Guide on methodological approach

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Chapter 1: Introduction on the learning by playing approach and intercultural education.

Creativity is a fundamental value in producing results and achieving them. However, creativity is often referred to as a spontaneous process, not linked to educational processes and less related to the influence of a teaching or methodological process that can enhance, accelerate, support and stimulate creativity. So it turns out that creativity is stimulated by the environment we live in but that the teacher does not have many tools to support its development.

With the GEM IN project we try to develop a method and tools that can be essential to enhance creativity and that can be used by teachers and educators in different contexts.

When one is young, learning skills are higher and the world has to be explored and experienced on a daily basis. Moreover, as mentioned above, curiosity is one of the engines that moves young minds in discovery, growth and therefore learning. Schools are one of the pivotal places where young people grow up on a daily basis, and for this reason they must be prepared to support the growth of young individuals in order to prepare them for the future, to prepare them for the dynamism of the world, its complexity and diversity. There is an awareness of the difficulties that schools might encounter, such as: lack of equipment or tools to promote creativity with sufficient standards; economic and/or social differences among students in the classrooms. For this reason, the tool developed by the GEM IN partners is simple, accessible, ready to use and valuable for teachers to teach in a different and engaging way, even in the contexts as described.

The game dynamic that supports learning through 'learning by playing' is the founding methodology of GEM IN, which is considered to be absolutely complementary to the formal education that we have all experienced in school or other educational and learning contexts.

The dynamic based on creativity is important for learners because it allows them to engage in divergent thinking in a subjective way. It is important to create a bridge between critical and creative thinking to prepare students for life as they become independent individuals who contribute to society.

If creativity is not part of this process, critical thinking will not be able to stand on its own.

From creative thinking comes innovation and reaction, both of which are necessary in an advancing society. If students are only taught to be critical, they will not have the same innovation as students who are taught to think creatively as well as critically.

"Learning through play" is a term used in education and psychology to describe how a child can learn to make sense of the world around them. Through play, youngsters can develop "social and cognitive skills, mature emotionally and gain the self-confidence to engage in new experiences and environments". (Kahn and Wright, 2013)

"Play is one of the most important ways in which children acquire essential knowledge and skills" (Unicef, 2018)

Humans learn best when at least one of these four pillars is present:
- Individuals take an active role in the learning environment
- They are engaged
- Information is meaningful
- They interact in a social context

But the methodology of "learning by playing" is not only limited to the world of children, but all those who are in a position of openness to knowledge can benefit from it. Creating a dynamic environment, rich in social

interactions, that makes people an active part of the learning process are some of the principles that GEM IN wants to support through this non-formal methodology.

The "learning through play" method fosters
- creative thinking
- problem solving
- independence
- perseverance
- freedom of expression
- Emotional development
- Stress and anxiety reduction
- Improves focus and attention
- Driving lifelong learning

The methodology of learning through play can therefore be used in many educational and teaching contexts. The experience the learner gains is lasting and linked to the positive energies associated with play. This methodology has even more practical value in its approach to intercultural dialogue.

Getting to know new cultures, traditions different from one's own, new languages, new ways of thinking can be fascinating but it certainly requires a great deal of effort and above all a open-mindedness that makes the learner free from prejudice in getting to know something different from what normally surrounds him.

Play and the dynamics of creative thinking linked to learning through a playful approach can be winning solutions to stimulate learning about what is far from us and sometimes, apparently, different from us. Intercultural dialogue takes place in a playful, fun and dynamic way. Through the approach of learning by playing one can play with cultures, get to know new ones, learn through play about the history, traditions, food, sport, of distant countries and discover many similarities that people have between them.

Through the dynamics of the game, prejudice stops and curiosity advances, thus breaking the dangerous patterns given by conformism, prejudice and lack of dialogue with what is different from us.

In this way, through play and the playful approach, young people can learn new things but also increase their critical thinking, tolerance, respect for what is often described as the enemy simply because it is different from us, in the hope of being able to create more inclusive and welcoming communities.

Chapter 2: Guidelines for teachers and non-formal educators (TG1) to manage the activity

Learning by playing approach is an innovative and ambitious method deconstructing the traditional concept and ways of teaching. The traditional school system has always been based on a student-teacher binary code; a code that was obviously born to respond to precise stimuli and that wanted to get specific results.

