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DIALOGUE PROJECT INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS EVALUATION REPORT



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Executive Summary

The DialogUE project “Diverse Identities Allied Open to Generate a United Europe” was promoted by a consortium of 14 CSOs from 9 EU Member States (IT, BE, AT, DE, RO, SK, HU, IE, PT).

Through an innovative approach, it invested on thematic exchanges about EU integration process and policies among 7 Categories of citizens constituting 4 Bilateral Dialogue Groups. Such “Dialogues” participated in international meetings to highlight their perspectives about Communication, Ecology and Social Policies, and formulated recommendations for EU decision makers both as single Dialogue group and transversal recommendations shared among all.

The project aimed to favour the emersion of cross-cutting dimensions of Identity overcoming national boundaries, contributing to the building process of EU citizenship, being careful to ensure gender balance and intergenerational dimension.

This report presents the results of the meetings carried out based on an evaluation activity that was built with an ex-ante ex-post design. In this way, it was possible to collect data on the participants' point of view, trying to study the main changes obtained thanks to the activities carried out.

Considering the items used to verify changes in the attitude towards dialogue, in the discussion, in the consideration of European policies, the data collected indicate significant changes. Participants stated that they had changed their positions, and this shows that the workshops helped to mobilize their points of view. Open dialogue and constructive discussion have made it possible to observe and discuss critical, controversial issues where there are sometimes divergences and conflicts. From this perspective, the participants and the organizers of the workshops managed to produce useful recommendations following the objectives of the project.

The monitoring allows us to notice a significant increase in awareness and knowledge of European policies in terms of eco-sustainable development, social policies and communication. This confirms the validity of creating moments of exchange, information and discussion in which citizens of different beliefs find themselves discussing.

Even though they dealt with different topics with diverse groups of citizens, the workshops favoured the rapprochement and understanding of very distant points of view. From this perspective, it was not necessary to reach absolute and rigid forms of consensus, rather an open dialogue for relative consensus. This result favours plurality and dialogue as a first step towards understanding and respecting different opinions.

Proceeding from these results, the following points should be taken into consideration for the development of future projects both at a national and European level.

The composition of the working groups must be studied allowing the research and involvement of representative people. This objective requires adequate resources and connections with the various realities of European civil society.

The thematic aspects can be articulated more precisely by isolating some issues which are of relevance in the political and social agenda. Although the CERV Programme does not promote research projects, we believe that, where possible, some social research tools can be introduced in the management of future projects to obtain better results and identify further innovative dialogue practices.

Introduction

Religions, interreligious dialogue, non-confessional dialogue, encounter between religions and secular mindsets and religious education have gained importance during the last 20 or so years (Weisse 2019). It is a process of dialectical rapprochement and comparison that developed in Western and Eastern Europe. The potential of interreligious dialogue and the possibility of addressing divergences and conflicts has pushed numerous international organizations such as UNESCO and the Council of Europe to engage in numerous projects.

Various institutions and civil society organizations have rediscovered the field of religion as a socially relevant area and interreligious dialogue departments for peace have been established in various countries, such as in Berlin in 2016. A reflection on the topic has also developed in the academic world religion dialogue society which has produced numerous studies in the humanistic, social, political and economic fields (Weisse & Gutman, 2010; Lehmann, 2020).

The Dialogue project is placed in this area of reflection and it aims primarily at encouraging the meeting of different cultures with particular attention to different types of religious beliefs. Thanks to the decades-long experience of the Focolare Movement, of which New Humanity is part, the project intends to promote moments of discussion, viewpoints exchange and mutual enrichment on dialogue regarding themes of universal interest.

For this reason, the 12 meetings scheduled and of which we will present the evaluation, were organized around the themes of social policies, communication and ecology. These are issues where the influence of different types of religious beliefs can have a great impact. In this way, we tried to bring together people of various ages, genders and cultural levels, and to address particularly sensitive issues from a social, economic and political perspective.

Therefore, the meetings held involved four types of dialogue and three themes (social policies, ecology, and communication).

1. The dialogue with religions, aiming to establish relations with the different religious communities present in the society. With this regard New Humanity has established a Centre for Inter-faith dialogue working at a global level with regional offices in the different continents; at EU level it is particularly committed for the relations with Muslims (partners in this project);
2. The dialogue among Christian believers and non-confessional people, with atheist and Marxist background;
3. Ecumenical dialogue, to improve the relations among citizens belonging to different Christian churches (Catholic, Protestants and Orthodox). The main active platform in this sector is Together for Europe, which coordinates local and transnational activities of about 400 Christian communities at EU level;
4. The Western-Eastern Europe dialogue (Multipolar dialogue project) composed by people whose focus is the cultural and geographical belonging to Western and Eastern Europe, without a particular confessional or non-confessional background.

All these groups are characterized by diverse approaches to EU integration process and different perspectives about EU values, that should all be considered to generate a genuine building process of EU identity. New Humanity over the past decades has been capable of assuming a bridging role among such groups and communities.

Evaluation design

The evaluation design took into consideration the type of activity by studying the implementation processes and the resources available to organize the meetings. The evaluation design was organized with an experimental method using a pre- and post-meeting measurement. Questionnaires with sensitive indicators were proposed to measure changes during the 12 meetings held, by comparing the results of the pre and post evaluation. Alongside the quantitative evaluation carried out with the questionnaires, some interviews were conducted to probe in depth some of the topics discussed.

The following indicators were used to design the evaluation tools: an increase in convergence on some points with a view to constructive dialogue, an increase in knowledge of the European Union's commitment to promoting inclusion and dialogue between different groups, the formulation of principles and recommendations for each meeting,

Alongside the quantitative analysis, a qualitative study was carried out involving some participants in the workshops. Thirteen interviews were conducted with participants in the four types of workshops. These interviews made it possible to collect points of view, opinions, criticisms and suggestions for a greater understanding of the usefulness of these activities. The report dedicates a specific section to this analysis to complete the verification and evaluation of the results achieved.

Results and discussion

Dialogue between Catholics and Muslims

Ecology

The ecology meetings were organized in cooperation with ECO-one, a transnational platform of experts in the field of environmental protection and sustainability. This platform collaborates with New Humanity, which coordinates the activities together with other project partners. ECO-one makes use of the collaboration of experts and professionals in the sector to organize events both locally and internationally, involving adults and students. Furthermore, ECO-one has a strategic role thanks to its partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which contributes to enriching dialogue and training on ecological issues.

The pre-workshop ecology questionnaire was completed by 58 individuals. The gender distribution consisted of 38 females (65.5%) and 20 males (34.5%). The post-workshop questionnaire, however, had a female majority with 14 participants (60.9%) compared to 9 male participants (39.1%).

Participants who filled out the pre-workshop questionnaire were distributed across different age groups with the most represented group between 40 and 60 years old (43.1%, 25 participants), followed by those over 60 years old (41.4%, 24 participants). There was also a significant participation of people between 25 and 39 years old (13.8%, 8 participants) and a single participant between 18 and 24 years old (1.7%). As regards the post-workshop questionnaire, the most represented age group was that of participants over 60 years old (52.2%, 12 participants), followed by the 40- to 60-year-old group (34.8%, 8 participants) and finally by the 25- to 39-year-old range (13.0%, 3 participants).

In terms of geographical origin, pre-workshop participants were from Italy (13.8%, 8 participants), and Germany (6.9 %, 4 participants). Other countries represented included Austria and France, each with varying percentages. Italy remained the most represented country also in the post-workshop questionnaire with 4 participants (17.4%). Other countries represented included Spain, Germany and Austria (8.7% each), France, Belgium (4.3 % each).

Regarding employment status, retired people constituted the largest group in the pre-workshop phase (36.2%, 21 participants), followed by employees (31.0%, 18 participants). Other employment statuses included self-employed, students, and workers with varying percentages. In the post-workshop questionnaire, pensioners still represented the largest group (47.8%, 11 participants), followed by employees (26.1%, 6 participants) and workers (13.0%, 3 participants).

Educational level was generally high with 37.9% of participants holding a master's degree (22 participants), followed by bachelor's degrees (29.3%, 17 participants) and PhD (25.9%, 15 participants). In the post-workshop questionnaire, the distribution was similar with a majority of participants with a master's degree (43.5%, 10 participants), followed by a bachelor's degree (30.4%, 7 participants), high school (17.4%, 4 participants), and PhD (8.7%, 2 participants).

Finally, religious beliefs showed a predominance of Catholic Christians (44.8%, 26 participants) in the pre-workshop phase, followed by Hindus (22.4%, 13 participants) and Muslims (20.7%, 12 participants). Other beliefs included Buddhists and Jews to a lesser extent. In the post-workshop questionnaire, the majority remained Catholic Christians (56.5%, 13 participants), followed by Muslims (21.7%, 5 participants), Buddhists and Hindus (4.3% each).

Workshop impact

Thematic Impact

Two questions were proposed to participants before and after the workshop to measure the impact of the activity on their opinion on ecology. One of these questions asked participants to rate on a scale from 1 (never) to 5 (very frequently) how often they believe climate change affects the daily lives of people around the world. The mean response increased slightly from 4.2 in the pre-workshop to 4.48 in the post-workshop. The other question asked participants how often they believe human activity contributes to climate change on the same scale. The average of the answers went from 4.38 in the pre-workshop to 4.57 in the post-workshop.

