



# Visibility of eTwinning Projects Group

## NEWSLETTER 5



~ *Paving the right roads* ~

July 2015

*In this issue:*

- **eTwinning brings teachers closer** – Cornelia Melcu
- **Show, share, spread: 3 keywords for a successful eTwinning project** – Veronique Sarrere
- **Christmas Truce - Best UK eTwinning project 2014-2015** – Diana Linford
- **Going beyond classroom walls** – Andrea Ullrich
- **eTwinning teachers as realistic designers of learning environments** – Mariella Fasanelli
- **eTwinning, an experience booster** – Sandra Macabre
- **eTwinning school-family cooperation: excellent results** – Irene Confalone
- **Social inclusion through eTwinning projects: RED BALL** – Xanthie Chouliara & Irineos Georgiou
- **eTwinning for a change!** – Nieves Mendez
- **eTwinning since the very beginning...** – Elena Pezzi
- **eTwinning in my class** – Nathalie Scerri
- **From postcards to stone culture, eTwinning has no limits** – Lina Pereira
- **The small children and the greatest composers** – Svetla Popova
- **Introductory remarks on Citizenship Competences embedded in the curriculum** – Carmine Iannicelli
- **The anatomy of a successful training course** – Daniela Bunea
- **With eTwinning in the USA** – Arjana Blazic



### Erasmus+

through the eyes of:

~Elena Pezzi

~Miguela Fernandes

~Marta Pena

~Diana Chirilă

~Daniela Bunea

### Web 2.0 Compass

> [LearningApps.org](http://LearningApps.org)

> [Aurasma Studio](http://AurasmaStudio.com)



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*Contents:*

Anne Gilleran: **Happy reading with eTwinning** – page 5

Daniela Bunea: **The anatomy of a successful training course** – page 5

Cinzia Masia: **“The character project: educating the heart” – An experience of key competences in eTwinning** – page 7

Maria da Luz Borges: **Yes, we are eTwinners!** – page 9

Olga Antonioli: **My eTwinning experience** – page 10

**eTwinning 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary:**

- Robert Conings: **eTwinning 2005-2015** – page 11

- Antonietta Calo: **My very special “eTwinning year”** – page 11

- Domenico Marino, Francesca Zampaglione and Caterina Praticò: **eTwinning’s tenth birthday at “Familiari” secondary school** – page 13

- Cristina Nicolăiță and Carmen Nicolăiță: **eTwinning Anniversary Workshop – 10 years of school partnerships in Europe** – page 15

- Costantino Soudaz: **The eTwinning world for me** – page 16

- Magdalena Goc: **10th anniversary of eTwinning in the Zespół Szkół w Pobiedziskach, Poland - 10 urodziny eTwinning** – page 19

Cornelia Melcu: **eTwinning brings teachers closer** – page 20

Barbara Klaassen: **eTwinning and STEM projects** – page 21

Ana Tudor: **MAVEN - a successful eTwinning project** – page 23

**Erasmus+:**

- Miguela Fernandes: **eTwinning and MORE...** – page 26

- Elena Pezzi: **eTwinning since the very beginning...** – page 27

- Marta Pena Garrido: **The role of eTwinning in Erasmus+ projects** – page 30

- Diana Chirilă and Péntzesné Győr Enikő: **Photography beyond borders** – page 32

Carmine Iannicelli: **Introductory remarks on Citizenship Competences embedded in the curriculum** – page 32

Branka Lamza and Iva Naranđa: **Integrating eTwinning projects into classes of IT and English** – page 34

Andrea Ullrich: **Going beyond classroom walls** – page 40

Arjana Blazic: **With eTwinning in the USA** – page 41

Adil Tugyan: **Defining intercultural communication** – page 44

Tatjana Gulic: **How to persuade...** – page 45

Alessandra Cannelli: **eTwinning initial teacher training pilot project** – page 45



- Lina Pereira: **From postcards to stone culture, eTwinning has no limits** – page 46
- Teresa Zeppa: **Continuity – experience – eTwinning** – page 48
- Christina Drakopoulou: **Diagnostic test, medication or maybe powerful antidote to the European (socio-moral) crisis? eTwinning can do it!** – page 49
- Xanthie Chouliara and Irineos Georgiou: **Social inclusion through eTwinning projects: RED BALL** – page 50
- Sandra Macabre: **eTwinning, an experience booster** – page 55
- Emine Cag: **My eTwinning** – page 56
- Theodora Gkeniou: **Learnenglish+ - Put a plus in language learning** – page 57
- Eva Buyuksimkesyan, Talar Bedikoglu and Zabel Boyacian: **What were we up to as the eTwinning club in 2014-2015?** – page 58
- Web 2.0 Compass Area:**
- Francoise Altamura: **Matching pairs on images** – page 61
  - Loredana Popa: **Aurasma – teaching and learning with Augmented Reality** – page 61
- Ingrid Gallardo Sundqvist: **Stepping ahead in our way of teaching** – page 64
- Eric Vayssie and Eleni Harzavalou: **Project trailers** – page 65
- Vasilica Gazdac: **Digital resources at early ages in the eTwinning project "Fairytale between cultures"** – page 66
- Mariella Fasanelli: **eTwinning teachers as realistic designers of learning environments** – page 68
- Umit Cicek: **eTwinning for professional development and to boost student motivation** – page 69
- Nieves Méndez: **eTwinning for a change!** – page 70
- Laura Rita Pitariu: **Closing the gap between family and school: The role of digital technologies – eTwinning professional development workshop in Guimaraes, Portugal** – page 71
- Irene Confalone: **eTwinning school-family cooperation: excellent results** – page 72
- Esen Sandiraz: **Hurrayyy! eTwinning goes national!** – page 73
- Brigida Clemente: **eTwinning at school for the construction of European citizenship** – page 75
- Ana-Maria Ghioc: **"Stories in a Photo" – Collaborative creative writing in eTwinning projects** – page 81
- Svetla Popova: **The small children and the greatest composers** – page 82



Diana Linford: **Christmas Truce - Best UK eTwinning project 2014-2015** – page 84

Nathalie Scerri: **eTwinning in my class** – page 88

Eva Toth and Emese Cîmpean: **ICT and eTwinning projects in vocational and theoretical schools** – page 89

Dalibor Todorović: **Experiences from the seminar "How to make a good collaborative eTwinning project"** – page 91

Loredana Popa: **Teaching English through creative story writing** – page 94

Veronique Sarrere: **Show, share, spread: 3 keywords for a successful eTwinning project** – page 96





**Happy reading with eTwinning!**

by Anne Gilleran

Who said newsletters were a thing of the past? Many are, but our unique one has certainly bucked the trend. Visibility of eTwinning Projects Newsletter – you are looking at number 5 now – is a refreshing and beautifully illustrated annual electronic bulletin that presents you with the latest news on eTwinning activities. It is especially aimed at eTwinners and not-yet-eTwinners alike. It brings you various ways in which collaboration is promoted within schools – across curricula – and between schools, as part of the eTwinning and Erasmus+ schemes.

Collaboration can bring about many positive elements in education, and this newsletter contains various tips that you may find useful when engaging in your didactic activities.

Erasmus+, good practice examples of celebratory eTwinning projects, tools to use, professional and personal development and of course eTwinning’s 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary – they are all here in the newsletter you are now starting to read! Enjoy!  
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**The anatomy of a successful training course**

by Daniela Bunea

Modern school requires teachers to learn incessantly. Regardless of seniority, they perfect their skills and complement their expertise, and in the age of the European Union they often do this abroad. I took part in such training not long ago – it was a two-week course, in the framework of the European Commission’s Erasmus+ Programme, held in St. Julian’s, Malta at ETI, the Executive Training Institute.



The aim of this course was for teachers to experience a range of interesting activities linking methodology and learning theories to today’s classroom. Sessions were practical, including a focus on technology, and helped the 7 teachers in my group reflect on our approach to teaching today’s students. The course addressed the needs of language teachers and educators in secondary education.

The course was taught interactively, with input, workshops and group work. The participants from 5 countries – Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, Italy, Bulgaria and Romania – took an active role in all sessions, maximising their use of English, and experiencing for themselves the activities covered in the sessions. We were introduced, during the course, to various web-based sites that we can use after the course.

The course was devoted to the methodology of working with students using all available resources, with particular emphasis on information technology and multimedia. In order to better assimilate the material, it was divided into thematic blocks related to the development of various language skills of



speaking, listening, writing, reading and to the ability to motivate students to study and work. We analysed the impact of multiple intelligences and learner styles on the learning process. Very often our teachers – Anita Gauci, Niki Stokes and Valerie Zammit – asked us to work in pairs or teams of three in the group.

Each thematic block was focused on developing existing knowledge and presentation of specific exercises. Especially interesting were the classes with the use of ICT and video presentations – we learned how to use Movie Maker to create our own video clips and multimedia presentations. We also learned how to create an interesting blog only for a specific group using avatars and other exciting apps.



Some of the 42 hours of learning were dedicated to vocabulary and grammar. We practised collocations, idioms, pronunciation, and active listening. With an atypical use of songs and video clips, we examined prepositional phrases, word formation, transformation of sentences, as well as the social and cultural situations presented in the songs. In addition, we investigated some "living" language as well – the use of slang and informal expressions.



An element worth mentioning was the exploitation of humour and jokes in learning phrasal verbs, grammatical structures and specific tenses. Interesting stories and anecdotes make it much easier to pass difficult content, which is often also confusing for students.

The course focused on refreshing the teaching methods and techniques in order to spice up activities and adapt them to the needs and abilities of our students. In my work I have never used an interactive whiteboard. The course showed me a large array of opportunities for its use and made me want to give it a try the next school year, if possible. I also enjoyed the use of Cuisenaire Rods and of dictation to develop vocabulary and imagination. With their simple yet various elements one can create fascinating stories for pointing directions, learning adjectives, practising themed scenes and more. Additionally we learnt how to create crosswords and quizzes and how to use them with our students.

The course also allowed me to participate in tours organised to the old yet modern capital of Malta, Valetta (where we watched the audiovisual show entitled The Malta Experience), to major localities of the Mediterranean archipelago like Sliema, Mdina, Rabat, Gozo and on the neighbouring island of Sicily (where we went to Mount Etna and to Taormina), to the prehistoric Hagar Qim Temples, the Dingli Cliffs, the Marsaxlokk fishing village, the Blue Grotto, the Azure Window, the Popeye Village, the National Aquarium. Interesting stories told by our guides brought us closer to the culture and customs of these hospitable people.

In addition to all these, I joined an eTwinning Ambassadors' Seminar organized by the Maltese National Support Service in Mellieha and met Amanda Debattista and Jaqueline Frendo from the Maltese National Support Service, all the Maltese ambassadors – Nathalie Scerri, Claudine Chircop, Mario Xerri, Maria Antoinette Magro, Romina Baldacchino, Gordon Cassar –, many Polish ambassadors – among them Dominika Tokarz, a friend of my dear eTwinning comrade Mariola Chodakowska-Malkiewicz – and Rute Baptista from the Central Support Service in Brussels. We were all full of energy, sharing ideas of eTwinning cooperation, collaboration and project work! After a few days I also had a meeting with a former eTwinning ambassador of Malta, Miriam Schembri – one of Europe's educational frontrunners, and a promoter and supporter of eTwinning for many years. Informal meetings of eTwinning ambassadors can carry amazing significance, and I



am proud and happy to be part of this remarkable network of pioneering teachers.



Mobility for learning is a great way to enrich teachers' work, to ignite a novel enthusiasm in themselves and their students, and an incentive for more creative endeavours. It is a marvellous manner of improving the quality of education ultimately. I am very satisfied with the quality of the course at ETI, the acquired skills, the making of new friends – with these teachers from different countries I hope my school will establish long-term cooperation in the form of joint partnership projects.

Thank you, Erasmus+!

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**"The character project: educating the heart" – An experience of key competences in eTwinning**  
by Cinzia Masia

Over the years one of the most important aims of the school systems has become the opportunity to offer students chances to improve their knowledge and competences but also to become responsible citizens and efficient workforce in a more and more challenging world.

In 1996 Jacque Delors and the European Commission exploited the term *Learning* in order to stimulate reflection on major educational questions in the 21st century. Throughout the *Four Pillars of Learning* (Learning to Know, Learning to do, Learning to be and Learning to Live together) they stressed the importance of putting knowledge and learning into practice developing skills and then competences together with personal attitudes and qualities knowing and understanding other people.

Competence has become a key word and the concept of 'key competences' has gained importance in recent years particularly at school level. In order to create an appropriate learning environment to help students to build up their competences it is important to rearrange national curricula. Teachers should work together to think about new interactive strategies so to involve students actively while exploiting their own knowledge and practicing their competences together with life skills, personal qualities, capabilities and attitude.

Then, according to the European Framework of 8 Key Competences (2006), several European schools have rearranged and updated their national school curricula. In Italy numerous schools have started reorganising their own curricula trying to establishing competences to be developed through proper methods and approaches in interactive learning situations useful to prepare students.

This has become one of the main aims of my school and subsequently last school year we decided to plan cross-curricular Teaching Units in order to create collaborative and multidisciplinary activities exploiting different key competences at the same time since of their co-dependent characteristics. So eTwinning platform offered the right chance to plan and carry out such activities motivating and involving our learners. Among a large amount of project proposals, I believed that the eTwinning project named "The Character project: educating the heart" was the proper one because of its topic and aims settled to help students to reflect on their own characters respecting the others.

