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Summary Report of the student, teacher and citizen surveys

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Promoting STEAM through participatory urban regeneration

Project partners:



City of Rijeka



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The FREELAND project “**Promoting STEAM through participatory urban regeneration**” aims at supporting schoolteachers and students in creating an educational environment in which respect for people and the natural and urban environment are at the centre. The participating schools are situated in areas that face challenges of social integration, with cultural minorities, social housing, or socio-economic disadvantages. The schools’ goals are reducing the dropout rate and integrating young people who may have fewer opportunities. Communities’ environments in these neighbourhoods, well-known by the students, become learning spaces, with a special focus on nature’s capacity to withstand the challenges of the urban environment.

FREELAND aims to develop a methodology that involves the activation of educational activities (including sports and cultural activities) based on an informal learning atmosphere, to create a stimulating and pleasant learning environment for STEAM subjects, and a living laboratory to practise civic education and inclusion by taking care of public spaces. Participation in democratic life, common values, and civic engagement is achieved by providing non-formal learning opportunities that involve schools of different grades, families and citizens. Eventually, the project contributes to the formation of a sense of belonging of the local place.

Surveys objectives and tools

At the beginning of the project, FREELAND has involved the students and the teachers of the schools participating in the project, in a survey aimed to identify teenagers' and teachers' knowledge, interest and attitudes towards urban regeneration, environmental threats, concepts and terminology, and their interest and familiarity in educational methodologies and tools. In addition, a survey to citizens aimed to focus on different aspects of citizen’s involvement in the project topics, not only to understand how much citizens knew about urban regeneration, climate change and city sustainability, but also to evaluate their interest in learning more and being involved in concrete actions, in collaboration with schools.

The surveys, in the form of questionnaires, were created in October 2024 and assessed internally to verify the clarity of questions and items and the overall coherence of the questions with respect to the aim of the survey. The questionnaires were anonymous, being impossible to identify the respondent.

The questionnaires for the students, in the three project languages, are available at the following links:

Questionnaire for the students:

Italian: <https://forms.gle/dcjvp6PTWrS7GvTU6>

Croatian: <https://forms.gle/YJQJzBTLBx8YQAQ8ZA>

Polish: <https://forms.gle/bjZwZTrkZWWX6svKA>

The questionnaires for the teachers:



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Italian: <https://forms.gle/24KLQH2DsmUvmyd56>

Croatian: <https://forms.gle/j96aVVslR5DeJioW8>

Polish: <https://forms.gle/wVynEU2ucA4u1h7x5>

The questionnaires for the citizens are available in four languages:

Italian: <https://forms.gle/tuxg3zk66ME9rdfr8>

Croatian: <https://forms.gle/RYttAN9H4Kxu5oz57>

Polish: <https://forms.gle/1NjhnioZasjZc6po9>

English: <https://forms.gle/oq46kKo7NXT937H79>

The questionnaires were administered between the 9th and the 20th of January 2025 in three countries of the project, at the Scientific Lyceum “N. Copernico” in Prato and Lyceum “M. Hack” in Baronissi in Italy; the Lyceum in Gandsk, Poland and the Gymnasium in Rijeka, Croatia. The questionnaire for stakeholders and citizens spread through the Network of Major Cities of Europe as the consortium members circulated through their own distribution channels.

In this document, we report only the key findings of the results while detailed reports are available from the project website.

Student results

Profile: Participants came from various age groups and educational levels of the secondary schools participating in the project: two Lyceums and one Gymnasium.

Urban regeneration and civic engagement:

- Most students had basic knowledge of main common terms, but they knew to lesser extent the term urban regeneration.
- They were very much interested in learning ways to become aware and active citizens and had a very positive attitude, agreeing with the importance of being an active citizen and of preserving urban spaces.

Sustainability and climate change:

- Most students had basic knowledge of main common terms such as sustainability and climate change and its impact on cities and human health, but fewer students knew the concept of circular economy.
- Students were interested in learning about climate change and its impacts on cities and human health, and to less extent in “participating in activities that make own city more sustainable”.
- Students thought that “a citizen should be aware about climate change” and they felt the need to do something to prevent the impacts of climate change.

Innovative learning environment and ICT tools



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- A few students regularly used ICT tools in education and even less had experience in fieldwork, but they had experience in learning by doing and in group work.
- Students would like to use personal devices for studying and they would like to do projects that involve external experts (e.g. visiting their labs), but less students were interested in school projects that involve the local community (e.g. families, associations, experts, municipality) or in creating artistic outcomes (drawing, painting, design, photography, etc.) to communicate ideas and notions.
- Students thought that “the use of ICT tools (e.g. digital platforms) can make lessons more interesting, and that fieldwork would motivate more in learning. They also feel most school subjects as detached from modern life.

