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Integrating Principles of Education for Sustainable Development into Visual Art Education in Teacher Education Programmes



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3.2 ESD TEMPLATES

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3.2.1 ESD Template: Land Use

A Sustainable Development challenge that is relevant to Malta:

“Land in Malta is the scarcest and most valuable resource. Clear limitations should exist regarding what percentage of land available is to be allocated to development. With time, the demand for available land to be used one way or the other was bound to increase – and it did. Ditto the price of land. Pressures grew for a more intensive use of it. Still, even while everybody accepted that land is our most precious asset, or perhaps for that reason, irrational decisions – there’s no better adjective to describe them – continued to be taken”.

Alfred Sant, Economist and former prime minister. <https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2015-08-20/blogs-opinions/Land-use-6736140828>

This SD issue links with SDGs 3, 11, 13, 15 as below:

Goal -3

- Objective: Good Health and Well-being
- Description: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages by 2030.

Goal -11

- Objective: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Description: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

Goal -13

- Objective: Climate Action
- Description: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

Goal -15

- Objective: Life on Land
- Description: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, combat desertification and halt biodiversity loss.

VAE can address learning about and for this SD issue:

- By learning to observe through VAE techniques, students become aware of how abusing our land contributes to the uglification of our localities.
- Students can express through drawing and painting their “feelings” on seeing land of important ecological value in their locality being degraded.
- VAE can promote land-based education using photography.
- VAE can promote land-based education using drawing/painting.
- Cultivate Ecological Literacy. See the Big Idea 5.2 (Ecological Literacy) in the Guide: “Visual art education in new times: Connecting Art with Real life issues”
- Learn about Regeneration See the Big Idea 5.6 (Regeneration) in the Guide: “Visual art education in new times: Connecting Art with Real life issues”
- Make use of the work of artists such as Steve Bonello, whose work reflects on (among other themes) the tragedy of the commons and compulsive construction.

Suggested ideas to learn about and for this SD issue through VAE:

Start a community garden on school grounds. The piece of land can be owned by the school or identified in consultation with the municipality. It can be as small as a raised bed or a small field. Involve the community where possible.

- Students can learn to sketch the plants they would like to grow.

- Students can sketch designs of how they envision the identified piece of land.
- Students can learn about different plant varieties, their colours and hues, in order to sketch a design that contributes to the beautification of the identified piece of land.
- Students sketches can be exhibited at the municipality
- The landscape can be embellished using murals.
- Plants can be labelled in creative and artistic manners, using scrap wood.

ESD competences that can be enhanced:

- Learning to be (Cultivating a reconnection with nature)
- Exploring alternative futures (identification of new pathways in land use)

Strategies to ensure an empowering approach:

- A community garden can increase the availability of fresh produce for students, it adds to community green spaces, it can potentially supplement the school incomes by selling produce or saplings on an open day, and it contributes in general to participants' mental and physical health.
- Elect a small committee to be responsible for the project (Re. community garden)
- Be political and privilege advocacy. E.g. once a land use issue is explored through VAE, students can engage with the local council.

3.2.2 ESD Template: Poverty

A Sustainable Development challenge that is relevant to Malta

"In 2019, people at risk of poverty increased by 5.2%, whilst people living in a severely materially deprived household increased by 24.9% over the previous year.

In view of this, Kurt Muscat, Senior Executive Advisory Services at EMCS states, "When considering the result in poverty took place in a year (2019) where the Maltese economy grew by 6.8%, this seems to indicate that while increases in the average income are being registered, such increases are not taking place across the board, leading to a widening divide between social classes. The strong double digit increase in persons living in a severely deprived household, in 2019 when compared to 2018, is worrying, especially, when taken in the context, that, the economic retraction that is likely to take place in 2020 due to the pandemic is likely to push these statistics towards more worrying levels."

<https://www.emcs.com.mt/people-living-in-poverty-in-malta-is-on-the-rise/>

"The pandemic is set to push an estimated 71 million additional people into extreme poverty. From 1990 until last year, the number of extremely poor people fell from 36% of the world's population, to around 8%. Now, for the first time since 1998, that number is rising fast."

<https://www.developmentperspectives.ie/SDGChallenge/InformationPacks/SDG%201%20No%20Poverty%202020.pdf>

This SD issue links with SDGs 1, 2, 8, 10 as below:

Goal -1

- Objective: No Poverty
- Description: By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere.

Goal -2

- Objective: Zero Hunger
- Description: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition by 2030.

Goal -8

- Objective: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- Description: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

Goal -10

- Objective: Reduced Inequality

- Description: Reduce inequality within and among countries by 2030.