"... How can we create a compassionate, caring school environment? How can we awaken the passion for learning in students? How can we promote kindness in the classroom? How can we inspire purpose, reach students' hearts, and cultivate student security, identity, and belonging?..." With some of my colleagues we decided to adopt these questions as starting points for our multidisciplinary project mainly based on the development of some Key competences such as *Communication in mother tongue, Communication in foreign language, Social and civic competences* that were exploited in the following subjects: Italian and English languages.

*Learning to learn, Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship and Digital competence* occurred also in all the other involved subjects like Art, ICT and Technology.



Firstly, students carried out most of the activities and tasks with the partners using the TwinSpace. Mainly in small groups, they had to reflect and give their opinions, ideas about their character strengths and traits, optimism, gratitude, self-confidence, self-compassion and the importance of an affective education at schools interacting in English through the Forum by using several ICT tools. They created different products that shared and compared with the other European mates. They had to listen to videos, read comments and replay to them writing simple sentences or texts, but also to interact with the partners during Skype meetings so they needed to improve their knowledge about new lexis and to recycle structures developing communicative skills and then their competence in *Communication in foreign language*.



During the Italian language classes learners were asked to read short stories about the project topic and reflect on them expressing their feelings and ideas. Then, they were asked to make up and write stories exploiting some of the teenagers' common character aspects applying skills and competences correlated to *Communication in the mother tongue*. The Art teacher engaged students in adorning all the tales with drawings that illustrated some chapters. *Social and civic competence* was improved during both Italian and English language activities when learners were invited to reflect on the different aspects of their characters and how they influence their relationship with together adults and mates. They shared their emotions and thoughts but also expressed empathy and tolerance while comparing them with the partners from different social contexts and cultural identities. Always with regard to them and their habits, learners had the chance to improve their social skills understanding and appreciating the diversity. Working in groups each student got a role and respected the others collaborating during the

project work to reach common goals. They looked for specific information, collect and select materials such as articles and pictures, then organized and planned them in order to create final products to be shared in the TwinSpace of the project. The key competences *Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship* and *Learning to learn* took place constantly in most of the tasks because students had to recycle their previous knowledge, skills and competences to acquire some new ones interacting and cooperating firstly with pairs in class and then with the partners in the TwinSpace. Students showed to be more concerned and encouraged while working to reach the final product and particularly to receive partners' feed-backs. As the previous competences *The Digital competence* occurred during all the activities and students had the opportunity to know and use new tools. A part from Power Point Programme that they mainly used in class to show the results of the group works, students became familiar with other programmes such as Padlet, Isuu, Youblisher, Animoto, Smilebox, Photopeach etc.. to make their task products. They had constantly to communicate and share materials exploiting the Forum or the Blog always being responsible and aware of their roles in the project.



Students enjoyed this opportunity a lot because they had the chance to enrich their knowledge and built up competences effectively cooperating through innovative activities and ICT tools that stimulated their motivation and creativity in some subjects at the same time during the school year. Once more eTwinning platform has given my students this challenging occasion to *learn* in a different way developing competences useful to interact and communicate effectively with other students and teachers in order to reach common aims so as it has encouraged some of my



colleagues to collaborate and work together in a common project using diverse approaches.



enthusiasm and commitment. We learn to work together, to listen, to share and collaborate with our partners and that make us learn in a playful, genuine and constructive manner. And the best thing of all is that you make a million friends and you are no longer alone.



**Yes, we are eTwinners!**  
by Maria da Luz Borges

Hello everyone. Let us introduce ourselves: We are the boys and the girls of St ´s. Benedict kindergarten, in Oeiras, Portugal, we are 3, 4, and 5 years old and are eTwinners.



Yes,... yes,... you heard well; we are eTwinners and we enjoy being so.

How is it to be an eTwinner in the Kindergarten?

Being an eTwinner in the Kindergarten is very, VERY GOOD, it is the best thing that can happen to us. Why do we say that? Because when we are eTwinners, we learn a lot of new things, with great

But being an eTwinner can also be difficult. Why? Because eTwinners have to collaborate, talk between them and with their partners, have to plan, to share, to match details, to execute in collaboration what was previously planned and climb every day a little a step ahead in training. And how can we do that, being so small as we are, not speaking the same language as our partners and not being able to read and write yet? Well it is simple. As you know, when the first language is not enough to communicate, we speak a universal language much more effective and important language than all the languages in the world. We speak the language of emotions. You can do it automatically if you are an eTwinner. So we do not need many words to understand each other. Smiling, singing and drawing with love and commitment, is a good way to communicate. And please do not forget to use web tools because they are a good way to help us improve communication between us. We also send a lot of emails, make video conferences, and use several web tools. ICT allow us to plan, to collaborate and to execute in collaboration. But we also use a lot of smiling, drawing, singing, the voice of our teachers, and the post office, of course. We can assure you this is an amazing and complete form of communication. With eTwinning we are always learning.



eTwinning is the best way to learn! It is great to be an eTwinner!

And now to communicate with you and to make you smile, this girl is for you, with all our love...



PS – This was made with imagination, love, white paper and 12 coloured pencils by Matilde Real, 5 years old. Guilherme, 5 years old, took a picture of Matilde's work with a digital Cassio camera. Afonso, 5 years old, edited the photo in Microsoft office 2010 and our teacher imported it here.

So are you smiling? Good! So we are communicating!

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**My eTwinning experience**  
by Olga Antonioli

In 2005 I joined the eTwinning portal, driven by curiosity and the desire to improve myself as an educator.

It was not an easy task to find my first partner: there were not all the guidelines and tutorials that abound nowadays and not many colleagues were available to start collaborating with people they did not know. I did not give up. I turned difficulties into positive learning opportunities: slowly but with determination, I learned to find my way in the portal, to build bridges of friendship, to use the computer in an innovative way and to collaborate with pupils and colleagues.

At first my professional and personal growth was stimulated and supported by the participation in training courses organized by the Italian National Support Service, then by regional, national and

international meetings as well as various online learning events on the eTwinning portal.

Almost imperceptibly, I changed the way of teaching, acquired new knowledge and skills in the logic of lifelong learning and furthermore my attitude towards my students became more dynamic, open and cooperative.

There was also an evolution in the students involved in the projects. The first participants were shy and afraid to face European peers, were not curious and constantly they had to be encouraged and urged to work. Little by little students gained more self-confidence and courage, enjoyed using ICT tools with their own creativity and dared to do better the next time. They themselves spread the word to the new students who spontaneously asked me to activate a European project.

In November 2014 and May 2015 I took part in two regional workshops as a pedagogical advisory. I illustrated the benefits teachers and students gain directly and indirectly from eTwinning: authentic learning, collaboration, professional development, European dimension, ICT use, tolerance and much more.

I have written these lines for those teachers who are still reluctant to take advantage of the opportunities eTwinning offers. In these 10 years of eTwinning involvement I have met lots of them. Most of them make a list of personal reasons which prevent them from embarking on a European project and complain about students' demotivation. How could we be innovative if we do not start to innovate ourselves?





### eTwinning 2005-2015

by Robert Conings

**Ten years** ago, a German colleague and Comenius-partner Hans Feldmeier told me we could combine Comenius with eTwinning. At that point, eTwinning was a new way to start with international projects without a lot of paperwork and funding. We had some experience with Comenius projects and starting with eTwinning did not make any sense. You can imagine that I was confused, but as I am open to new ideas and challenges, I agreed.

Today I am happy to be a part of the eTwinning family.

During these **10 years** I worked together with people from all around Europe and this made me a social guy. Not only social competences have been improved, also my knowledge about online tools and apps increased every year. I became so obsessed by the tools, I had to start a teacher's group about tools.

Some people noticed my interests, and decided I had to do some workshops on national workshops and during eTwinning conferences. Preparing these workshops took some time but was again very useful. And finally I organized some online events about using these tools, also quite an experience.

My latest eTwinning project is about using tablets and 3D-printers, so I am trying to be up-to-date with recent developments. My students are excited when printing out 3D-objects created by the Czech students.



The use of eTwinning in my classroom surely motivated my students, and I am quite happy when

one of my former students reminds me of one of the many projects we have done.

Thank you, my eTwinning friends all around Europe!

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### My very special "eTwinning year"

by Antonietta Calo

Another school year is over but this one really flew away! Maybe because it was totally focused on eTwinning, from the beginning to the end... but let me tell you the story from the start!

My school year started with the launch of the "Stone Culture rolling over Europe" project with my second year students, together with the Science and the Art teachers. Its main aim was to promote a more positive attitude towards our Earth for our students, and consequently for the entire school community, in order to have an active role in the support of our cultural heritage, environmental quality and sustainable development, for a better awareness of the European citizenship.

In the meanwhile I started my activity as an Italian Ambassador, taking part to the National eTwinning Conference held in Naples from 30th September to 1st October

([http://etwinning.indire.it/articolo.php?id\\_cnt=353](http://etwinning.indire.it/articolo.php?id_cnt=353)) on the key role played by eTwinning in the National Recommendations for the Compulsory Education Curriculum. My task was to run the training session of the "eTwinning Open Day" together with the other ambassadors of my region - Campania.



Then I was asked by the Regional Board of Education to join, as an ambassador, three more meetings during the month of November.



*I hosted one of the meetings in my school, on the topic of "eTwinning in students' and teachers' development". In this meeting I presented my personal experience, and my students expressed what eTwinning had meant in their life as 21st century students and as European citizens. They were very excited for the chance they had to demonstrate what competencies and skills they had acquired thanks to the eTwinning projects they had joined, three projects awarded with the EQL!*

*Here you can see the testimonial by one of the students, Francesca:  
<https://youtu.be/r2RCRp17USQ>.*

*In my school eTwinning is part of our everyday life. For example, last December we prepared an eTwinning Stand to support funding for Fondazione Telethon, a major Italian charity supporting research on genetic diseases, during the Open Day School.*



*In January 2015 I started working on the new Erasmus +programme, according to the development plan of the Regional Board of Education. I am particularly proud of the*

*organization of a teacher seminar in my school to point out the key role played by eTwinning in Key Action 1 and Key Action 2. It was a very successful meeting, which motivated other teachers of my school to be active eTwinners!*



*And while planning my institute's KA1 project and running the eTwinning project with my second year students, suddenly it was time to organize the celebration for eTwinning's **10th Birthday**. The students were very excited and put forward a lot of interesting ideas: the creation of the human logo, a wishing video, a flags parade, a Chinese lanterns and balloons release and... and... and... We had only to make them reality!*



*So I decided to organize the meeting "Let's celebrate together" on 9th May, with representatives of the USR and of some schools of my district, invited to share their experiences and to prepare a short activity to wish Happy Birthday to eTwinning. My invitation was accepted by three high schools and by an elementary one; all the teachers were together with some student*



representatives and one of the school involved also its Belgian partners, making it a very nice way to celebrate eTwinning in Europe.



At the end of the celebrations, after the Chinese lanterns and balloons, I invited all the audience to join the AperiTwinning, to taste all the handmade specialities cooked by the students themselves.



This celebration was a great success, skilled teachers shared their knowledge with the less experienced ones, and it was so inspiring that I was asked to run two more eTwinning training seminars by the participating schools before the school year ending! You can see the whole celebration here: [https://youtu.be/smEm\\_ThGGGI](https://youtu.be/smEm_ThGGGI), <https://youtu.be/ZDeMVj52qQ0> and <https://youtu.be/zheXBw0S7Tk>.

Finally, how could I forget the winter afternoons spent with my eTwinners friends joining the webinars organized by my NSS or by the CSS?

I improved my professional development thanks to these online meetings, stretching my personal and

teaching skills: each of them made me a bit better! I would have never imagined running a webinar myself for European Ambassadors about "TwinSpace and its technical characteristics"!

So while I learnt new things I also shared my knowledge with other teachers contributing to diffusion of eTwinning principles from local school communities to regional, national and European ones.

Considering that I joined eTwinning in 2007, I must admit that I have come a long way from then, changing my teaching methods and my idea of "good school" thanks to all my mentor friends who "infected" me with their enthusiasm.

Now I want to greet my travel companions saying: "Have a nice summer, relax and collect new ideas for the next school year; we have a new exciting eTwinning school year ahead of us!"

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### eTwinning's tenth birthday at "Familiari" secondary school

by Domenico Marino, Francesca Zampaglione and Caterina Praticò

Celebrating **10 years** with eTwinning in our school concurred to celebrate **10 years** of successes and awards. It was with pride and satisfaction that on May 7<sup>th</sup> 2015, we were very pleased to celebrate this event in the conference hall of the "Lieutenant Colonel John Familiari" secondary school of Melito di Porto Salvo.

During these **ten years**, our school has been involved in 26 projects, eleven of which have been very successful, and some of them got several national and European Quality Labels as the best projects in French and English languages. In the latest two years the "Familiari High school" has been able to get two highest eTwinning European prizes for the category "the best project in French" in 2012 in Berlin, and in 2014 in Brussels.

eTwinning has become a real opportunity which has given our students the opportunity to join their knowledge and skills and also their ITC competences, making them speculate and compare the foreign languages they study at school: English, French and now Spanish too.

Working within an eTwinning project and using Web 2.0 has given our students the opportunity to work in a context far from their familiar context, where



knowledge and skills are intertwined, and where they have been able to free their spirit of initiative and taste the satisfaction of reaching goals which they have never coveted and desired.

The experience of eTwinning has become an indispensable tool in the teaching / learning processes within the different courses of our school. Thanks to eTwinning hundreds young Melitesi have shortened the distance among their European peers, it has allowed them to confront them.