However, the progress brings in itself, or at least it should bring in itself, such changes that require a change of perspective; there are different stimuli that affect our lives and consequently that fit within the school environment and therefore there will be different new results to be achieved. For this reason, it is increasingly necessary to change the style to the classic student-teacher binary code.

The challenges of today's world lead us to think of ever larger spaces able to embrace and include new and different experiences and cultures; it is therefore necessary to open up to diversity and understand it as an opportunity for growth and to acquire and convey messages in a more direct and non-formal way.

With the method adopted by GEM IN we try to trace this way in the game, which does not need to be seen as a contradiction with the academic teaching; on the contrary, proposing constructive games could allow the students to gain a deeper knowledge than the classic method of learning.

The students, in fact, developing more the playful sphere are more predisposed to memorize and internalize what they have learned.

Game-based learning aims to hone skills such as **critical** and **creative** thinking, problem solving and collaborative skills. Through learning by playing, we want to develop a model that allows to create a circular learning system, where the teacher is a part of the system itself and not an external subject who have only transmit a message or a notion.

The key to understand this model, in fact, lies in the ability to learn from who is around us, who is on our side; each experience represents a piece more in our cultural baggage and **every language is a vehicle of that culture.**

Learning by playing method makes basic use of only one element: class/learning group!

In fact, the class is the one that becomes a "teacher", in its entirety, in its completeness and diversity; and the students who are part of it, together with the teacher, are the common thread that allow the experience of learning and skills' development.

By proposing the game as a vehicle for skills' acquisition and learning, we want to facilitate the way of learning by actively involving the direct recipients but also the educators themselves who, playing a fundamental role, will close this "circle" by facilitating a shared learning.

Active and workshop didactics use a **flexible relational style**, which give space to the interests of the students and their experiences. They place the students at the center, enhancing their aptitudes and knowledge, favoring a collaborative group learning that turns out to be more productive and allows students to turn on the "cognitive conflict" and the collective search for answers to the problems that arise.

This is important not only to allow students to learn but also, and especially, to develop skills and competences and among them the capacity for *"learning to learn"* in an alternative way with the aim to experiment new The aim of this model is to focus not only on the transmission of knowledge per se, but rather on creating meaningful conditions in which the students can develop their full potential, in a manner and pace suitable for their own preferences and needs

Learning requires processes that involve the entire person of the student: intellect, emotions and experiences, it is not just a matter of cognitive processes.

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This type of experience-based learning is of particular importance for developing those skills necessary for active democratic participation, a participation that underlies the construction of a personal and collective identity; these cooperation skills can be more developed in interactive or collaborative learning environment.

In this virtuous circle, therefore, the teacher will have to undress in the classic clothes of knowledge's judge and will guide the student promoting that dialogue that underlies this method of learning.

In GEM IN project there is no chair, no grade, no first of the class; and that is why the teacher will be called to leave his/her role as a professional to hold that an **educator**, ready to stimulate the students to shared success but also making errors and learning from them.

The only way to get to the end of the game is to play together.

In this context, the teacher will be the one who will guide the students, the host of the game; and she/he will do so through a positive and proactive attitude, accompanying students to victory and she/he will do so from within the process of sharing and learning.

It will be necessary for the teacher to know the questions in order to be able during the activity not only to explain the right answer but also, and above all, to stimulate and motivate the debate that will come out of them.

But even more necessary for the teacher in creating this dialogue and this flow of communication and knowledge will be his/her ability to break down any barriers that may be created between the participants in the game itself but also between them and the moderator.

The character of flexibility and positive attitude must be a constant throughout the whole time required, not only during the game itself but also during the discussions that can be created before the game or after it.

In this regard, some examples of activities have been thought for the teachers/educators to carry out with the students and that can create a relaxed atmosphere, always bearing in mind what the aim of the game is: use an innovative, non-formal tool that enhance the acquisition of social and civic competences of young people and that improve the youngsters´ knowledge on citizenship, EU, shared values, fundamental rights, intercultural citizenship and dialogues.