Knowledge of European policies and other points of view

Two other questions were proposed to measure the impact of the activity but with regards to the level of knowledge of European policies as well as on other points of view regarding ecology. One of these questions asked participants to self-rate on a scale from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high) their knowledge of European policies in the field of ecology. The mean response increased from 5.0 in the pre-workshop to 6.57 in the post-workshop. The other question asked participants to self-rate their knowledge of other religious and cultural points of view regarding ecology on the same scale. The mean response increased from 5.57 in the pre-workshop to 6.86 in the post-workshop.

Dialogue and convergence with other points of view

In line with the two previous points, here too participants were asked to self-evaluate their level of convergence of opinion on the topic with that of other communities on a scale from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high). Before the workshop, Catholics had an average convergence of their opinions with those of their peers of 6.85 and of 5.19 with those of Muslims. After the workshop, this mean increased to 8.08 and 7.31 respectively. This increase suggests that the workshop had a positive effect on making Catholics feel more cohesive about their views and more aligned with Muslim views on ecology.

Muslims, for their part, also showed an increase in the convergence of their opinions both with those of their peers and with those of Catholics. Before the workshop, they had an average convergence of their opinions with those of their peers of 8.50 and of 5.17 with those of Catholics. After the workshop, this average increased to 9.40 and 7.80 respectively. Again, a significant increase is observed, indicating that Muslims have developed a greater understanding and appreciation of the views of their peers, as well as Catholics, on ecology. The workshop therefore facilitated a productive dialogue that helped both communities see ecological issues through each other's lenses.

Conclusion

The ecology workshop had a significant impact on the participants, as evidenced by the results of the pre- and post-workshop questionnaires. Awareness of the impact of climate change on daily life and the role of human activity in it has increased albeit slightly, while knowledge of European policies and different cultural and religious perspectives has seen a more significant improvement.

The rapprochement between the opinions of the religious communities has been considerable. In fact, Catholics showed greater convergence with their peers (+1.23 points) but above all with Muslims (+2.12 points). Muslims also recorded an increase in the convergence of opinions with their peers (+0.90 points) but mainly with Catholics (+2.63 points). This indicates that the workshop facilitated a very constructive interreligious dialogue, promoting greater mutual understanding and alignment of ecological views.

Social policies

The meetings on social policies were organized in cooperation with "Social One", a network made up of social workers and academics. This network is responsible for providing training on the social implications of policies, facilitating dialogue between social actors and collecting data on citizens' perspectives on social issues. Thus, their main role is to promote awareness and understanding of social policies among dialogue participants, creating a space for informed and constructive discussions.

The pre-workshop questionnaire on social policies was completed by 67 individuals. The gender distribution consisted of 48 females (71.6%) and 19 males (28.4%). The post-workshop questionnaire was attended by 63 individuals, with 44 females (69.8%) and 19 males (30.2%).

The participants who completed the pre-workshop questionnaire were mainly in the age group above 60 years (83.6%, 56 participants), followed by the 40-60 age group (13.4%, 9 participants) and the 25-39 age group (3.0%, 2 participants). Regarding the post-workshop questionnaire, the distribution was similar with a majority in the over 60 age group (85.7%, 54 participants), followed by the 40-60 age group (12.7%, 8 participants) and the 25-39 age group (1.6%, 1 participant).

In terms of geographical origin, most pre-workshop participants came from Italy (44.8%, 30 participants), followed by Germany (6%, 4 participants), and Spain, Portugal and France (4.5%, 3 participants each). Other countries were represented with varying percentages. In the post-workshop questionnaire, Italy remained the most represented country with 33 participants (52.4%), followed by Spain (6.3%, 4 participants), Germany, Portugal, (4.8% each) and other countries with smaller representations.

Regarding employment status, pensioners constituted the largest group in the pre-workshop (56.7%, 38 participants), followed by employees (16.4%, 11 participants) and other statuses (26.9%). In the post-workshop questionnaire, pensioners still represented the largest group (58.7%, 37 participants), followed by employees (19%, 12 participants), other statuses 22,3%.

Educational level was varied with a predominance of participants with a master's degree (43.3%, 29 participants), followed by participants with a high school diploma (22.4%, 15 participants), a bachelor's degree (17.9%, 12 participants), and a PhD (9.0%, 6 participants). In the post-workshop questionnaire, the distribution was similar with most participants with a master's degree (44.4%, 28 participants), followed by participants with a high school diploma (25.4%, 16 participants), bachelor's degree (15.9%, 10 participants) and PhD (9.5%, 6 participants).

Finally, religious beliefs showed a predominance of Catholic Christians (95.5%, 64 participants) in the pre-workshop, followed by one Muslim and one Lutheran participant. In the post-workshop questionnaire, the majority remained Catholic Christians (96.8%, 61 participants), followed by one Muslim participant.

Workshop impact

Thematic Impact

Two questions were proposed to the participants before and after the workshop to measure the impact of the activity on their opinion regarding social policies. One of these questions asked participants to rate on a scale from 1 (never) to 5 (very frequently) how often they believe that people in their country are discriminated against on religious, racial, ethnic or gender grounds. The mean response increased slightly from 2.97 in the pre-workshop to 3.02 in the post-workshop. The other question asked participants how often they believe people are subjected to hate speech and/or hate crimes on the same scale. The average of the answers went from 2.69 in the pre-workshop to 2.70 in the post-workshop.

Knowledge of European policies and other points of view

Two other questions were proposed to measure the impact of the activity but with regards to the level of knowledge on European policies as well as on other points of view regarding social policies. One of these questions asked participants to self-rate on a scale from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high) their knowledge of European policies in the field of social policy. The mean response increased from 4.48 in the pre-workshop to 5.61 in the post-workshop. The other question asked participants to self-evaluate on the same scale their knowledge of other religious and cultural points of view regarding social policies. The mean response increased from 5.16 in the pre-workshop to 5.71 in the post-workshop.

Dialogue and convergence with other points of view

In line with the two previous points, here too participants were asked to self-evaluate their level of convergence of opinion on the topic with that of other communities on a scale from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high). Before the workshop, Catholics had an average convergence of their opinions with those of their peers of 6.27 and 5.76 with that of Muslims. After the workshop, this average decreased slightly to 6.19 and 5.71 respectively.

Muslims, on the other hand, represented by only one participant, had an average convergence both with their peers and with Catholics of 7. After the workshop, no Muslims filled out the questionnaire, so it is not possible to evaluate the impact of the activity.

Conclusion

The workshop on social policies had little significant impact on the participants.

Awareness regarding discrimination and hate speech in one's own country has remained almost unchanged and, if on the one hand knowledge of European policies on discrimination has significantly improved (+1.13 points), on the other hand knowledge of different cultures and religions had only a slight increase (+0.55 points).

As regards the convergence of opinions, the impact was negative. In fact, for Catholics, the convergence of opinions with their peers decreased by 0.08 points, while for Muslims it decreased by 0.05 points. However, the evaluation of the impact on Muslims was not possible, since no Muslim participant completed the post-workshop questionnaire. This result also allows us to highlight the importance of differentiated levels of consensus as envisaged by the project, in which on some issues it is not possible to have approximations of opinion.

Overall, the workshop did not meet the expectations. This could also be explained by the underrepresentation of Muslims. These findings suggest that future initiatives should seek to more actively involve religions of interest to promote greater cohesion and mutual understanding between different communities.

Communication

The communication meetings were organized in cooperation with "Net-One", a network of journalists and media operators specialized in dialogic journalism, an approach characterized by a fair communication style that aims at social media education, the prevention of fake news and hate speech, and at the limitation of polarized debates.

The pre-workshop communication questionnaire was completed by 109 individuals. The gender distribution consisted of 77 females (70%) and 32 males (29.1%). The post-workshop questionnaire was attended by 58 individuals, with 42 females (72.4%) and 16 males (27.6%).

The participants who filled out the pre-workshop questionnaire were mainly distributed in the age group over 60 years old (72.7%, 80 participants), followed by the 40-60 age group (19.1%, 21 participants), the 25-39 age group (6.4%, 7 participants) and the 18-24 age group (1.8%, 2 participants). As regards the post-workshop questionnaire, the distribution was similar with a majority in the over 60 age group (75.9%, 44 participants), followed by the 40-60 age group (15.5%, 9 participants), the 25-39 age group (6.9%, 4 participants) and the 18-24 age group (1.7%, 1 participant).

In terms of geographical origin, most pre-workshop participants were from Italy (28.2%, 31 participants), followed by Germany (7.3%, 8 participants). Other countries represented included Belgium, France, Portugal, Austria, Spain, and other countries with varying percentages. In the post-workshop questionnaire, Italy remained the most represented country with 19 participants (32.8%), followed by Germany (10.3%, 6 participants) and Belgium (6.9%, 4 participants). Other countries represented included Austria, France and Portugal (5.2% each).

Regarding employment status, pensioners constituted the largest group in the pre-workshop (56.4%, 62 participants), followed by employees (20.9%, 23 participants) and other employment statuses (22,7) In the post-workshop questionnaire, pensioners still represented the largest group (60.3%, 35 participants), followed by employees (19%, 11 participants), other employment statuses (20,7%).

