

OBJECTIVE 03

To support reconciliation, dialogue, closer relationship and trust between the Turkish Cypriot and the Greek Cypriot communities

SHARED WORLDS

NURI SILAY AND SPYROS ARMOSTIS



Vol. 2 for

#language_learning

#conflict_resolution

#peace_building

#reconciliation



THIS ACTION INVOLVED

Development of the second volume of the Shared Worlds dictionary.

Publication and dissemination of the second volume of the Shared Worlds dictionary (January 2018 to March 2018).

Creation of an online version of Shared Worlds dictionary.

ABOUT NURI SILAY AND SPYROS ARMOSTIS

Nuri Silay is an industrial engineer who has been working with various projects funded by UNDP, USAID and EU on peacebuilding and capacity building of civil society in Cyprus. Spyros Armostis is a linguist who has been working as an academician in various universities in the Republic of Cyprus. Their paths crossed when Nuri Silay was developing an idea for a peace building project that promotes the existence of common words, idioms, expressions and proverbs in the Greek and Turkish languages.

STORY OF THE ACTION

The aim of the Shared Worlds project is to bring together Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots by raising awareness on the similarities between their languages through social media pages, books, on-line dictionary and public outreach events. The founders of the project wanted to use the shared words as symbols of the prevailing culture and use it as a peacebuilding and reconciliation tool.

"Common words, common expressions, common idioms, common proverbs of different languages are common grounds that we can use to communicate with each other. By using them in our inter-cultural relationships, we can overcome the psychological obstacles of "foreign" and prejudice by focusing on our similarities and common values rather than seeing each other's differences."

Nuri Silay

The Grow Civic action was a continuation of the first volume of the "Shared Worlds" dictionary, in which the team wanted to further promote the language similarities for Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots with a second volume of "Shared Worlds" dictionary, its online version, and the use of different media platforms to promote its peacebuilding and reconciliation aspects.



Photo: Sharedwords - Grow Civic promo film

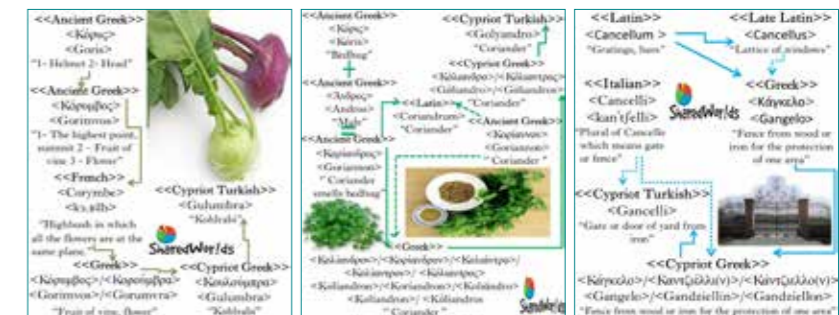
"We named the project "Shared Worlds", which reads both as "shared words", and "shared worlds". As the name implies, the action aims to open people's eyes to the fact that both languages share many common words, and also open people's minds as to how similar our "worlds" are in reality."

Spyros Armostis

With the Grow Civic action, the visibility of the project increased and the project reached more people.

"With the Grow Civic support, we managed to reach a wider audience. First, with the creation of our second volume of the Shared Worlds dictionary, we are able to show the relation between common words and phrases through images, and second, with the creation of an online dictionary of common words. We had the possibility to reach a wider audience through etymology and games, so that even more people can discover all those common words and the common culture the two communities share."

Spyros Armostis



RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

The action reached a wider audience by highlighting the common culture and using it as a peacebuilding and reconciliation tool. The action not only empowered its audience with the knowledge of "commonality", but also encouraged them to get involved with the process of sharing it. The team managed to distribute the dictionary to various stakeholders including public schools, universities, libraries, community houses, language schools, teachers' unions, and duty bearers. Embedding the commonalities of Turkish and Greek languages into the language learning process, and the adoption of this approach by language teachers as a teaching methodology, was one of their long-term objectives. Their media campaign was focused on advocating this to the duty bearers.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Shared Worlds project will continue encouraging Turkish and Greek Cypriots to learn, understand and communicate with the language of the other community. The team is planning to reprint the first volume of the dictionary and disseminate both volumes to secondary schools, with the support of the local body responsible for education in the northern part of Cyprus. Additionally, they would like to add an audio function to their online dictionary to promote learning the language through listening. Nuri and Spyros ask: "Isn't understanding each other a crucial factor for building trust?"

TO FIND MORE ABOUT THE ACTION

- Sharedworlds
- www.shared-worlds.com
- civicspacesivilalan



This Project is funded by the European Union.