- ✓ Activity 1:
  The educator asks the youngsters to make a quick brainstorming session answering the question: "What is a good citizen?"
  The time required to this activity is 10 minutes and it aims to introduce the concept of citizenship and reflect on participants´ role as citizens and their role as citizens of their community/town/country.
  The reflection to do after the brainstorming could be:
  - ▫ What are the similarities among the answers?
  - ▫ What are the differences?
  - ▫ What are the main features of a good citizen?
  - ▫ What would happen if there are no rules or laws at home, or in school?

- ✓ Activity 2:
  The educator asks the youngsters to draw their image of a European citizen.
  The time required for this activity is 10 minutes and in this case the educator allows a reflection on what citizenship and citizen is; and on the concept of European citizen to participants´ daily life making it less abstract.
  The reflection to do after the activity could be:
  - ▫ Why did you draw him/her in this way?

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- What is important for a European citizen to have/not have?
- What is your role and place in the community in relation to your family/to your classmates/to your countrymen?

✓ Activity 3:
The educator asks the youngsters to discuss in pairs on the topic "EU in my daily life?"
The time required for this activity is 15 minutes and it aims to initiate reflection on what is participants´ relation with the EU and to start fostering a sense of belonging and being a part of a wider community.
The reflection to do after the activity could be:
- What does be a part of the EU mean?
- Is this impacting my neighbourhood, my town, my country?
- Does it have an impact on my school/education?
- What can I do and cannot do as an EU citizen?
- What can I do for my community as an EU citizen?

✓ Activity 4:
The educator asks the youngsters to discuss in pairs about: "What is a multicultural society?"
The time required for this activity is 15 minutes and it aims to introduce the concepts of culture and multiculturalism; to reflect on if and how we live in a multicultural environment; to reflect on how we interact with different cultures.
The reflection to do after the activity could be:
- Do you have friends/neighbours from different countries/religions/ethnic groups?
- Do you use languages different than your mother tongue?
- How do you communicate with people who do not speak your mother tongue?

✓ Activity 5:
The educator divides the youngsters in two groups and ask them to make up a story, starting with the following line:
1st Group – There was a boy named Antonio, he …
2nd Group – There was a boy named Ali, he …
The time required for this activity is 15 minutes and it aims to reflect on how our cultural background influences how we perceive the surroundings; how we approach different cultures; introduce unconscious bias.
The reflection to do after the activity could be:
- Do you have friends/neighbours from different countries/religions/ethnic groups?
- Do you use languages different than your mother tongue?
- How do you communicate with people who do not speak your mother tongue?
- Are you interested in other cultures? How do you get to know different cultures and people coming from different backgrounds?
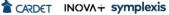
☐ Activity 6:
The educator divides the participants: some will be reporters; some will be citizens.
The reporters will need to walk among the citizens and ask them questions about various topics. It is supposed to be quick one question – answer situation with each citizen (e.g like a blitz questions). In the end each reporter is to make a short summary of the answers.

The time required for this activity is 30 minutes (but depending on the number of participants); it aims to engaging way of brainstorming for peer-learning; to get to know what their peers think about certain topics; to explore different views.

The questions to do could be:

- What do you know about the EU?
- What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you think of Spain/Denmark...?
- Do you speak foreign languages?
- Do you want to learn another language?
- Which countries are part of the EU?
- What does it mean to be a part of the EU?
- Which country would you like to visit? Why?
- For which culture/country/ethnic or religious group you would like to learn more?
- Do you have friends from different cultures/religions?
- What is culture?
- What is value?
- What is community?

The teacher's objective is twofold:

- On the one hand, she/he will have to manage this *moment of exchange* between the students who, although it will be playful, will be able to touch on topics capable of stimulating deep and complex discussions.
  In this case, the professor is not called to be an expert in knowledge (as when she/he is in the chair), but the one who, despite being a peer of the students, is able to manage the relationships that are created in the classroom because he has a greater awareness of the communication processes that are established in a group.
  This role of mediator and facilitator, precisely, will make her/him accepted by her/him own students as a peer.
- On the other hand, she/he must be good at creating a shared climate that represents for students a *comfort zone*; s/he must be able to facilitate and develop a circular communication, that encourages the knowledge of oneself, and promotes the free and active expression of ideas, opinions, feelings and personal experiences.
  In this way, the students involved will have, therefore, the perception of living within the normal course of school teaching, a moment of informal life in which learning is fueled by curiosity, interests, exploration.

