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WP4 – SMALL SCALE MEETINGS REPORT

King Danylo University

UKRAINE

Erasmus+ KA220-SCH Strategic Partnership in School Education

-DICOMI-

DIGITAL COMICS OF MIGRATION

[2023-1-TR01-KA220-SCH-000166103]

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Contents

1. INTRODUCTION 3

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS 3

3. ANALYSIS OF THE MEETING 3

3.1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENTS 4

3.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAMILIES 5

3.3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS 7

3.4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION MAKERS 8

4. CONCLUSION 9

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1. INTRODUCTION

Within the scope of Work Package 4 (From Action to Recommendation) of the DICOMI project, the Institute of Higher Education King Danylo University organized two small-scale stakeholder meetings.The primary objective of these meetings was to introduce the digital comic modules developed under WP2 to stakeholders in the educational field, to gather their perspectives via discussions, and to formulate sustainable recommendations for educational policies. In alignment with the project's pedagogical objectives, the meetings were structured to integrate the participants' insights and experiences into the project's final "Recommendation Package".

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

A total of 32 participants attended the two small-scale meetings. The participant profile consisted of 22 teachers and 10 university students. The educators represented a diverse range of institutions, ensuring a comprehensive and multidisciplinary discussion. These institutions included King Danylo University, KDU College, the BRIT NGO, Ivano-Frankivsk National Technical University of Oil and Gas (IFNTUNG), and scientific educational centers such as the Science Museum "New Energy" and "Science City".

3. ANALYSIS OF THE MEETING

The meetings were conducted at the King Danylo University campus in Ukraine. Two sessions were held, each lasting approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes. The first meeting took place offline on April 23, 2026, and the second meeting was conducted in a blended format on April 30, 2026.

During the sessions, the DICOMI project was introduced at various stages of its implementation, and the digital comic modules alongside the digital learning platform were demonstrated to the attendees. Subsequently, the meetings

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proceeded with focus group discussions centered on the themes of migration, xenophobia, and the digitalization of education. The participants were highly active and demonstrated significant interest in the project, providing valuable feedback on implementing these innovative tools with their target audiences.

3.1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENTS

Based on the focus group discussions and feedback gathered during the small-scale meetings, the participants provided several key recommendations for both immigrant and local students, focusing on the integration of comics, inclusiveness, and digitalization:

- ***How comics should be integrated into education for students:*** *Participants emphasized that digital comics should be utilized not merely as passive reading materials, but as active, creative tools that empower students to construct and share their own narratives. Because visual storytelling makes complex social issues more engaging, enjoyable, and memorable compared to traditional materials, comics should be integrated as a core medium for Social-Emotional Learning (SEL). By reading and creating comics, students can develop perspective-taking skills, learning to "see through the eyes of others," which helps them process the traumatic effects of war and forced migration.*
- ***How inclusiveness for migration should be planned and practiced for students:*** *Inclusiveness should be actively practiced through collaborative and interactive activities in mixed classrooms. Local and immigrant students should be strongly encouraged to undertake collaborative comic projects together, which fosters peer support and mutual understanding. Participants noted that creating a shared space for storytelling is a highly effective instrument for overcoming xenophobia, breaking down prejudices, and*

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building a cohesive societal structure. Inclusiveness must be planned by validating the unique cultural capital of immigrant students, ensuring that their lived experiences are recognized and respected by their local peers.

- ***How digitalization should be planned and practiced for students:*** *Digitalization for students should bridge the gap between technical skills and creative expression. Students should be guided to use Web 2.0 tools and platforms to design their own digital comics, transforming them from content consumers into content creators. The integration of digital tools should be planned carefully to enhance students' digital literacy while simultaneously exploring themes of human dignity and democratic values. Furthermore, participants highlighted that for these digital practices to be effective, schools must modernize their digital infrastructure to adequately support interactive, comic-based learning and ensure equal access for all students.*

3.2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAMILIES

Based on the insights gathered from the small-scale meetings and the core objectives of the project, the participants provided significant recommendations for engaging both immigrant and local families in the educational process:

- ***How comics should be integrated into education for families / How DICOMI affects families:*** *Participants highlighted that digital comics serve as a powerful bridge connecting the school environment with the home. For immigrant families, seeing their real-life experiences, struggles, and resilience reflected in educational materials provides a profound sense of validation, ensuring that their voices are heard and respected. For local families, these story-based comics act as an empathetic window into the realities of forced displacement, helping to lower prejudices. It was recommended that schools*

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encourage families to use these digital comics as shared reading materials at home, which can initiate open and meaningful family discussions about war, human dignity, and cultural diversity.

