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WP3 – "DIGITAL COMICS OF MIGRATION" LEARNING PROGRAM

**GIRES – Global Institute for Research, Education &
Scholarship**

The Netherlands

Erasmus+ KA220-SCH Strategic Partnership in School Education -

DICOMI -

DIGITAL COMICS OF MIGRATION

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TEACHER TRAINING EVALUATION REPORT



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1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of the teacher-training evaluation carried out by GIREs – Global Institute for Research, Education & Scholarship in the Netherlands within Work Package (WP) 3 of the Erasmus+ KA220-SCH project DICOMI – Digital Comics of Migration. The purpose of WP3 is to support the practical educational use of the DICOMI Learning Program, including the digital comics, the teacher modules, the online platform, and the wider pedagogical approach connecting migration, inclusion, empathy, and digital learning.

The report focuses on the teacher-training component, while also reflecting on the expected implications for student implementation. The analysis draws on the completed teacher evaluation survey, the DICOMI teacher-training questions, and the wider findings during the discussion during and after the training. feedback is used here as contextual evidence because it provides broader reflections from educators, and through them from the community actors on the educational value of the DICOMI materials, particularly their use of real migration stories, visual storytelling, testimony-based learning, and inclusive classroom dialogue.

A methodological note is necessary. The teacher-training evaluation dataset submitted to GIREs contains four responses as there were four teachers that participated in the training. All respondents were educators based in the Netherlands. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted as qualitative and indicative rather than statistically representative. Nevertheless, the responses are coherent and useful because they show a clear pattern: very strong support for the DICOMI comics, modules, objectives, and migration-related pedagogical value, together with more critical feedback on the usability and future recommendation of the online platform. The results are based on teachers' professional expectations, feedback, and the pedagogical implications of the training.

2. TEACHER TRAINING

The teacher training introduced educators to the DICOMI Learning Program and its educational purpose. The training familiarized participants with the project's digital comics, the related learning modules, the online platform, and the pedagogical rationale for using visual and digital storytelling to address migration and inclusion in school contexts. Particular attention was given to how teachers can guide classroom discussions on sensitive topics such as displacement, belonging, identity, stereotypes, exclusion, empathy, and human dignity.



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The training also underlined that DICOMI should not be understood only as a set of digital comic materials. It is a broader educational approach that combines testimony, oral history, visual storytelling, digital learning, and inclusive dialogue. This is consistent with the wider GIREs stakeholder feedback collected under WP4, where participants emphasized the importance of the real-story basis of the comics and considered this a major strength because it gives the materials authenticity, emotional depth, and educational credibility.

2.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The teacher-training evaluation survey was completed by four participants. All respondents identified their profession as educator and all were based in the Netherlands. The gender distribution was balanced, with two female and two male respondents. The profile of respondents is therefore consistent with the objective of the teacher-training activity, namely to assess how educators understand, evaluate, and intend to use the DICOMI Learning Program in educational settings.

The small number of responses limits the possibility of statistical generalization. However, the responses provide meaningful feedback because the participants evaluated the programme across a broad set of dimensions: coherence of design and objectives, compatibility of the 3E model with the modules, expected student reactions, usefulness of the online platform, planned future use, migration awareness, inclusion and belonging, and the educational effectiveness and artistic quality of the comics.

2.2. TRAINING EFFECT ON DIGITAL SKILLS

The teacher training had a positive effect on educators' awareness of how digital tools can be used for sensitive and socially relevant learning. The DICOMI materials helped participants understand digital comics not only as reading materials, but as tools for visual literacy, multimodal learning, classroom discussion, and student reflection. Teachers recognized that digital formats can support the presentation of complex migration experiences in ways that are accessible to young learners and adaptable to different classroom needs.

The survey results show a strong distinction between the perceived value of the DICOMI materials and the perceived usability of the online platform. Participants unanimously rated the design of the learning programme, the coherence of its objectives, the suitability of the module themes, and the compatibility of the 3E model with the modules at the highest level (average score 5.0 out of 5 for each of these items). They also unanimously indicated that they plan to use the materials and content of DICOMI in their teaching



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(average score 5.0). This shows that the training successfully communicated the educational value of the digital content.