However, the students will experiment a type of learning based on **values and experiences** that allow them to deepen the human perceptions with respect to important issues.
The educators will see have their students working together to answer questions that are relevant and perhaps fascinating for them and encouraging them not to be afraid of giving wrong answers, focusing on what they can learn from each other´s mistakes and that learning is a process, rather than on the error itself.

Each question included in GEM IN has 4 possibilities for answer but only one will be the correct one and the professor will have to be able to identify in the correct option that input that can generate a discussion among the students and that can lead to knowledge.
However, it will also have other tools to encourage discussion: the wrong answers.
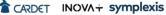
In fact, many questions have within them as options for answering names or events important for the history of countries that can represent for educators the key to address certain topics.

In this latter consideration, we find the theory for which the educator, in addition to stimulating knowledge, must be able to manage the errors of his students and make it an opportunity for learning.

Chapter 3: Explaining how to use the GEM IN board game and how to adapt it to each specific educational setting.

How to use GEM IN board game

The game is designed for a maximum of 8 players or more if playing in teams.
It will require the presence of a game moderator who will have a different role from that of the players while being largely part of the game itself: the moderator will be the one who reads the questions to the players.
The game follows a geometric path that forms a spiral (the theme of the logo).
The players place their tokens on the *Start point* and, after drawing lots who is the first player, the game will start and it will continue clockwise (player on the left).
The first to reach the center with the GEM IN logo - *Wins*!
To play the players need all the components of the board game: the *board, two packs of cards* and *the dice*; *papers and pens* in case the players need to write something down or draw and *a timer* to time the players' answers.
The board has a spiral in the center made up of small triangles that can be coloured or white.

The colours of the triangles represent the different topic approached with GEM IN:

Orange	Humanities
Brown	Music and Art
Red	Logic
Green	Science
Light Blue	Europe
Purple	Social Values
Grey	Media and Technologies
Blue	Sport and Hobbie

The participants are asked to answer questions on the above topics and/or to collaborate with other players in more creative activities; it all depends on the position they gain by rolling the dice and the box they reach.
The game contains two different decks of cards: The Questions pack and the Jump pack

Questions Pack:
Each card is double-sided, numbered and with 8 multiple-choice questions, one for each topic. When the players roll the dice, they move their tokens by a number of boxes equal to the number of the dice. When they will stop on the various boxes, the teacher/ moderator will take a card from the Questions pack and reads the question with the cooler of the box reached by the players.

- If the player answers correctly, he/she may re-roll the dice and continue his/her turn;
- If the player gets the wrong answer, he/she will remain in the box where he/she is and the game will continue with another player; when his/her turn comes again, however, before rolling the dice, he/she has to answer another question on the topic on which he/she got the previous wrong answer. So that in this case the teacher/moderator will take a card and will read the question with the same colour of the box in which the player is. If the player answers right he/she throws the dice and continues following the rules, otherwise the player stops again, and so on until he/she gives the right answer of the topic in which he/she is.

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- Time: From when the moderator reads the question the players have only 1 minute to answer. For all those Logic and/or Science questions that require complex reasoning or mathematical calculations the moderator will provide papers and pens for their transcription (if necessary) and the players will have 2 minutes to answer.

Jump Pack:
There are also some white triangles with an arrow indicating another box: when the players reach a white box, the teacher will not take any card from the questions pack.
The players who reach the white box will draw a card from the "jump" pack that give them the opportunity to make a jump forward without following the classic path.

The Jump cards are intended to stimulate a collaborative method.
The player who draws a jump card has the possibility to choose a partner (if the game is played in teams, he/she must choose a partner from the other team) and play together, this means that they will win or lose together.
Each card in the Jump pack contains a single word and the players who draw the card from it will have to be creative to allow their chosen partner to guess the word.