VAE can address learning about and for this SD issue:

- Make use of political cartoons to teach about poverty.
- Ensure all children have opportunities to share their feelings and experiences through the Visual Arts.
- Prepare a poster for the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty on the 17th October each year
- Provide opportunities for the poor and marginalised to express themselves through art. Offer resources and encouragement to help express themselves. Provide art materials and a marketplace.
- Teachers make use of artistic work by homeless people.
- The school buys artistic work by homeless people.
- VAE has a role in modelling sustainable practices with classroom resources e.g. buying and using less resources, recycle paper, buying second-hand classroom resources including from charity shops.
- Cultivate compassion. See the Big Idea 5.3 (Compassion) in the Guide: “Visual art education in new times: Connecting Art with Real life issues”

Suggested ideas to learn about and for this SD issue through VAE:

Students can produce a small commercial to convince others to act against poverty. This presumes previous activities where students understand poverty and its causes. Such previous activities could be organised by the VAE teacher itself (e.g. using political cartoons, using photos of the belongings of homeless people or drawings by migrants who crossed the dangerous seas in search of a better life in Europe), or could be coordinated with teachers of other subjects e.g. social studies, geography or mathematics. The commercial can be real (e.g. for the student magazine) or simulated (e.g. a TV commercial). Different media can be used, including short videos (e.g. 30 seconds) taken through an ordinary mobile phone. Such an activity can be done in liaison with the drama teacher.

ESD competences that can be enhanced:

- Learning to do (Practical actions against poverty)
- Learning to be (Personal development – the ability to act with personal responsibility in relation to poverty)
- Achieving transformation (A vision for a society without poverty).
- Active engagement in the present (the urgency of poverty and hunger)

Strategies to ensure an empowering approach:

- Consider the CONCORD Code of Conduct on Images and Messages. See: <https://concordeurope.org/2012/09/27/code-of-conduct-on-images-and-messages/>
- Ensure that learning about a poverty related issue is followed by investigating solutions and acting on at least one.
- Be political. E.g. once a poverty related issue is explored through VAE, students can write to the appropriate Minister, demanding action to eradicate poverty.

3.2.3 ESD Template: Racism and “Otherness”

A Sustainable Development challenge that is relevant to Malta:

“For some reason, it’s culturally okay to be a racist in Malta, and why wouldn’t it be, when it has so very little consequences? Until we treat it like the crime that it is, we shall continue to suffer from ‘otherness’ – and believe you me, we are not keeping them out, but boxing ourselves in.”
<https://www.eve.com.mt/2014/05/31/racism-in-malta-why-is-it-seemingly-acceptable/>

“Online hate has surfaced repeatedly over the past few weeks, triggered by posts published by public figures which fuelled the sentiment to support Labour Leader Robert Abela, after he set the tone that citizens either supported his stand to close the ports to migrants or they stood with ‘the enemy’.”
27/04/2020 <https://theshiftnews.com/2020/04/27/surge-in-racist-and-hate-speech-online-following-government-decisions/>

“Research shows that women are 27 times more likely to be harassed online than men.”
https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/comment/blogs/102693/sexism_is_a_threat_online_too_renee_laiviera

“We all assume the younger generation is more open, but it’s not always the case

“I was swimming at Għadira with my then girlfriend and as any couple would do I gave her a peck on the lips. A group of around 10 kids between the ages of 8 and 13 circled us and started shouting ‘jaq’ and saying that it’s sick and abnormal. This is coming from kids imagine what grownups are capable of doing.””

From: 8 Stories Of Homophobia And Transphobia In Malta That Prove Society Has A Lot Of Catching Up To Do

<https://lovinmalta.com/lifestyle/community/8-stories-of-homophobia-and-transphobia-in-malta-that-prove-society-has-a-lot-of-catching-up-to-do/>

This SD issue links with SDGs 3, 5, 10,16 as below:

Goal -3

- Objective: Good Health and Well-being
- Description: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages by 2030.

Goal -5

- Objective: Gender Equality
- Description: To achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Goal -10

- Objective: Reduced Inequality
- Description: Reduce inequality within and among countries by 2030.

Goal -16

- Objective: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions
- Description: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development; provide access to justice for all.

VAE can address learning about and for this SD issue:

- Capitalise on the comparative advantage VAE has in supporting students to develop new ways of understanding and seeing the world. E.g. VAE as a medium for self-expression and a way to understand multiple perspectives.
- Acknowledge the intangible cultural heritage of diverse students and integrate the cultivation of local identities and knowledge systems into the school curriculum.
- Cultivate intercultural skills. See the Big Idea 5.4 in the Guide: “Visual art education in new times: Connecting Art with Real life issues”
- Students engage with topical campaigns such as the Black Lives Matter campaign through art (e.g. collage).

Suggested ideas to learn about and for this SD issue through VAE:

Create a class quilt – each student will be assigned a square. This idea can be given different formats. E.g. Each square can represent who they are and their heritage. Or each square can represent an anti-racist message. Or handprints with different skin tones. Different media can be used e.g. print work. The quilt represents the diverse identities that exist in the classroom and the classroom as a community. Depending on the square chosen it can also be art as activism.

(Idea inspired by Elder, J. (Spring 5-18-2018). Anti-Racist Education Through the Visual Arts: Lesson Plans for Early Childhood Educators. University of San Francisco.

ESD competences that can be enhanced:

- Learning to live together (an appreciation of interdependence, pluralism, and mutual understanding)
- Active engagement in the present (being voices against racism)
- Exploring alternative futures (creating intercultural visions for the future)

Strategies to ensure an empowering approach:

- Schools need to move beyond celebrating different holidays and traditions and explicitly deal with discriminatory attitudes and behaviours.
- Ensure a focus on positive futures for people rather than those that simply do less harm (e.g. move beyond tolerance).
- Ensure a safe and productive environment where students can have important conversations around racism, sexism, homophobia and religious intolerance.
- If there is an issue that arose in the media or in the community do not "suppress" it but encourage a safe space to talk about it. Capitalise on the comparative advantage of VAE to encourage self-expression.
- Encourage students to speak out against intolerance and prejudice.

