

Small size bilateral cooperation project supported by a grant
from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway

July 1st, 2016-January 31st, 2017



ElitMod

**Learning to Live Together:
Modern Perspectives
on Transversal Skills
in Education for Sustainable
and Solidary Development
(ElitMod)**

Summary of Research Results



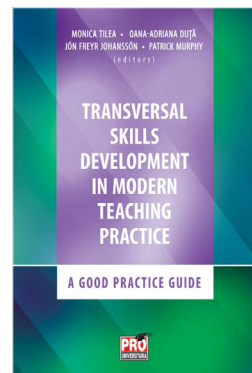
Table of Contents

Previous Cooperation between the University of Craiova and Bifröst University	4
Development of the Transversal Skills Assessment Tool (TSAT)	7
State of the Art Assessment	7
Transversal Skills Assessment	7
Critical Thinking	8
Intercultural Communication	9
Joint International Conference	10
Publication of a Joint Research Volume	12
Section 1: Interdisciplinary approaches to education for sustainable and solidary development	12
Section 2: Economic perspectives on sustainable and solidary education	13
Section 3: Language teaching and intercultural communication	13

Previous cooperation between the University of Craiova and Bifröst University

The University of Craiova and Bifröst University started their cooperation in 2013, with a Mobility project in higher education within the programme Scholarships and Inter-institutional Cooperation in Higher Education financed by the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014. Mobility projects have been operational in the academic years 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016, to the benefit of students and teaching staff of both universities.

The partnership of the two universities developed in a significant way with the inter-institutional cooperation project “New Tools for the Integration of Transversal Skills in Modern Teaching Practice” (TRANSMOD), supported by a grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, and coordinated by Assoc. Prof. PhD Monica TILEA (Faculty of Letters, University of Craiova). The project was implemented during July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015 and it also involved Nesna University College from Norway. The focus of the project was to develop and implement new teaching strategies and tools for the promotion of transversal skills in formal education.



<http://proiecte.ucv.ro/transmod/>



The strong cohesion of the collaboration between the University of Craiova and Bifröst University was a driving force that successfully underpinned the project outcomes, facilitated the achievement of the envisaged outputs, and generated mutual and sustainable enrichment.

Given the successful achievement of the goals proposed by TRANSMOD and the prompt, professional and committed inter-institutional cooperation, the partners agreed to contribute to both the sustainability of their first common project, and the identification and development of new cooperation axes. Therefore, the Romanian and Icelandic partners decided to continue and strengthen this cooperation within a new project dealing with a topic of common interest for both universities, identified pursuant to active exchanges and mutual discussions – *Learning to Live Together: Modern Perspectives on Transversal Skills in Education for Sustainable and Solidary Development* (ElitMod), Small size bilateral cooperation project supported by a grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, coordinated by Assoc. Prof. PhD Monica TILEA (Faculty of Letters, University of Craiova).

www.eea.grants.org | www.see-burse.ro | <http://proiecte.ucv.ro/transmod>
 UNIVERSITY OF CRAIOVA | HÁSKÓLINN Á BÍFRÖST | Regjastofa | Neira
New Tools for the Integration of Transversal Skills in Modern Teaching Practice
Inter-institutional cooperation project supported by a grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway
1st July 2014 - 30th June 2015
TRANSMOD
<http://proiecte.ucv.ro/transmod>
www.eea.grants.org | www.see-burse.ro

www.eea.grants.org | www.see-burse.ro | <http://proiecte.ucv.ro/ELITMOD>
ElitMod | www.eea.grants.org | UNIVERSITY OF CRAIOVA | HÁSKÓLINN Á BÍFRÖST
Learning to Live Together: Modern Perspectives on Transversal Skills in Education for Sustainable and Solidary Development (ElitMod)
 July 1st 2016-January 31st, 2017
 Small size bilateral cooperation project supported by a grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway



<http://proiecte.ucv.ro/ELITMOD/>

Development of the Transversal Skills Assessment Tool (TSAT)

1. State of the art assessment

The initial status of the perception on sustainability and social responsibility was assessed by means of two questionnaires drawn up by Jón Freyr Jóhannsson from Bifröst University: a 5-question questionnaire directed to students and a 4-question questionnaire for teachers. The purpose of the questionnaire was to establish the interest of the target groups for sustainable and solidary development, their knowledge on the matter and how it is integrated in the university's curriculum.

99 responses were collected from students at Bifröst University and 56 responses were received from students at the University of Craiova.

