

CHALLENGES

- There is no common curriculum on Human Rights throughout the EU.
- Some teachers do not have the basic knowledge or they do not find it important to apply these values to school programs.
- School work is not always based on real life experience, so students do not feel involved in the process of democracy at school level and not enough in the learning process.
- Students do not experience how democracy works because there are not enough debates in classes and students are not sufficiently trained in participating and in openly stating their ideas.
- Some teachers in a number of EU countries are not acknowledged for extracurricular activities.

SUCCESSSES

- Some lessons teaching Active Citizenship and Human Rights.
- Open discussions in a class-based environment.
- Continuation of discussions on human rights outside the classrooms in informal ways. E.g. within the family.
- Organisation of seminars for teachers subsidized by some Regional Councils, National Governments or the European Union.
- Encouragement of voluntary activities like the “potato week” in Romania or “the one day work” project in Norway that support the socially disadvantaged.
- Informal meetings among students promoting the value of religious, cultural and linguistic diversity, involving their families and the local authorities.
- Active participation in the discussion of European and international issues in EU Projects (e. g. Comenius).
- Appreciation of cultural diversities and integration of minorities through active involvement of institutions and non-profit organisations.
- Removal of physical barriers for the disabled; assistance and support of the disabled in schools with the help of learning assistants.
- Using all forms of communication – including non-verbal ones - that can involve the pupils as both participants and spectators and thus encouraging their creativity (e.g. role-playing, short-plays, video clips, show films or documentaries etc).
- The availability, in some cases, of free materials whose contents are the work of scholars, teachers and experts.
- The promotion of the internet as a platform for the spreading of news, networking and surveys in a secure environment, such as Partecipa.net of the Legislative Assembly of the Emilia-Romagna Region.
- School exchanges and e-twinning projects.



CONTRIBUTIONS

- We believe that ‘promoting’ these values imply offering to the students models and good practices to follow. This involves demonstrating to the students that following these values would mean that we are part of a bigger family of Europe.
- We are ready to introduce these issues as part of a compulsory curriculum to be taught across the entire European educational system. We are also ready to adapt the curricula of all subjects to include aspects of democracy as a fundamental part of the curriculum itself.
- As teachers working in schools throughout Europe, we believe in encouraging discussions that will help develop a Common European Framework for Citizenship, Justice, Equality, Freedom and Solidarity that would be applicable to the entire European community. We believe that such a commonly developed framework has to be open to new teaching strategies and methods that can include debates, seminars, conferences, voluntary work and the like both for students and teachers. This requires more flexibility of curricula and exam-setting, and sufficient resources for teachers and administrators. Such resources need to be developed by experts and scholars from different backgrounds providing students with different points of view.
- We are ready to promote projects against prejudice, exchange of information and good practices, and facilitate student exchanges within the European Union to share common values. We are ready to provide access to disadvantaged students and encourage peer to peer support amongst pupils.

SUPPORT

- We want common curricula applicable for all EU countries on Active Citizenship. This should include a mandatory period of practical experience/exchange for both students and teachers in at least one of the other EU countries. The setting of such curricula should be independent of party politics and change in government.
- The EU should stimulate the development of standard teaching material.
- There should be coordinating agencies, at a local and national level, that facilitate all student activities related to the promotion of these values such as the exchange of students as well as the sharing of good practices.
- An EU-wide recognition of formal and non-formal qualifications and certificates for both teachers and students.
- We need to make it financially possible for all EU citizens to participate in this enrichment.