Talking about eTwinning with colleagues and students always produces a certain impact. They have not been very confident with e-twinning, however, thanks to the latest achievements, they have begun to be interested in this experience in its widest meaning: multiculturalism.

It's clear that, if from one side the use of the impact with the technological – educational innovation has been accepted with some reluctance by a large number of teachers, from the other side more and more teachers have adopted the eTwinning methodology within their syllabus, which allowed them to improve their teaching so much that they have got results above their initial expectations.

A school that guarantees the interaction among the counties by breaking down the country borders, "here and now", allows a continuous training of both students and teachers, confidence with the new technologies, but above all, it increases the sense of belonging to the European Union.

During the event, after the introduction about the advantages of the eTwinning platform, numerous foreign partners, teachers and students, who have worked in the school projects during this school year, took part in the conversation.

At the end of the event, but not as the last thing to single out on such a day, full of subject matter, we can admit that only the idea of working as a team with the help of the new technologies, can really help us let our students grow up and mature, as well as it giveswe teachers, who "patiently" take care of them, the satisfaction that the work we do in the classroom doesn't make us only evaluate a given content by expressing a mark , but our work has a real value if it can contribute to rise interest and enthusiasm in children, if we are successful in giving them some hints to make them acquire a new way of thinking. The relevance of our teaching and educational action is valid only if we contribute to our pupils' personal growth.



The event ended with the cutting of the cake and with the hope that, in the near future, our school may get some more awards to confirm the great validity of teaching and learning with eTwinning.

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## eTwinning Anniversary Workshop – 10 years of school partnerships in Europe

by Cristina Nicolăiță and Carmen Nicolăiță

On April 25, 2015, an eTwinning workshop was held in School "Michael the Brave", Targoviste. On May 7th, 2015, we all celebrated **10 years** of eTwinning implemented at European level. In our country, Romania, eTwinning is implemented starting October 2007.

The purpose of the event was to promote examples of successful projects and exchange of ideas, practice and experience among teachers. The workshop was an associated event to the Symposium "Key competences, the foundation of personal development", organized by the Secondary School "Michael the Brave" Targoviste, Dambovita Teacher Training House and School Inspectorate Dambovita County.

The presenters of the workshop were:

- 8 years of eTwinning in Romania

Alexandra Bunica, Institute of Education Sciences - National Centre eTwinning Romania

- Presentations of best practices eTwinning
  - Project "Healthy & Happy" - Cristina Nicolaita, "Gh. Magheru" School, Caracal
  - Project "Tweaster" - Carmen Nicolaita, National College "Ionita Asan", Caracal
  - Project "MAVEN" - Mariana Radulescu, "Liviu Rebreanu" School, Mioveni



Project "Healthy & Happy" - Cristina Nicolaita "Gh. Magheru" School Caracal



The project is about healthy food habits, healthy lifestyles and physical activities in childhood. We'd like to improve the awareness of healthy life habits in childhood, prevent immediate and long-term effects of overweight in the future and research the effects of hormones food.

The expected results were: \*to be aware of the differences and the similarities between the partner schools' traditional and local meals. \*to increase the awareness of our students, colleagues and families including them into the Project activities \*to learn and to share healthy lifestyle habits in partner countries \*to grow organic food with students \*to have the opportunity to change school's and the families' point of view on healthy eating habits \*to create a website to share the activities, works and meetings carried out by the partners in their own schools. \*to prevent the immediate and long-term health effects of obesity in childhood \*to improve the awareness of healthy life habits \*to learn each other's traditional and local healthy meals and share with all.

One of the final results of the project was dedicated to 10<sup>th</sup> eTwinning anniversary. The online calendar gathers snapshots from project activities, healthy



recipes, questionnaires for students and parents regarding a healthy lifestyle and, of course, benefits of eating fruits and vegetables.

The project develops students' critical thinking, communication and debate skills, as students are required to speak about their habits on health, compare them with their classmates' and also their partners' from other European countries. Through these comparisons students learn about their partners' perceptions, understand them and start feeling close to them, breaking barriers and stereotypes. Through discussions and friendship, students develop a positive stance towards native and foreign language learning, as well as ICT.

Project "Tweaster" - Carmen Nicolaita, National College "Ionita Asan", Caracal



During this short project we twinned about Easter in different countries in Europe. We made pictures, video and drawings to show each other which habits we have during the Easter period in our country. We shared original ideas to show our results to the others. The project was open for everyone: new and experienced eTwinners. We kept it very simple and easy, to make it possible for everyone to take the first eTwinning steps. With the students we wanted to share cultural knowledge in Europe. We also wanted to work on the ICT and media skills of the students.

As my students are young (8-9 years old) and they are beginners at English language, I tried to engage them using their talents: drawing, singing, taking photos, filming, and their ICT and internet skills, many of them being already little experts, using cameras, tablets and smartphones on a daily basis.

The project has had a big impact upon my students (and their parents), being their first international

collaborative online project. By sharing our activities on Facebook and also by inviting parents to activities, I was able to get a very positive feedback from them. For me it was an opportunity to rediscover the eTwinning portal, a new improved one, as it is eTwinning plus and part of Erasmus+ action now. My school benefit was the involvement in European projects, pointing out the European dimension.

The most successful result in my opinion was the great involvement of my students, they became more responsible trying to meet the project's tasks and in the end they developed their self-esteem and self-awareness.

Instead of conclusions: working in eTwinning projects, our students developed their linguistic and ICT skills but more importantly they learnt the importance of friendship and positive thinking in life. They broke stereotypes and discovered commonalities by studying the work of their partners and realized that, although we have different languages, we share the same values, dreams and emotions.

Long live eTwinning at its **10<sup>th</sup> anniversary!**

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**The eTwinning world for me**  
by Costantino Soudaz

Here is what I have received from the eTwinning World in **10 years**.

I have chosen 10 pictures and I will comment on them one by one.

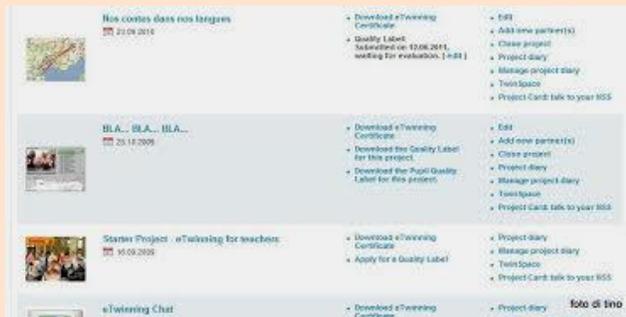


I live in a mountain area and we experiment experience in digital divide: often we do not have in our school a good ADSL and communication is a little bit more complicated. So often we cannot work



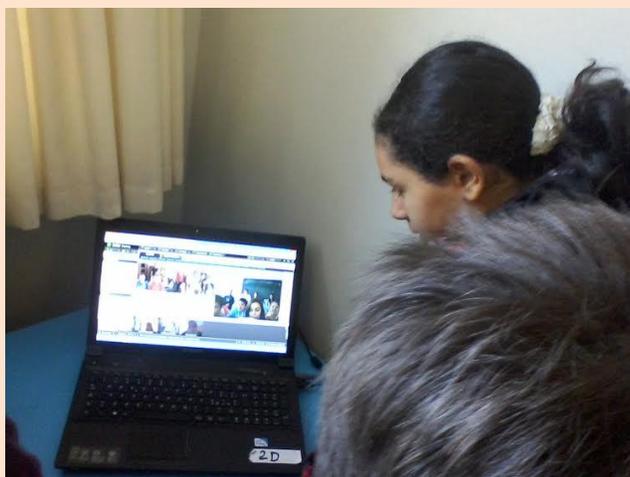
on some kind of project as we do not have right tools available for. But planning carefully iyit is always possible to manage communication, not always directly but in asynchroneus way .

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So we choose to work on project with many possibility of communication and we hare very happy about the choose we made. During first 2 years in eTwinning we did not make many projects due to: difficulties in tools, not the same goals of the partners, bad relationship between us. But I can assure you those years gave me the possibility of better understanding the way I could work in eTwinning and the points to discuss before starting a project.

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Conferences between pupils are very important in any project and where it was possible we used as motivation instrument for our pupils. Le real activity of communicating with others pupils is really giving a lot of interest of the pupils in the project. But we receive as teachers the instructions about tools giving possibilities of a asynchronous communication: in this case it is important to have a good planning between partners in order to keep interest running during the project workout.

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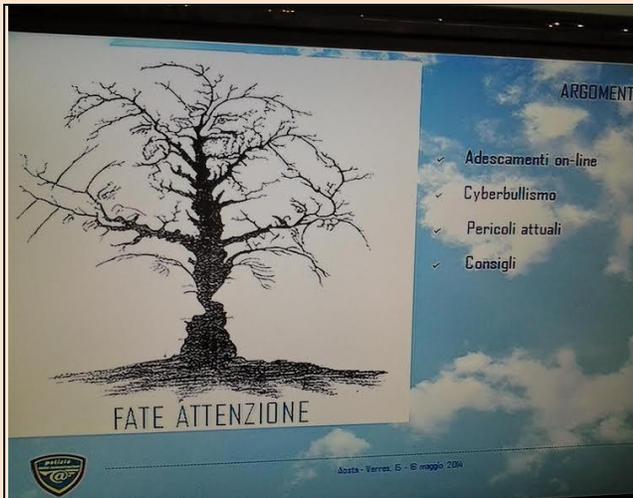
I am a technical teacher but among the best projects we participated in we had some on poetry and exchanges of short written pieces from our students. Overcoming language problems we understood pupils are easily in connection between them and nor the language, the tools are a really problem.

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Teacher Learning Event  
I participate, during the years, to many learning event giving possibility of comparing, sharing, working together , and getting a better aknowledge of the way the school is working all ove the Europe. Many new programs, new way of teaching, some special educational needs has been discussed in a very large comunity of teachers. I always participate with a good willing, as well as others teachers, to LE during last 6 years.

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**E-Safety**

*I realize in the last **10 years** eTwinning as the safety area in which working: we can rarely find problems due to a control on user name, password and rights about file and documents published. When i speak about eTwinning I always appoint the attention on the Safety policy as one of the most important point to take attention. Also on social Internet there are good programs but from the safety point of view eTwinning is really unique and safe.*

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**eTwinning and Europe**

*Europe is always present in any eTwinning activities: between teachers, pupils we cannot work without comparing, discussing, judging each other and step by step we know better and better about Europe and what must be the concept of Europe: poeple working together for a better future for the World.*

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**European Quality Labels**

*The final work of a project is to apply for a Quality Label if you are convinced that you have made a good project. But not always we receive a QL for the project we think good: when you have a good felling keep the satisfaction for the good project. The criteria for QL are changing and they want to push us to work better and better, Continuous improvement is becoming one of the most important way to modify our life.*

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**Groups**

*Between teachers in eTwinning there are people activating and managing group with special interest: Francophonie, ITC, Creativity, and many more groups. You can learn a lot about new way of working with groups of people having the same interest. I learn a lot during those years and I suggest to all new eTwinners to follow some groups.*



The school I would like  
 During the years I meet virtually many friends;  
 between them Gianfranco Zavalloni and I share perfectly what he was writing about slow school. It is also true that in eTwinning I meet a big number of teachers sharing those ideas: a school taking care of pupils' needs, motivating them and doing – slowly – big projects.

So thanks to all the friends I have met and who helped me during **10 years** of eTwinning!

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### 10th anniversary of eTwinning in the Zespól Szkół w Pobiedziskach, Poland - 10 urodziny eTwinning

by Magdalena Goc

This year we were celebrating the **10th anniversary** of eTwinning – transnational programme of collaboration of kindergartens and schools and promoting teachers' professional development.

For the first time the date 7<sup>th</sup> May became Transnational eTwinning Day.

That is why in Zespól Szkół in Pobiedziska, Poland we organized an interesting celebration with videoconference with our partners from Crete.

While communicating in a Virtual Classroom, our Greek partners prepared for us a surprise – posters with an invitation to their beautiful country in Polish (without mistakes!), wishes for holidays and a melorecitation (wrap) of one of Homer's song.

Our pupils participated in an Art competition on **10<sup>th</sup> eTwinning anniversary** and we announced this contest's results just on that day.

At the end of the videoconference each partner sang "Happy Birthday" in their own language and then together in English.

The meeting organizers in our school – Ewa Olszewska and myself – prepared nice prizes for the most hardworking students and... a sweet surprise:



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**eTwinning brings teachers closer**  
by Cornelia Melcu

Around 150 eTwinning ambassadors, members of National Support Services and of the Central Support Service and educational experts participated from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 2015, in the Professional Development Workshop for eTwinning ambassadors held in Jurmala, Latvia.



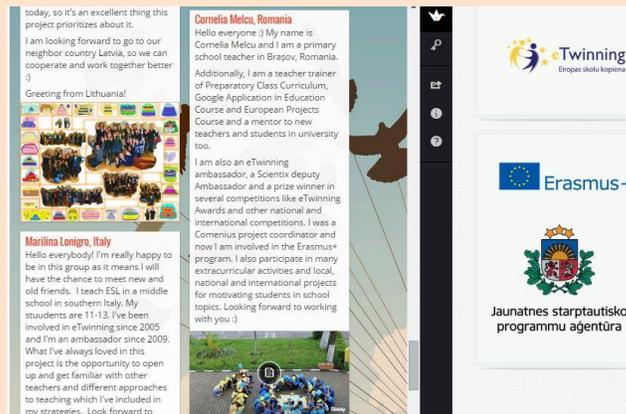
The programme featured 7 talks and 18 workshops. During the event, the participants met colleagues from other European countries and learnt innovative methods of teaching in the classroom related to eTwinning and used useful tools for organizing eTwinning trainings. They also developed a plan for onsite and online eTwinning trainings. The workshops offered participants the chance to go through different approaches and methods on teaching related to eTwinning.



eTwinning Ambassadors worked in teams and they discussed and developed the new 1, 2 or 3

day on site training programs and online courses, putting together new experience and own experiences. All the products of their work can be found following this link:  
<http://twinspace.etwinning.net/8350>.

