

Facing Global Challenges Environmental and Peace Education in Interreligious Cooperation for Religious Teacher Training

3rd Transnational Erasmus+ Meeting in Tirana, Albania

*Facing Global Challenges: Environmental
and Peace Education in Interreligious
Cooperation for Religious Teacher
Training*

*3rd Transnational Erasmus+ Meeting,
Tirana, Albania (10-13 April 2025)*

Under the title “*Facing Global Challenges: Environmental and Peace Education in Interreligious Cooperation for Religious Teacher Training*”, the third transnational Erasmus+ meeting took place in Tirana from 10 to 13 April 2025. The event, hosted by the Faculty of Humanities at Beder University College (BUC) brought together academic and institutional representatives from Austria, Germany, Malaysia, and Spain.



First day_10 April 2025

The opening sessions, held on 10 April 2025 at Beder University College, began with an opening ceremony with the presence of the Rector of Beder University College, followed by two joint working sessions. Representatives from each partner institution presented the progress of their research and educational initiatives related to peace education, ecological



ethics, and interreligious dialogue. A



general visualization session of all work packages allowed the consortium to align

objectives and define common indicators for evaluation and dissemination.

International Symposium on the Role



of Faith-Based Actors in

Environmental Protection: The Case of Albania

The symposium, moderated by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Genti Kruja, Secretary General of the ICFTA, opened with the greeting of Mons. Gjergj Meta, President of the Interreligious Council of Albania.

The panel brought together representatives from all five religious communities in the country, members of the Women's Department and the Youth Department at the ICFTA, who shared the perspectives of the respective communities on environmental care and the role of religion in promoting climate responsibility. They were:

- Dr. Hysni Skura, representative of the Muslim Community of Albania,
- Ms. Sonila Rembeci, representative of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Albania,
- Ms. Ada Lushi, representative of the Catholic Church of Albania,
- Ms. Sheldiana Agaraj, representative of the Bektashi World Patriarchate,

- Ms. Lidia Sema, representative of the Evangelical Brotherhood of Albania.

Each speaker brought concrete examples of the commitment of the community they represent in protecting the environment and educating the younger generations in the spirit of respect for nature and peaceful coexistence.

At this symposium, academics and researchers from the above universities also discussed interfaith academic dialogue and exchanged experiences from different religious perspectives. This high-level meeting comes as part of joint efforts to integrate interfaith values and education for sustainability into educational policies and practices in Europe and beyond.





The day ended with a shared dinner and a late-night reflection session offered space for informal exchange and team bonding among participants.

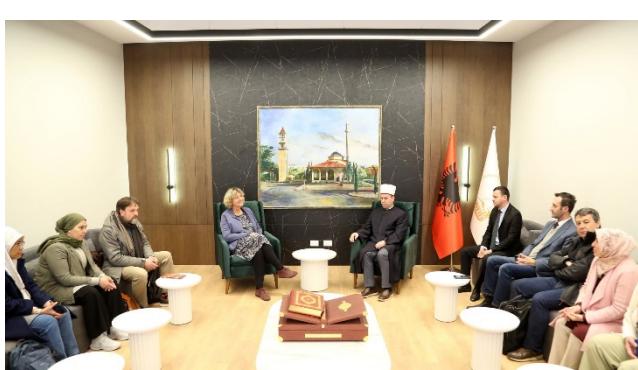
2nd Day_11 April 2025

The group started the intensive day with a visit at Muslim Community of Albania. The Chairman of the Muslim Community of Albania, Mr. Bujar Spahiu, acquainted the delegation with the role of the Muslim Community of Albania over a century for its contribution to social peace and the preservation of universal, Islamic and national values for a healthy society.



The delegation continued with several

Community of Albania, where participants discussed the role of universities in educating young generations with common values for the preservation of the environment and ecology.



working sessions of the Erasmus project, held at the premises of the Muslim



Following a series of enriching cultural visits, the participants gathered for lunch and attended the Friday Prayer.

Visits:

1. Catholic Cathedral
2. Ethem Bey Mosque
3. Orthodox Cathedral
4. Namazgjah Mosque
5. Bektashi Community
6. Pyramid of Tirana
7. Tirana Castle
8. Bunkart Museum

Later in the afternoon, a distinguished panel discussion was organized by Eco Albania Organization at the Catholic Cathedral of St. Paul.

The event featured Mrs. Kaltrina Hyka as the guest speaker, who delivered an insightful presentation on the topic "*Vjosa River and the Water Challenge.*" Her discussion shed light on the environmental significance of the Vjosa River, the pressing challenges related to water preservation, and the importance of sustainable environmental policies in Albania and beyond.

As a symbolic act promoting peace, unity, and interfaith dialogue, the Erasmus team concluded the day by planting a tree in the front yard of the Cathedral. This gesture represented a shared commitment to environmental protection, harmony among communities, and the lasting impact of Erasmus cooperation in fostering mutual understanding and respect.



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3rd Day_12 April 2025

The Erasmus team began their day with a departure to Shkodra. Upon their arrival, they were greeted with a Welcoming Ceremony, which was followed by formal opening remarks delivered by Prof. Dr. Tonin Gjuraj, the Rector of the University of Shkodra "Luigj Gurakuqi."

Next, the academic portion of the day commenced with an important open panel. This session focused on "Water resources of Shkodra Region and the challenges facing climate, human and natural hazards," with Dr. Skender Bruçaj chairing the discussion. The team listened to a detailed presentation by Ervis Kryembi PhD from the Department of Geography at the university.

Following the intellectual engagement, the team transitioned to exploring Shkodra's rich culture. They first visited the renowned Marubi National Museum of Photography. This was followed by a comprehensive Cultural Tour of Downtown Shkodra before they enjoyed lunch at the "Shpia e Gjyshit" Restaurant.

The afternoon was dedicated to Shkodra's natural and historical landmarks. The team took a scenic Boat Trip to Shkodra Lake, followed by a visit to the historic Rozafa Castle. While at the castle, they received a fascinating Overview of the three rivers (Kir, Drin and Buna) and Shkodra Lake, highlighting the region's unique geography.

The day concluded back in Tirana, where the team conducted the Closing Remarks session and received an Epoka University Overview. This final academic segment was chaired by Prof. Dr. Elisabeth Naurath & Dr. Fatmir Shehu. Finally, the full day wrapped up with a well-deserved Dinner at Epoka University.





The Albania meeting showed the dynamic interaction between academia, religions, and civil society, demonstrating how education for peace and the environment can become a transformative force when based on dialogue and ethical

responsibility.

The project reaffirmed its shared commitment to training educators who can connect faith, knowledge, and sustainability, helping to build a culture of peace and care for our common home.



