



October 2018

Newsletter n° 6

CARMA Final Conference was a success!

Under the motto "*Collaborative Learning as a Road towards Educational Success*", the CARMA final conference held in Brussels on 4th-5th October reached a great impact among participants.

The two days of practical and hands-on sessions were a perfect opportunity to explain and showcase to teachers, school managers and other policy makers in education, how relevant and how easy is to use non-formal education techniques in traditional school settings. Keynote speaker included Stijn Dhert, National UNESCO ASPnet coördinator for Flanders and co-founder of 'The Mystery of Education' (Mysterie van Onderwijs). The conference allowed participants to know about the CARMA project and its activities and achievements, but above all, to understand how non-formal education can be daily used in formal classrooms and how it impacts in students' motivation and participation, contributing to a more inclusive strategy.



How can teachers benefit directly from the project results?

In the preparation phase, the CARMA Project surveyed the needs and analysed the factors causing early school leaving, including data at European level as well as country-specific from the partner countries. The [CARMA Needs Analysis Survey Report](#) provided a basis for further project's aims and activities.

During the project implementation several practical and easy to consult materials were produced with and for teachers and are now available to be used by any school and teacher. These materials include a Toolkit providing a step-by-step guide for teachers on how to implement collaborative learning activities in their classroom to increase student motivation and participation and address low achievement. This Toolkit is supported by a Teacher Competence Assessment Model that defines common standards on teachers' competences using the CARMA approach to deliver collaborative learning and assessment in classroom practices (both are available at the project website in the download area <http://carma-project.eu/download-area/>).

Complementarily, the CARMA partnership members have researched and compiled a set of useful resources to support the delivery of collaborative practices in school and the wider school community. These resources are gathered within an online [Resource Bank](#), where teachers can find theoretical resources on collaborative learning and teaching, practical lesson plans and activities, and resources to support collaborative assessment methods. The collection of resources is available in different languages. If you are interested in sharing resources you can complete the contact form on the [Resource Bank](#).



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Practical results for teachers

CARMA Toolkit: A step-by-step guide for implementing collaborative learning to increase student motivation and participation

The Toolkit is a step-by-step guide for teachers to implementing collaborative learning practices with the students and transform classroom practices using NFL techniques. It targets lower secondary and secondary school teachers working with students in the age range of 11 to 16 years old in general. We say in general, because as we will explain in the following chapters, school students up to the age of 18 years old have also participated in the CARMA project and their experiences and outcomes have influenced the development of this Toolkit.

Its primary focus is to support understanding in collaborative learning approaches and offer a step-by-step guide on how to implement collaborative learning activities to increase student's motivation, participation and raise achievement levels. The Toolkit addresses the specific needs of secondary education teachers wanting practical ideas on how to introduce collaborative learning in the classroom, in particular when teaching in a complex environment to learners identified as disadvantaged, low achieving and at risk of early school leaving.

This Toolkit also intends to support teachers in initial teacher training from a wide range of subject areas. In addition, school headmasters, school leaders and teaching staff in school education can benefit from using this Toolkit as a resource for introducing and promoting alternative NFL approaches and collaborative learning in the classroom to address educational challenges, enrich the learning environment and make a positive impact on the wider school community.

The Toolkit is available in two versions: a more complete version that gives readers the full picture of the CARMA work that inspired the design of the Toolkit and presents the different NFL techniques; a shorter version that goes straight to the point and focuses on the NFL techniques itself. The Toolkit is available in English, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, German, Flemish and Turkish.

Competence Assessment Model

The CARMA assessment model for teachers is meant to make them aware of their skills and what they have learnt thanks to the use of NFL techniques in their classroom.

The tool is foreseen to be used at individual level but also within a peer-to-peer method with other teachers to support them in assessing their skills development when they implement NFL techniques in the classroom. The model is organised with 4 main competences (with some abilities related to each competence):

- I. Facilitation and moderation skills
- II. Competences in collaborative learning
- III. Know-how in collaborative assessment
- IV. Use of non-formal education

The Model can help teachers and schools to establish a framework for measuring teacher's skills and competences in understanding, identifying and implementing successful collaborative learning environments, whilst reflecting on the principles of NFL together with actual classroom practice.

Resource Bank for Teachers

As a result of a large research phase and continuous work of the CARMA team members, a set of useful resources to support the delivery of collaborative practices in school and the wider school community were compiled.

The online Resource Bank is meant to be further elaborated over time, and there, teachers can find theoretical resources on collaborative learning and teaching, practical lesson plans and activities, and resources to support collaborative assessment methods. The collection of resources is available in different languages.

There are currently 5 main categories grouping the resources:

- I. CARMA resources
- II. Exploring collaborative learning and teaching (Theoretical resources)
- III. Lesson plans and activities in collaborative learning and teaching
- IV. Collaborative assessment methods and tools
- V. Resources in national languages.