The workshops and discussions at the Professional Development Workshop in Jurmala were summarized by the Outreach Coordinator of eTwinning Central Support Service, Claire Morvan, who stressed the role of ambassadors in bringing about change in European education and in growing the eTwinning community.



The chance to participate in face-to-face training at European level was greatly appreciated and eTwinning community members derived important benefits from being a part of the eTwinning programme. Thank you, Latvian NSS and thank you, eTwinning!





### **eTwinning and STEM projects**

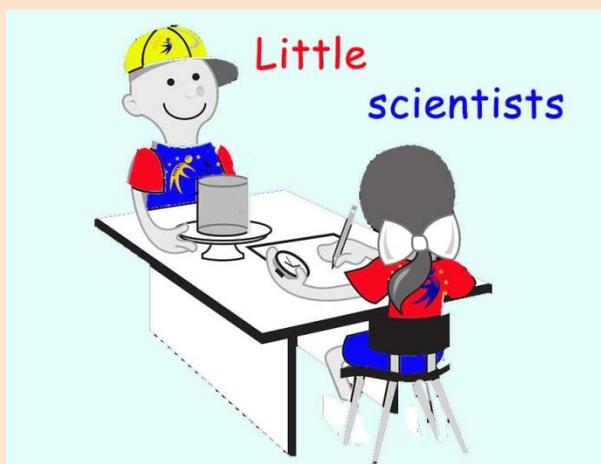
by Barbara Klaassen

Enthusiasm, curiosity and interest make the essential key to a positive approach to learning and thus also to science, mathematics and technology. eTwinning with its possibility of collaboration between classes and teachers offers a great opportunity to strengthen this.

I would like to introduce two projects related to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education in primary schools European partners and me developed over the last school year, as well as to give you some hints on how to connect eTwinning and Scientix – **which** collects and promotes best practices in science teaching and learning in Europe, organises trainings and workshops for STEM teachers.

*Little scientists* (age 6-8)

<http://twinspace.etwinning.net/5579>



We worked on this Project with three classes of which one sadly had to drop out: a 1<sup>st</sup> grade from Germany, a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade from France and a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade from the United Kingdom, which dropped out.



As children are usually enthusiastic about experiments, we used this to develop an understanding of basic scientific contexts. Each month during the project each class carried out an experiment, formulated expectations and assumptions, subsequently verified by practical experimentation. Results were documented and shared with partner schools.

It was amazing how focused and interested the participating girls and boys did the experiments and explored the TwinSpace together with their teachers to see what their friends in the other schools did.

The highlight for most kids was the videoconference. The classes presented each other an experiment and discussed their observations.



Of course the teachers had the task of overcoming the language barrier, in which they luckily succeeded so that a feeling of working in an international environment existed for the pupils. As in every eTwinning project, there was a European dimension, but in this project STEM-education was the primary focus.

You may say that experiments are a trivial approach to STEM education and ask yourself how to do a motivating project focused on math in primary schools. I want to present another eTwinning project of last school year.

*Lost shapes* (age 6-9)

<http://twinspace.etwinning.net/1681>

My colleague Birgit and I started this project with her 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and 3 other partner schools from Hungary, Turkey and Italy. The project title is based on the book "Lost shapes" written by Shobha Viswanath & Christine Kast.

The kids studied geometric figures, shapes and bodies. I cannot show all the things we did, but I want to present some:



All partners searched and photographed shapes and bodies in daily life and made amazing videos, not only showing shapes but also the living environment of the partners.

We shared ideas and knowledge for example the Hungarian pupils created their own shape board games.

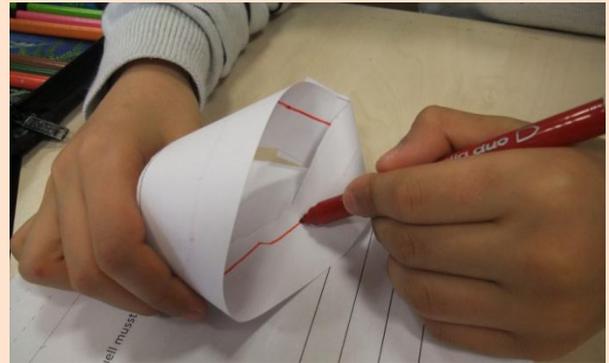


Patrizia from Rome drew our attention to the video "Donald in Mathmagic Land", which is available on YouTube in different languages.

We taught our partners how to fold a Tetrahedron from a sheet of paper.



We did not focus only on the "normal" geometry taught in primary schools. We had also a glimpse at the 4 colour theorem, when drawing and colouring shape-pictures with paint.net. Children loved to create the Möbius strip and got a first feeling of Topology (short explained as the study of shapes).



But we created a multilingual audiovisual booklet with some "shape words" too.

Pupils were really motivated to learn the geometrical vocabulary in all languages. Could you imagine that "die Kugel", "gömb", "sfera", "küreman" have all the same meaning?

Let us solve: it means sphere.

We teachers are sure that this project helped our kids enormously to get a fundamental knowledge of geometry and creative thinking. The international team helped us teachers to improve our teaching skills as well.

*Scientix and eTwinning*  
<http://www.scientix.eu>

Originally an initiative of the European Commission, Scientix is managed by European Schoolnet (EUN) under the European Union's 7th Framework Programme. EUN is a consortium of 30 Ministries of Education in Europe. Scientix promotes and supports a Europe-wide collaboration among STEM teachers, education researchers, policymakers and other STEM education professionals.

But how can Scientix help you to start / get ideas or even carry out a STEM related eTwinning project?

Have a look on some possibilities teachers are provided by Scientix. Teachers can

- browse through the Scientix resources repository and find inspiration



- get involved in European STEM education projects via our matching tool
- participate in the national and European workshops and professional development courses
- participate in the national and European workshops and professional development courses
- ...

Like the eTwinning kits, the Scientix resources repository is a very good way to get inspiration for a new project or even an existing project, e.g. if you have the idea to run a project about the moon, you could search the Internet and would find many more or less good websites. By using the Scientix resources repository search, which you can filter by age, kind of material and other criteria, you will be shown results, ideas and teaching material from different projects like EUNAWE, CoReflect, astroEDU or UniSchoolLabS... on a single (!) page.



Especially for primary teachers it is very complicated to find teaching material in your preferred language. Lots of work and time is needed to translate, which takes even longer if it has to be translated into different languages.

In case you find an interesting learning resource in Scientix teaching materials, which is not in your preferred language, you can (in most cases) request a translation via the 'translation on demand service'. This service is free of charge and available only through the Scientix website. A slight problem (but solvable) is that three different people have to request a translation for it to be translated. Whether or not a teaching resource is available for translation depends on the copyright conditions under which the material is distributed.

Imagine you plan an eTwinning project with partners from different nations with different languages. Imagine the kids are able to read/speak only their mother tongue. You have the possibility to work with the same resources in all of your languages. What a huge advantage! Another way to

get inspired is to take part in one of the professional development courses or in the Scientix Communities of Practice - a moderated online forum, led by a designated expert. Even if you do not want to take an active role, you can read and perhaps you will find a good idea, or you will find another teacher who has similar ideas...

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### **MAVEN - a successful eTwinning project**

*by Ana Tudor*

The main idea of the eTwinning MAVEN project was to encourage pupils for an informal Math and English learning, using videos and audio recordings with the partners, online interactive games, stories with Math riddles and these subjects' integration into curriculum with Science, Geography, Art, History, Literature. At the beginning, partner pupils created two experts, Computer 3000 for Math and Mr. Quick for English. They helped pupils to implement the project activities during visits. Each host organized contests for Math and English. The winners were rewarded, appearing in the "Hall of Fame". Each month, the project was dedicated to a Math or English topic and to a continent. Thus, February was about "Points, Lines, Angles" and Asia, March about the chapter on the experts' adventures in Africa, with crosswords, movies about triangles and polygons, calendars and famous mathematicians mind-mapping. During the project, pupils created greetings and gifts for partners on Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter. The link to the public TwinSpace of the eTwinning MAVEN project is: <http://new-twinspace.etwinning.net/web/p105709/welcome>.

Along the eTwinning MAVEN project we have applied the methodology of writing online books, by using Boomwriter, AnswerGarden, StoryJumper and these were adopted by each partner school curriculum in the subjects as Mathematics, English, Geography, History, Romanian and Drawing. Our pupils have contributed to designing tests for Mathematics, English language and for the other subjects involved, primarily through documentation. Thus, they have found on different websites information on the theme of each test. We have developed a unique methodology for using various types of Conferences (TodayMeet, Skype, FlashMeeting, etc.) and interactive online games (Socratic Kahoot, etc.) in learning to increase our pupils' motivation. Each participation in such a motivating activity resulted in a higher incentive to participate actively and consciously in project activities and daily activities included in the school



program. Each participant pupil or teacher introduced themselves with a unique acrostic poem. Each line had to be connected with Mathematics. There was only one rule: to be creative. All the time we have evaluated our work by filling in the survey on the "Evaluation" page. By adding monthly our teams most active members to the page "Hall of Fame", we managed to make partners more enthusiastic in their work.

Concerning English as a foreign language, we used video and audio conferences. Besides, they chose appropriate vocabulary themes in English which were the support for learning how to use Quizlet, ProProfs, Learning Apps etc., by forming vocabulary tests, studies or games, genuine resources for other classes. Our pupils created a small dictionary of mathematical terms in English. We integrated Informatics into our existing curriculum by using various online IT tools of using TwinSpace (film, PowerPoint presentations, SlideBoom, AuthorStream, Kizoa, PictureTrail, etc.). For Geography, we achieved the partner countries and schools location on a map of Europe, videoconferences about mathematics in relation continents. At Mathematics we integrated European methods for teaching and learning natural numbers, integers, fractions, coordinated plan, points, lines, angles, polygons, equations and inequalities. History was reflected by presenting our national traditions, in activities like "Math and English on holidays", "Getting to know each other". Arts were integrated for the logo creation using digital tools, Christmas paintings and drawings to illustrate the online book. Literature knowledge helped us in composing acrostics poems on behalf of partners by using mathematical terms and in the writing chapters for the online book using Boomwriter within the workshop entitled "Mathematicians and Writers' Club".

The communication between the Romanian team and the partners from the other countries operated on multiple channels: TwinSpace mail-box, Skype, e-mail, Facebook. I selected my team pupils according their ability to speak and write in English, to their Math skills. This selection made my pupils to study more English, to be more ambitious, understanding that only thus they could be selected in European projects. During the development of the activities within "Liviu Rebreanu School Days", my pupils popularized this project, proving thus that they learned a lot about the traditions of other European nations, about education programs in other countries. First of all, they explained how interesting and exciting is to communicate with people whom you do not know, to exchange

impressions about their hobbies and even on educational systems. The pupils and teachers of our gymnasium school were pleased to see the cooperation between all partners involved in this project. Our school leadership was always a real support to us. My pupils were very glad to participate actively in the three discussion forums created for "Pupils" in TwinSpace: "Describe Yourself in Three Words", "My Hobby", "About Me" and they were very joyful to discover this wonderful manner of communication.

We had collaboration activities which went beyond communication: competitions, contests, vote. Thus, we voted the project logo, the Math and English experts, the title of the book written in BoomWriter. We managed to do it by using Tricider and excel charts. Other means of our collaboration were: surveys, questionnaires, self-assessment, presentation of results. By using SurveyMonkey, charts and PPT, we succeeded to achieve the project aims: to motivate pupils learn Mathematics in English, to develop pupils' skills in Computer Science, to improve the IT and collaboration skills, to explore and raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem, to share resources and materials. We used quizzes, games, contests and displayed their results. Besides we added the comparison of comments. Each month we voted the online book best chapter using boomwriter.com. According to the schedule we received the experts in our school, sent Mr. Quick and Calculator 3000 in the Czech Republic and Bulgaria with different workloads, two tests being designed by us. Due to our laborious work, we made common project products: Popplet, Mind-mapping, Video, as well as common Video conferencing, Skype or FlashMeeting. Besides, by using comments on TwinSpace, blog, forum exchange ideas, VoiceThread and even e-mails we had the most fruitful collaboration.