As for the teaching staff, 19 out of the 37 teachers at Bifröst answered the questionnaire, i.e. more than 50%; on the other hand, a much lower response rate was achieved at the University of Craiova (32 teachers out of approximately 1,000 academics), which is why an interpretation was not performed for this latter target group. This low response rate among the teachers of the University of Craiova suggests that sustainability and social responsibility is not a familiar topic for this group.

The outcomes of this activity, lying at the basis of the development of the transversal skills assessment tool, are summarized and interpreted in Jón Freyr Jóhannsson's chapter: *Modern Perspectives on Education for Sustainable and Solidary Development and Bifröst University: ESSD from the Vantage Point of Teachers and Students - Are They Ready?* included in the joint volume of the project.

2. Transversal skills assessment

Out of the list of transversal skills established in the inter-institutional cooperation project "New Tools for the Integration of Transversal Skills in Modern Teaching Practice" (TRANSMOD), as well as based on relevant scientific literature (also see Trincherò, R., *Costruire, valutare, certificare competenze. Proposte di attività per la scuola*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 2012), the project team jointly selected four transversal skills facilitating education for sustainable and solidary development (ESSD):

- critical thinking
- intercultural communication
- active citizenship
- embracing complexity.

Taking into consideration the very short duration of the ElitMod project, the team decided to focus on testing two of the transversal skills. Based on the hierarchical importance of transversal skills proposed in the TRANSMOD project (see Tilea, M., Duță, O. A., Johannsson, J. F., Murphy, P. (eds). *Transversal skills development in modern teaching practice: a good practice guide*. București, Pro Universitaria, 2015) it was agreed that the focus should be on critical thinking and intercultural communication.

Critical thinking

For the evaluation of students' critical thinking, the team drew up a questionnaire based on a YouTube video entitled *Seven Billion Dreams. One planet. Consume with care* (Available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JyL58vlbvgw> [Accessed 15 October 2016]). The questionnaire included 10 open-ended questions mainly aimed at determining whether students are able to detect the theme of the video and comment upon its importance in today's world.

The workshops took place in December 2016 at the University of Craiova and were organised at the Faculty of Letters (30 students) and at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (20 students).

A slightly modified version of the questionnaire and a different video (so as to accommodate the specificities of a multicultural target group whose common working language was French) were also administered to a group of 17 MA students in the *Didactique des langues* (Language Teaching) Master's Programme organised by the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie.

The results of the questionnaire and their interpretation will be presented in the future by project team members, in internationally refereed journals.



Intercultural communication

The second skill to be assessed, also ranked high in the priorities of students and teaching staff of the involved institutions, was intercultural communication.

The researchers drew up a questionnaire in order to test intercultural communication. The questionnaire included 9 open-ended questions and 2 close-ended questions and it was applied to an international group of 17 MA students in the *Didactique des langues* (Language Teaching) Master's Programme organised by the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie.

This research is presented and detailed in two papers authored by Cristiana Teodorescu: *A Study on the Intercultural Competence of a Group of International Students*, and *Pedagogical and Intercultural Challenges of the AUF International Master's Programme Didactique des langues*, both included in the joint volume of the project.



Joint international conference

The joint international conference *Modern Perspectives on Education for Sustainable and Solidary Development* was organised by the Faculty of Letters, University of Craiova (Romania) and Bifröst University (Iceland), and took place in Craiova during 25-26 October 2016.

The focus of this conference was to encourage and develop joint research and educational activities, in order to strengthen the role of ESSD in the education and training policies of academic institutions. At the same time, it created a place for discussions between teachers, researchers, students and local education authorities on the need for defining and identifying transversal skills associated to ESSD and for implementing up-to-date ESSD principles and policies in the academic institutions.



Thus, it welcomed 66 professors and researchers from Romania, Iceland, France, Italy and Macedonia, with papers dealing with, but not limited to, the following themes: transferable/transversal skills and lifelong learning; education for sustainable development; education for international solidarity; new methods and approaches towards a global education; intercultural communication and mediation; social, cultural and cognitive approaches to

education for embracing complexity; critical thinking; creativity and innovation; citizenship education and global awareness. The three participants from Bifröst University, Kári Joensen, Jón Freyr Jóhannsson and Karl Eiriksson, presented relevant information and important details about the Icelandic education system, about the approaches to ESSD in their academic institution, as well as, their point of view on international mobilities, with a focus on EEA and Erasmus+ exchanges.