At the same time, the online platform itself received lower ratings. The statement "I find the online platform easy to use" received an average score of 2.0 out of 5; the statement "I would recommend the platform to my colleagues" also received an average score of 2.0; and the statement "I plan to use the platform in my teaching in the future" received an average score of 2.25. This suggests that although teachers value the content and intend to use the DICOMI materials, they need a more user-friendly platform experience, clearer navigation, and possibly additional technical guidance. That is understandable as the platform was not completed, it was a pilot, at the time the training took part. Thus the responses helped the consortium to identify issues and flaws in the platform and adjust and correct them.

The open-ended responses support this interpretation. Participants suggested several digital improvements, including a "Create Your Own" tool that would allow students to use DICOMI assets to tell their own inclusion stories, interactive quizzes, vocabulary pop-ups inside comic panels, and optional multilingual audio descriptions. These suggestions show that educators see strong potential for the digital development of DICOMI, but also expect the platform to become more interactive, accessible, and supportive for language-learning students.

2.3. TEACHERS' REACTION TO COMICS IN EDUCATION

Teachers reacted very positively to the use of comics in education. All respondents gave the highest score to the statements that students will like the comics in the modules, that comics are effective materials for students especially for subjects such as migration and inclusion, that comics make teaching easier for complex subjects, that students would love the comics, that the comics are artistic in visual terms, and that the comics are effective for the objectives of the modules. The average score for each of these items was 5.0 out of 5.

These results indicate that teachers consider comics to be highly suitable for the educational aims of DICOMI. The comic format was seen as a way to reduce the distance between students and complex social realities. By combining image, text, character, emotion, and narrative development, the comics make migration-related topics more accessible and less abstract. This is especially important for mixed classrooms where students may have different language levels, different levels of prior knowledge, and different personal relationships to migration.



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The teachers' feedback also confirms the value of comics as a bridge between literacy, visual learning, and socio-emotional education. Participants did not view comics as simplified or secondary materials, but as serious pedagogical tools that can support empathy, critical reflection, and inclusive dialogue. This finding is consistent with the WP4 stakeholder meetings, where participants recommended that students should not only read the comics, but also actively discuss, reflect on, and creatively respond to the stories.

The comments submitted by teachers show a desire to extend the comics into more participatory learning activities. Suggestions included student-generated inclusion stories, peer-to-peer workshops led by student ambassadors, home-link activities for families, and multilingual audio features. These recommendations demonstrate that teachers perceive comics as a starting point for a wider learning process involving classroom dialogue, creative production, peer learning, and family engagement.

2.4. TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES/REACTIONS ON MIGRATION AND EDUCATION

Teachers responded very positively to the migration and inclusion objectives of the DICOMI programme. All respondents strongly agreed that the themes of the modules serve the objective of raising awareness about migration (average score 5.0), that the modules effectively explain the challenges of migration (average score 5.0), and that more projects and teaching materials should be designed for migration and inclusion (average score 5.0). These findings show that educators consider DICOMI highly relevant for contemporary European classrooms.

The feedback indicates that teachers recognize migration as a complex educational topic requiring careful, human-centered, and inclusive pedagogical methods. The use of real stories and lived experiences is particularly important in this respect. It allows teachers to approach migration not as an abstract political issue or a set of statistics, but through human experiences of movement, adaptation, family, language, memory, loss, resilience, and belonging.

The item "I did not know migration was so difficult before I read the comics" received mixed results, with three respondents strongly disagreeing and one strongly agreeing. This should not be interpreted as a weakness of the materials. Rather, it suggests that most participating educators already had prior awareness of the difficulties connected to migration, while the materials may still have deepened understanding for some participants. Similarly, the statement "I started to think about migration more after I met the online platform/DICOMI" produced a divided response: two participants strongly agreed and two strongly disagreed. This again suggests that DICOMI may be especially transformative for some educators, while



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others may already work with migration, inclusion, or intercultural education and therefore approach the topic with established awareness.