3.2.4 ESD Template: Public Space**A Sustainable Development challenge that is relevant to Greece:**

The bad condition of public space in children's neighbourhoods, the ill-maintained parks and playgrounds is the problem tackled here. Given today's technological developments that lure children to indoors instead of outdoors games, it is important to provide adequate, safe and attractive outdoor stimulation and outlets that undeniably contribute to children's physical, mental and social growth. Despite the alleged increased concern for the protection of public health during the COVID-19 lockdown period, public playgrounds continue to show a picture of desertion, with often poorly maintained and thus hazardous games and equipment and filthy ground and open spaces. The problem becomes more acute in larger parks designed to address the needs of multiple ages and create spaces for intergenerational contact and encounters. Intergenerational meeting places are a great idea but demand stricter and more painstaking management and maintenance efforts to secure safety and benefits for all.

SDG(s) linked to this issue:

Goal 3: Good health and wellbeing

Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities

VAE can address learning about and for this SD issue:

Arts and education student teachers can involve children in activities that will enable them to trace, observe and reflect on the problem so that they can plan and design through visual arts means their suggestions for the amelioration of a public space that is addressed to them but takes little care of their actual needs. Children can draw maps or take pictures of playgrounds, so that they can discuss the problems they locate and brainstorm ideas for their redesign. Their suggestions can take the form of scale models, architectural design etc. or visual arts forms.

Suggested ideas to learn about and for this SD issue through VAE:

The study can take the form of action research, i.e. a participatory and collaborative intervention that will generate discussion and reflection among participants and increase student participation and achievement. Based on the arts, the intervention can include equality, attractive activities that build on students' resources and thus engage all students in purposeful and meaningful learning. The arts are more likely to appeal to all children rather than more formal teaching routines and create a "common meaning" that is addressed to the whole group, a starting point that exceeds but at the same time addresses personal pursuits. Cooperative, experiential learning where children are encouraged to use their knowledge and skills to make sense of the new concepts and challenges presented to them are at the heart of such an arts rich programme.

ESD competences that can be enhanced:

By involving children in the observation of familiar places, as well as facilitating them to identify and feature problems related to these places, they become interested in a local problem and are encouraged to make

suggestions for its amelioration. Moreover, this process not only contributes to children's gaining an awareness of environmental issues and values, but it also develops attitudes of active citizenship, all traits promoted by ESD. The study of space in education constitutes the basis for its sensible coordination and planning. It involves children in direct observation, research and experimentation and helps them turn theory into practice.

Strategies to ensure an empowering approach:

Through action research children are actively involved in planning and suggesting solutions for the problem, testing and reshaping their ideas so that they reach the most satisfactory solution for their group. Thus, children are encouraged to be responsible actors who assume responsibility for their life, resolve challenges and contribute to creating a more sustainable world.

3.2.5 ESD Template: Minorities

A Sustainable Development challenge that is relevant to Greece:

Minority children's identity, language and culture appraisal have been proven to be causal factors of achievement/underachievement. Language minority students in monolingual/monocultural classes are usually limited in learning. In an environment that does not offer children opportunities to engage in learning experiences that empower them and invite them to reveal how they situate themselves in the world, what they already know, how they prefer to demonstrate their knowledge and skills, children usually underperform. The problem, therefore, is that societal power relations, and their reflection in patterns of identity negotiation in schools, operate as causal factors in explaining underachievement among students from socially marginalized communities (Cummins, 2004).

SDG(s) linked to this issue:

Goal 4: Quality education

Goal 10: Reduced inequalities

VAE can address learning about and for this SD issue:

By inviting children to draw a portrait of themselves through written, spoken, visual, etc. texts or a combination of multimodal texts, so that they can introduce themselves to the classroom community and, in the process, become aware of and come to terms with their own, their family and community culture. Such an arts-rich intervention can cultivate skills such as multicultural understanding and empathy.

Suggested ideas to learn about and for this SD issue through VAE:

Children can be stimulated to draw a portrait of themselves divided in two halves: the one half will be created by themselves, through any expressive means they choose, in a way that it represents the most vital characteristics of their home/community culture they wish to promote. The second half can be created by a classmate so that it depicts the way she or he sees the portrayed classmate. Airing the diverse ideas expressed through discussion of these split portraits offers children an insight of how their views of themselves are similar or different from those of their peers, which gives them food for thought and increases their critical thinking. Sharing one's views in an open, supporting and safe place develops excellent verbal, reflective and argumentative skills, as well as respect for diversity and for opinions different from our own.

ESD competences that can be enhanced:

When children realise that their culture and language are irrelevant to their progress at school, they are deprived of valuable resources for their learning of and through the dominant school language. Respect and maintenance of a child's home culture and language facilitates rather than obstructs the acquisition of the dominant school language and culture and, at the same time, promises success at school. Maintenance of the home culture and language is among the pursuits of ESD.