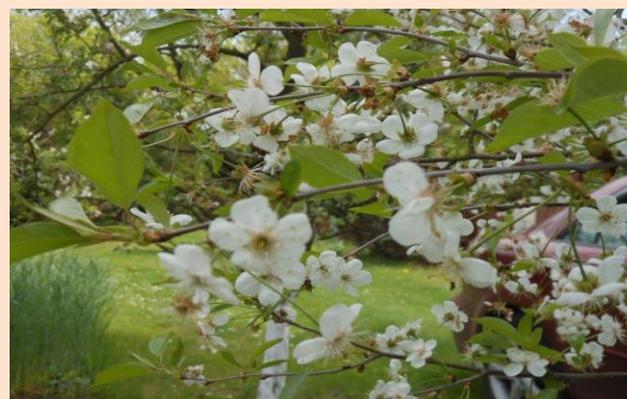


Technology has been used to further the work of the MAVEN project both by our partners and our team of teachers and pupils in our school to achieve some presentations, adaptations, survey results, the most used websites being: [www.slideshare.com](http://www.slideshare.com), [www.utellstory.com](http://www.utellstory.com), [www.voicethread.com](http://www.voicethread.com), [www.slideboom.com](http://www.slideboom.com). We realized the composition of polls by means of using [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com), [www.answer-garden.ch](http://www.answer-garden.ch), Google Docs. In order to achieve all the tasks suggested by the project founders from Latvia and Estonia, we used imaging tools such as: [www.pizap.com](http://www.pizap.com), [www.imagechef.com](http://www.imagechef.com), [www.picturetrail.com](http://www.picturetrail.com). Among the other IT tools used in order to make tests, dictionaries, games and worksheets, I can mention: [www.learnings.app](http://www.learnings.app), [www.quizrevolution.com](http://www.quizrevolution.com), [www.quizlet.com](http://www.quizlet.com), [www.propofs.com](http://www.propofs.com). Besides, we were delighted to use film processing tools like Smilebox, [www.animoto.com](http://www.animoto.com), [www.kizoa.com](http://www.kizoa.com), [www.authorstream.com](http://www.authorstream.com). All the time we shared impressions about the used tools and we tried together Web Presentation Tools and rankings like: [www.lionit.com](http://www.lionit.com), [www.gliterfy.com](http://www.gliterfy.com), [www.pageplugins.com](http://www.pageplugins.com), [www.flashvortex.com](http://www.flashvortex.com), [www.imagechef.com](http://www.imagechef.com), [www.padlet.com](http://www.padlet.com), [www.pollydaddy.com](http://www.pollydaddy.com). Videoconferencing, Virtual learning environment, Web publishing by using [www.flashmeeting.com](http://www.flashmeeting.com) or Skype helped us to accomplish our goals for the eight project pages in the work process: 1) Our Timetable; 2) Getting to Know Each Other; 3) Project Logo and Heroes; 4) Meet Experts; 5) Mathematicians' & Writers' Club; 6) Experts' Performance; 7) Skype Lessons; 8) Evaluation.

us to prepare guidelines for conference as CLIL for advanced Mathematics and English teachers. The illustrated book of mathematical puzzles is a result for whose achievement we are very proud. The collection of mathematical exercises in English will be a good teaching material for each teacher in any project we implement. The calendar "Mathematicians of All Time" will stay in the bookshelves of our schools libraries, at the disposal of whatever person who want to see the beauty of the eTwinning products. The CD with films created by all partners was entitled by us "MAVEN Cinema". A great impact of this project is the contact with pupils and teachers from different countries to engage in other projects. The results of these contacts were the new methodologies, ideas for teaching and learning Mathematics and English. Most achievements and results can be used outside the project: presentations, workbooks, games, quizzes, competitions, films, web pages. This project experience suggested us a partnership agreement in order to launch a similar project next school year.



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By our involvement in this amazing project, we managed to make our school staff and pupils to improve knowledge of Mathematics, English and social and teamwork skills. The project ideas helped



# Erasmus+

## eTwinning and MORE...

by Miguela Fernandes

*I first registered with eTwinning on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2005 and on the 30<sup>th</sup> April I had my first project registered with a teacher from Poland, Grazyna Kutnicka. At the time I was not sure about what eTwinning was, but it seemed really interesting to have my students communicating with other students from another country. Grazyna and I exchanged emails about the project and we registered it in eTwinning.*

*The project ran until the end of the school year. I was teaching programming and I thought that it was really interesting for my students to make contact with other students from another culture, another school, another reality. The main goal was to share experiences, find out about school life and share some aspects about the use of ICT. We created a forum where students could write and debate topics, created a website for the project and students communicated using MSN. At the time our first videoconference was something that changed my students' life and mine... from our school, we could communicate with people who were in another country! No words... amazing!*



The screenshot shows the eTwinning project page for 'XIV L.O. im. Stanisława Staszica w Warszawie'. It includes a 'Breve descrição' (Brief description) in Portuguese, a 'Detalhes' (Details) section with fields for title, duration, language, and objectives, and a 'Página inicial' (Home page) sidebar with navigation options like 'Estatistic Secondary School'.

*Ten years later here I am writing this small contribution for eTwinning Visibility newsletter. eTwinning changed my life in so many ways. I believe I am a better teacher because of what I have been learning with my involvement in eTwinning. I have done so many different things that it is hard to remember them all. I just know that*

*everything I have experienced through eTwinning helped me to become a better person.*

*I took part in Regional Events, Teacher training workshops, helping teachers, involving new teachers from my school, eTwinning Groups, Learning Events, Professional Development Workshops, Conferences, eTwinning dissemination workshops, wrote articles for newspapers, collaborated on the first eTwinning book in Portugal about "Teacher Training" and many other things!*

*Today I have an eTwinning/Erasmus+ Key Action 2 project called MORE - **MO**bile **R**esources on **E**ducation: let's learn with each other (2), that was born out of an eTwinning project, of course!*

*We are 4 countries: Italy, France, Portugal and Slovenia with teachers who are specialized in different fields, so our aim is to spread each other's knowledge in order to increase the students' participation in learning and better prepare them for their future jobs or career all over Europe. Portugal is responsible to teach other partners about programming APPs; France is responsible for sharing information about the use of microcontrollers; Italy is going to share knowledge about Robotics and Slovenia asked all partners to produce resources related to Math and Science, to use with their primary school students. These students will learn from other tutors (older students) that create tutorials and promote workshops during the mobilities. The Slovenian partner will also involve students from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade to learn, so that later they can teach other students in their school.*

*This is still STUDENTS and TEACHERS LEARNING with each other...*

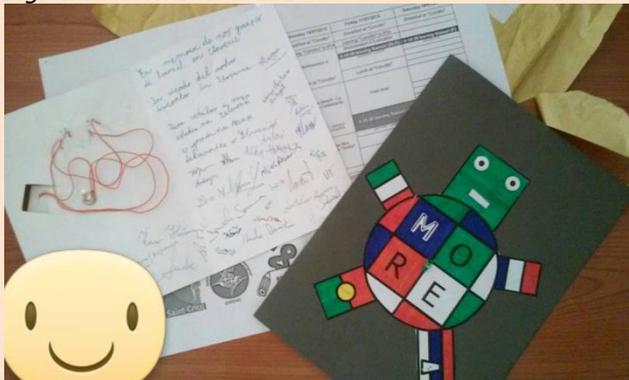
*The MORE project is visible here:  
<http://twinspace.etwinning.net/639/home>.*

*Slovenian students evaluating the first APP:*





Digital Postcard with LEDs:



Microcontrollers to find out when a plan needs being watered:



Workshop about Robotics:



APPinventor Workshops team:



Congratulations to eTwinning, to this wonderful community of teachers and to my MORE team!

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**eTwinning since the very beginning...**

by Elena Pezzi

*Well... it is not true, actually the very beginning (back in 1999) was a Socrates project, but after finishing it I swore to myself: "Before getting involved in a new European project, I have to forget about this one"...*

*The truth is that after that Socrates-Lingua project and all it involved I was really exhausted, feeling of having been buried under mountains of things to do – the bureaucratic, organizational, logistical aspects –, always and invariably **alone**, even if the project had been positively received in my school.*

*Then, over the years, I began to realize that maybe I had to act in a different way, through small steps: if in my school colleagues were not ready yet for a "massive" involvement, then it would be better to start with a small class project, limited in time...*

*Some foreign schools with which we had partnerships do not feel confident to embark on large-scale projects? Do not worry, we could plan more flexible and less demanding pathways...*

*And at this point, that's it! I was ready to "take off" again, but from a different perspective and with other objectives. I landed on the eTwinning "planet" by curiosity, thanks to a colleague, just to see what was moving around Europe; but I was immediately captured. I had finally found the right tool for me*



and my students, to communicate, share, collaborate and build knowledge!



Little by little, from the first very simple projects we started to broaden our horizon, to think about broader collaborations, to get involved in new adventures.

This is the way we began to run so many bilateral and multilateral Comenius partnerships, many of whom saw their own birthplace in eTwinning, where we began to contact other European teachers. The TwinSpace platform quickly became the unique and privileged space where we gathered all participants to meet and work actively in all phases of the project.



How to describe this radical change in few words? An extraordinary partnership, an innovative perspective, a real and highly effective collaboration. We also created a slogan:

Not only "eTwinning and Comenius: better together", but also "eTwinning and Comenius: never alone"!

Well, you might say, but this was Lifelong Learning Programme, this was Comenius... But I think that we cannot fully understand the current **Erasmus+** actions and their innovative perspective if you do

not have in mind the previous programmes and the extraordinary impact they had on schools, teachers and students.

How do you understand the meaning of the proposal for a "European Development Plan" and a mobility project for the whole school staff (the cornerstone of the Key-Action 1 **Erasmus+**), if you do not recognize in the unity of the design and in the sharing of experiences two of the key points of every school institution?

This explains why, then, eTwinning is considered a strategic and essential action within KA1: it is not just "register on eTwinning to access the "dealing room" of the partners" (as some unwary still dares to say: "If you sign up for eTwinning you get more points in order to have your project approved"...).

eTwinning is strategic for KA1 because it represents its fulfillment: teachers who really want have access to the European dimension of training cannot think of doing it **alone** (and finally the nightmare of my first years has disappeared!). We all need to collaborate, share good teaching theories and practices: that allows us to train first and then to spread what we have learned in our school community.

Of course, we can find these common ideals elsewhere, but I can say that in eTwinning they are almost at a "saturation state": in the most active eTwinners this European and collaborative dimension is so strong that there is no need to remember it to each other.

So, do I still need to stress that participating in eTwinning means to be willing to cooperate, to get involved and to discover methods and teaching practices of our European partners?

Therefore, when a school plans training and in-service courses for their staff, it becomes indispensable, in my opinion, to bear in mind three ways of training:

- training courses offered by various organizations and on different topics to strengthen teacher's competences;
- job shadowing experiences: these opportunities to spend some time at foreign educational institutions are crucial to understand from the inside what are the strengths and weaknesses in pedagogical innovation, in the application of special education solutions, in the organization and management of human resources, equipment, technology (just to name few aspects, but how many more could be explored!);



- a little bit more complicated from an organizational point of view but extremely useful: a period of teaching at the partner school.

And here you can see, at least in my experience, the unique role of the members of my many "old" eTwinning projects: we spent years running projects in which we experienced and encouraged collaboration among our students, where we found issues and topics to work together to build an engaging and motivating teaching process. Now it is the time to stop and reflect on ourselves, on what means to be twenty-first century teachers. We need constant training open to Europe, we have to closely observe the "real" school, to build relationships and interactions among teachers who live there every day, with its lights and its shadows.

That is why we did not hesitate a moment to plan some activities of job shadowing with our historic Spanish partners (with whom we shared eTwinning projects, multilateral Comenius projects, a common belonging to the community of eTwinning Ambassadors). This ended up in a KA1 project entitled "School without Borders", because after more than a decade of exchanges and European projects (often unfortunately run only by foreign language teachers) we have finally reached a comprehensive view of in-service training involving quite all the subjects and teachers of our school.

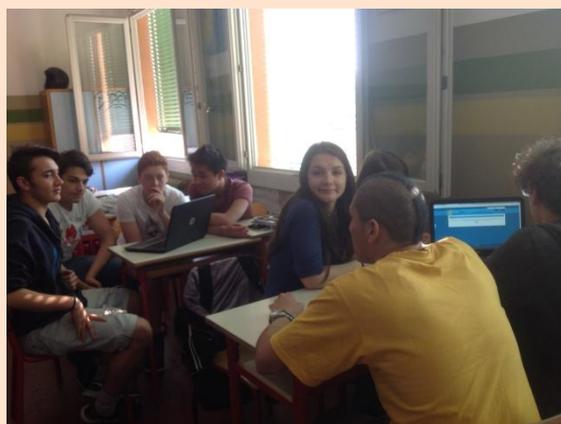


But you cannot think of a fruitful follow-up of these experiences if you do not provide contacts and interactions even outside of periods of pure mobility: the eTwinning platform, with the opportunity of opening a TwinSpace for the project, provides a place where to find and share materials, ideas and opportunities for discussion to the staff involved in training (and, consequently, to the whole institution), with a view of "extended school", truly multicultural and multilingual, without physical boundaries.

Is it too utopian to think of a radical change in our school teaching methods in only two years of our KA1 project? Maybe, but when you really enter a European perspective, as suggested by **Erasmus+** you do not think so much about utopia (after all, Erasmus himself wrote the famous "Praise of Folly"...) but rather of the innovation that these actions set in motion...

And then, not to lose that touch of madness that now characterizes us, in this second year of the European programme, we decided to broaden our horizons and to launch into a KA2 project, coordinated by our unstoppable and active Spanish partners. The protagonists of what we hope is our next three-year adventure are, of course, other old Comenius-eTwinning partners. The title of our project? "Open school", it goes without saying!

It means a school open to Europe, to all the components that build it, to new pedagogical and teaching methods involving teachers and students in a process of reflection, construction and experimentation of innovative teaching.



Where can we work on all these topics? On the TwinSpace, of course! Since the very beginning of our joint planning between partners we have opened a project where to discuss, negotiate, imagine the development of the new adventure.

Then, if the project is approved, we will have a new TwinSpace, which will be the place where all our ideas will really take shape thanks to the contribution of all the partners involved.