The level of education was varied, with a predominance of participants with a master's degree (40%, 44 participants), followed by participants with a high school diploma (20.9%, 23 participants), a bachelor's degree (24.5%, 27 participants), a PhD (8.2%, 9 participants) and middle school (4.5%, 5 participants). In the post-workshop questionnaire, the distribution was similar with most participants with a master's degree (43.1%, 25 participants), followed by participants with a high school diploma (25.9%, 15 participants), bachelor's degree (17.2%, 10 participants), PhD (8.6%, 5 participants) and middle school (5.2%, 3 participants).

Finally, religious beliefs showed a predominance of Catholic Christians (86.4%, 95 participants) in the pre-workshop, followed by Muslims (5.5%, 6 participants), Lutherans and Buddhists (1.8%, 2 participants each) and Orthodox and other beliefs (0.9%, 1 participant each). In the post-workshop questionnaire, the majority remained Catholic Christians (84.5%, 49 participants), followed by Muslims (8.6%, 5 participants), Orthodox and Lutherans (1.7%, 1 participant each).

Workshop impact

Thematic Impact

Two questions were proposed to participants before and after the workshop to measure the impact of the activity on their opinion regarding communication. One of these questions asked participants to rate on a scale of 1 (never) to 5 (very frequently) how often they believe there is misinformation in mainstream media. The mean response decreased from 3.68 in the pre-workshop to 3.48 in the post-workshop. The other question asked participants how often they believe there is misinformation on social media on the same scale. The average of the answers went from 3.98 in the pre-workshop to 3.93 in the post-workshop.

Knowledge of European policies and other points of view

Two other questions were proposed to measure the impact of the activity but with regards to the level of knowledge of European policies as well as of other points of view regarding communication. One of these questions asked participants to self-rate on a scale from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high) their knowledge of European policies in the field of communication. The mean response increased from 4.51 in the pre-workshop to 5.21 in the post-workshop. The other question asked participants to self-evaluate their knowledge of other religious and cultural points of view regarding communication on the same scale. The mean response increased from 5.19 in the pre-workshop to 5.89 in the post-workshop.

Dialogue and convergence with other points of view

In line with the two previous points, here too participants were asked to self-evaluate their level of convergence of opinion on the topic with that of other communities on a scale from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high). Before the workshop, Catholics had an average convergence of their opinions with those of their peers of 5.40 and of 4.80 with that of Muslims. After the workshop, this mean increased to 6.00 and 5.65 respectively.

Muslims, represented by only one participant, showed a decrease in the convergence of their opinions both with that of their peers and with that of Catholics, going from 7.00 before the workshop to 5.00 after the workshop.

Conclusion

The communication workshop had an unexpected impact on the participants. In fact, the perception of misinformation in traditional media and social media decreased slightly by 0.20 points and 0.05 points respectively.

As regards knowledge of European policies and different cultural and religious perspectives on communication, the impact was residual (+0.70 points in both cases). The same for the convergence of opinions on the part of Catholics, with a slight increase of 0.60 points with those of their peers and of 0.85 with those of Muslims. Muslims' convergence with both communities was initially high. However, in the post-workshop questionnaire, the question was answered only by one Muslim participant.

Dialogue between Christians and non-confessionals

Ecology

The ecology meetings were organized in cooperation with ECO-one, a transnational platform of experts in the field of environmental protection and sustainability. This platform is part of the New Humanity structure, which coordinates activities together with other project partners. ECO-one makes use of the collaboration of experts and professionals in the sector to organize events both locally and internationally, involving adults and students. Furthermore, ECO-one has a strategic role thanks to its partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which contributes to enriching dialogue and training on ecological issues.

The pre-workshop ecology questionnaire was completed by 24 individuals. The gender distribution was perfectly balanced, with half of the participants male (50%, 12) and the other half female. The post-workshop session, however, had a male majority (61.5%, 24 participants), with 15 female participants (38.5%).

The participants who filled out the pre-workshop questionnaire were distributed across different age groups, with the most represented group between 40 and 60 years old (37.5%, 9 participants), followed by those between 25 and 39 years old (29.2%, 7 participants). There was also a significant participation of people over 60 years old (20.8%, 5 participants), and the rest were individuals under 25 years old (8.3%, 2 participants). One participant did not indicate their age. As regards the post-workshop questionnaire, the most represented age group was that of 25- to 39-year-old people, with 14 participants, which constitute 35.9% of the total. The participants in the 60+ group follow, with 12 people, equal to 30.8%. The 40-60 age group saw the participation of 11 individuals, representing 28.2% of the total. Finally, young people between 18 and 24 were the least represented, with only 2 participants making up 5.1%.

In terms of geographical origin, the majority of participants were from Italy (45.8%, 11 participants). Other countries represented included France (16.7%, 4 participants), Germany (12.5%, 3 participants), Belgium (8.3%, 2 participants), Portugal (4.2%, 1 participant) and Greece (4.2%, 1 participant). Italy remained the most represented country also in the post-workshop questionnaire, with 17 participants, constituting 43.6% of the total. This is followed by Austria with 5 participants (12.8%) and France with 4 participants (10.3%). Germany and Portugal each had 3 participants, representing 7.7% of the total. Belgium contributed with 2 participants, constituting 5.1%. There were also individual participants from various other countries, each representing 2.6% of the total.

Regarding employment status, employees constituted the largest group (33.3%, 8 participants), followed by other statutes (students, professional etc. 58.4%), and retirees (8.3%, 2 participants). In the post-workshop questionnaire, the largest group remained that of office workers, with 13 participants, constituting 33.3% of the total. Self-employed workers follow with 8 participants, equal to 20.5%. Students made up 15.4% of the participants, with a total of 6 people. There were 7 workers, representing 17.9%, while there were 5 pensioners, equal to 12.8%.

Educational level was generally high, with 50% of participants holding a PhD (12), followed by master's degree (45.8%, 11) and secondary school (4.2%, 1) qualifications. In the post-workshop questionnaire, the distribution remained similar to that of the pre-workshop questionnaire. The majority (53.8%) of participants with a research doctorate (21) remained, followed by participants with a master's degree (43.6%, 17) and secondary school (2.6%, 1).

Finally, religious beliefs showed a predominance of Catholics (66.7%, 16 participants), with atheists (33.3%, 8 participants) represented to a lesser extent, while in the post-workshop questionnaire the majority remained Catholics (74.4%), followed by atheists (23.1%, 9) and one participant of Orthodox belief (2.6%).

Workshop impact

Thematic Impact

Two questions were proposed to the participants, before and after the workshop, to measure the impact of the activity on their opinion on ecology.

One of these questions asked participants to rate, on a scale from 1 (never) to 5 (very frequently), how often they believe climate change affects the daily lives of people around the world. The mean response increased slightly from 4.63 in the pre-workshop to 4.64 in the post-workshop.

The other question asked participants how often they believe human activity contributes to climate change, always on the same scale. The average of the answers went from 4.83 in the pre-workshop to 4.85 in the post-workshop.

Knowledge of European policies and other points of view

Two other questions were proposed to measure the impact of the activity but with regards to the level of knowledge of European policies, as well as of other points of view, regarding ecology.

One of these questions asked participants to self-rate, on a scale from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high), their knowledge of European policies in the field of ecology. The mean response increased from 6.46 in the pre-workshop to 7.33 in the post-workshop.

The other question asked participants to self-rate, again on the same scale, their knowledge of other religious and cultural points of view regarding ecology. The mean response increased from 6.12 in the pre-workshop to 7.38 in the post-workshop.

Dialogue and convergence with other points of view

In line with the two previous points, here too participants were asked to self-evaluate, on a scale from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high), their level of convergence of opinion on the topic with that of other communities.

Before the workshop, non-confessionals had an average convergence of their opinions with those of Christians of 7.88. After the workshop, this average increased to 8.89. This increase suggests that the workshop had a positive effect on making non-confessionals feel more attuned to Christians' views on ecology. Non-confessionals, through dialogue and interaction during the workshop, likely found more common ground with Christians and developed a greater understanding of their perspectives.

As for Christians, the average convergence of their opinions with those of non-confessionals went from 6.94 before the workshop to 7.83 after the workshop. Again, a significant increase is observed, indicating that Christians have developed a greater understanding and appreciation of non-confessionals' views on ecology. The workshop therefore facilitated a productive dialogue that helped Christians see ecological issues through the lens of non-confessionals.

Conclusion

At first glance, the ecology workshop was effective in improving the perceived impact of the topic and in increasing the knowledge of ecological policies and other cultures among the participants. The workshop also had a positive impact on both communities in terms of greater convergence of their views on ecology. The increase in post-workshop means for all analysed variables indicates an overall positive impact. However, the considerable discrepancy regarding the completion of the pre and post questionnaires must be considered. In fact, only 24 participants filled out the pre questionnaire, compared to 39 who filled out the post questionnaire. The significant difference between the pre- and post-numbers complicates the ability to make direct comparisons between the responses of the same participants.

Social policies

The meetings on social policies were organized in cooperation with "Social One", a network made up of social workers and academics. This network is responsible for providing training on the social implications of policies, facilitating dialogue between social actors and collecting data on citizens' perspectives on social issues. Thus, their main role is to promote awareness and understanding of social policies among dialogue participants, creating a space for informed and constructive discussions.

The workshop on social policies had 18 pre-workshop questionnaires filled out, with a balanced gender distribution: 44.4% male (8) and 55.6% female (10), while the post-workshop questionnaire was also filled out by 18 participants but, in this case, the percentages were reversed: 55.6% males (10) and 44.4% females (8).