Strategies to ensure an empowering approach:

Effective educational interventions that aim to include all children imply the implementation of culturally relevant/sensitive pedagogies that ensure learning opportunities for all. In an empowering, supportive learning environment, different languages and cultures are respected and valued as they are embedded in the learning process in a natural, instrumental way. Instead of being stigmatised for their difference from the dominant languages and ways of knowing and learning, children in a culturally relevant teaching environment are encouraged to use elements from their home culture as a vehicle to achieving literacy in the dominant school culture and language and progressing at school.

3.2.6 ESD Template: Community Spirit

A Sustainable Development challenge that is relevant to Greece:

Through their daily experiences in their local communities, as well as through textbooks, children become acquainted with professions and arts/crafts that seem to be disappearing in the whirl of industrialization and globalization. Some of them, e.g., weaving, constitute arts with an uninterrupted presence in people's lives and activities since the beginning of time. A traditionally female task, individual or corporate, weaving provided families of every class with fabric that wrapped all of their needs. Textiles in Greece alone impress with their variety of technique, material, color and motifs; they are invariably related with traditions, songs, customs and habits and are true representatives of the spirit and temperament of the community that produced them. This fabrication seems a "lost" cause, with consequences to the robustness and resilience of local communities. Given the current tendency for strangulation of cultural variability, the promotion of local arts and the prudent management of natural resources seems to be a vital component of quality education that aims at sustainability; drawing from the memory of the past, they can create a viable contemporary narration.

SDG(s) linked to this issue:

Goal 4: Quality Education

Goal 5: Gender Equality

Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth

Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities

Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production

VAE can address learning about and for this SD issue:

- By familiarizing children with the weaving trajectory through time, by introducing them to the wide variety of weavings around the world and connecting them with the customs and traditions of their birthplaces through actual or virtual visits to museums/craft industries.
- By collaborative involvement in weaving activity that could lead to familiarization with the art as well as creation and marketing of children-made products.
- By utilizing recycled material, e.g., plastic bags, worn fabrics, threads, etc. for weaving useful or/and artistic objects.

Suggested ideas to learn about and for this SD issue through VAE:

Children can:

- Be collaboratively involved in weaving in the fashion of cooperatives.
- Be invited to acquaint themselves with the raw materials (i.e., wool, silk, etc.) for weaving and be sensitized with respect to their natural life cycle
- Using threads, chart a visual art map depicting the history of weaving at local and international level, in preindustrial and current years.
- Learn the traditions, myths, tales, poems, songs, etc. intrinsically woven with the art.
- Imagine a contemporary version of weaving and its diversity as manifested in contemporary art that utilizes threads, textiles and weaving.
- Stage a performance presenting, for instance, the intricate process related to weaving (the discourse, the customs and traditions surrounding it) or a story that depicts a community involved in expressing themselves and creating woven objects.

ESD competences that can be enhanced:

Raising children's awareness in preserving valuable ancient/old resources, in cultivating respect for old customs and traditions or old tales and crafts are among ESD initiatives. Children become aware of the role of local influences on global partnerships; they collaborate and participate in activity that purposes to maintain and make use of valuable resources thus becoming critical thinkers and active future citizens.

Strategies to ensure an empowering approach:

Through collaborative, participatory learning paths, children are actively involved in their learning and in planning and suggesting solutions for their future. By encouraging children to be responsible actors, who assume responsibility for their life, you facilitate them to resolve challenges and contribute to creating a more sustainable world thus ensuring an empowering learning process.

3.2.7 ESD Template: Efi Savvides (Judgement Day)

(Example also applicable to TWOFOOTWO Art work 2 'Kalos Kakos Ithate')

A Sustainable Development challenge that is relevant to Cyprus:

The escalating conflict in Syria has created massive population movements of refugees and asylum seekers that seek safety in other countries. Cyprus is a final destination or in some cases a stop on their way to Europe. Refugees enter illegally by the sea, or through the Turkish-occupied part of Cyprus, using dangerous boats and being financially exploited by smugglers. For Cyprus with a population of 850.000, this creates an emerging migration crisis. The surge in asylum seekers arriving in Cyprus is a result of the island's geography — it's close to Lebanon and Turkey, making it attractive to people fleeing the war in Syria. Its complex history as a divided country makes it harder to regulate migrant inflows. An unknown number of migrants languish in northern Cyprus, which for years has been a destination for Middle Easterners and Africans fleeing economic hardship and war. The number of asylum seekers in Cyprus was five times higher in 2019 than it was four years ago, approaching the country's absorbing capacity and creating a humanitarian crisis for the arriving refugees.

SDG(s) linked to this issue:

The refugee and asylum seekers issue is connected to Sustainable Development Goal 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions – that seeks to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Since poverty, hunger and inequalities can be experienced during fleeing and can also be reasons for migration, indirectly the issue additionally to SDG16 is also connected to the Sustainable Goals:

- SDG1 Zero Poverty
- SDG2 Zero Hunger
- SDG3 Good health and Well-being
- SDG8 Decent work and Economic Growth
- SDG10 Reduced Inequality
- (& SDG16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions)

VAE can address learning about and for this SD issue:

Addressing migration and refugee issues requires a high degree of sensitization, awareness and empathy. The Cyprus people, have experienced the Turkish invasion in 1974, and understand how it feels to lose everything from one day to the other, the horror of fleeing to save your life and how you depend on other people's support and charity in order to survive. Refugees' issue is a sensitive and humanitarian topic and requires citizens' empathy and practical support.