- How:
  After drawing the Jump card, without showing it to anybody, the player has to roll the dice and, depending on the number that comes out, he/she has to mime, draw or sing the word of the card.
- If the numbers 1 or 2 come out, the player has to draw the object/action/name on the card.
- If the numbers 3 or 4 come out, he/she has to mime the object/action/name written on the card.
- If the numbers 5 or 6 come out, he/she must invent and sing a verse of a song talking about the word written in the jump card BUT without mentioning the word itself.
- If the partner guesses the word correctly, the player who took the Jump card jumps to the box indicated by the arrow and continues his turn by rolling the dice again.
  The partner who guesses the word, instead, moves forward to the nearest Jump box and when his/her turn comes he/she will draw a card from the Jump pack following the Jump's rules.
  (If the partner who guesses correctly is in a position where there aren't more Jump boxes, he/she will advance 3 positions).
- If the partner fails and doesn't guess the word, both players will remain in the boxes where they are on and the game continues normally with another player.
  The Jump option can only be used once!!
- Time:
  The player playing the Jump card will have a maximum of 2 minutes to let his/her partner guess the word.

Digital Archive:

GEM IN offers players an additional possibility of knowledge. In fact, a digital archive has been specially created where players can find a short explanation for each question and get more details.

The archive has a dual purpose: not only is it useful in the cases where the players don't know what the answer is and therefore use the archive to know, for the first time, what the question refers to3, but also when the players know the answer but want to get an insight in what lies beyond a simple multiple-choice question. 11

The knowledge that GEM IN wants to achieve is deep knowledge, which traces the roots, searches deeply and makes people aware of what they are learning through discussion.

GEM IN is based on Socratic maieutic, the objective is not simply knowledge, but the path to knowledge: dialogue in order to learn.

The archive will therefore provide further input for the reflections that will arise during the game thus encouraging players to always look for more information to enrich their knowledge.

It will be possible to access the digital archive thanks to an App that players will download, thanks to which it will be possible to frame the Q-code present on the board.

Each topic will have its own Q-code and once in the digital archive the players will be able to find the specific question and read the explanation.

How to adapt the game to each specific educational setting

GEM IN is a game that promotes social inclusion through its ludic methodology that we can translate into "Learning by doing".

It is a non-formal tool that can be used in various intercultural contexts: the only prerequisite for its use is the intention to stimulate an exchange between the participants and the will to open a dialogue between them.

The non-formality of the game makes GEM IN a tool that can easily bring young people into contact by lowering all those barriers that often create disparities or impede cultural communication between young people from different backgrounds.

The aim of GEM IN is to open up to reflection, to get to know different stories and to find in diversity that extra element that allows us to grow and learn; GEM IN wants to write and tell new stories in which participation and sharing of experiences and knowledge trace the path to a shared European identity.

The rules just described are applicable to different contexts, from the most formal to a non-formal one; from schools to educational centers, GEM IN can be a perfect key to read our multicultural society through a game between peers and on equal terms.

In a school context, the teacher will play a fundamental role, although in this case he/she will be more of an educator, moderating the game and suspending any kind of judgement.

The educator will have to be good at always stimulating the exchange between the players with a view to learning; the questions created ad hoc for GEM IN have within them a lot of ideas that open up to discussion. In fact, in many of them it is also possible to generate learning experiences thanks to the wrong answer options.

The educator will have to create a comfortable environment in which young people can feel at ease even when giving the wrong answer. In a school environment, known for its formality, introducing such a methodology would mean, among other things, giving students the ability to react positively to mistakes.

GEM IN does not demonize mistakes, on the contrary, it connotes them with a sense of challenge that pushes the players to embrace that healthy competition inherent in games that will encourage them to do more and go further.

One of the rules of the game is precisely that if the players fail the questions, they don't take any step backwards, nobody ever steps back in GEM IN, all the experiences that have led the player to the box in which he/she is in, are always the result of steps forward.

GEM IN contemplates stops when someone gets a wrong answer but never a regression.

GEM IN is a forward-looking approach, with no penalties, no inadequacies or demerits; if the player fails, he/she stay put and try again on the next round!

These concepts obviously also apply when GEM IN is used in other learning contexts than school (such as youth associations, citizenship clubs, students' associations, etc..) or in contexts where there is no educator at all.

However, it is essential that even if the group of players is self-managing, one of the participants in the game is identified as the moderator of the game.