Most participants fell into the 60+ age group (55.6%, 10 participants), followed by the age groups 25-39 (22.2%, 4 participants) and 40-60 (22.2%, 4 participants). In the post-workshop questionnaire, however, the majority remained that of those over 60 (44.4%, 8 participants) but the distribution of the percentages underwent a slight variation: 25-39 (33.3%, 6 participants) and 40-60 (22.2%, 4 participants).

Geographically, the largest group came from Italy (38.9%, 7 participants) and Austria (38.9%, 7 participants), while France (11.1%, 2 participants), Greece (5.6%, 1 participant) and Portugal (5.6%, 1 participant) were represented in a smaller proportion. In the post-workshop, however, Italy remained the most represented country (44.4%, 8 participants), followed by Austria with 4 participants (22.2%) and Portugal with 2 participants (11.1%). Belgium and France contributed with 1 participant each, each representing 5.6% of the total.

Regarding employment, the most represented groups were employees and pensioners, with 7 participants each, constituting 38.9% of the total for each group. Self-employed workers made up 11.1% of participants, with a total of 2 people. Other kind of employees and the "other statutes" category contributed each with 1 participant, each representing 5.6% of the total. For the post-workshop the distribution underwent a slight variation but the majority order remained the same. The most represented group was that of office workers, with 7 participants, constituting 38.9% of the total. This is followed by pensioners with 5 participants (27.8%) and self-employed workers with 4 participants (22.2%). Employees constituted 11.1% of the participants, with a total of 2 people.

The level of education was very high, with 50% of participants holding a master's degree (9), followed by participants with a PhD (5 people) equal to 27.8%. There were 3 participants with a high school diploma, representing 16.7% of the total, while only 1 participant had a three-year degree, constituting 5.6%. In the post-workshop, however, the most represented group remained the one with a master's degree, with 14 participants constituting 77.8% of the total. This is followed by participants with a PhD and a bachelor's degree, with 2 people each, equal to 11.1%.

In terms of religious beliefs, 66.7% of participants were Catholic Christians (12), 5.6% Anglican (1) and 27.8% non-confessional (9). In the post-workshop, however, there were 13 Catholics (72.2%) and 5 non-confessional (27.8%).

Workshop impact

Thematic Impact

During the workshop, participants were asked to rate, on a scale from 1 (never) to 5 (very frequently), how often they believed that people in their country were discriminated against on religious, racial, ethnic or gender grounds and how often they believed people were subjected to hate speech and/or hate crimes. The results showed a notable increase in the perception of these phenomena. In particular, the average of the answers to the question on discrimination went from 3.56 to 4.22, while for the question on hatred it went from 3.50 to 4.11. This increase suggests that participants, after the

workshop, became more aware of how often discrimination and hate speech occur in their home countries.

Knowledge of European policies and other points of view

In terms of knowledge of European policies in the field of discrimination and/or hate crimes and knowledge of other religious and cultural points of view regarding the same topic, participants showed significant improvement. The average of the answers to the question on European policies increased from 5.61 to 6.56, while to the question on knowledge of other points of view on the topic it went from 5.67 to 6.17. This suggests that the workshop was effective in improving participants' understanding of European policies and different religious and cultural perspectives on discrimination and hate crime.

Dialogue and convergence with other points of view

Before the workshop, non-confessionals had an average convergence of their opinions with those of Christians of 6.00. After the workshop, this average increased to 8.00. This increase indicates that the workshop had a positive effect on making non-confessionals feel more attuned to Christians' views on discrimination. Through dialogue and interaction during the workshop, non-confessionals likely found more common ground with Christians and developed a greater understanding of their perspectives.

As for Christians, the average convergence of their opinions with those of non-confessionals went from 6.15 before the workshop to 7.23 after the workshop. Again, a significant increase is observed, indicating that Christians have developed a greater understanding and appreciation of non-confessionals' views on discrimination. The workshop therefore facilitated a productive dialogue that helped Christians see social issues through the lens of non-confessionals.

Conclusion

The social policy workshop had a positive and significant impact on the participants. It improved their understanding and attitude towards discrimination and increased their knowledge of European policies and different religious and cultural perspectives. Both communities (Christians and non-confessionals) showed greater convergence in their views on discrimination and hate crimes after the workshop. This result indicates that the dialogue and interaction facilitated during the workshop helped to reduce distances and promote mutual understanding of social issues. This experience of interreligious and intercultural dialogue has proven effective in building bridges and promoting greater harmony between groups with different beliefs.

Communication

The communication meetings were organized in cooperation with "Net-One", a network of journalists and media operators specialized in dialogic journalism, an approach characterized by a fair communication style that aims at social media education, the prevention of fake news and hate speech, and to the limitation of polarized debates.

The communication workshop had a total of 55 completed pre-workshop questionnaires. 56.4% of participants were female (31) and 43.6% were male (24). The post-workshop questionnaire, however, was filled out by only 6 participants, half of whom were male and the other half female.

The most represented age group was 18 to 24 years old (40%, 22 participants), followed by 25 to 39 years old (34.5%, 19 participants), 40 to 60 years old (14.5%, 8 participants), 18 years old and under and from participants over 60 years old in equal proportion (5.5%, 3). In the post-workshop questionnaire, the most represented age group was 25-39 years (50%, 3 participants), followed by 18-24 years (33.3%, 2 participants) and under 18 (16.7%, 1 participant).

Geographically, participants came from Italy (12.7%, 7), Portugal (10.9%, 6), the Netherlands (9.1%, 5) and other European countries (23.5 %) and other countries (21.9%) in smaller proportions. In the post-workshop, the most represented country was the Netherlands (33.3%, 2 participants), followed by Austria and Portugal with 1 participant (16.7%) each.

As regards employment, the largest groups were made up of students (40%, 22 participants) and employees (38.2%, 21 participants), followed by other statutes (9.1%, 5), self-employed workers (5.5%, 3) and other employment statuses (11.4%). Only one participant was retired. In the post-workshop, half were employees (50%), 2 were students (33.3%) and 1 was other statutes (16.7%).

The level of education was varied but with an overwhelming majority of university graduates. 45.5% of the participants had a three-year degree (25), 36.4% had a master's degree (20), 14.5% had a second level high school diploma (8), 1.8% had a first level high school diploma (1) and 1.6% a doctorate (1). In the post-workshop, however, half had a master's degree (50%) and the other half had a secondary school education diploma.

Religious beliefs were mainly Catholic Christian (90.9%, 50 participants), with small representations of other Christian religions (3.2%) and atheists (4.9%, 3 participants). In the post-workshop all participants were Catholic.

Workshop impact

Thematic Impact

Regarding the perception of the presence of disinformation in traditional media, participants showed a slight increase in the perception of the presence of disinformation, with an average that went from 3.58 to 3.67. This suggests that the workshop had a small positive effect in raising awareness among participants.

In contrast, perceptions of the presence of misinformation on social media saw a slight decrease in average rating, going from 4.38 to 4.33. While this reduction is small, it may suggest that participants were left with a slightly less critical view of misinformation in the social media post-workshop questionnaire.

Knowledge of European policies and other points of view

The workshop had a significant impact on knowledge of European policies on disinformation. The mean increased from 3.72 to 5.80, showing a notable improvement in understanding these policies. This suggests that participants have gained greater awareness of European initiatives to combat disinformation.

Similarly, knowledge of religious and cultural viewpoints regarding misinformation increased from 4.94 to 6.60. This indicates that participants developed a deeper understanding of different cultural and religious perspectives on the topic of disinformation.

Dialogue and convergence with other points of view

Before the workshop, non-confessionals had an average convergence of their opinions with those of Christians of 4.33. After the workshop, there are not enough data to calculate an average, as no questionnaires were completed by non-confessionals.

As for Christians, the average convergence of their opinions with those of non-confessionals went from 5.37 before the workshop to 6.20 after the workshop. This increase indicates that Christians have developed a greater understanding and appreciation of non-confessionals' opinions regarding misinformation. The workshop facilitated a productive dialogue that helped Christians see issues of misinformation through the lens of non-confessionals.

Conclusion

Overall, the workshop was effective in improving participants' knowledge of European disinformation policies and understanding religious and cultural perspectives. Perceptions of misinformation in traditional media increased slightly, while perceptions of misinformation on social media remained relatively stable. While the workshop had a positive impact on Christians, showing an increase in convergence of their views on disinformation issues after the workshop, there are insufficient data to draw definitive conclusions on the impact on non-confessionals, due to the lack of post-workshop responses.

Dialogue among Christians

Ecology

The ecology meetings were organized in cooperation with ECO-one, a transnational platform of experts in the field of environmental protection and sustainability. This platform is part of the New Humanity structure, which coordinates activities together with other project partners. ECO-one makes use of the collaboration of experts and professionals in the sector to organize events both locally and internationally, involving adults and students. Furthermore, ECO-one has a strategic role thanks to its partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which contributes to enriching dialogue and training on ecological issues.

The pre-workshop ecology questionnaire was completed by 77 individuals. The gender distribution consisted of 67.5% female participants, 31.2% male participants, and 1.3% participants who did not report their gender. The post-workshop questionnaire was completed by 29 participants, with a female majority (65.5%) and 34.5% male participants.