The conference sessions were officially opened on 25th October 2016 at 9.00 a.m. in the Blue Hall of the University of Craiova with the plenary talks and the keynote speeches of Monica TILEA (University of Craiova, Romania), *On the Reception of a Viral YouTube Environmental Video Signed by Prince*

Ea, Kári JOENSEN (Bifröst University, Iceland), Blended Learning and Student Engagement: Students' Perception, and Jón Freyr JÓHANNSSON (Bifröst University, Iceland), Modern Perspectives on Education for Sustainable and Solidary Development and Bifröst University: ESSD from the Vantage Point of Teachers and Students – Are They Ready?



All conference presentations were organised in four panels: Interdisciplinary approaches to education for sustainable development and solidarity (Drágan Amphitheatre), Economic perspectives on sustainable and solidary education (Room 454), Language teaching and intercultural communication (Room 454) and Young researchers' panel (Room 454).



Small size bilateral cooperation project supported by a grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway

Joint International Conference, October 25th-26th, 2016

ElitMod

Modern Perspectives on Education for Sustainable and Solidary Development

Book of Abstracts

| www.eeagrants.org | www.see-burse.ro

Publication of a joint research volume



The research outputs of this bilateral cooperation project were included in the volume: *Sustainable and Solidary Education. Reflections and Practices* (2017). Monica TILEA, Oana-Adriana DUȚĂ and Alina REȘCEANU (eds.), Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang. ISBN: 978-3-631-72066-0.

The contributions in the volume were organised in three sections:

Section 1: *Interdisciplinary approaches to education for sustainable and solidary development:*

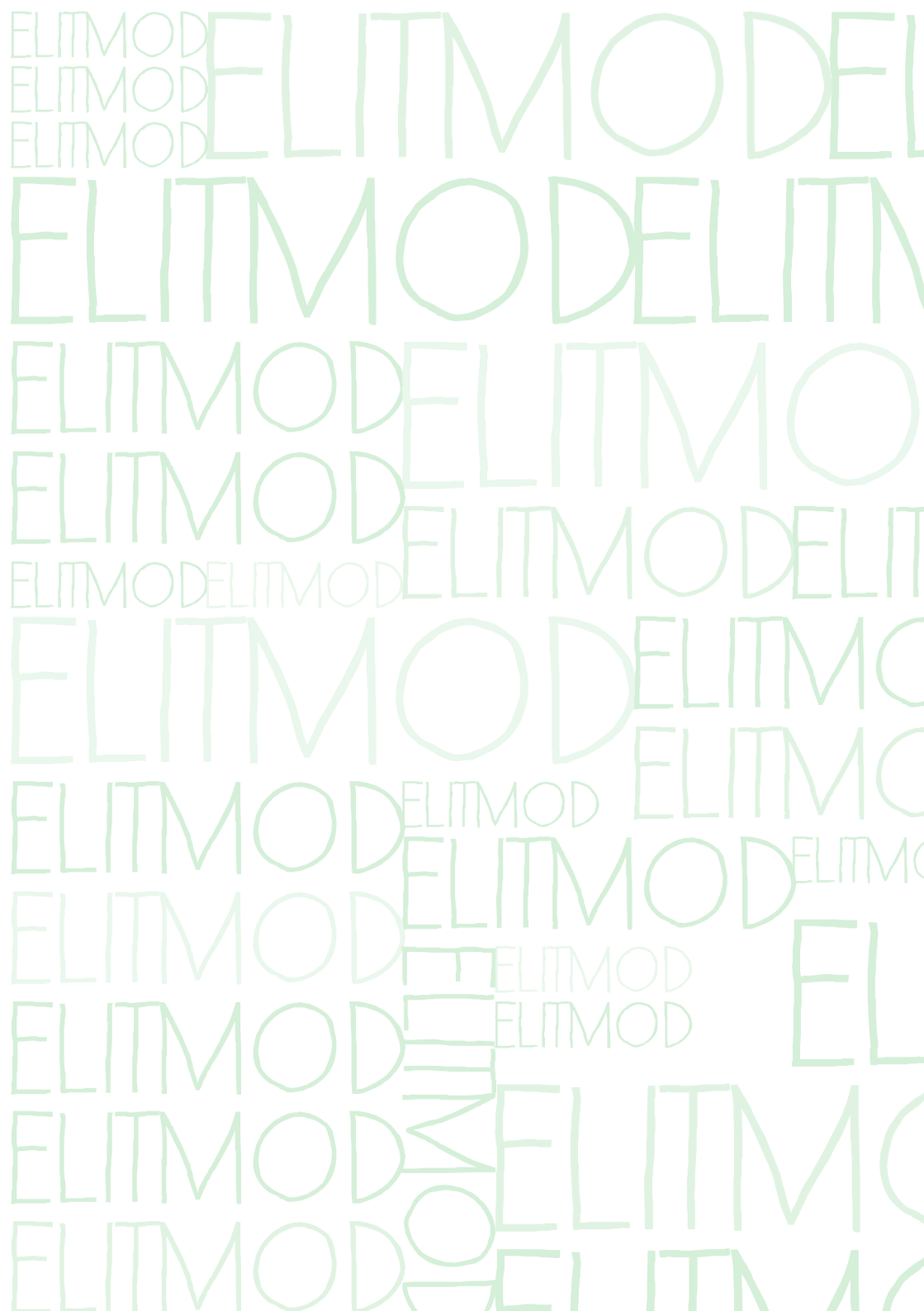
- *The Development of Intercultural Curriculum from the Perspective of Education for International Solidarity* (Claudiu Marian Bunăiașu);
- *Assessing the Intercultural Competence of Students in the Romanian Higher Education Environment* (Claudiu Marian Bunăiașu, Aida Cornelia Stoian);
- *Optimizing Students' Psycho-Motor Capacity by Using Dance-Specific Methods* (Germina Cosma, Ligia Rusu);
- *Cultural Stereotypes Corrupting Indexical Meaning: How to Fight Prejudice through Education* (Oana-Adriana Duță);
- *Modern Perspectives on Education for Sustainable and Solidary Development at Bifröst University. ESSD from the Vantage Point of Teachers and Students - Are They Ready?* (Jón Freyr Jóhannsson);
- *The Design, Construction and Development of Educational Curriculum from the Perspective of Sustainable Development* (Emil Lazăr);
- *Learning Together in the Local Territory? Learning Territory and Education for Sustainable and Solidary Development: A Guidance Device for Teachers* (Thierry Delavet, Marie Françoise Olivier);
- *Education in the Context of Interculturality and Globality* (Porzia Quagliarella);
- *A Study on the Intercultural Competence of a Group of International Students* (Cristiana Teodorescu);
- *Social Media in Education: on the Reception of a Viral YouTube Environmental Video* (Monica Tilea).