The slogan we created few years ago is now quickly adapting itself to the new context: "eTwinning and KA1 to train together in Europe", "eTwinning and KA2 to build together a new Europe"!



## The role of eTwinning in Erasmus+ projects

by Marta Pena Garrido

*With the appearance of the new Programme **Erasmus+** and the possibilities it provides to teachers and students of higher education, vocational education and training, school education and adult education for mobility or partnerships, eTwinning has been considered one of the most important and appreciated tool by the European Commission to develop the projects under **Erasmus+**. They are better considered to get the grant if eTwinning is included but, do we really know how eTwinning can improve our projects? Firstly we should have just a glance at the different **Erasmus+** projects which can be implemented.*

*Under Key-Action 1 (KA1), Learning Mobility for Individuals, professionals are encouraged to further their professional development in another country in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning, broadening their knowledge and skills, which includes learning new languages or gaining proficiency in areas of IT. These competences often provide a wider perspective on education, as well as ensure the exchange of knowledge and best practices. To achieve these aims, the staff can participate in structured courses or training abroad; job-shadowing or observation periods at a school or other relevant organization abroad; or teaching assignments at a partner school.*

*The Key-Action 2 (KA2), Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices, supports projects which develop international Strategic Partnerships in the fields of education, training and youth between local and regional authorities, schools and other organizations that establish international links and give school issues more weight in local government, to cooperate on issues of shared interest with possibilities of teacher, class and pupil exchanges, in order to introduce innovative practice into daily activities and build bridges between the worlds of education and work.*

*Projects funded under these Key-Actions are likely to have a positive impact on the persons directly or indirectly involved in the activities, such as, for example, the increased competence in foreign languages, a broader understanding of practices, policies and systems in education, training or youth across countries, the enhancement of employability or better intercultural and European citizenship awareness.*

*As mentioned above, it is just a quick look at the possibilities that **Erasmus+** provides, so it is*

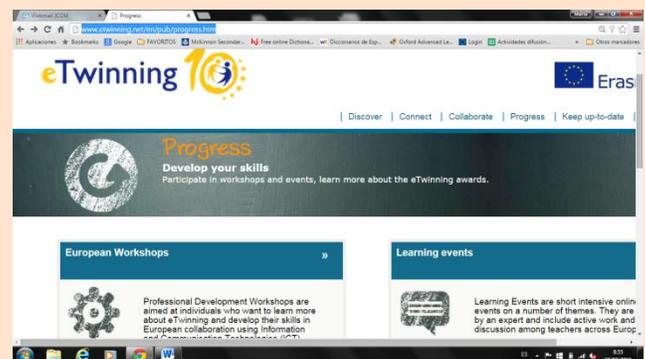
*strongly recommended to check out the official European website, your National Agency site and the **Erasmus+** Programme Guide for further and more specific information.*

*I am currently carrying out a KA1 project in a high school in Cuenca, a little town in Spain, with some other teachers. With this project we would like to improve the methodology we use to teach foreign languages at school, especially due to the fact that we are involved in a bilingual programme. This KA1 project offers us the chance to travel abroad to receive some training in the field of CLIL methodology and the teaching of English and French as second languages.*

*Now, we are ready to know more about the role of eTwinning in the **Erasmus+** projects.*

*So far, eTwinning has turned to be an extremely powerful tool to look for partners in order to set an online association between schools so, the first idea which comes to our mind to use it in **Erasmus+** is to find other schools to apply for a KA2 project, sharing our ideas about a possible project and waiting for someone interested or joining any other teacher's plan.*

*But partnerships are not the only reason to look for partners; many teachers need a colleague and/or an organization abroad to develop a job-shadowing experience to observe and learn from a different educational system to share resources, ideas and programmes which could enrich their school life. And using eTwinning we also can offer our school to receive a teacher from other countries.*



*In the process of getting a job-shadowing experience, eTwinning can also help both, individuals and institutions, before applying for funding, discussing and agreeing on the activities to carry out in order to improve the quality and impact of the planned projects; during the implementation,*

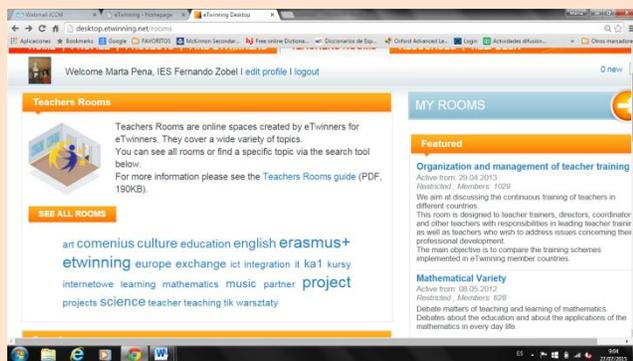


as a bank of ideas, resources, suggestions, feelings and so on; and after that, in order to make the final report easier to be written or as a starting point of new activities and projects. This is one of the best ways to exploit the results and make the project sustainable.

eTwinning can also be a valuable meeting point in order to disseminate and multiply the impact of our mobility projects. This section of the application form receives the 30% of the total so it is necessary to find more relevant ways to spread the results and impact not only across our school but also at a national and international level.

In connection with a mobility project, after had taken training courses, eTwinning allows to develop a project between the teachers involved in it, or with other interested, to share the materials they will design after, for instance, a CLIL course for their lessons or the resources they will find for their practice.

An eTwinning teachers' room can also be opened to help other teachers to apply for an **Erasmus+** grant offering ideas, suggestions, reliable institutions where they can take quality courses, means to disseminate their project and being for them a priceless source of inspiration.



into the Dissemination Platform. Everything needed to complete the final report will be there.

These eTwinning projects can be awarded with a quality label at a national and European level. Can you imagine the impact in other potential beneficiaries of the **Erasmus+** Programme?

And of course, everyone who has been involved in a mobility project or in a Strategic Partnership will want to keep on improving their linguistic skills, so, why not to start an eTwinning project related to your subjects to get in touch with old or new friends and reinforce the competences achieved? That is what we did. At the same time of our mobility project, we have started an eTwinning project with a school in Wimbledon and an association with a school in France with two main aims: the first one was to offer the students an opportunity to develop the language competences they were improving through different ways in a real context; and the second one was to establish some relationships with teachers abroad to develop activities together in the field of learning a second language and as a starting point for further projects such as a job-shadowing experience.

Besides of all these advantages, the participants in an **Erasmus+** project can benefit from the training that eTwinning offers, maybe in the field of your KA1 course or the observations in another institution abroad, and from the recognition, services and tools provided by the eTwinning national and European Support Services.

- [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index_en.htm)
- [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/tools/national-agencies/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/tools/national-agencies/index_en.htm)
- [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-programme-guide\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf)

eTwinning has also an important role in the development of KA2 projects, before, during and after a Strategic Partnership. The eTwinning projects, carried out at the same time of applying for the grant, are a perfect starting point. The partners have a space to fill the form together and share the information they need from each other. If the association is approved, eTwinning keeps it alive and allows the interaction between students and teachers, in a completely safe environment, in order to achieve the planned aims because the mobilities are not the only activity expected from a Partnership. At the end of a Strategic Association, it will be easier to collect the results to upload them





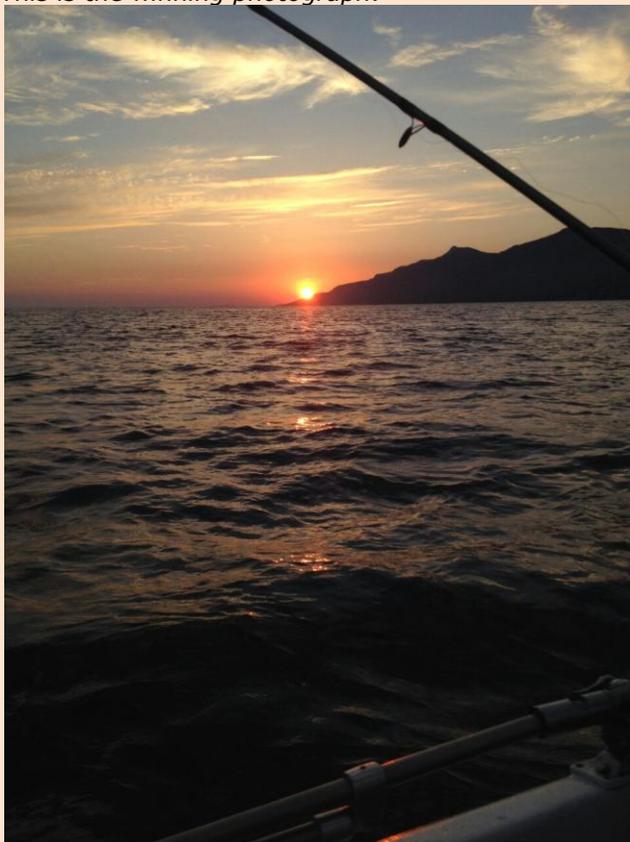
### Photography beyond borders

by Diana Chirilă and Pénczesné Győr Enikő

*The 13th edition of the Romanian IT Competition "DUAL PC" took place in April 2015 in Sibiu. The organizing team decided to take one step further in the life of this competition: to upgrade it to international level.*

*The participants from Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Turkey and Romania competed in the photography section. The topic of this academic year 2014-2015 was "Wonders of Mother Nature", to which the contestants submitted 140 photographs. A part of them are uploaded onto the competition site [www.dualpc.ro](http://www.dualpc.ro).*

*This is the winning photograph:*



*Taking into consideration the success of this event, the organizing team has decided to introduce one more section to the international level competition: the project presentation. This section will be open to students of classes 9th-12th, students of 15-19 years old for next academic year.*

*We are looking forward to meeting you the next academic year!*

### Introductory remarks on Citizenship Competences embedded in the curriculum

by Carmine Iannicelli

A significant feature of eTwinning is the possibility of planning a multifaceted syllabus. As a matter of fact, the objectives of some micro-paths you can design in an eTwinning project aim at strengthening skills and competences of different kinds which can easily be embedded into the curriculum:

- linguistic: decoding of texts and use of the vocabulary and content studied for communicative purposes - in the mother tongue and/or in foreign languages - according to the CEFR levels;
- meta-cognitive: use of various reading strategies: previewing - questioning to understand and remember - outlining and summarizing-comparing and contrasting interrelated texts; problem solving skills applied to the identification and selection of sources and content data corresponding to the core concepts; ability to work cooperatively teaming up with other groups; strategies for the sharing of materials.
- digital: aware and effective use of search engines (learning to learn); social network usage to share.

However, at your planning stage, even if the learning objectives have been quite clearly set, you may not have any observation grids for an accurate evaluation.

Enhancing the level of citizenship competences requires an analytical planning stage of your eTwinning project (you cannot just spell out the key competences you are aiming at) and constant feedback during the implementation and at the final stage of your project.

To get a full awareness of the extent to which these skills have been acquired, a grid for different purposes may be helpful.

Actually, it may be very difficult to give a proper assessment while implementing projects whose objective is not only getting some knowledge but also activating several resources aiming at specific goals: cognitive, practical, social, methodological, personal.

The Key competences for lifelong learning, as set by the Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32006H0962>, are a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context. In particular, they are



necessary for personal fulfillment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment.

While for some of these skills it is quite easy to identify and evaluate evidence-based products and learning assessment tools (especially for those which refer to specific subjects: mother tongue, foreign languages, mathematics and science and technology), for citizenship competences you have to devise suitable forms of assessment dealing with a range of situations and considering the learner in three main contexts: construction of the self, relationships with others, relationship with the environment.

In Italy the key competences identified by the EU Recommendation have been recalled by the Decree 139/2007 "Regulation regarding the fulfillment of compulsory education", which identified the eight key competences that every citizen should get to at the end of his/her basic schooling. Looking at them, you can see that the semantic field of 'citizenship' is vast and varied and contemplates man's life in its widest range of events.

You can also clearly see that one document, for certain specific aspects, derives from the other – what follows represents a comparison: on the left there are the 8 key competences, on the right one can see the corresponding citizenship competence:

1. Communication in the mother tongue – Communicate
2. Communication in foreign languages – Communicate
3. Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology – Communicate; Solve problems; Find out connections and relations
4. Digital competence – Acquire and interpret information
5. Learning to learn – Learning to learn; Find out connections and relations; Acquire and interpret information
6. Social and civic competences – Collaborate and participate; Act in an autonomous and responsible way
7. Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship – Plan; Solve problems
8. Cultural awareness and expression – Communicate

Indeed, the specific interest of the Decree 139/2007 of the Italian Ministry of Education (MIUR) towards competences relating to all human activities, beyond subject boundaries, sounds highly significant.

The study of citizenship is vital to the formation of an open-minded attitude to a multi-perspective and plural view of reality, which might possibly be geared to economic competitiveness as well, but should above all aim at the foundation of an ethically anthropocentric society.

This is favoured on the one hand (integrated view) by its strong link with the knowledge of documents at national, European and international levels (The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/default_en.htm), The Charter of the United Nations

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/>, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>, Convention on the Rights of the Child

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>, Charter of values of citizenship and integration

[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/migrants/pom2007\\_104/rc\\_pc\\_migrants\\_pom104\\_charter-integration.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/migrants/pom2007_104/rc_pc_migrants_pom104_charter-integration.html)) and on the other hand (transversal view) by the several issues dealt with:

legality and social cohesion, national identity as part of a European and an international and interdependent community, human rights, equal opportunities, pluralism, respect for diversity, intercultural dialogue, ethics of individual and social responsibility, bioethics, protection of national treasures of artistic and cultural value.