The participants who filled out the pre-workshop questionnaire were distributed across different age groups, with people aged 60 and over as the most representative group (72.7%), followed by 40- to 60-year-olds (23.4%) and 25- to 39-year-olds (3.9%). In the post-workshop questionnaire, most participants were aged 60 and above (55.2%), followed by 40- to 60-year-olds (41.4%) and 25- to 39-year-olds (3.4%).

In terms of geographical origin, most pre-workshop participants came from Italy (48.1%), followed by Germany (19.5%) and Austria (6.5%). In the post-workshop, Italy remains the most represented country (37.9%), followed by Hungary (13.8%) and Germany (10.3%).

Regarding employment status, in the pre-workshop pensioners constituted the largest group (51.9%), followed by office workers (27.3%) and other occupations (11.7%). In the post-workshop, pensioners were still the largest group (44.8%), followed by employees (27.6%) and self-employed workers (13.8%).

Educational level was generally high, with 32.5% of participants having a master's degree, 27.3% having a bachelor's degree, and 16.9% having a high school diploma. In the post-workshop, the majority of participants had a master's degree (41.4%), followed by 20.7% with a PhD.

Finally, religious beliefs showed a predominance of Christian Catholics (84.4% pre-workshop and 96.6% post-workshop), with a minority of other Christian denominations such as Lutherans (6.5% pre-workshop and 0% post-workshop), Orthodox (1.3% pre and 3.4% post), Baptist (1.3% pre and 0% post), and other unspecified beliefs (6.5% pre and 0% post).

Workshop impact

Thematic Impact

Two questions were proposed to participants before and after the workshop to measure the impact of the activity on their opinion on ecology. One of these questions asked participants to rate on a scale from 1 (never) to 5 (very frequently) how often they believe climate change affects the daily lives of people around the world. The mean response increased from 4.17 in the pre-workshop to 4.41 in the post-workshop.

The other question asked participants how often they believe human activity contributes to climate change on the same scale. The average of the answers went from 4.29 in the pre-workshop to 4.66 in the post-workshop.

Knowledge of European policies and other points of view

Two other questions were proposed to measure the impact of the activity, but regarding the level of knowledge on European policies as well as on other points of view regarding ecology. One of these questions asked participants to self-rate on a scale from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high) their knowledge of European policies in the field of ecology. The mean response increased from 5.29 in the pre-workshop to 6.41 in the post-workshop.

The other question asked participants to self-rate their knowledge of other religious and cultural points of view regarding ecology on the same scale. The mean response increased from 5.12 in the pre-workshop to 7.0 in the post-workshop.

Dialogue and convergence with other points of view

During the ecology workshop, the convergence of the participants' opinions was assessed both with people from the same church and with people from different churches.

Before the workshop, Catholic Christians reported an average convergence with people from the same church of 6.47. After the workshop, this mean increased significantly to 8.07, indicating that participants felt greater connection with members of their own church.

The average convergence with people from different churches for Catholic Christians was 6.05 before the workshop. After the workshop, this average rose to 7.96, suggesting that participants had developed a greater understanding and appreciation for the opinions of people from churches other than their own.

For Orthodox Christians, the average convergence with people from the same church was 5.00 before the workshop. After the workshop, the mean increased to 7.00, showing an improvement in perceived convergence with members of their own church.

For Orthodox Christians, the average convergence with people from different churches was 3.00 before the workshop. After the workshop, this average increased significantly to 7.00, indicating significant progress in understanding and aligning with the opinions of people from other churches.

Conclusion

The ecology workshop was effective in improving perception of the topic covered and in increasing knowledge of European policies on ecology and of the points of view of people belonging to other cultures and/or religions. Furthermore, there was a positive impact on both communities in terms of greater convergence of their views on ecology. The increase in post-workshop means for all analysed variables indicates an overall positive impact. However, the considerable discrepancy regarding the completion of the pre- and post-questionnaires should be considered. In fact, 77 participants filled out the pre questionnaire, compared to 29 who filled out the post questionnaire. The significant difference between the pre- and post-numbers complicates the ability to make direct comparisons between the responses of the same participants.

Social policies

The meetings on social policies were organized in cooperation with "Social One", a network made up of social workers and academics. This network is responsible for providing training on the social implications of policies, facilitating dialogue between social actors, and collecting data on citizens' perspectives on social issues. Thus, their main role is to promote awareness and understanding of social policies among dialogue participants, creating a space for informed and constructive discussions.

The pre-workshop sample consisted of 46 females (52.3%) and 42 males (47.7%). After the workshop, the number of male participants decreased to 18 (64.3%), while the number of females decreased to 10 (35.7%).

Before the workshop, most participants fell into the over-60 age group (48.9%, 43 participants), followed by the 40-60 age group (34.1%, 30 participants), the 25-39 age group (13.6 %, 12 participants) and finally from the 18-24 age group (3.4%, 3 participants). In the post-workshop, the distribution saw the 40-60 age group prevail with 11 participants (40.7%), followed by the 60+ age group with 8 participants (29.6%), the 25-39 age group and the 18-24 age group both with 4 participants each (14.8%).

The majority of pre-workshop participants were from Germany (30.7%, 27 participants), followed by Italy (15.9%, 14 participants) and Romania (12.5%, 11 participants). Other countries were represented to a lesser extent. After the workshop, Germany continued to be the most represented country with 13 participants (46.4%), followed by Romania with 6 participants (21.4%) and other countries with a variable distribution between 1 and 3 participants per country.

Before the workshop, the largest group was composed of employees (36.4%, 32 participants), followed by pensioners (29.5%, 26 participants), other employment statuses (17.0%, 15 participants), self-employed workers (9.1%, 8 participants), students (4.5%, 4 participants) and other statutes (3.4%, 3 participants). After the workshop, the group of employees remained the largest with 14 participants (50.0%), followed by students (17.9%, 5 participants), self-employed workers and pensioners both with 4 participants (14.3%), and finally other statutes with 1 participant (3.6%).

The pre-workshop education level showed a majority of participants with a master's degree (46.6%, 41 participants), followed by bachelor's degrees (20.5%, 18 participants), PhDs (15.9%, 14 participants), high school graduates (14.8%, 13 participants) and participants with a middle school diploma (2.3%, 2 participants). In the post-workshop, most participants still had a master's degree (53.6%, 15 participants), followed by bachelor's degrees (28.6%, 8 participants), PhDs (14.3%, 4 participants), and high school graduates (3.6%, 1 participant).

Pre-workshop questionnaires revealed that the majority of participants were Catholics (68.2%, 60 participants), followed by Lutherans (21.6%, 19 participants), other beliefs (7.9%, 7 participants) and Orthodox (2.3%, 2 participants). In the post-workshop, the distribution was similar with a majority of Catholics (64.3%, 18 participants), followed by Lutherans (21.4%, 6 participants) and Orthodox (14.3%, 4 participants).

Workshop impact

Thematic Impact

During the workshop, participants were asked to rate, on a scale from 1 (never) to 5 (very frequently), how often they believed that people in their country were discriminated against on religious, racial, ethnic or gender grounds and how often they believed people were subjected to hate speech and/or hate crimes. The results showed a notable increase in the perception of these phenomena. In particular, the average of the answers to the question on discrimination went from 2.76 to 3.18, while for the question on hatred it went from 2.59 to 2.86. This increase suggests that participants, after the

workshop, became more aware of how often discrimination and hate speech occur in their home countries.

Knowledge of European policies and other points of view

In terms of knowledge of European policies in the field of discrimination and/or hate crimes and knowledge of other religious and cultural points of view regarding the same topic, participants showed significant improvement. The average of the answers to the question on European policies increased from 5.36 to 5.87, while to the question on knowledge of other points of view on the topic it went from 5.60 to 6.09. This suggests that the workshop was effective in improving participants' understanding of European policies and different religious and cultural perspectives on discrimination and hate crime.

Dialogue and convergence with other points of view

Before the workshop, Catholics had an average convergence of their opinions with those of Christians of same denomination of 6.90. After the workshop, this average increased to 7.73. For Lutherans, the average went from 6.37 to 7.17, while for Orthodox it increased from 7.50 to 8.50. This increase indicates that the workshop had a positive effect on making participants feel more attuned to others' opinions regarding social policies and discrimination. Through dialogue and interaction during the workshop, participants likely found more common ground and developed a greater understanding of each other's perspectives.

As regards the convergence of opinions with the points of view of Christians belonging to different churches, the average convergence for Catholics went from 6.59 to 6.73, for Lutherans from 6.05 to 7.00 and for Orthodox it remained stable at 7.50. Again, a significant increase is observed, indicating that participants have developed a greater understanding and appreciation of different opinions on social policies and discrimination. The workshop therefore facilitated a productive dialogue that helped participants see social issues through the lens of other religious groups.

Conclusion

The workshop on social policies had a positive impact on the participants, improving their perception and knowledge of European policies on the topic covered, also promoting a greater convergence of opinions between the different Christian professions regarding discrimination. The increase in post-workshop means for all analysed variables indicates an overall positive impact. However, even in this case there was a significant difference between the number of completed pre- and post-questionnaires, which complicates the assessment of the real impact of the workshop on the participants.

Communication

The communication meetings were organized in cooperation with "Net-One", a network of journalists and media operators specialized in dialogic journalism, an approach characterized by a fair communication style that aims at social media education, the prevention of fake news and hate speech, and to the limitation of polarized debates.