One survey item asked respondents to agree or disagree with the statement that DICOMI would be ineffective in creating inclusion or belonging for immigrant students. This item is negatively worded and also combines two distinct concepts: inclusion and belonging. Three out of four respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, which indicates that they do not consider DICOMI ineffective. One respondent strongly agreed, which should be interpreted with caution because the wording of the item may have created confusion. For future evaluation, it would be more accurate to separate this question into two positively phrased items: one on inclusion and one on belonging.

Overall, teachers' reactions show that DICOMI is perceived as a meaningful contribution to migration education. It provides teachers with materials that can support empathy, social awareness, intercultural dialogue, and respectful discussion in classrooms. The training confirmed that educators are willing to use such materials, provided they receive sufficient pedagogical and technical support.

3. ANALYSIS OF STUDENT IMPLEMENTATION

The student implementation phase in the Netherlands was carried out in two training sessions with high school students aged between 15 and 17. The sessions introduced students to the overall purpose of the DICOMI project and to the educational value of using digital comics to discuss migration, displacement, inclusion, empathy, and human dignity.

During the sessions, students were guided through the design and development logic of the comics. Particular attention was given to the fact that the DICOMI stories are not fictional exercises, but are based on real testimonies collected through interviews with migrants, refugees, and people with migration backgrounds in the partner countries of the consortium. This helped students understand that the comics represent lived experiences and should therefore be approached with respect, sensitivity, and ethical attention.

The implementation created space for students to reflect on the emotional, social, and educational meaning of the stories. Students were especially struck by the feeling of disconnection experienced by some of the characters, as well as by the psychological burden carried by people who had left their home countries because of war, insecurity, or economic hardship. The sessions therefore confirmed the relevance of the DICOMI approach as a method for connecting visual storytelling, testimonial learning, and classroom discussion.



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3.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

A total of 15 students participated in the DICOMI student implementation sessions in the Netherlands. The group consisted of 12 girls and 3 boys, all of whom were high school students between 15 and 17 years old. Their participation was voluntary.

The students took part in two sessions designed to introduce them to the DICOMI Learning Program and to explore selected digital comics and related themes. The age range of the participants was appropriate for the topics addressed, as the students were old enough to engage critically with complex issues such as migration, war, displacement, identity, social belonging, and inclusion, while still benefiting from the accessible and visually engaging format of comics.

The composition of the group also allowed for meaningful peer discussion. Students were encouraged to respond not only to the narrative content of the comics, but also to the way in which real stories had been transformed into educational materials. The voluntary nature of participation contributed to an open atmosphere, while the facilitation approach ensured that no student was asked to disclose personal or family experiences unless they wished to do so.

3.2. DIGITAL SKILLS

The DICOMI Learning Program has the potential to support students' digital and visual literacy. Through the digital comics, students engage with multimodal texts that combine images, written language, narrative structure, symbolism, emotion, and digital presentation. This can help them interpret visual narratives, understand how stories are constructed, and reflect on how digital media can communicate social experiences.

The teacher feedback points to several ways in which student digital skills could be strengthened further. A "Create Your Own" function would allow students to construct their own inclusion stories using DICOMI assets. Interactive quizzes and vocabulary pop-ups could support comprehension and language development. Multilingual audio descriptions could improve accessibility for students who are still developing reading skills or who would benefit from listening to stories in different languages. These suggestions are directly linked to digital inclusion because they would make the platform more flexible for learners with different linguistic, cognitive, and educational needs.

However, student digital learning will depend on the accessibility and usability of the platform. Since teachers gave low scores to platform ease of use and recommendation, it is important that any student



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implementation is accompanied by clear teacher guidance, simple navigation instructions, and technical support. Improving the platform experience should therefore be treated as a priority for strengthening the digital impact of WP3.

3.3. STUDENTS' REACTION TO COMICS IN EDUCATION

Students responded with interest and curiosity to the use of comics as educational tools. At the beginning of the implementation, they were introduced to the general idea of DICOMI and to the process through which interviews and real migration stories were transformed into digital comics. This explanation was important because it helped them move beyond the idea of comics as entertainment and understand them as structured learning materials based on lived experience.