By employing interactive, intervening or even “disturbing” means, Visual Arts have the potential to touch sensitive strings and awaken peoples’ empathy and will to help. Art can reveal the hardships, bring forward the humanitarian crisis, upset the viewers and encourage them to act.

Suggested ideas to learn about and for this SD issue through VAE:

The learners should explore the migration, refugee and asylum-seeking problem in their area. One possible way is to review several interviews and articles published in the local and international press, telling us the stories of people that left their countries, not because they wanted to, but because they had no alternative. The information can be used to develop a concept map through which learners connect the issue with other SDGs. Inspired and informed through these activities, learners will finally be asked to focus on one single message they want to send which they will express through visual arts.

ESD competences that can be enhanced:

- Critical Thinking, Systems Thinking, Values: With systemic competence, learners understand the causes (political, economic, environmental) that led refugees to flee their country. They also understand the situation they are in and critically examine, from a humanitarian perspective, the social, health, economic, environmental, etc. impacts on the lives of refugees and the host countries. This critical reflection provides opportunities to link SDG6 with other SDGs and includes links with humanitarian values leading to empathy.
- Empathy: To create feelings of empathy, understanding of the difficult situation in which refugees find themselves, solidarity & willingness to support them.

Strategies to ensure an empowering approach:

The activity should give a sense of purpose. Learners should be aware that the learning process they are going through will lead them to a practical outcome (their work of art and the message which they want to send) which collectively can be used to raise awareness and become an informal education tool for the broader public or their peers.

3.2.8 ESD Template: Kyriaki Kosta(Climate Challenge)

A Sustainable Development challenge that is relevant to Cyprus:

Subjected to time, everything around us deteriorates and is finally rejected or abandoned: objects, spaces... Their abandonment and/or discarding, is a waste of energy and resources and may contribute to problems of pollution and degradation of the urban environment. There are many such spaces in Cyprus, especially in Nicosia near the ‘green line’ – UN controlled buffer zone - or any other area on the island that has been affected by the economic crisis. These spaces cease to attract visitors, may attract suspicious activities, deteriorate and sink into a vicious cycle of devaluation and absolute abandonment.

SDG(s) linked to this issue:

Repairing or re-inventing objects and spaces is connected to sustainability principles as reusing and minimizing waste and pollution. Restoring or re-inventing deteriorated objects or spaces is also a way of highlighting the otherwise latent dimension of Culture within the Sustainable Development Pillars. Dealing with spaces and objects of the past as well as the present establishes connections with our ‘culture’ in the context of civilization and tradition, as well as our ‘culture’ in the context of our behavior and our mentality as individuals and as citizens.

Sustainable Development Goals relevant to this ‘abandonment’ of objects and spaces issue can be:

- SDG11 Sustainable Cities and Communities
- SDG12 Responsible Production and Consumption

Indirect connections can also be identified with:

- SDG8 Decent work and Economic Growth
- SDG1 Zero Poverty
- SDG2 Zero Hunger
- SDG3 Good health and Well-being
- SDG10 Reduced Inequality

VAE can address learning about and for this SD issue:

Sustainable development is about the sustainable use of the resources. Reusing and restoring helps save energy and resources and is an indication of responsible production and consumption. In order to do so, one has to be imaginative, creative and in many cases re-invent perhaps a different use to the object that has completed its life cycle, in order to make it useful again. Visual Arts develop these competences and employ artistic and creative skills to a practical end.

Suggested ideas to learn about and for this SD issue through VAE:

Learners are asked to find and bring along old 'useless' objects (appliances, adornments, kitchenware, old clothes, an old bike... anything). Identify some interesting pieces and work in groups using a structured handout to explore: the past use of those objects; their origin; their structure; cultural customs connected to them (if any); the ecological impact of their creation (materials, transportation, energy used for their production, pollution created for their production or during their use...) and their disposal. After presenting and discussing the selected objects, they are asked to repair them or re-invent new uses for them using principally the pool of materials from the objects initially brought.

ESD competences that can be enhanced:

Transdisciplinarity
Creativity
Participation
Critical Thinking
Systems Thinking
Values
Action

Strategies to ensure an empowering approach:

The activity should give a sense of purpose. They will make a new object which will have a practical or a decorative use, out of old unexploited (instead of useless) objects. Additionally the exploration part of the learning process will ensure that learners become aware of the environmental impact of each of the goods we use. They will understand that before throwing something away or recycling it, it is important to explore possibilities for alternative uses as a means of saving the energy and resources that would be needed in order to make a completely new object.

3.2.9 ESD Template: Viki Pericleous (The Idle Fountain)**A Sustainable Development challenge that is relevant to Cyprus:**

A major threat to Cyprus biodiversity is the unsustainable form of our tourism as well as urbanization. The construction industry, in the name of economic development, destroys natural habitats and threatens biodiversity and sensitive coastal and terrestrial landscapes. It is necessary to understand that unsustainable practices that lead to environmental degradation for short-term profit entail long term losses – economic, social, cultural and environmental. In order to protect Cyprus landscapes, it is necessary to appreciate their natural beauty (aesthetic value) as well as the uniqueness of Cyprus Geology and biodiversity.