The communication workshop sample consisted of 13 participants who completed the post-workshop questionnaire. Most participants were female, with 8 women (61.54%) and 5 men (38.46%).

In terms of age, participants were predominantly young adults between 25 and 39 years old, representing 38.46% of the total with 5 participants. This was followed by those between 40 and 60 years old (30.77%, 4 participants) and those over 60 years old (23.08%, 3 participants). One participant was under 18 years old (7.69%).

Geographically, the largest group was from Germany and the Netherlands, each with 4 participants (30.77%). Italy was represented by 3 participants (23.08%), while Romania had one representative (7.69%).

From an occupational perspective, most of the participants were employed (38.46%, 5 participants), followed by retired people (23.08%, 3 participants) and other statuses (15.38%, 2 participants). Other employment statuses included students, self-employed, and other categories, each represented by one participant (7.69%).

The level of education was generally high: most participants had a master's degree (69.23%, 9 participants), followed by those with a bachelor's degree (23.08%, 3 participants) and one participant with primary school education (7.69%).

Workshop impact

Thematic Impact

Participants expressed their perceptions of the presence of misinformation in traditional media and on social media. The average rating for misinformation in mainstream media was 4.38 on a scale of 1 to 5, indicating a high perception of misinformation. For social media, the mean was slightly higher, with a value of 4.92, suggesting an even greater perception of misinformation on social media.

Knowledge of European policies and other points of view

No data were collected regarding these aspects.

Dialogue and convergence with other points of view

No data were collected regarding these aspects.

Conclusion

Overall, it is difficult to draw a conclusion. The responses to the questionnaires were partial, also because the project was at the beginning, and the data collection tool had probably not been adequately proposed. Data on key issues are missing since the questionnaire was constructed and structured differently.

EAST and WEST Dialogue

Ecology

The ecology meetings were organized in collaboration with ECO-one, a transnational platform of experts in the field of environmental protection and sustainability. This platform is part of the New Humanity structure, which coordinates activities together with other project partners. ECO-one makes use of the collaboration of experts and professionals in the sector to organize events both locally and internationally, involving adults and students. Furthermore, ECO-one has a strategic role thanks to its partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which contributes to enriching dialogue and training on ecological issues.

The group of participants who responded to the pre-workshop questionnaire was composed of 17 women (58.6%) and 12 men (41.4%). The group that responded to the post-workshop questionnaire was made up of 18 women (66.7%) and 9 men (33.3%). This indicates a slight female predominance. Most pre-workshop participants fell into the 60+ age group, with 12 people (41.4%), followed by the 40-60 age group with 9 people (31%). The 18-24 and 25-39 age groups had 3 participants each (10.3%), while only one person (3.4%) was under 18 years old. The age ranges remained similar in the post-workshop, with most participants still in the 60+ (14 people, 51.9%) and 40-60 (8 people, 29.6%) ranges. The 18-24 and 25-39 age groups had 2 participants each (7.4%), while only one person (3.7%) was under 18.

Pre-workshop participants came from a variety of countries, with the majority coming from Belgium (8 people, 27.6%). This is followed by Austria with 5 participants (17.2%), Hungary and the Netherlands with 4 participants each (13.8%). Germany, Czech Republic and Italy had 2 participants each (6.90%), and other countries with 1 participant (3.4%). The distribution of countries of origin remained varied, with Belgium continuing to have the largest number of participants (9 people, 33.3%). This is followed by Austria and Hungary with 5 participants (18.5%), Italy, Germany, and the Czech Republic with 2 participants (7.4%), while the Netherlands and Luxembourg had 1 participant each (3.7%).

Most pre-workshop participants were employed (10 people, 34.5%), followed by retirees (8 people, 27.6%) and students (6 people, 20.7%). There was a smaller representation of self-employed workers (2 people, 6.9%), one employee (3.4%) and two people who identified with other occupations (6.9%). In the post-workshop, employees remain the majority group (11 people, 40.7%), followed by pensioners (8 people, 29.6%), students (5 people, 18.5%), and self-employed workers (3 people, 11.1%).

In terms of education level, 12 participants (41.4%) had a master's degree, 6 (20.7%) had a high school diploma, and 5 (17.2%) had a bachelor's degree. Three participants (10.3%) had a secondary level diploma and another three (10.3%) had a doctorate. The post-workshop distribution remained similar with 10 participants (37%) having a master's degree, 9 (33.3%) having a high school diploma, and 5 (18.5%) having a doctorate. Two participants (7.4%) had a middle school diploma and one (3.7%) had a bachelor's degree.

The vast majority of participants identified as Catholic (20 people, 69%). There was a small representation of Muslims (1 person, 3.4%) and other beliefs (8 people, 27.6%). The distribution of religious beliefs showed no significant post-workshop changes, with the majority still identifying as Catholic (23 people, 85.2%). Here too there was a small representation of Muslims (1 person, 3.7%), Orthodox (1 person, 3.7%) and other beliefs (2 people, 7.4%).

Workshop impact

Thematic Impact

The workshop had a positive effect on participants' perceptions of the impact of climate change on the daily lives of people around the world. The increase from 4.07 to 4.33 points indicates that participants have gained greater awareness of how often climate change affects people's lives.

Participants' perception of the contribution of human activities to climate change increased slightly after the workshop, with an increase from 4.24 to 4.27 points. This suggests that, although there has been improvement, participants already largely recognized the influence of human activity on climate change before the workshop.

Knowledge of European policies and other points of view

The workshop significantly improved participants' knowledge of European policies in the field of ecology. The increase from 5.07 to 5.44 points highlights that participants felt more informed about European green policies after participating in the workshop.

Participants' knowledge about the religious and cultural views of others decreased slightly, from 5.46 to 5.41 points after the workshop. This may indicate that while participants have gained greater awareness of cultural complexities and differences, they may not feel more informed about the specific views of other participants.

Dialogue and convergence with other points of view

Participants from the East had an average level of convergence of about 7.17 with the opinions of people from the East and of about 5.67 with the opinions of people from the West. This level increased to approximately 7.43 and approximately 6.43 respectively, indicating a slight increase in the perception of affinity with the opinions of people from the East and a significant improvement in the perception of affinity with the opinions of people from the West.

Participants from the West had an average level of convergence of about 5.90 with the opinions of people from the East and of about 5.45 with the opinions of people from the West. This level increased marginally to approximately 5.95 and approximately 5.55 respectively, indicating little significant increase in the perception of affinity with both the opinions of people from the East and people from the West.

Conclusion

The ecology workshop had a positive impact on several key areas, improving participants' perception of the impact of climate change and knowledge of European green policies. However, there was a slight decrease in perceived knowledge of others' religious and cultural views, suggesting that further interventions may be needed to explore this.

Regarding the perception of affinity between the participants, it could be said that those from the East showed a significant increase in convergence with the opinions of people from the West, suggesting that the workshop facilitated a better understanding and appreciation of the ecological perspectives of the participants from the East, while those from the West showed a less pronounced change in convergence with the opinions of people from the East.

Social policies

The meetings on social policies were organized in cooperation with "Social One", a network made up of social workers and academics. This network is responsible for providing training on the social implications of policies, facilitating dialogue between social actors and collecting data on citizens' perspectives on social issues. Thus, their main role is to promote awareness and understanding of social policies among dialogue participants, creating a space for informed and constructive discussions.

Due to a technical problem, there were no responses to the pre-workshop questionnaire, so the characteristics reported below concern exclusively the sample relating to the post-workshop questionnaire.

The group of workshop participants was mainly composed of women, with 23 female participants representing 69.7% of the total. Men made up 30.3% of the group, with 10 participants.

The majority of participants were in the over 60 age group with 20 people (60.6%). The second most represented group was the one between 40 and 60 years old, with 9 participants (27.3%). There were 3 young adults between 25 and 39 years old, representing 9.1% of the total, while only one participant was between 18 and 24 years old (3.0%).

Participants came from a variety of European countries, with the greatest representation from Austria (9 participants, 27.3%), followed by Belgium (8 participants, 24.2%) and Hungary (6 participants, 18.2%). France was represented by 4 participants (12.1%), while Croatia and Slovakia had 2 participants each (6.1%). Malta and Luxembourg both had only one participant (3.0% each).

Over half of the participants were retired (18 participants, 54.5%). There were 10 employees (30.3%), followed by self-employed workers and employed workers, with 2 participants each (6.1%). Only one participant was a student (3%).

The educational level of the participants was remarkably high. Most had a master's degree (11 participants, 33.3%) or a doctorate (9 participants, 27.3%). Another 7 participants had a bachelor's degree (21.2%) and 5 had completed high school (15.2%). Only one participant had a middle school education level (3%).

Nearly all participants identified as Catholic, with 32 participants (97%). Only one participant identified with another religious belief (3%).

Workshop impact

Thematic Impact

During the workshop, participants were asked to rate, on a scale from 1 (never) to 5 (very frequently), how often they believed that people in their country were discriminated against on religious, racial, ethnic or gender grounds and how often they believed people were subjected to hate speech and/or hate crimes. Since there were no responses to the pre-workshop questionnaire, it is impossible to evaluate the impact of the activity. However, the results of the post-workshop questionnaire are reported.