Several students appeared surprised by the depth and seriousness of some of the stories. In particular, they noted that they had not fully imagined how many people who migrate or flee from conflict may continue to feel disconnected from their new environment, even after reaching a safer country. The stories also helped students reflect on the psychological burden that refugees and migrants may carry from their home countries, especially when they have fled because of war, insecurity, family separation, or economic hardship.

The classroom discussion showed that the comic format can make sensitive topics more approachable without simplifying them. Through images, dialogue, and narrative structure, students were able to identify moments of fear, hope, loss, adaptation, friendship, and belonging. This encouraged them to discuss migration not only as a movement from one country to another, but as a complex human experience involving memory, identity, family, language, and emotional resilience.

A relevant classroom approach used during such a topic is to begin with a short, safe warm-up activity around key words such as home, journey, language, fear, hope, and belonging. The teacher can then present one comic and ask students to identify what the main character might be feeling at different points in the story. Rather than asking students whether they have lived similar experiences, the teacher can guide them to discuss the character's situation, the choices available to the character, and the type of support that classmates, teachers, or communities could offer. This approach protects students' privacy while still encouraging empathy and ethical listening.

Another useful strategy is to connect the comic to a creative response activity. For example, after reading a story, students may be asked to write a short diary entry from the perspective of a character, design a poster about inclusion in their school, create a storyboard showing a moment of support, or discuss in small groups



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how schools can become more welcoming for students with different backgrounds. These activities make the learning process active and help students move from reading to reflection and from reflection to responsible social awareness.

Overall, the implementation confirmed that digital comics can function as effective classroom entry points for discussing migration and inclusion. The students' reactions suggested that the materials are engaging, age-appropriate, and capable of opening meaningful conversations when supported by careful teacher facilitation and clear ethical framing.

3.4. EMPATHY AND SOCIAL SKILLS FOR MIGRATION (STUDENTS)

The DICOMI Learning Program is strongly connected to empathy, perspective-taking, respectful communication, and social awareness. Teachers recognized that the modules effectively explain the challenges of migration and that more educational materials should be developed for migration and inclusion. This suggests that the programme can support students in understanding migration not only as movement across borders, but as a complex human experience involving identity, memory, family, language, resilience, and belonging.

The use of real testimonies is central to the development of empathy and social skills. When students understand that the stories are connected to actual experiences, they are encouraged to listen more carefully and interpret the comics with respect. Teachers can use the materials to introduce the idea of ethical listening: learning how to listen to someone's experience without judgement, simplification, stereotyping, or pressure.

The programme can also support social cohesion in the classroom. Students can be guided to reflect on what makes a school environment inclusive, how classmates can support one another, and how language, cultural background, and life experience shape feelings of belonging. The materials should be implemented in ways that protect students' privacy and avoid putting migrant or displaced students in the position of representing or explaining migration to others.

Teachers' open-ended suggestions further strengthen the social dimension of implementation. A student ambassador model could allow older students to lead peer-to-peer activities and support younger students in discussing empathy and belonging. Home-link activities could extend the conversation from the classroom to families, encouraging intergenerational dialogue while remaining voluntary and sensitive. These ideas show that DICOMI can support not only individual learning, but also community-building within and beyond the school.



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4. CONCLUSION

The GIREs teacher-training evaluation for WP3 shows that the DICOMI Learning Program is strongly valued by educators in the Netherlands. Teachers rated the coherence of the programme design, the clarity of its objectives, the suitability of the module themes, the compatibility of the 3E model, the expected effectiveness of the programme in schools, the educational value of the comics, and the relevance of migration and inclusion materials at the highest level.

The most important strength identified in the evaluation is the educational potential of the digital comics. Teachers consider them engaging, artistic, effective, and suitable for addressing complex topics such as migration and inclusion. They also believe that students will respond positively to the comics and that the materials can help make difficult social issues more accessible in the classroom.

The second major strength is the testimonial and human-centered basis of the project. In connection with the wider feedback, the teacher-training results confirm that DICOMI is not only a digital comics project, but a broader pedagogical approach that brings together real stories, visual storytelling, oral history, digital education, and inclusive classroom dialogue. This approach can help students understand migration as a human experience and can support empathy, perspective-taking, belonging, and respect.