SDG(s) linked to this issue:

SDG9 Industry Innovation and Infrastructure
 SDG11 Sustainable Cities and Communities
 SDG12 Responsible consumption and production
 SDG14 Life below water
 SDG15 Life on Land.

The specific SDGs are highlighted, as the development of the construction industry for tourism or other economic and political interests has a direct impact on terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, the conservation and protection of which is directly linked to our quality of life and is also our moral duty to future generations. As citizens and as a state, we are called upon to act responsibly.

VAE can address learning about and for this SD issue:

Art can promote and develop appreciation for nature through creations using natural materials, creations in nature and about nature. Nature becomes inspiration; context; theme; source of materials; stage and Art becomes the 'voice' that reveals threats, emits values and worries, raises awareness and proposes solutions and actions. It can bring learners in contact with Cyprus landscapes, help them become aware of the factors that lead to environmental degradation (e.g. pollution, urbanisation) and create appreciation for nature and will for action.

Suggested ideas to learn about and for this SD issue through VAE:

Through the study of examples of artistic creations (made with natural materials, creations in nature, for nature and/or by nature) learners explore different landscapes and ecosystems, and identify and discuss actions that may lead to their protection or their degradation. Intrigued by the art they have studied, they are invited to identify areas (near or far) that suffer from environmental degradation due to human activity and create a work of art in a visible spot of the area that can raise public awareness of the problem. Learners can work individually or in groups.

Having identified the problem and the place, they analyse the causes and the outcome. They explore alternative actions and solutions. They discuss the message they want to send, the target audience they will address and they draft ideas of artistic interventions and possible - appropriate "stages" to present their work of art in the area.

The locations of the learners' interventions can be marked on maps which can be disseminated in order to reach the audience.

ESD competences that can be enhanced:

Transdisciplinarity, Participation, Action, Attentiveness, Decisiveness, Criticality, Futures

The process of intervention in space requires the skills of imagination and creativity and has an interdisciplinary character since it can draw information and skills from different scientific fields. It is important that the process starts from the examination of the space, its degradation aspects (ecological, cultural, social, economic). As a process, this analysis contributes to the awareness and awakening of the individual as a responsible consumer and citizen. It is linked to values and leads to a willingness to act. This action and energy is channeled through the creative process of visual intervention in space in order to spread messages and social awakening.

Strategies to ensure an empowering approach:

The activity is connected to action. It begins with the immersion of the learners in the problem and puts them in a situation where they have to explore alternative solutions and ways of disseminating these messages and solutions to the broader public.

3.2.10 ESD Template: Re-Cyprus**A Sustainable Development challenge that is relevant to Cyprus:**

The era of globalization is posing a variety of challenges to national identity. National identity crisis usually arises in political, economic and cultural

levels (Zhuojun & Hualing, 2014). For Cyprus, all these «triggers» seem to systematically appear during the past few years: the financial crisis, the ongoing division of the island due to the Turkish invasion, along with the uniformity promoted by the international market replacing local products, practices and customs.

A person's national identity is formed by 'common' elements in people's daily lives: e.g. national symbols, language, nation's history, culture, music, cuisine, and so on (Janow 2013). Under various social influences, people incorporate the national identity into their personal identities by adopting beliefs, values, assumptions and expectations which align with one's national identity (Bar-Tal and Staub, 1997). People view national beliefs and values as personally meaningful, and translate these beliefs and values into daily practices (Ashmore, Jussim, Wilder, 2001). National identity creates bonds and aspires common goals and efforts for everyone's benefit. In order to conserve and evolve our national identity in the global age, among other actions, we need to: develop national culture, strengthen value integration and enrich the cultural significance of national identity (Zhuojun & Hualing, 2014).

SDG(s) linked to this issue:

Although issues of national identity can potentially be linked to any of the SDGs, we identify as more relevant the:

SDG11 Sustainable Cities and Communities
SDG12 Responsible consumption and production
SDG16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
SDG17 Partnerships for the Goals

VAE can address learning about and for this SD issue:

A strong national identity does not mean nationalism, racism and discrimination. One can be proud of their own culture without rejecting other cultures and identities. VAE can provide a context where learners explore aspects of local culture and identity and identify and scrutinise in a critical way values and attributes of the Cyprus people in the past and how these evolved in time to the present. The process of portraying the national identity of the Cypriot can provide us with cathartic and constructive opportunities of reflection and self-evaluation that can support the evolution of our identity in the pathway of sustainability, justice, equity and solidarity.

Suggested ideas to learn about and for this SD issue through VAE:

Learners elaborate on the concept of identity. What is 'national identity'? What elements compose a 'national identity'?

Learners work in groups and are asked to identify an artwork or artefact and an adjacent practice, habit, custom or behaviour that reflect an element of our national identity. They are also asked to identify and discuss the values that derive from the selected identity element with respect to contemporary society and sustainability values and principles (e.g. weaving – κουπελού, or a patchwork, engages re-using, diminishing waste and diminishing pressure for use of new environmental resources. This is a practice that clashes with prevailing contemporary unsustainable practices of rapid production and consumption. What lessons can we learn from the past?)