It has become clear how crucial – for a concrete implementation of the citizenship competences – is a plural education based on social values and democracy developed not "only through the compliance to values and rules, but also through the contribution in terms of knowledge, of s a p e r i, of intellectual means, which take place thanks to the cooperation between generations and among nations. From this point of view, in order to strengthen the European dimension, the multilingual competence is the essential and necessary platform for the citizens' participation in the social and political life of the European countries, which would enable the full participation in democratic processes.

A grid (see <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B470dgHMBCqDNC1xcWtGZI9UdU0/view?usp=sharing>, pp. 1-5) to assess citizenship competences is important in the evaluation, since it allows a systematic holistic vision, to verify the presence of abnormal concentrations of problematic behaviour in specific



situations, the congruence between the strategic priorities identified – namely the general objectives that the school intends to accomplish in the long term through its improvement action – and the process objectives activated to reach them.

The Annex 2 of the Decree says that at the end of compulsory education learners must have acquired some key competences to promote the full development of the construction of the self-concept, of correct and meaningful relationships with others and a positive interaction with the natural and social reality.

It seems clear that in an eTwinning project it is fundamental to acquire information about the skills of citizenship also for multi-focused projects, which can bring enrichment in terms of knowledge and skills, but may also be an extraordinary vehicle of education to democratic values in order to promote social cohesion at a time of social and cultural diversity, without forgetting the values of the person.

The micro-descriptors proposed for evaluation may vary and be enriched by more precise descriptions and relevant information on the specific item.

Similarly, in order to exemplify, we have reduced the levels of mastery, by using a rating scale from five to three. It is a modular and editable grid which might be modified at will according to the needs of a specific field. To insert descriptors it may be useful to break the competence down, taking the cue from the key competences and putting the modal "Can" followed by the verb infinitive.

The question of the concrete assessment/evaluation within the subjects has not been tackled yet here. But that might get further consideration another time.

Citizenship competences are important and have a core value in that they help build not only a profile of mastery but also an asset for values which goes beyond the subject knowledge, being at the same time deeply tied to it.

Being cross-curricular, such a grid is very useful to evaluate an eTwinning project - and not only that -, to verify the level of learning in the cognitive and meta-cognitive process, to enable all the strategies, to do retrieval work, to adjust the teaching methodology. Another significant element is sharing the thoughts on competences and the adoption of the grid with the class committee, and possibly also with the teaching staff. Teachers embody the

competences in the curriculum, agree on didactic paths, establish criteria for monitoring and evaluation, involve families (their contribution is essential for an aware circular acquisition of citizenship competences).

The level descriptions can be anchored to a specific context. This allows the chance to have a consistent picture of the data so as to examine and analyze the results unambiguously and use electronic data-processing techniques in order to have significant statistics. Actually, these data can be adapted to guide the building up of the curriculum, to make educational proposals and methodological choices, to direct and manage school priorities. This takes up formidable value as regards the process of self-evaluation schools are undergoing, the quality assessment, operating feedback on particular projects, but not only.

The outcome of such process objectives is of formative nature but also certifying. It is a tool that, in my opinion, should be integrated into the curriculum for a comprehensive assessment of knowledge and subject-related skills.

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### ***Integrating eTwinning projects into classes of IT and English***

*By Branka Lamza and Iva Narandža*

#### *Introduction*

The paper represents the overview of experiences and ideas based on nine eTwinning projects during the past three school years at two Croatian schools: II Primary School Čakovec (II. osnovna škola Čakovec) and Primary School Vladimir Nazor Pribislavec (Osnovna škola Vladimira Nazora Pribislavec). Six projects have been awarded with a National Quality Label, three projects have been awarded with a European Quality Label and one project with a national award Comet 2013 in the category of upper classes of primary school in Croatia (pupils aged 11-14). Three projects are in their final phases and have not yet been applied for a Quality Label. The curricular integration of eTwinning projects is one of the six criteria for project evaluation by the National Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes in Croatia or corresponding institutions in each country. In this paper we will tackle the process of integrating eTwinning projects into classes of Information Technology (IT) and English. Project activities are created in a way to enable active participation to all students in the way that suits them best and offer



them a chance to express their creativity, the feeling of success and learning through fun.

#### *Integrating eTwinning projects into classes of IT*

In Croatian schools IT is an optional subject in grades 5 to 8 (pupils aged 11 to 14, two classes a week). IT also exists as an extracurricular activity which can be held in grades 1 to 8 (pupils aged 6 to 14, one or two classes per week). Taking into account that eTwinning projects are based on information and communications technology, they are easily integrated into classes of IT. Also, the work on these projects offers plenty of ideas for integrating IT as a school subject with other school subjects. In the projects presented in this paper we managed to integrate IT mostly with English but also Art and Biology. Furthermore, activities on eTwinning projects provide an excellent chance to leave the IT lab and connect the syllabus of IT to different activities organized on the school level and in collaboration with the local community, e.g. marking important dates, eco-actions and similar occasions.

#### *Integrating eTwinning projects into optional classes and the extracurricular activity of IT*

The integration of eTwinning projects into optional classes of IT was carried out as a part of units The Basics of Drawing, Multimedia, Creating Presentations, Internet, Solving problems and programming, as well as a part of project tasks. In grade 5 students were introduced to eTwinning through creating drawings in MS Paint on different project themes and greeting cards for eTwinning partners. In grade 6 project activities were carried out within the units Internet, Multimedia and Creating Presentations. In grades 7 and 8 eTwinning projects were integrated into the syllabus of IT as a part of the unit Internet and project tasks which were planned to enable students expand and correlate their IT skills and introduce them to Web 2.0 tools. Workshop classes where one of the students had the assignment to demonstrate and explain the use of a Web 2.0 tool of his choice were very interesting for other students.

Our eTwinning project "E-waste - What Can Citizens Do?" drew attention to the comprehensiveness of the social, ecological and economic aspect of e-waste, the global challenge and the fact it has been an underestimated problem. The aims of the project were sharing information on e-waste, explaining and approaching the basics of various aspects of e-waste, understanding the possibility of reducing, reusing and recycling e-waste as well as raising the

awareness of students, their parents and the local community of the problem of e-waste and prompting them to act more responsibly. One of the project results is the online brochure named "E-waste and I".

Within IT classes students used Web 2.0 tools Gickr, Glogster and Prezi, they took part in discussions on the theme using TodaysMeet and they created PowerPoint presentations on the themes related to the social aspect of e-waste. Students also participated in a joint online survey created using the tool Zoomerang. Members of the extracurricular activity school web team actively participated in all stages of the project, regularly keeping notes and publishing materials on the project activities on the TwinSpace and the school website.

At the beginning of the project a survey among fourth graders was carried out: we wanted to get insight into the initial situation and see if students had already been familiar with the notion of e-waste. The results showed that the idea of carrying out this project was justified: only 7 out of 32 students answered that they had already heard about e-waste:

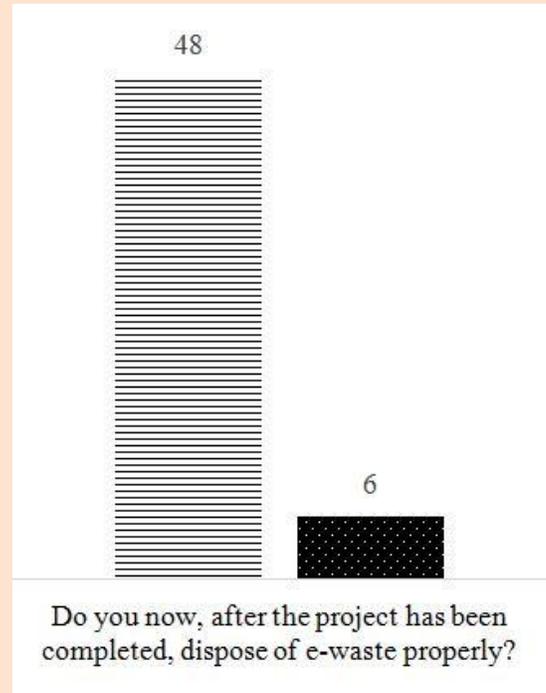
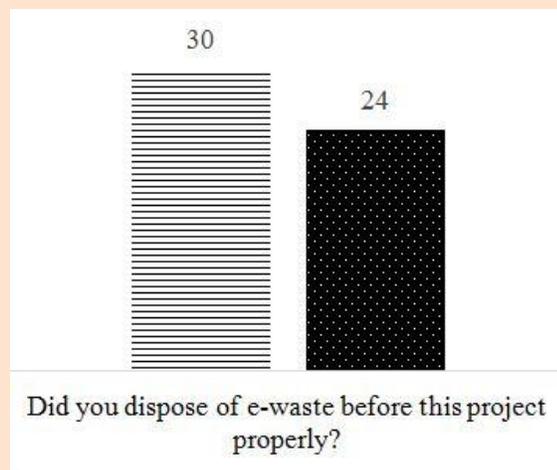
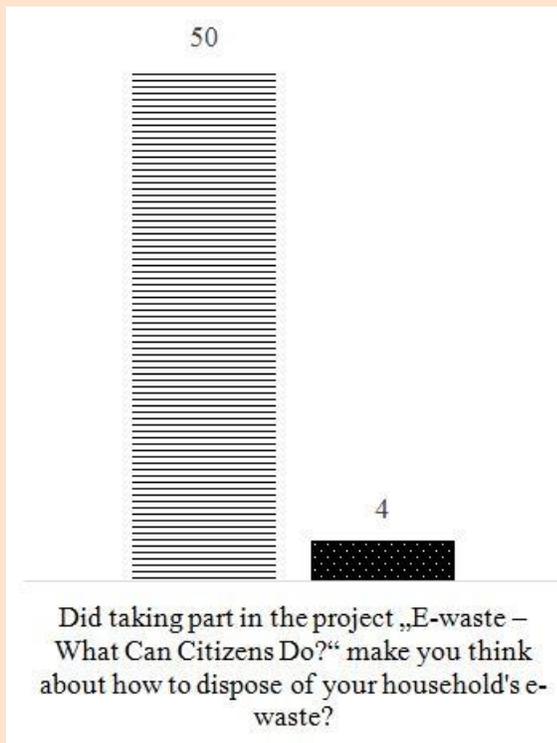


*The initial situation in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade of II Primary School Čakovec (10 years of age)*

The fourth graders presented themselves to partners with a joint presentation, they created mind maps using the tool bubbl.us, word clouds using the tool Wordle, they drew a symbol for separated collection of waste using the program Paint, they solved online games.



Three months after completing the project, in December 2014, the students of II Primary School Čakovec were surveyed again. The goal of the survey was to see if the project had fulfilled its aims. 54 students of grade 5 and 8 in the school year 2014/2015 were surveyed – the students who participated in the project in the previous school year and were still primary school students. The results offer the conclusion that carrying out the project on the theme of e-waste was justified and that the project had a positive impact on the students' attitude towards e-waste.

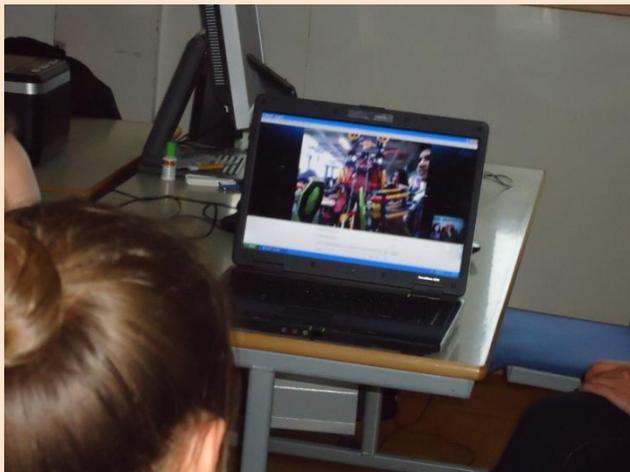


The following example of integrating eTwinning projects into classes of IT is the project "Sustainable Energy – Clean Energy for the Future" which was awarded with Croatian national award Comet 2013. Students created educational and fun materials where they presented the use of renewable energy sources with a special emphasis on their homeland. A videoconference was held with partners from Spain and a joint online survey was carried out. The project was integrated into classes of IT of grade 6 within the units Internet, Creating Presentations and Multimedia. Projects tasks to develop information and communications skills and learning about Web 2.0 tools were planned for grades 7 and 8. In this project pupils learned how to use Prezi, Pixton, Glogster, ProProfs flashcards, Goanimate, Zondle, ProProfs games.





The possibility of collaboration with peers from all over Europe proved itself as a significant help in motivating our students in programming, the part of the syllabus that students often find the most difficult. These activities are also related to the vocational guidance and should stimulate them to continue their education in the areas of IT.



Programming was an important part of the activities of two projects at II. Primary School Čakovec. The basic goal of the project "2014 Winter Olympics, Sochi, Russia" was promoting the idea of Olympism connected to another event, the European Code

Week 2013. On this occasion we organised workshops for students of grades 7 and 8 "Create logo using Logo". The idea was very simple: creating a program in Terrapin Logo which drew the logo of the Olympic Games. After the workshops the students had the opportunity to exchange experiences with partners from Spain via videoconference.

#### Croatian regional television about our project

27 November 2013 09:29

The work on the project Sustainable Energy - Clean Energy for the Future has been another new and unforgettable experience for our pupils. The Croatian regional TV channel SrceTV has made a news broadcast about the project. We are very happy and excited that Srce TV has spread the word about our eTwinning project to millions of viewers!



