of Sustainable Development in August 2024.
- International PILGRIM conference at the University of Silesia in Katowice. This conference was organized at the end of November 2023 at the Faculty of Theology of the University for all PILGRIM schools in Poland.
- EuFRES conference in Poprad/Slovakia (April 3-7, 2024)- Presentation of SysMind and elements of the MOOC program to professors and directors responsible for religious education and continuing education of religious education teachers in various European countries.
- PILGRIM Newsletter Newsletter for 350 schools and institutions that support and develop the projects on linking sustainability and spirituality. It is published every two months. Here is a link to it: <https://pilgrim.at/newsletter/>
- The school partnership between the Jalgava-Gymnasium, the Vienna Business School and the Realgymnasium Purkersdorf came about as a result of the Erasmus project SysMind. Students from Latvia completed part of the MOOC program - the "SysMind Experts" program - in April 2024. They were then certified as "SysMind Experts" at the Vienna Business School.
- As part of the SysMind project and in cooperation with the international education network PILGRIM, the book "PILGRIM in Dialogue with Sustainability and Spirituality" was published. One chapter of this book deals with the Erasmus+ SysMind program. Here is a link to the book: <https://ebooks.kphvie.ac.at/pilgrim/pilgrim-compendium/index.html>
- Certification of new PILGRIM institutions and the presentation of SysMind as part of the “Long Night of Churches”. Presentation of the MOOC program and the book: "PILGRIM in dialogue with sustainability and spirituality.". For this book, Father Lumnesch Svaroop has selected texts from Hinduism that deal with sustainability.



Fr Lumnesh Svaroop Kumar, SJ receives the printed first edition of the PILGRIM book (part of the MOOC) with the texts from Hinduism, he has selected



Vienna Business School students certified as **SysMind experts** in Cooperation with Highschool in Jalgava/Latvia

Conclusion of the Project Manager

How do we conclude a project that hopefully marks a starting point for many people towards gaining a more sustainable mindset by themselves and supporting others in this personal process?

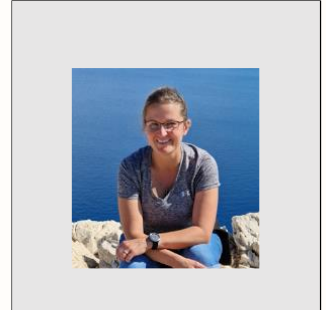
I want to emphasise the dynamic of a journey: This project's comprehensive and holistic topic brought us as partners on an expedition ourselves, coming from different directions and elaborating our common way.

The joint work with colleagues from other countries with different professional backgrounds while focusing on cultural and spiritual differences helped me directly experience the advantages and challenges of diversity in general. Getting to know new perspectives, and working with them is sometimes difficult, but it is also very important, and worth it! I personally and professionally learned a lot and met new approaches and methods I'd never heard of before. Even in my everyday life I sometimes face situations where my knowledge and experiences gained by our work on SysMind supports me to develop a more open view.

Apart from that, I think that addressing the spiritual and cultural approach towards the world that surrounds us is surely of utmost importance, as the pure knowledge of facts obviously does not seem capable of motivating us to deal more responsibly with our environment.

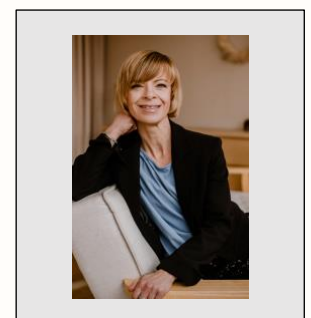
Finally, I hope that we can inspire many people with our MOOC, as we are all asked to take responsibility and act more sustainably!

Silke Schaumberger, Project Management



Quality Management (QM) of SysMind

Quality assurance for the big final result Mooc has been the focus of the last few months. During the LTT meetings, where a fixed group of participants was used, the online and face-to-face sessions were evaluated. The evaluation was carried out online with a common digital platform. Relevant answers were also obtained for the development of the Mooc. The participants emphasized the relevance of the practical examples and positive learning experiences during the LTT sessions, which should also guide the didactic preparation of the mooc. During the final meeting in Ankara, more than 100 regional multipliers were informed about the contents and goals of the sysmind project. They were also asked for their feedback afterwards.

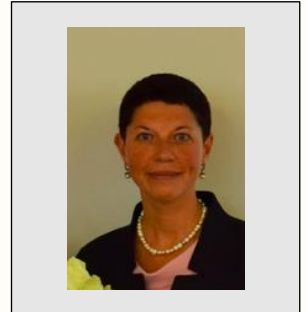


Elke Szalai,
QM - SysMind

Latvian University of Life Sciences hosted the LTT 3

International seminar develops evaluation criteria for sustainable learning processes

From 9 to 11 April, the Latvian University of Life Sciences and Technologies (LBTU) hosted a multi-day learning, teaching, training (LTT3) seminar “valuation of sustainability strategies in vocational education and training - Assessment of learning processes for sustainability”, which brought together 19 experts from various fields from several countries in the European region. They aimed to jointly explore best practices for assessing learners' achievements and their impact on the development of sustainable thinking.



The LTT3 seminar in Jelgava took place in the framework of ERASMUS+ project “Discovering a sustainable Mindset - Neue Dimension der Bildung für nachhaltige Entwicklung mit Fokus auf interkulturelle Werte und Ethik” (Sysmind) (2021-1-AT01-KA220-VET-000028126) and was attended by pedagogical, forest science, agriculture, adult education experts from Austria, Latvia, Spain, Turkey, North Macedonia and Ukraine.

During the LTT3 seminar, the international partners gained valuable knowledge on methods of assessing learning achievements and participated in several educational master classes, as well as went on experience visits to Jelgava State Gymnasium, landfill “Getliņi Eko” and LBTU Technology and Knowledge Transfer Department. Both LBTU teaching staff and Jelgava State Gymnasium teachers shared their experience in integrating sustainability topics into the teaching process.

Sandra Īriste
Latvian University of Life Sciences and Technologies