With an average of 3.5, participants believe that discrimination on religious, racial, ethnic or gender grounds is a frequent issue in their country of origin.

With an average of 3.0, participants perceive that hate speech and/or hate crimes are relatively frequent in their home countries.

Knowledge of European policies and other points of view

In terms of knowledge of European policies in the field of discrimination and/or hate crimes participants reported a medium level of knowledge (5.44 out of 10). In terms of knowledge of other religious and cultural points of view regarding the same topic, participants reported a medium-high knowledge of other participants' religious and cultural views regarding discrimination (5.84 out of

10). This suggests that, despite the absence of responses to the pre-workshop questionnaire to evaluate the actual impact of the activity, there is still room to further investigate these aspects.

Dialogue and convergence with other points of view

Participants from Eastern countries (Croatia, Hungary and Slovakia) perceive greater convergence on the topic of discrimination with people from the West (6.2) than with those from the East (5.9).

As regards participants from Western countries, there was always greater convergence on the topic of discrimination with people from the West (6.2) than with those from the East (5.9).

Conclusion

When considering the impact of dialogue activities, only the final evaluation elements can be highlighted. Significant differences can be seen between people from Eastern and Western Europe and the levels of convergence can be better verified by analysing the data from the meeting on ecology.

Communication

The communication meetings were organized in collaboration with "Net-One", a network of journalists and media operators specialized in dialogic journalism, an approach characterized by a fair communication style that aims at social media education, the prevention of fake news and hate speech, and limiting polarized debates.

In this case there were again no responses to the pre-workshop questionnaire, so the results concern a final evaluation carried out with the contribution of the participants.

The group was mainly composed of men, with 4 male participants representing 57.1% of the total. Women made up 42.9% of the group, with 3 participants.

Participation was equally distributed between the over 60 and the 40-60 age groups, with 2 participants in each group (33.3% each). The 18-24 and 25-39 age groups had one participant each (14.3% each), while one participant did not indicate their age.

Participants were mainly from Hungary, with 3 participants (42.9%). Austria, the Netherlands and Slovakia had one participant each (14.3% each), while one participant did not indicate their nationality.

Retirees made up 28.6% of participants (2). Every other occupational category had only one representative (14.3% each).

The educational level of the participants was very high, with the majority (71.4%) having a master's degree (5 participants). The remaining participants had a high school diploma or a bachelor's degree (14.3% each). Regarding religious belief, there are no data available.

Workshop impact

Thematic Impact

The participants' perception regarding the traceability of disinformation phenomena in traditional media such as press, TV and radio was high as shown by the results, with an average of 4.57 out of 5, indicating that participants believe that disinformation is highly traceable in traditional media in their country.

Regarding the relevance of disinformation phenomena in social media, participants demonstrated a high perception, with an average of 4.71 out of 5, indicating that participants perceive social media as a highly relevant platform for the spread of disinformation.

Knowledge of European policies and other points of view

Given that the process was at the beginning and in an experimental phase, these questions were not asked.

Dialogue and convergence with other points of view

Given that the process was at the beginning and in an experimental phase, these questions were not asked.

Conclusion

The final questionnaire proposed only a few questions in an experimental form. Therefore, conclusions like those of the other workshops cannot be drawn. However, the experience conducted in these two workshops allowed us to refine the survey instrument by actively involving the participants in all the other workshops.

Qualitative Assessment

Alongside the quantitative evaluation carried out through the questionnaires, some interviews were conducted to study whether the goals of the project had been met and to assess participants' reactions to the activities they took part in. The following pages will present first the methodology used to carry out the interviews, and second, a table summarizing the answers, followed by a brief comment.

Methodology

The first step was to identify a sample of participants in the DialogUE project, usually two to four people for each of the four “dialogues”: the Dialogue between Catholics and Muslims, between Christians and non-confessionals, among Christians, and the East-West Dialogue. Thirteen people have been interviewed, who had participated in seven workshops and/or activities of the DialogUE project, either online or in-person.

The interviewees were selected based on their age, gender, nationality, belief and profession, so to have a sample as varied as possible. Six women and seven men were interviewed, of several nationalities: Swiss, Italian, Hungarian, Serb, German, Belgian and French. Of these thirteen people, five of them are university students under 30 years old, while the others are working as professors, translator, lawyer, psychotherapist or communication officer, just to mention some examples. The majority declared themselves as Catholics, one of them as Muslim, one as Christian Orthodox and one as non-confessional. In general, all of them were already volunteering in religious or civil society organizations prior to participating in the project.

Each interview was carried out online via Zoom and was 30 minute long. It consisted of eleven open questions divided in four parts: the first part concerned their approach to dialogue before getting involved in the DialogUE project; the second part analysed their opinions about the workshop or event they joined; in the third part they were asked about their proposals on how to further promote dialogue, and if their approach to dialogue had changed thanks to the activity; the last part revolved around their knowledge of the European Union and their potential contribution to European policies.

The work done through the interviews was aimed at assessing whether the project had been successful in meeting its core goals. On a personal level the objective was to create a general behavioural change by enhancing the capacity of participants to deal with conflict and dialogue with people of different cultural, religious and geographical backgrounds, by reducing stereotypes and by increasing availability to cooperate with other groups. On a wider level, the project aimed at bridging the gap between citizens and EU institutions by raising awareness on EU strategic policies on communication, ecology and social policies, while simultaneously reinforcing EU identity. In this way, participants would hopefully be willing to engage and commit personally with EU policies and dialogue in the future.

In the table below the answers given by respondents have been clustered in four topics: 1) Elements that, according to the interviewee, favoured dialogue during the activity, or that are generally useful to have a deep and respectful dialogue; 2) Elements that discourage dialogue; 3) Their proposals to advance dialogue between different groups; 4) Their opinions on the role of the EU and their suggestions on how the EU could improve its policy. In addition, the division among the four dialogues has been kept.

Results

Dialogue between Catholics and Muslims

| Elements that favour dialogue |
|--|
| Making the person feel accepted; Having some dialogue skills, it is important to know how people think; Small groups; Trying to understand the differences between people and the reasons behind their behaviour, before rejecting them <i>a priori</i> ; In the case of Muslims, integration in our society. Integration then becomes a channel to communicate |
| Proposals |
| Trans-religious dialogue with every religion in one group, trying to find answers or solutions to social problems; There must be structural funding for these projects, together with an association that can conceptualise the project and request funds from the EU. Otherwise, there is a lot of voluntary work, which is important, but it is by involving professionals that you can get more innovative projects; Workshops in schools; Continuing these events to create an opinion among people, to make people think, to spread these values; Using these events as meeting points for people from all over Europe, for them to know what is going on in their area or region, so that they can join; Making the EU aware that citizens who want a more united Europe exist; Making sure that the results of this projects do have an impact. |
| Role of the EU and suggestions |
| More initiatives to regulate human rights on the internet through EU norms should be implemented; The EU should promote more interreligious initiatives, overcoming the diffidence of secular States (Germany); The EU should try to raise more awareness about what it means to be European, both among youth and adults. |
| Elements that discourage dialogue |
| Digital setting (but it is also useful to gather more people from different countries). |

Dialogue between Christians and non-confessionals

| Elements that favour dialogue |
|--|
| Having informal occasions for dialogue (with enough time and in a small group of people), not only organised and formal discussions; Informal spaces to dialogue. Coffee breaks were positively long: this is important because people can discuss on what they have just listened; Dialogue with people with different knowledge and expertise (multipolarity of knowledge, interdisciplinarity); Maximising and leading people to search for convergence points instead of divergence points; Making sure that the knowledge, ideas, and dialogue networks emerged in the conferences are made available to a wider audience, otherwise it is impossible to have an impact ¹ ; Building relations on the subjects, not on the type of actor you represent. |

¹ In December 2024, the proceedings of an important conference organized by the Eco-one network will be published

| Proposals |
|--|
| <p>In France a new dialogue group started after the conference on Ecology, involving high quality scholars and intellectuals of both Christian and Marxist sides;</p> <p>The work done needs to be known on the ground;</p> <p>The two people interviewed joined the task force to continue the dialogue on integral ecology and to communicate to the EU the results of this project;</p> <p>Proposal to use this occasion to initiate a network of dialogue to organise other events;</p> <p>Proposal to create a maxi-dialogue by bringing together the results of all four dialogues;</p> <p>Building bridges with other networks and projects.</p> |
| Role of the EU and suggestions |
| <p>The event was able to make the interviewee rediscover their interest for the EU, and sparked the will to get more engaged in European politics;</p> <p>There should be more political pressure on and by the EU to deliver commitments;</p> <p>More participative activities with the EU on different strategic subjects (like ecology);</p> <p>There must be an impact that people can see (so for the EU to be credible)²;</p> <p>Many EU projects (for example the Conference on the Future of Europe) are useful for those <i>inside</i> the project, but not for others: there is the need of mechanisms to give centrality and power to people;</p> <p>These projects help people believe that a politically united Europe is possible, so the EU should have a mechanism (for example a referendum) to quickly spread the initiatives to everybody;</p> <p>A mistake of the EU is the insufficient representation of differences.</p> |
| Elements that discourage dialogue |
| <p>The dialogue is European, but far from the ground reality.</p> |

