



JUST! NEWSLETTER

Updates from the JUST ACTION project



OUR JOURNEY SO FAR...

by Alex Whyatt

We've been hard at work developing resources and teacher training as part of the Just Action project. But what exactly have we been doing? Join us as we look back over the project so far.

Summer 2020: First applied for Erasmus+ funding to adapt a GCE programme developed by GAP Ireland. This application was refused, but the feedback we received was very helpful!

Summer 2021: We reapplied for Erasmus+ funding. This time we carried out more research to support our application. We asked teachers in partner countries how they found existing resources and teacher training in GCE and climate action. They told us that...

September 2021: Application accepted!

Continues overleaf

Project Results

Here's a quick reminder of the goals of the project! Between now and 2024, we're going to produce materials to help teachers to bring climate action into their schools using Global Citizenship Education (GCE). We'll be developing:

Secondary School Resources

Primary School Resources

Teacher Training Programme

Resource and Learning
Online Platform

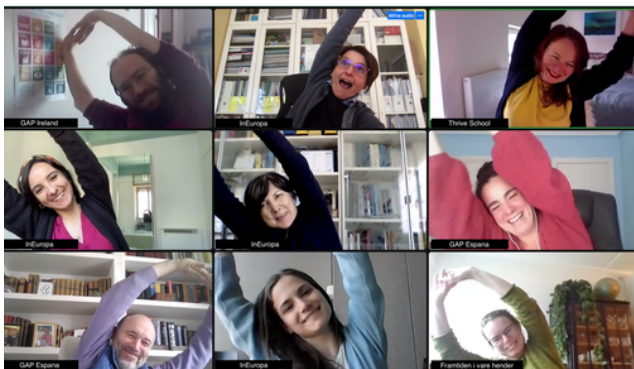


OUR JOURNEY (CONT.)

January 2022: The first official transnational partner meeting. Usually, these are held in-person, but Covid restrictions in Ireland at the time meant it was unwise to travel. So on Zoom, we presented the state-of-the-art of GCE in partner countries, heard about GCE in Ireland from Lisa Gallagher at Worldwide Global Schools, and then began to plan our project results. We also talked about how we could measure the impacts of the programme, and made some arrangements for working together as a team.

February - March 2022: We had our first learning, teaching, training and activity, or LTTA for short. To be sure we were creating resources that had the most impact, we wanted to use a design thinking approach. See the next page for a description of the workshop.

March - April 2022: We spent a lot of time talking to teachers. Each partner recruited two teachers at primary level and two at secondary. We interviewed these teachers to understand their needs in GCE and climate action. Later, they will help us to pilot our resources.

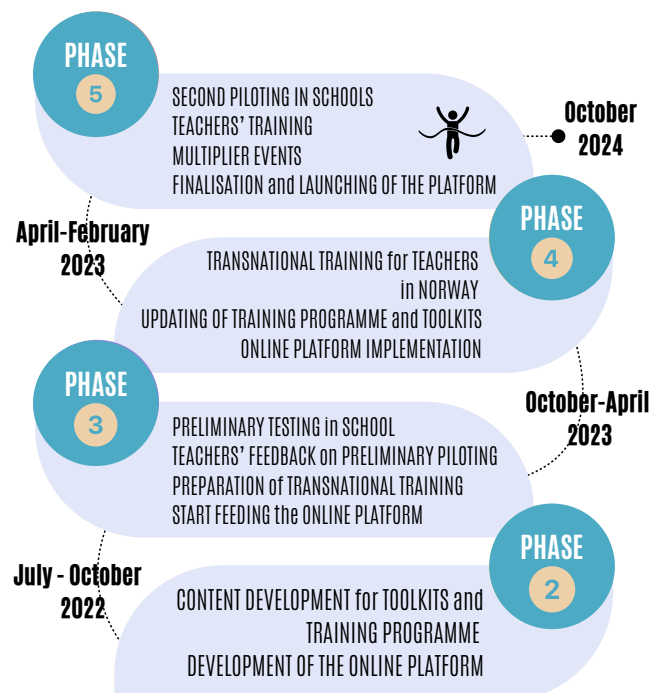


Taking a stretch during a long Zoom session!

