

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

Transnational Erasmus+ meeting in Augsburg

Religions – Environmental Education – Peace
June 19–21, 2024



Under the title “*Facing Global Challenges: Environmental and Peace Education in Interreligious Cooperation for Religious Teacher Training*,” the first transnational meeting of the Erasmus+ project took place at the University of Augsburg from June 19 to 21, 2024. The meeting was hosted by Prof. Dr. Elisabeth Naurath (University of Augsburg), who invited the international team from Austria, Spain, Albania, and Malaysia to engage in an intensive exchange on interreligious approaches to environmental and peace education.

The meeting focused on exploring how religious education can contribute to sustainable development and peaceful coexistence, and on developing a shared didactic framework for environmental ethics in teacher education across diverse religious contexts.

Prof. Dr. Elisabeth Naurath opened the meeting with a didactic classroom example on “Theology of Creation,” illustrated through a Godly Play method. This approach served both as a practical introduction to the topic and as an opportunity to present a well-known pedagogical method from the Christian context.

In addition to group-building activities and opportunities for the international project partners to get to know one another, the workshop “Education for Sustainable Development” formed a

key part of the program. Designed by Norbert Stamm from the Office for Sustainability of the City of Augsburg, the workshop illustrated how education, urban development, and ecological responsibility can intersect when local initiatives and university teaching are interlinked. These stimulating insights were then taken up by the project's international working groups, which explored how they could be adapted and applied within religious educational contexts.

Afterwards, a guided tour of the UNESCO World Heritage Site “Augsburg Water Management System” provided impressive insights into the city's historical approach to water resources. It also served as a practical example of how ecological education can be brought to life through cultural and historical approaches – an approach that also plays a central role in the interfaith modules of the project.

Special attention was paid to the theological and pedagogical perspectives of the partner institutions. Dr. Selcen Güzel presented her empirical study on the self-perception of Muslim children and young people, which provides valuable insights for religious education practice. Following on from this, Amina Boumaaiz showed how ecological ethics and sustainable development can be developed in the context of Islamic theology and religious education. These contributions illustrated how religious and ethical dimensions can be integrated into religious education approaches to sustainability.

Another highlight was the presentation and discussion of the project's future digital platform, which will serve as a central interface for exchange, materials, and scientific results.

In the academic part, Laura Bondl presented the master's program “Environmental Ethical Learning” and Barbara Halbauer presented approaches to interreligious education for sustainable development in teacher training. Both contributions showed in a practical way how ecological responsibility can be embedded in the training of religious education teachers.

This was followed by intensive work phases to further develop the content modules and work packages of the project. Under the direction of Prof. Dr. Imran Schröter, the results achieved so far were reflected upon and joint guidelines for the next project phase were formulated.

An memorable conclusion to the meeting for interreligious exchange was a city tour on the history of the Reformation, following in the footsteps of Martin Luther and the Peace of Augsburg, which brought to life the historical connection between religion, peace, and social cohesion in the German and European context.



The meeting in Augsburg impressively demonstrated how interreligious cooperation, environmental ethics, and peace education can be linked in the European higher education landscape. It was characterized by academic exchange, personal encounters, and a common concern: understanding religion as a path to responsibility, sustainability, and peace in a global world.



Additional images (high-resolution)





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