ESD competences that can be enhanced:

Futures
Responsibility
Values
Action
Empathy
Criticality
Creativity
Systems

Strategies to ensure an empowering approach:

The outcome of the activity can be the collection of a number of case-studies conducted by the different groups of learners where sustainable practices

from the past appear to have faded and could be restored or unsustainable practices from the past have changed in our mentality and habits indicating a transition to a more sustainable – green culture. Groups can present their case – studies and share their thoughts and reflections with the rest of the learners.

The collective report can be presented as an article in the local press.

3.2.11 ESD Template: TWOFORTWO ART GROUP (Like Orphans)

A Sustainable Development challenge that is relevant to Cyprus:

Probably the common denominator in most sustainable development issues, is Economic Growth. Economic growth can ensure the means for a high life quality, environmental protection and sustainability. Nevertheless, if Economic growth is perceived as maximization of profit and ignores the well-being of the society, the environment and culture, this will eventually lead to an unbalanced administration of the SD pillars and will lead to a collapse.

For Cyprus this was the case during the period that followed the financial crisis of 2013. (It probably still is, considering the “golden passports” scandals and the construction fever). The events that lead to the financial impact that affected Cyprus and several other countries in Europe and elsewhere, were a consequence of unsustainable practices. In Cyprus in particular, the financial crisis to 2013 was connected to a real estate industry boom, in order to attract foreign investors overlooking the serious environmental impact of this practice. Along the same rationale of greed, Banks were offering absurdly high interest to attract foreign capital, in ways that could not be supported by such a small economy. The results of the 2013 economic crisis, was the bankruptcy of one of the major banks in the country, a haircut in the deposits of the second major bank in the country, and bankruptcy of several businesses. Commercial areas became deserted and many people became unemployed. The social impact was evident.

SDG(s) linked to this issue:

Because of the semiological concept of the work which directly relates to the socio-political condition of the society in Cyprus, there are a plethora of meanings which can directly relate to the SDGs of the project. These are messages that deal with cultural identity and can revolve around issues of clarity/equality and fight against corruption. The relation to the SDGs touches on issues of:

- SDG1 Zero Poverty
- SDG2 Zero Hunger
- SDG3 Good health and Well-being
- SDG5 Decent work and Economic Growth
- SDG10 Reduced Inequality
- SDG12 Responsible Consumption and Production
- SDG16 Peace and Justice Strong Institutions

VAE can address learning about and for this SD issue:

As all SD issues, the economic crisis in Cyprus and the events that lead to it require a critical approach where one has to reflect upon the causes and the malpractices as a way of learning from past mistakes and becoming wiser. Visual art works engaging disciplines as design, architecture, fashion and fine arts can provide opportunities that challenge the viewers and immerse them in a process of reflection. In the case of socioeconomic issues, such art works can provide the basis for discussion and the development of a critical stance.

Suggested ideas to learn about and for this SD issue through VAE:

The learners should identify a sustainable development problem in their area, related to socioeconomic issues. In our example (TwoFourTwo) we focus on the financial crisis in 2013. Learners should initially have the opportunity

to explore and discuss the causes of the crisis and the consequences at all levels of sustainable development (economic, environmental, social, cultural), perhaps in the form of a debate activity. Alternatively, personal responsibility can be addressed through a scenario posing a moral dilemma. Inspired and informed through these activities, learners will finally be asked to focus on one single message they want to send which they will express through visual arts.

ESD competences that can be enhanced:

Critical Thinking
Systems Thinking
Futures Thinking
Empathy
Creativity
Participation
Action

Strategies to ensure an empowering approach:

The activity should give the sense of purpose. Learners should be aware that the learning process they are going through should lead them to a practical outcome (their work of art and the message which they want to send) which collectively can be used to raise awareness and become an informal education tool for the broader public or their peers.

3.2.12 ESD Template: Food

A Sustainable Development challenge that is relevant to England:

Food – how can we transition from importing foods grown in unsustainable means, to growing more local food in a sustainable way? Is there a way we can grow high –protein food here in the UK, with the potential to partially replace meat and dairy? Can we imagine growing food in places in our very local areas? Can we do this equitably?

SDG(s) linked to this issue:

SDG 2 Zero Hunger
SDG 3 Good health and Well-being
SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities
SDG 13 Climate Action

VAE can address learning about and for this SD issue:

A way of understanding and imagining a community growing system– through drawing, modelling, designing. An opportunity to draw on our understanding of the science of growing food to the art of growing food – and to inspire local citizens to be involved and supportive.

Suggested ideas to learn about and for this SD issue through VAE:

Food is a very relatable topic for children as it connects with everyday life; it's also a versatile topic that can be considered from various angles. Many artists include food within their artworks in one shape or form - even making artworks from food, as well as food extracts being used - e.g., vegetable dyes. In terms of food processing/ packaging the work of Andy Warhol comes to mind, which connects to GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production; other artists have explored similar ideas. There are many possibilities for exploring 'the story of food' and how it arrives on our plates. Children could make storyboards, films or animations, taking different perspectives to develop understanding and empathy. Links could be made to picture books that feature food and farming themes, of which there are many. Children could design and make miniature allotments and work with aerial photographs featuring farming in diverse landscapes, perhaps adapting these digitally or making collages/ mixed-media pieces. They could also use various foods, including 'waste' foods to make collaborative large-scale artworks.