June 2022: GAP International, the umbrella organisation for project partners, had its AGM. Our little team finally got to meet in person! For some of this precious in-person time we made sure our timeline made sense, we worked on the project results, and explored Gea's lovely permaculture farm in the sun!

July - August 2022: The summer season was a little slower, as most of the team took holiday time. We developed a template for our primary school resources, and created a few activities. We will soon give these to our teachers to pilot, and then include their feedback. We're really excited to try them out!

NEXT STEPS





DESIGN THINKING WORKSHOP

By Alex Whyatt

As part of the project kick-off, the Just Action team attended a workshop in design thinking. Design thinking is a process that helps creators to understand the needs of their users, and develop products accordingly. This help to make things that are really helpful to our teachers and students.

The workshop was facilitated by Clare Mulvaney of Thrive School over four sessions in February and March 2022. We met on Zoom and collaborated on an interactive whiteboard called Mural.

Day One: The first day was an introduction to design thinking. We learned that good products are ones that meet users' needs in a useful way, and the people who know best about those needs are the users themselves. The design thinking process follows four phases; research, insight, ideate, and prototype. Research means learning about what resources already exist and what teachers do and use in their classes. The insight phase involved gathering together this information so we could discover new ideas.

One great thing about this workshop was that it was really practical. Clare divided us up into teams and set each team a 'design challenge'. These challenges were similar to the project results - for example, one team was asked How might we design relevant, adaptable and easy-to-use GCE materials for primary teachers? Our homework for this session was to interview teachers and generate some insights. You can see some of these on the next page.

Day Two In this session, we focused on empathy - trying to understand the world from the perspective of teachers. Clare created a few 'personas' - fictional teacher profiles. Using the data from our interviews, she challenged us to understand what they might need. We phrased this need as a 'problem', for example, *Teachers need clear, detailed and adaptable resources because of time constraints for planning and teaching.* By asking teachers about our problem statement, we were able to validate it to see if it was true for them.

Day Three It's time to get creative! We learned lots of activities to generate ideas. For example, in Crazy 8s we drew 8 ideas in different 'frames' - what's the worst idea, the best idea, a wild idea, etc. We then started to develop a prototype - a simple, cheap and quick version of the end product.

Day Four We pitched our ideas to the rest of the team and got feedback. A prototype is useful because you can show it to many different stakeholders to show your ideas - especially teachers. This helped us to develop the roadmap for the future.

Overall, this was a really interesting and exciting workshop. We got closer together as a team, and the challenges set by Claire meant that it had real-world benefits for the project. We can't wait to see how this translates into our project results!



The prototype of PR2 from the design thinking workshop



INSIGHTS FROM TEACHERS

By Elisa Lai

As we learned from our design thinking workshop, to develop powerful active citizenship training for teachers and students, we need to talk to the people who will eventually use it! In February 2022, we started gathering information about teachers' needs. We found that, even though our teachers work in different countries, they have plenty in common. Here are some of those insights.

Time

Teachers usually only have a few hours to dedicate to global citizenship education, and learning activities must always be in line with curricular requirements. This means activities need to be impactful, memorable, and generative.

Continuity

Although there are curricular requirements for GCE in some partner countries, in practice, what students actually learn depends on the needs, interests and views of the teachers themselves. Teachers felt this created a disjointed learning experience for their students.

Being active

Teacher training, even when they describe themselves as 'active', often end up as boring lectures. If learning is boring for teachers, how can they encourage students to be passionate about global issues? Our programme teachers are keen on that allows them to experiment and apply to their classrooms.

Practical action

Teachers also need to be able to lead and support students to take action. Gone is the teacher-centred, 'lecture'-style of lesson, and in its place, teachers need to be able to use learner-centred methodologies. Teachers especially want to know how to drive action projects that create space for learning in their students.

The key to students' hearts

When we asked what it takes to get to students' hearts and minds, all teachers answered that being able to convey a message in a passionate way is the most important element of good teaching. Teachers want to be able to convince students of the importance of the topic, and of the power in action and solidarity to influence a complex world.

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