The moderator is important because s/he has an insight into the group as a whole; he/she is not there as a player but as a "motivator". He/she has to be good at observing and intervening when necessary to act as a bridge between the experiences and knowledge of the players.

In addition, it is important to remember that only the moderator can read the questions to be asked to the players, because the correct answer is already marked on the cards, so it would be useless, for the purposes of the game, if the players read the questions themselves.

The moderator must be able to give more detailed explanations about the topics discussed, also using the digital archive of GEM IN, created for the purpose of deepening the topics discussed.

He/she must give the times that are set for each question and also for the activities to be carried out in case a Jump card is played.

Chapter 4: Insights on the topics addressed by the GEM IN Board Game: factsheets for the introduction of the playing sessions.

GEM IN rests its feet in another project, **GEM - https://gameforeuromed.eu/**, that aimed to achieve the same results through a game for which participants played in *search of knowledge* and which essentially revolved around precise and outlined topics aimed at the exchange of knowledge touching on the themes as history, general culture, cuisine and current events.

Through this exchange, the participants of the game could learn more about their land and would have the opportunity to explore other cultures to arrive, finally, at knowledge following a Socratic approach based on the dialogue.

GEM IN, therefore, was already born with the awareness that the cultural encounter between several countries leads to important results and that in order to improve more and more interculturality must increase opportunities for exchange.

The entry of topics such as the European Union or Social Values among the cards of the game responds to the need to lay ever more solid foundations for an open community that, while recognizing the different views, follows that red thread that ties everyone and that becomes the ground of union between peoples.

The macro areas covered by the partners for the formulation of the game's questions are:

- Humanities
- Music and Art
- Science
- Logic
- Europe
- Social values
- Media and Technologies
- Sports and Hobbies

Each of these macro areas can deal with different aspects that we will soon see specifically.

However, it is important to understand the process that led to the definition of these issues.

During the international workshop between the partners, the goal sought and achieved, was to recreate that environment of sharing and integration that GEM IN itself wants to transmit in schools and in all those environments in which it can be functional.

We wondered what might be that knowledge that, if developed or encouraged through a creative process, allowed us to activate parts of our personality that could favor a more collaborative cognitive approach.

Each individual question aims to create a discussion that embraces the different facets of the individual answer; we have tried to give a "playful dress" to the treated subjects, but in each of these is intrinsic a specific meaning.

Analyzing the macro areas, we now go to see what themes GEM IN will deal with.

With the first, **Humanities**, we will touch on topics such as:
Literature
Language
History
Geography

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Monuments

Why did we want to include these issues in this area?

Basically, because the starting point for developing this project is lies/is founded in the conviction that we are nothing more than our culture.

We always have to know where we come from, but not only to get to know ourselves and allow others to know us better; but also, because only by knowing the different stories from different cultures we can finally realize how many things exist in common among us.

Very often, it is in the history of other communities that we trace our roots and many things could show us this: the etymology of a word, a typical dish, the sound of a folk song.

Fortunately, there are few walls of shame left to be torn down in the world, but there are many bridges that need to be built to communicate stories, flavors, languages and smells.

With the second macro area, we go to touch instead the notes of **Music and Art**, always having as a reference the knowledge of our artistic and musical past but especially the concept of the "contemporaneity" of the art! GEM IN wanted to include artistic subjects to respond to a primary need: know who we are through our artistic and cultural heritage.

Knowing art, in whatever form it may be represented, means knowing the language of a community; the artistic expression was, in fact, the first means of communication of the human being; teach arte means educate the students to be sensitive.

Art identifies our continent; Europe is like a big canvas worked upon by some of the greatest in the world who continue to live in contemporaneity despite having lived centuries ago.

Learning who Michelangelo was, is so much more than simply studying his works of art, as it translates to studying the history of the time, the peculiarities of the local context, the power struggles, as well as the mathematics of his lines.

For all these reasons, topics like Music and Art represent for us a milestone of our project.

The third theme covered is **Science** in which we have included topics such:

Mathematics

Health

Financial literacy

Nature and ecology

Animals

Chemistry, Physics and Biology.

While, the next one is **Logic** that has within both Prepositional and Mathematical logic.