ESD competences that can be enhanced:

Normative competency - to reflect on norms and values behind actions, considers the values, principles and goals of food production in a context of conflicted interests, uncertainty, compromise and controversy.

Anticipatory competency - understand and assess various scenarios for the future: possible, impossible and desired, and form their own vision for the future.

Strategic competency: work collectively in order to develop and apply innovative actions that could expand local food production on the local level and beyond.

Integrated problem-solving competency - find a viable sustainable solution to food production space based on SD principles.

Strategies to ensure an empowering approach:

Involve a local council, a local school, and local children. Share their findings.

3.2.13 ESD Template: Wildlife**A Sustainable Development challenge that is relevant to England:**

Wildlife – wild species are currently declining at a rate of approximately 150 species a day (U.N. Convention on Biological Diversity, 2015). With habitat destruction, food scarcity and pollution, species are struggling. The hedgehog in Britain is now officially classified as “vulnerable to extinction” on the IUCN red list. Is there a way we can help some of these species, in our gardens, homes, school and community spaces? Can we re-imagine some natural corridors and safe places?

SDG(s) linked to this issue:

SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities
SDG 15 Life on Land

VAE can address learning about and for this SD issue:

Through representations of the natural world, using natural materials to encourage participation by both humans and non-humans. Ways of expressing home, safety, food, and connection for all beings.

Suggested ideas to learn about and for this SD issue through VAE:

Numerous artists take inspiration from the natural world, e.g., making art in response to their immediate environment and using observational studies as a springboard for subsequent work. Encouraging children's close observation of nature has endless potential, both in situ and by bringing examples of the natural world into the classroom. There are strong links to land art/ environmental sculpture with this theme which children could explore through making collaborative sculptures on the school grounds or in local nature sites. Children can look at artists who use natural materials in their artwork and others who focus on habitat and different types of wildlife – e.g., many artists are interested in one particular animal and its behaviours, such as bees. They could research facts about a particular animal and document their learning in a sketchbook, which might feed into creating a poster, zine or film to raise awareness of the animal's needs. They could also design and make homes/ shelters for wildlife, such as bug hotels and bird boxes.

ESD competences that can be enhanced:

Collaboration competency:
learn, understand and respect the needs of others (human and non-human), their perceptions, their way of thinking and actions (empathy), to understand, feel and express sensitivity towards others (empathic leadership)

Anticipatory competency: understand and assess various scenarios for the future, possible, impossible and desired, and form their own vision for the future.

Strategic competency: work collectively in order to develop and apply innovative actions that could expand wildlife regeneration on the local level and beyond.

Integrated problem-solving competency - find a viable sustainable solution to wildlife regeneration based on SD principles.

Strategies to ensure an empowering approach:

Involve a local council, a local school, and local children. Share their findings.

3.2.14 ESD Template: Shared spaces

A Sustainable Development challenge that is relevant to England:

Shared spaces on the high street – the event of a global pandemic has had a significant effect on high street traffic – namely more cars, less public transport, and the impact of social distancing. This has resulted in local councils making decision regarding “shared space”. High streets have pedestrianised or semi-pedestrianised their streets to allow safer eating and shopping for pedestrians. This has resulted in some disputes. How can we keep our town centres safe (Covid, traffic, air pollution) and accessible? Can we imagine a shared space that works for everyone?

SDG(s) linked to this issue:

SDG 3 Good health and Well-being
SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities
SDG 13 Climate Action

VAE can address learning about and for this SD issue:

A way of visualising and imagining a shared space – through drawing, modelling, designing. A chance to canvas and express people’s needs and desires for shared space.

Suggested ideas to learn about and for this SD issue through VAE:

This topic lends itself well to observational work, such as making drawings and taking photographs or videos in the local area. These activities could be a useful starting point, serving as first-hand research to inform subsequent art making. Children could look at artists whose work features urban areas and compare and contrast these - this could include amateur local artists who might paint their local towns, for example. A historical dimension could be brought in by examining photographs of local urban areas ‘now and then’, using archive sources such as photos and books. Road networks could be examined on maps and these could be a good stimulus for discussion and art making. There are also interesting links that can be made to the changes in pace of life and the impact of today’s consumerism. For example, connected to learning about visual culture, in the past a great deal of attention used to be given to the window-dressing of shops in an almost gallery-like way, and this is much less common in contemporary society. Children could look at shop displays as an artform, linked to curation, and this could be a good photography project.

ESD competences that can be enhanced:

Normative competency - to reflect on norms and values behind actions, considers the values, principles and goals of shared space in a context of conflicted interests, uncertainty, compromise and controversy.

Anticipatory competency - understand and assess various scenarios for the future: possible, impossible and desired, and form their own vision for the future.

Strategic competency: work collectively in order to develop and apply innovative actions that could expand shared space on the local level and beyond.

Integrated problem-solving competency - find a viable sustainable solution to shared space based on SD principles.

Strategies to ensure an empowering approach:

Involve a local council, a local school, local children. Share their findings.