Section 2: Economic perspectives on sustainable and solidary education:

- *The Legislative Impact on Labour Market Insertion of Vulnerable Persons from South-West Oltenia* (Daniel Cîrciumaru, Silviu Cârstina);
- *Higher Education Funding in Romania. An Applied Analysis* (Raluca Drăcea);
- *Correlations between Financial Resources for Education and the Outcomes of the Educational Process in Iceland and Romania* (Cristian Valeriu Stanciu);
- *Sustainable Development: An Insight on Funding and Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Romania and Iceland* (Anca Tănăsie);
- *A Higher Education Perspective on the UN Sustainable Development Goals* (Anca Tănăsie, Magnús Árni Skjöld Magnússon);
- *Public Internal Audit and Its Role in Assessing the Risk Management Process in Universities* (Cristina Petrina Trincu-Drăgușin).

Section 3: Language teaching and intercultural communication:

- *Ensuring the Access of Roma People to Higher Education: a Case Study at the University of Craiova* (Ionela Carmen Banța);
- *Project-Based Learning: a Premise of Education for Sustainable Development* (Daniela Dincă);
- *Arguments in Favour of Cooperation in Medical Terminology Research* (Iulia Cristina Frînculescu);
- *Memorable Grammar Design in Foreign Language Learning. Comparing Romanian and German Textbooks* (Daniela Kohn);
- *Lifelong Learning: Developing Experienced Students' Speaking Skills* (Adriana Lăzărescu);
- *Internationalization of Gastronomic Terminology: a Step toward Intercultural Communication* (Gabriela Anca Mic);
- *Intercomprehension – A Means of Intercultural Communication* (Cecilia Mihaela Popescu);
- *Interdisciplinary Writing for Developing Critical Thinking* (Alina Reșceanu);
- *The Effectiveness of Authentic Audiovisual Materials in Teaching and Learning French at University Level* (Darko Ristovski);
- *Pedagogical and Intercultural Challenges of the AUF International Master's Programme Didactique des langues* (Cristiana Teodorescu).



Learning to Live Together: Modern Perspectives on Transversal Skills in Education for Sustainable and Solidary Development

July 1st, 2016 - January 31st, 2017

Small size bilateral cooperation project supported by a grant
from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway

www.eeagrants.org

www.see-burse.ro

Project Coordinator: Assoc. Prof. Monica TILEA, PhD

Project Website: <http://proiecte.ucv.ro/elitmod>

ElitMod

ElitMod 2017

Text: Monica TILEA, Oana-Adriana DUȚĂ, Alina REȘCEANU

Graphic design by Anca Gabriela MIC