The main area for improvement concerns the online platform. While teachers clearly value the DICOMI content and intend to use the materials in their teaching, they did not rate the platform itself as easy to use or as something they would readily recommend in its current form. This does not weaken the educational value of the content, but it does indicate the need for improved navigation, clearer technical guidance, more accessible design, and additional interactive features.

The open-ended feedback provides concrete directions for future development: a student "Create Your Own" storytelling tool, interactive quizzes, vocabulary support, multilingual audio descriptions, a student ambassador model, and home-link activities for families. These proposals are consistent with the wider aims of DICOMI and could strengthen future versions of the programme or support a possible continuation of the project.

Overall, the teacher training achieved its purpose by familiarizing educators with the DICOMI Learning Program and by confirming the strong pedagogical value of digital comics for migration and inclusion education. The findings show that teachers are ready to use the materials, provided that platform usability and implementation guidance are further strengthened. DICOMI therefore has clear potential to contribute to inclusive, creative, and digitally supported education in European classrooms.



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APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF TEACHER EVALUATION SURVEY RESULTS

The teacher evaluation survey used a 1-5 scale. In most items, 5 indicates the strongest agreement. Item 12 was negatively worded and should be interpreted separately. The table below summarizes the average scores from four educator responses.

Participant profile

Category	Result	Number
Gender	Female	2
Gender	Male	2
Profession	Educator	4
Country of residence	the Netherlands	4

Thematic score summary

Theme	Average score	Interpretation
Programme design and objectives (Q1-Q6)	5.00	Very strong agreement
Online platform usability and future use (Q7-Q9)	2.08	Main improvement area
Planned use of DICOMI materials (Q10)	5.00	Very strong agreement
Migration learning and inclusion (Q11-Q15, with Q12 interpreted cautiously)	3.40	Strong support with some mixed awareness items
Comics as educational materials (Q16-Q20)	5.00	Very strong agreement



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Item-level survey summary

No.	Survey item	Average	Interpretation
1	Programme design is coherent	5.00	Very strong agreement
2	Programme objectives are coherent	5.00	Very strong agreement
3	Programme will reach objectives in schools	5.00	Very strong agreement
4	Students will like the comics	5.00	Very strong agreement
5	Module themes raise awareness about migration	5.00	Very strong agreement
6	3E model is compatible with modules	5.00	Very strong agreement
7	Online platform is easy to use	2.00	Area for improvement
8	Would recommend online platform to colleagues	2.00	Area for improvement
9	Will use online platform in future teaching	2.25	Area for improvement
10	Plans to use DICOMI materials/ content	5.00	Very strong agreement

No.	Survey item	Average	Interpretation
11	Modules explain challenges of migration	5.00	Very strong agreement
12	DICOMI will be ineffective for inclusion/belonging (negative item)	2.00	Interpret cautiously; negative wording
13	Did not know migration was so difficult before comics	2.00	Mixed/depends on prior awareness
14	Thought more about migration after DICOMI/platform	3.00	Mixed/depends on prior awareness
15	More projects/materials needed for migration and inclusion	5.00	Very strong agreement
16	Comics are effective for migration/inclusion topics	5.00	Very strong agreement
17	Comics make teaching complex subjects easier	5.00	Very strong agreement
18	Students would love the comics	5.00	Very strong agreement
19	Comics are artistic in visual terms	5.00	Very strong agreement
20	Comics are effective for module objectives	5.00	Very strong agreement



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Open-ended suggestions from educators

- Add a student-facing 'Create Your Own' tool so learners can use DICOMI assets to tell their own inclusion stories.
- Integrate interactive quizzes and vocabulary pop-ups directly within the digital comic panels to support language-learning students.
- Develop a DICOMI Student Ambassadors model, where older students who have completed the modules lead workshops for younger peers.
- Add optional multilingual audio descriptions to support students who are still developing literacy skills and to strengthen the emotional dimension of the testimonies.
- Create a DICOMI Home-Link activity so students can voluntarily discuss selected themes with parents or guardians and extend the conversation beyond the classroom.