Why introduce these topics into a game which aim is the interculturality?

Learning by playing approach represents for us the right way to connect notions learning with a type of thought process that taking advantage of creativity and playfulness comes to the knowledge.

Therefore, if on the one hand the students are helped to engage with scientific subjects, based for nature on rigid and predetermined rules, on the other hand we want to stimulate on them a mental exercise.

It could allow them to arrive at solutions that do not necessarily have to do with a previous knowledge but that can be the result of a reasoning and an argument, just as the origin of the word Logic – *logos*- suggests us.

Another topic included in GEM IN is **Europe**. Within this area we want to deal with:

Common Eu values

Eu politics

Democracy and civic participation

Sustainable development.

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European Union represent a real opportunity for all citizens but especially for the new generations!

In order to avoid that Europe remains out of the lives of its citizens, remaining only an institution known for budget and debts' themes, it is necessary to do an effort to convey the values of solidarity that underlie the Europe project.

The challenge of the modern world is to break down national borders in order to live and feel, above all, part of an enlarged community; a community that while speaks different languages, officially recognizes in their diversity, reasons with the same vision of Europe, the same vision of cooperation, and the same worldview.

Following the same logic, we will deal with the issue of **Social Values**, where we also want to highlight internationally recognized rights trying to break down, also, European borders.

Inside this topic, we will find questions related to:

Peace and safety

Human rights

Gender equality.

They are issues that the younger generation hear a lot but perhaps not enough; with a more international gaze we want to emphasize essential and indisputable human values that must be the basis of the community.

The last two-macro areas are perhaps those closest to the age of the direct recipients of this project and are **Media and Technologies** and **Sport and Hobbies**.

For Media and Technologies, the focus is certainly on the origin of the virtual world and the advantages that it brings us.

Nevertheless, whit this topic, we wanted to deal with a delicate phenomenon that, unfortunately, is highly widespread: the problem of the Fake News.
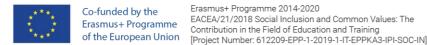
We chose to introduce this specific topic to face with an expanding social phenomenon that, in addition to encouraging disinformation and misinformation, can degenerate into violent attitudes on the web.

When we talk about violent attitudes, we refer to cyberbullying, online hate speech and all those vexatious acts put in place in the virtual world that can cause any violence on well-identified people or communities.

We know that the generation that represents our target is highly vulnerable when talking about online threats and bullying, given the increasing number of cases present in schools and youth aggregation centers and for this reason we want to stimulate a debate about it.

In an attempt to provide new and more playful point of view on the mentioned issues, GEM IN aims to be a tool for the students to get to know themselves and the others, to be more aware of their past, and learn how to build a future when setting the foundation in the present.

The conversations about young people refer to their future, but GEM IN wants to make them aware of their present by making them engage with their history and culture in a relatable and appealing manner. Thus, this could lead to institutions approaching the issues of the youth by putting themselves in their shoes.

Chapter 5: De-briefing: how to foster reflection on European identity and its roots

Nowadays, the main and fundamental challenge to be taken forward is the issue of European identity. Strengthening the sense of community is the objective to be achieved in order to guarantee not only to each European citizen, but also intercontinental people, a coexistence based on values such as peace and solidarity that are at the basis of the entire European project.

However, if we go back in history to trace the origin of everything, it is precisely in values and ideals that we find the basis of European construction.

Values such as peace, unity, equality, freedom, security and solidarity have been the architects of this Union that, for that principles on which it is founded, will never be able to lose its free and democratic role.

GEM IN will start from these considerations to arrive, finally, to bring to light those European roots that, after all, have always belonged to our history.

The identity of a people, in this case the European people, is therefore based on a set of values and principles shared by all those who are part of it and whose representatives have a duty to defend against any violation.

It is the sharing of these values and principles that must help to unite all European citizens in a feeling of brotherhood and interchange and to promote reflection on the concept of European identity.

But let us start from the word "identity"; this derives from the Latin *identitas,* and implies a concept of "sameness" which naturally emphasizes the common aspects of those who form a community. What this etymology raises in the discussion of a European identity is precisely the question of <u>how to reconcile identity and diversity</u>.