- ***How inclusiveness for migration should be planned and practiced for families / How families were affected by DICOMI implementation:*** *Inclusiveness must extend beyond the classroom and actively involve the family community. The implementation of DICOMI demonstrated that when immigrant families' stories are integrated into the curriculum, it empowers them and reduces feelings of social exclusion and marginalization. Participants recommended that inclusiveness should be practiced by organizing joint school-community events where both local and immigrant parents can interact and collaborate. By valuing the unique cultural capital of immigrant families and making them an integral part of the school's social fabric, schools can break down barriers, overcome xenophobia, and build a cohesive, mutually supportive community.*

- ***How digitalization should be planned and practiced for families:*** *Digitalization for families should be planned to ensure easy and equal access to educational resources. Participants recommended that families be encouraged to utilize the DICOMI digital learning platform alongside their children. This shared digital experience not only supports the students' academic and social-emotional learning but also enhances the digital literacy of the parents. To practice this effectively, schools should provide basic guidance and support to families on how to navigate digital tools and platforms, enabling them to use digital storytelling as a modern medium to preserve, honor, and share their cultural heritage.*

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3.3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Based on the feedback gathered during the small-scale meetings, the participants provided crucial recommendations regarding the support and professional development required for both immigrant and local teachers to effectively manage modern, diverse classrooms:

- ***How should teachers be supported for comics education:*** *Participants indicated that using comics is an innovative but often unfamiliar method for many educators. Therefore, teachers require continuous professional development support and practical, step-by-step guides in the areas of digital storytelling. To successfully integrate comics into the curriculum, teachers should be provided with comprehensive training modules that demonstrate how visual storytelling can be utilized as a pedagogical instrument to teach complex and abstract phenomena, such as migration and human dignity, in an engaging and structured way.*
- ***How should teachers be supported for inclusive education for both migrant and local students:*** *Addressing sensitive topics like war, forced displacement, and xenophobia can be emotionally demanding for educators. Participants strongly recommended that pedagogical and psychological support modules be incorporated into teacher training to help them navigate these emotional challenges in the classroom. Teachers need to be equipped with Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) strategies to manage mixed classrooms effectively, mitigate peer conflicts, and foster mutual empathy between migrant and local students. Providing teachers with concrete, story-based materials empowers them to create a safe, inclusive, and socially cohesive learning environment.*
- ***How should teachers be supported for digitalization:*** *While educators recognize the benefits of digital tools, they require hands-on training to*

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effectively implement them. Teachers should be supported through dedicated online teaching platforms that offer personalized, collaborative, and interconnected lesson plans utilizing Web 2.0 tools. Furthermore, participants emphasized a systemic need: for teachers to practice digitalization effectively, decision-makers and school administrations must modernize the digital infrastructure within schools. Providing adequate technological equipment and reliable internet access is essential to support teachers in delivering interactive, digital comic-based lessons.

3.4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION MAKERS

Based on the evaluations and feedback gathered from the small-scale meetings, the participants outlined several strategic recommendations for policymakers, school administrations, and educational authorities:

- ***How to integrate comics education into curriculum, testing, etc.:*** *Participants strongly recommended that comic-based learning methods be formally integrated into the national curriculum. Decision makers should recognize digital comics as an innovative and effective pedagogical approach that can be utilized cross-curricularly across various subjects, such as social studies, language, history, and arts. To support this integration, educational authorities should adapt testing and assessment frameworks to accommodate visual storytelling and creative expression, moving beyond traditional text-based evaluations to accurately measure students' social-emotional learning and academic progress.*
- ***How to improve inclusive education at policy level:*** *To improve inclusive education, innovative pedagogical approaches must be supported directly at the policy level. Decision makers should prioritize policies that validate the*

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cultural capital of both migrant and local students by incorporating real-life migration experiences into official educational materials. Furthermore, policies must mandate and fund pedagogical and psychological support modules within schools to help educators effectively address sensitive topics like forced displacement and xenophobia, thereby building a more cohesive societal structure.

- ***How to boost digitalization at policy level:*** *Participants emphasized a critical systemic need: to effectively boost digitalization, the digital infrastructure in schools must be significantly modernized to adequately support interactive content. Policymakers must allocate the necessary resources to provide schools with adequate technological equipment and reliable internet access, ensuring that all students have equal opportunities to engage with digital comics and Web 2.0 tools. Additionally, policy-level support is required to establish comprehensive digital platforms and continuous professional development programs that train teachers in digital literacy.*

4. CONCLUSION

The two small-scale stakeholder meetings conducted at the Institute of Higher Education King Danylo University successfully fulfilled the core objectives of Work Package 4. Through the active engagement of 32 participants—comprising 22 educators from diverse institutions and 10 university students—the sessions provided a comprehensive platform to evaluate the DICOMI project's outcomes.

The discussions clearly demonstrated that participants perceive digital comics not merely as reading materials, but as a "key instrument" for combating xenophobia, fostering social cohesion, and enhancing Social-

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Emotional Learning (SEL) in diverse classrooms. Both teachers and students agreed that visual storytelling is a highly effective, modern pedagogical approach to address sensitive topics such as forced displacement and cultural integration. Furthermore, the meetings highlighted the critical need for modernized digital infrastructure and continuous professional development to support inclusive education at the policy level.

Ultimately, the valuable ideas, feedback, and recommendations gathered during these meetings will serve as foundational input. These insights have been reported to the project coordinator, Yıldız Technical University (YTU), and will be directly integrated into the final "From Action to Recommendation Pack for Students/Families/Teachers/Decision Makers". By bridging grassroots educational experiences with strategic policy planning, the meetings have significantly contributed to ensuring a lasting and sustainable impact on European educational systems.

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