Dialogue among Christians

| Elements that favour dialogue |
|--|
| <p>Mutual listening and tolerance;</p> <p>Getting to know the other's culture by going to their country (also to reduce prejudices);</p> <p>Seeing other people being committed for dialogue is contagious;</p> <p>Having the same values;</p> <p>Cultural awareness;</p> <p>Welcoming atmosphere, acceptance for diversity;</p> <p>Focussing on the beauty of exchanging views, without trying to persuade one another;</p> <p>Curiosity and openness;</p> <p>Looking for the common ground, and only at a later stage talking about the differences.</p> |
| Proposals |
| <p>The most important thing is acting within a group, so it is important to raise awareness within the groups that already deal with these topics;</p> <p>Workshops must be "dynamic", not just sitting and listening to someone lecturing;</p> <p>Showing the world that there is hope by talking about these experiences;</p> <p>The public has an opinion, but it is often not represented where it should be: proper networks should be created to connect these communities, for then forming a well-established opinion about important matters, that can be represented at an EU event.</p> |
| Role of the EU and suggestions |
| <p>The EU should invest more in exchanges for young people, because it is an investment for peace;</p> <p>Providing funds, since not many youngsters can afford these events;</p> |

² In the interviewee's words, the Conference on the Future of Europe for example was a remarkable project but it did not generate a clear impact.

| |
|---|
| <p>Youngsters are not sure about how they can have an impact (for example when there is a workshop on environment, then lobbies act against it);</p> <p>The EU is so large that in smaller and rural villages it is difficult to perceive it;</p> <p>The EU is thinking too much in a short-term perspective;</p> <p>The EU should consider more the religious and spiritual aspects.</p> |
| Elements that discourage dialogue |
| <p>Language barrier;</p> <p>It is hard to motivate youth, they need the right incentive: they want to make a change, but they don't know how. They must be rightly facilitated;</p> <p>Activities that were just about "giving information";</p> <p>Generational gaps.</p> |

East-West Dialogue

| |
|---|
| Elements that favour dialogue |
| <p>Having meaningful conversations about what is different;</p> <p>Safe, friendly, and acceptive environment;</p> <p>Honesty;</p> <p>Addressing the language barrier (sometimes well-managed, sometimes not);</p> <p>Having occasions to practice dialogue is fundamental (there are not many opportunities for normal people);</p> <p>Facilitating the mutual knowledge of each other, so to make people feel at ease;</p> <p>Informal occasions to dialogue, like lunch breaks: they are useful to build new relationships;</p> <p>Trying to understand the other person, not to convince them;</p> <p><i>Listening</i>, before talking;</p> <p>Getting inputs from different sources to create an opinion.</p> |
| Proposals |
| <p>Initiating dialogue groups at society level to share thoughts, above all where the society is most pluralized (Hungary)³;</p> <p>Teaching people how to talk about sensitive topics, it is important to know which words and language to use;</p> <p>Organising similar activities in symbolic places, like Belgrade (the city hosts Muslims, Orthodox, Catholics...);</p> <p>Giving importance to the problem of fake news and continuing talking about it;</p> <p>Going on with events and project like this (with the EU support and funding).</p> |
| Role of the EU and suggestions |
| <p>The EU should use this opportunity to listen to people that are not politicians;</p> <p>The EU should try to engage more with Eastern European countries and people;</p> <p>The EU should become closer to less educated people and the youth to fight euroscepticism;</p> <p>The EU could help people who want to engage with dialogue to be mediators between the EU and society.</p> |
| Elements that discourage dialogue |
| <p>Language barrier;</p> <p>Online meeting (because informal dialogue is not possible).</p> |

³ After the workshop, the person interviewed admitted being more prone to participate in such initiatives.

Additional comments

In general, both positive and negative observations can be drawn from the interviews. The first comment concerns the profile of the interviewees. The people that accepted to be interviewed were all already involved in the promotion of intercultural and interreligious dialogue. Consequently, it can be said that they were already open to dialogue, and even if the DialogUE project was described as overall useful and significant, the opinion of people who are less used to such activities could not be heard. In some cases, the event or workshop focussed little – and sometimes even never – on the topic of the EU, therefore participants were unable to grasp the significance of being personally engaged in European processes. Similarly, participants do not seem to have deepened their knowledge of EU functioning and policies, unless they were already educated on the subject, suggesting that the project did not meet the expectations about bridging the gap between the EU and citizens.

Despite these negative remarks, there are also unquestionable positive elements worth mentioning. The events were generally helpful to raise awareness about mutual tolerance and understanding, since some participants underlined how it became easier for them to understand other cultures after joining the project. Therefore, the project was generally successful in encouraging people to cooperate with other groups of different cultural, religious, and geographical backgrounds and to overcome stereotypes. Moreover, some interviewees acknowledged that they could gain new suggestions, ideas, examples, and experiences with which to enrich the dialogue actions they are already involved in; others expressed the will to personally initiate dialogue activities where they live. Overall, all interviewees seem willing to engage further with dialogue activities, some of them more actively than others.

On a last note, the interviewees expressed general satisfaction with the three topics chosen: ecology, communication and social policies. The three subjects were often discussed with a fresh and different perspective, giving participants quality content through which they could learn new things. One interviewee praised the choice of linking social policies with religious diversity, describing it as a very bold and brave decision, as such a topic is divisive.

By reading the table, it emerges that participants agreed on the positive and generative impact of convergence between different people, and they highlighted how informal occasions are much more fruitful than formal meetings or lectures. In conclusion, everyone regarded these activities as highly significant, though many expressed concerns about the actual outcomes of these projects. In other words, the interviewees emphasised the importance of disseminating the results, for these projects to truly have an impact.

Main results

For the study of the activities impact, pre and post questionnaires were used, with 76 indicators for the participants to fill in. The experimental evaluation design demonstrates that there were changes in all items.

This shows that the activities produced changes in the orientations and opinions of the participants. Given the diversity of the topics and working groups, the deviations were of different magnitude and only in seven cases was a negative deviation recorded.

Let us now analyse the three themes addressed in the four dialogue groups: Ecology, Social Policies and Communication.

The discussion on Ecological issues was well received by the participants, particularly by the group of dialogue among Christians.

The discussion on Social policies found greater favour in the dialogue group between believers and non-confessionals. In the other groups – particularly in the dialogue between Christians and Muslims – there have been more critical issues as there are many controversial subjects that are not easily manageable in a debate lasting a few hours. However, a slight deviation indicates that the orderly and reasoned reflection conducted in the group allowed an open comparison of the various positions.

In the case of Communication, the participants faced challenges, and their awareness likely prompted the interreligious group to express the most critical considerations. In the other three types of dialogue there was a positive consideration, albeit with small increases. It must be considered that disinformation in the religious field is seen as a very negative element and, unfortunately, in recent years many phenomena of disinformation and misinformation have occurred.

Studying the data regarding knowledge of European policies, we note that the average of the deviations before and after the meetings is rather high compared to all the items considered: +1.52. This means that during the workshops the information and activities had a significant impact on the opinions of the participants. Greater awareness of what the European Union is achieving and can do in the coming years indicates that it is recognized by participants of various religious beliefs as an important actor from a social, economic and political point of view.

The participants in the workshops had the opportunity to compare and exchange opinions, trying to verify different levels of convergence with different and often adverse positions. The monitoring results allow us to make some considerations. In general, all the participants declared that they had brought their point of view closer to that of people with different beliefs or orientations. The greatest divergences occurred, as previously mentioned, in the dialogue group between Christians and Muslims discussing one issue. In the area of social policies there are controversial topics such as places of worship, clothing, and other family issues where there are very different opinions. It must be underlined that one of the objectives of the project was to verify where there are these critical points to develop forms of listening and mutual respect for the different positions.

Final remarks

The DialogUE project allowed the meeting of different cultures, beliefs and religions which often experience divergences and even conflicts.

The workshops on the four dialogues represented a complementary mirror of EU society both in terms of religious, cultural and geographical belongings and for the intergenerational composition. Thanks to the workshops, significant energies of comparison, discussion and dialogue have been mobilized, which have generated significant changes.

The results achieved and presented in this study demonstrate the importance of encouraging moments of discussion, exchange of information and opinions, even when addressing difficult and controversial issues at a social, political and economic level. The workshops, if properly conducted, allow a dialogue by putting at the centre the main concerns of European citizens of different beliefs.

The positive climate of dialogue and exchange favoured the production of timely and detailed recommendations. Obviously, given the time constraints, these recommendations do not always offer significant innovations to the framework of social policies, ecological transition, and effective communication. However, these recommendations are a clear result of a constructive dialogue experienced by the participants, which indicates the achievement of the main objectives of the project.

This project, of course, has also limits which are given by the type of resources used and the time available to carry out the various activities. A point to be taken into consideration for the development of other projects in the field of socio-cultural dialogue concerns the recruitment of people. Forming heterogeneous groups in terms of cultural level, gender, age and beliefs is an important challenge. This challenge will have to be addressed with more care in future European projects to ensure, where possible, better representativeness of the different memberships.

The DialogUE project wanted to open a front for discussion and debate between different groups on issues of great social impact. From the introduction it was specified that the comparison should not lead to consensus, but rather to the recognition and acceptance of diversity. The monitoring indicators and the results emerged allow us to give a positive evaluation of what was achieved in the workshops. In fact, convergence on various aspects does not mean flattening, but rather the richness of contributions in a dialogue that has made relative and differentiated consensus a strong point.

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