Although all the Member State share the name of the continent itself, they have had different roots, and even if they were all born from a single matrix, over time have acquired peculiarities that make them a sign of identity for their people.

However, this <u>multiculturalism</u> has formed the first layer of European culture from the outset.

The coexistence of several cultures, languages and traditions has characterized Europe as a whole, enriching its history; and the respect for individual cultural identities has always had great importance.

An example of this respect is the fact that all national languages have been recognized as official languages of the European Union; the reason lies on the principle that is the Union that have to speak all the languages of its States and not vice versa.

Another example is that every citizen can ask advices to all the European institutions to assert their own rights and every citizen has the right to receive the reply in his own language.

So, what reconciles our identity with our diversity is the peaceful coexistence of our multiculturalism.

Our identity depends first, on what we have been, without our history we would be stateless person on a land; but it also depends on what we collectively project to be.

The sense of belonging to a single "European people" would make it possible to break down the barriers that in recent centuries have been built by self-asserting the power of one territory over another, to eliminate the risk of conflicts between governments and citizens of different member states, to increase the level of protection of citizens and their rights.

To achieve this, we need to tell the new generation what we have been before the creation of European Union. *History*, in fact, is the instrument par excellence to strengthen this sense of belonging in a heterogeneous continent such as Europe and it is for these reasons that we wanted to insert historical references in all the macro areas from which we took inspiration for the questions of the game.

From humanities to science, every area of interest in our lives deals with history and GEM IN wants to stimulate, with its innovativeness, the interest in knowledge.

The European Identity cannot ignore the traditions of individual nations, but it has to take from them its vital nymph, configuring itself in relation to these.

It must not replace old traditions established over the centuries; indeed, it must ensure that each national identity can incorporate within it the values of unity, freedom, equality that allow to open its cultural borders in order to create a European Identity.

Europe has always been considered as the cradle of culture, a land that has built the history of its people gradually feeding on the external contaminations that have followed each other over the centuries.

The European multiculturalism, we mentioned earlier, has created the basis for a civilized country in which democracy and the respect for human rights reign today; a society in which inclusion, tolerance, justice, solidarity and non-discrimination prevail.

European identity is one of those concepts on which we must work seamlessly and for which all citizens, in the different roles they play, must carry on.

The particular challenge for the acceptance and sharing of a European identity plays, in fact, on different levels. It is a democratic process, which consists of two essential elements: on the one hand, the institutions and, on the other, a constant civic activism of the community.

By leaving the institutions the creation of a basis for the development of collective identity, the opportunities that the people have to identify themselves with these institutions can only be given by civic commitment and participation.

What is the prerequisite for civic participation? Civic education.

European Union may well exist in itself, but it was not born just to be.

European Union was born from the desire to bring together States that have chosen to renounce parts of sovereignty in order to design a cohesive future for the new generations.

We must therefore take up those roots that are already under our feet, in our monuments, in the artistic and literary currents that have crossed the entire continent, in poets, in wars made against each other and in struggles to defeat each other's enemy.

They are roots that we can track in the origin of words, in the different traits of our faces, in the variety of color of our skin.

Roots that go from north to south and that are able to cross-seas and oceans; roots that intertwine, taking life from diversity.

GEM IN fits perfectly into this vision by encouraging an exchange of knowledge through a type of education explicitly linked to the idea of sharing, of learning free from any judgment.

Its methodology puts in the spotlight the defense and constant search for the affirmation of human rights, responding to a logic inspired by the ideals of democracy.

These principles are of particular importance with regard to the development of competences for active participation in democracy.

All this therefore has a dual objective: it, implicitly, strengthens the values that underlie the European community; and it lays the foundations for an important reflection on what we want to do with the European Union, how we want to grow it.

We are aware, especially in this strange and particular period, that the recipients of this project will be those who will be called, in the future, to make an ever-greater effort in the search for a sense of belonging.

However, we know also that knowing one's own history and learning to recognize in the history and culture of others our roots would mean being able to reaffirm those principles for which European Union was born.

It would mean establishing itself as a single community, which in its own diversity, has managed to find the single denominator that allowed putting all the Member States on the same line; without discrimination, endorsing that principle of equal treatment inherent in all European policies.