Overall Perception about School and Learning

- Students would like to connect school disciplines to better understand things
- More were the students who liked Science and Technology than those who liked Humanistic studies) and subjects related to Art.

Teacher results

Profile: Most teachers were females and between 36-55 years old, older teachers were particularly the Italian ones.

Urban regeneration and civic engagement:

- Teachers reported understanding the concept of biodiversity and incorporating discussions on social issues or civic engagement in their teaching and including ecology-related topics in their lessons. However, fewer teachers demonstrated knowledge on urban design/regeneration.
- Most teachers were interested in learning about urban regeneration and in how to become more aware and active citizens, and all teachers recognized the value of incorporating civic engagement into their teaching.
- All teachers agreed on the importance of actively taking care of a neglected space in an urban context and on the civic education and active engagement in modern teaching. They believed that students would be more motivated when teaching includes civic life and social issues, especially when learning deals with one's specific area.

Sustainability and climate change:

- Most teachers felt skilled enough to discuss the implications of climate change and its impact on cities and human health with students and peers and include topics of climate change and sustainability in their own teaching, but only a few the concept of circular economy.
- The majority were interested in teaching about climate change and its impact and in integrating more critical discussions on sustainability.
- Most teachers had positive attitudes, believing about the importance of being aware about climate change as citizens.



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Innovative learning environment and ICT tools

- Most teachers regularly used ICT tools in teaching (fewer Italian teachers) and almost all teachers stay updated on innovative teaching methodologies. Integrated STEAM teaching is less practiced, but teachers were engaged in interdisciplinary collaborations. Fieldwork was practiced by a few, mostly Croatians. Collaboration with local stakeholders was more common among Croatian teachers.
- The majority of the teachers were interested in being informed about innovative teaching methods and in collaborating with colleagues and with the local community and local stakeholders.
- Almost all teachers believe that innovative teaching methodologies can improve students' learning, and that fieldwork improve students' motivation to learn. Personal devices were considered important for learning. However, teachers thought that "innovative teaching methodology requires great workload" although there were in favour of a topic-centred approach for teaching instead of a subject-centred one.

Challenges in Teaching:

- Only about 50% of teachers recognized constraints in the application of innovative teaching methodologies, such as limited time in terms of class hours, high number of students in the class, logistic issues that prevent outdoor activities, lack of time and facilities to introduce new different teaching protocols.

Citizen results

The survey collected hundreds of responses (Italy – 176; Croatia – 158; Poland – 147; Other – 14 from different countries), with a majority of females.

Knowledge, Interests and Attitudes on Urban Regeneration

- The survey highlights a generally favourable context for developing urban regeneration initiatives across Italy, Croatia, Poland and other countries, with some differences in awareness, engagement and preferences.

Knowledge and awareness.

- Familiarity with urban regeneration varies: it is high in Poland, while in Italy and Croatia respondents mostly report only partial knowledge. In contrast, knowledge of ecology and biodiversity is consistently high across all countries, providing a solid basis for environmental actions.

Interest in learning.

- Interest in further knowledge is high for both urban regeneration and environmental topics, even among those already familiar with them, indicating good potential for awareness-raising and educational activities.



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- Improving environmental quality emerges as the main priority (it gets more interest) in Italy, Croatia and Poland, whereas respondents from other countries place more emphasis on participation and social cohesion. The redevelopment of public spaces is also widely valued across all samples.

Willingness to cooperate.

- Openness to collaboration with schools and local communities is moderate, with Croatia and Italy showing higher interest, while Poland displays more reluctance. Preferred forms of engagement include co-design of public spaces, support to local groups, and active participation in projects.
- The barriers to participation are the lack of time, followed by the belief that public authorities should be responsible. Lack of interest or perceived uselessness are marginal reasons.

Attitudes towards participation.

- Respondents strongly believe that small, community-led interventions can improve urban quality of life, and that collaboration between schools and citizens can foster social integration.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- Greater integration of sustainability into educational programs.
- Encourage more interactive teaching methods, field work and the use of personal devices to engage students. Keep group work as appreciated learning method.
- Include civic education and active engagement on social issues in teaching.
- Improve collaboration between schools and local organizations for concrete initiatives.
- The population is aware, interested, and generally positive towards urban regeneration, but only partially engaged. This suggests that participatory processes could be effective if supported by targeted communication, capacity-building, and facilitation strategies.