By Iva Naranda | 15 Views, 0 Comments | Flag  
television  
Average (0 Votes)

Blog  
On air  
04 December 2013 09:05

Another new and unforgettable experience for our pupils. The Croatian radio station HRČAK has made a radio broadcast about the project Sustainable Energy - Clean Energy for the Future. We are very happy and excited that radio has also spread the word about our eTwinning project!

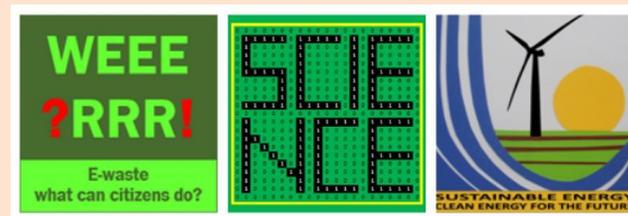
eTwinning projects promote European awareness, so we wished to hear Beethoven's Ode to Joy - the EU anthem.

eTwinning: creative, efficient, fun - ideal in education

We made a **podcast** about our radio show.



By Iva Naranda | 12 Views, 0 Comments | Flag  
podcast  
Average (0 Votes)



The syllabus of the extracurricular activity IT gives the teacher the freedom to choose contents and topics to be dealt with throughout the school year. Thereby, Scratch was incorporated in the curriculum of grades 5 to 8, which was done as a part of the project "Safe Internet - A Bridge Between Us". In this project our students had a chance to express their ideas creatively by making animated stories on the theme of safety on the internet and exchange experiences and impressions with partners from Greece.

The project "Science Around Us" at Primary School Vladimir Nazor Pribislavec drew attention to science and famous scientists from partner countries. It has been integrated into the school curriculum (The Evening of Science dedicated to Nikola Tesla) and optional classes of IT for grades 7 and 8. During Computer Science Education Week students took part in the Hour of Code. We exchanged our impressions with partners from Turkey through an online survey. The results were published on the TwinSpace. Furthermore, within classes of IT eighth graders studied the examples of a program applied in maths, physics and chemistry. They also did a research on scientists whose names are related to discoveries or topics related to certain examples.



### *Integrating eTwinning projects into classes of English Language*

Although the portal of eTwinning can largely be used in most European languages it is a fact that, as in most other areas of life, English has become the language of communication among most eTwinning users. Thereby, it has also become the work language of most projects. Taking into account previously stated, teachers of English were the first to accept integrating eTwinning projects into classes. Integrating projects in English, whereby one can choose themes and adjust them both to the national education plan and programme and one's own plan, came up as something natural in classes of English.

Clearly, it is hard to imagine contemporary classes of English without information and communications technology. eTwinning enables teachers to develop their IT skills and educate each other about new internet tools. We can say that it was through eTwinning projects that we came up with the idea of collaboration of teachers of English and IT. The inseparability of English and information and communications technology, as well as the syllabus of English as a second language and Information Technology as school subjects provides a strong background for their successful integration in praxis.



### *Integrated classes of Information Technology and English in eTwinning projects*

Integrated classes of English and IT are a part of most eTwinning projects at II Primary School Čakovec. They are carried out in form of double lessons and are divided into mostly theoretical and mostly practical part. Although in none of the parts school subjects can be fully separated (and this is not our intention), we can say that in the first part English is emphasized, whereas the second part tackles mostly IT. In the first part the English teacher teaches vocabulary and structures of English related to the theme of the project. Then, the IT teacher teaches about the use of the

computer programs and/or Web 2.0 tools. Finally, in the practical part both teachers play an equally important role. Thereby their main goal is not to function as guides to students but as their assistants.



This form of classes can be successfully carried out only if both teachers possess at least minimal knowledge of their colleague's subjects. If both colleagues get interested through joint work in the other one's subject and expand their knowledge, the success of future projects done together shouldn't come into question. In the practical part of the classes students work individually or in pairs on computers with their teachers discreetly supervising them and providing help when needed. In this way an informal way of teaching is achieved with the highest possible autonomy of students in the process of project work in the classroom.

In this way, for example, activities were carried out in the project "Sustainable Energy – Clean Energy for the Future". The main goal of this project was to learn about the possibilities of the energy of the sun, water, wind, biomass and geothermal energy. Students of grades 6 and 8 took part in the project (age 12 and 14). After they got the assignment to do the research on renewable sources of energy and find out about the most important facts, the integrated classes of English and Information Technology were held. In the theoretical part students were shown a thematic animated film in English followed by exercises of comprehension and expanding the vocabulary. Finally, the students had to create written matching exercises and quizzes.

The IT teacher made students familiar with the program HotPotatoes. In the practical part of the classes students turned the previously created



tasks into electronic form. In the following IT classes students were taught about a very popular Web 2.0 tool Zondle and used it to create e-quizzes on renewable energy sources.

In this project the partner school was IES Clara Campoamor Alaquas, a technical school (a high school) from Spain. Due to the different structure of education the students were of the similar age (14). Students led by their teacher David Navarro explored the topic within the syllabi of vocational subjects. A thematic quiz via videoconference was held, and the questions prepared by the teams were published on the school website turned into a Zondle quiz, so that everybody could check their knowledge.

The following example of a successful integration of English and IT is the project "Winter Olympics 2014, Sochi, Russia" with partners from all over Europe. Students of grade 7 were involved in this project. Since the topic of sport is a part of the Croatian national plan and programme of English for grade 7, this important event served as a useful link to the topic. Within classes of English students expanded their vocabulary of winter sports. As a part of communicational activities they got the assignment to make dialogues to the theme of favourite winter sports and following the Winter Olympics.



Within classes of IT students were made familiar with the Web 2.0 tool Go!Animate for creation of short animated films. As 6<sup>th</sup> graders students were presented the basic features of this tool. They were taught how to create an animated film choosing the characters and the background and entering their own text. In this way they practised their spelling: incorrectly typed words are interpreted by the equally incorrect pronunciation by the programme, which is recognized by most students, and they are able to self-correct their spelling mistakes.

This time students expanded their knowledge on the tool Go!Animate and learnt about additional

options: entering text in word clouds, adjusting the character movement, choosing the face expression and background music. They turned their previously written dialogues into interesting short animated films which our project partners liked very much.

### Conclusion

The advantages of eTwinning project in 21<sup>st</sup> century classes are unquestionable. Working on these projects undoubtedly develops information and communications skills of students and their awareness as European citizens and helps developing their creativity. It encourages the development of eight key competences for lifelong learning and can be easily integrated in all school subjects and activities. IT classroom becomes open and connected not only with students, parents, the local community, but also European partners which gives a new dimension to education.



The thing that makes a difference between traditional classes and classes with integrated eTwinning projects is the possibility for students to present the results of their work not only outside their classroom but also outside their country, without any additional costs, and get feedback. Students and their teachers are able to find out about similarities and differences between education systems all around Europe. Carrying out such projects is possible within classes of any school subject and doesn't require introducing any additional topics to the ones already planned as a part of personal, school and national plan and programme. To sum up, eTwinning projects provide each topic with interculturality, interactivity and the awareness of the fact that differences are not something negative – on the contrary: they enrich the Europe of the future.

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### Going beyond classroom walls

by Andrea Ullrich

This year I had my Year 7 group in two really good and challenging eTwinning projects: "care2feed", related to the topic of EXPO 2015, and "Don't bully, act kindly, live happily". Both projects got recognition outside our eTwinning community.

When Niculina Chiper, Romania introduced "Together in EXPO", a global project for schools organized by the Italian ministry of education in cooperation with EXPO Milano, to us and six of our "care2feed" teams decided to join we had no clue what was waiting for us – a school year full of creative challenges with weekly missions on whatever you can think of related to the topic "Feed the planet, energy for life". To get an impression of what we were doing in addition to the activities we had originally planned for the "care2feed" project, check the German collection <http://padlet.com/MrsU/EXPO2015>.

This is the place to thank eTwinning Europe and European Schoolnet for all the opportunities of professional development they offer – without all the courses I have taken many of these products wouldn't have been possible; they would even have been far beyond my imagination. I think my presentation with Betina Astride, Portugal at the Creative Classroom Group Unconference showed well how eTwinning teachers can benefit from learning together.

Let us come back to the project; we made sure to spread the word about eTwinning:

- the Dutch, Maltese and German teams used our project title in their names: portwijk\_care2feed, care2feedMalta, care2feedGymGeorg;
- in our profiles all of us referred to the eTwinning project;
- in some of our products for missions we referred to eTwinning, too.

All six teams were constantly among top 20 of 2750 participating teams, Paulien du Fossé with her Dutch team unbeatable number 1, which showed the strength and commitment of our eTwinning group.

But that was not all. When the winners of an additional competition, where you had to team up with another participant and create a collaborative product, were announced three of the nine winning entries were with care2feed teams. We had four teams among the winners as one of the products was 100% care2feed (the German and Polish teams).



We were so proud and happy that we used social networks to let the world know about the power of our eTwinning group. In September 2015 we will visit EXPO to show our project <https://www.thinglink.com/scene/622919454430330881> together with our Polish team mates in the Italian pavilion. The German pavilion has also contacted us to arrange a meeting.





Last but not least a quick word about the “Don’t bully, act kindly, live happily” project. Five partners from previous year’s “Europe’s Sweet Tooth” teamed up again for a project to fight bullying. The final product was a collection of stories collaboratively created by five countries – France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Turkey - and published as an e-book. Each team started a story, which got a good and a bad ending, written by two partners. The other teams contributed illustrations and titles. What started as the German story got a happy ending by the Spanish team, a sad ending by the Turkish team; the illustrations were added by the French team and the titles created by the Italian team. Here you can read our e-book <http://goo.gl/KAB7N2> and listen to the German story <https://goo.gl/2NWCik>. Apart from being presented on social media, this project got a different kind of recognition: the owner of a local bookshop printed the book, displayed it in her shop and finally gave it as a present to the students. The local press covered this activity <http://goo.gl/U7mBdU> and explained the advantages of eTwinning in detail.



Many thanks again to Buchhandlung am Markt! Why not give them a like on Facebook?



Special thanks to my students, who have been in eTwinning projects for three years now, and my fantastic project partners, who have made collaboration a great experience again.

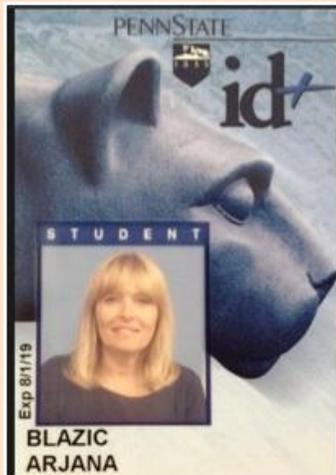
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### **With eTwinning in the USA** *by Arjana Blazic*

It was on Happiness Day in late March 2014 that I was notified that my application for the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship (see <https://www.humphreyfellowship.org/>) was accepted. This meant that I would be living and studying in the US for ten months and that my longtime dream would come true. Every year 150-170 fellowships are awarded to mid-career professionals from across the world. The fellows are selected based on their potential for leadership and their commitment to public service. I am the first high school teacher in Croatia who has been awarded this prestigious honor.

I moved to Pennsylvania in August 2014 and became a student at Penn State University. I was soon immersed into studying at the College of Education and I really enjoyed discovering new ways of teaching with technology. I made lots of new friends and got used to the American way of life.





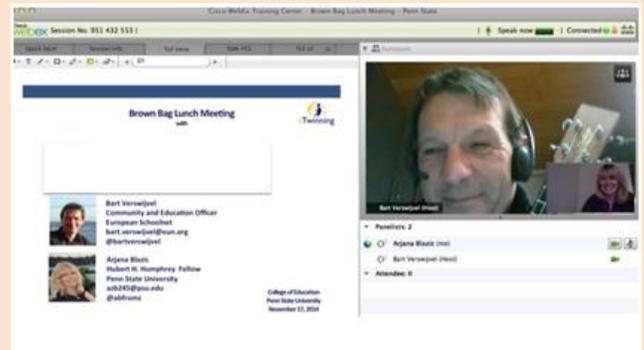
But of course I did not forget Europe and European teachers because I brought eTwinning to the United States with me! As an eTwinning ambassador I promoted eTwinning in the United States whenever I could. One of the events where I talked about eTwinning was a brown bag lunch.

Brown bag lunches, informal meetings that take place over lunch, are very popular in the US. A brown bag lunch is usually an informative session about a topic that is of interest to faculty and students who bring their own food, usually packed in a brown bag. Sometimes the food is provided for the participants. While in the US, I attended a number of brown bags, both as an attendee and an invited speaker.

At two brown bags I talked about Croatia and the things I love about my country: romantic lighthouses and beautiful sunsets at the Adriatic, traditional wooden toys, Dalmatian dogs, coffee and those beautiful Chicagooan Indians on Horseback by the Croatian sculptor Ivan Mestrovic, to mention just a few. I think I was a good ambassador of my country, because after the presentation, some attendees told me they would like to visit Croatia.



At another brown bag for the Teacher Leadership Faculty I co-presented with Bart Verswijvel, Education and Communications Officer from the European Schoolnet in Brussels. He joined us via Webex and was so kind to stay with us during the whole session, even though, unlike us, he did not get a brown bag. Bart and I talked about the eTwinning network and how teachers use it to launch projects, connect with their peers and develop professionally. Our presentation was so inspiring, that this September one of the Penn State professors is going to visit eTwinning in Brussels and meet with Bart Verswijvel and Anne Gilleran to learn more about eTwinning.

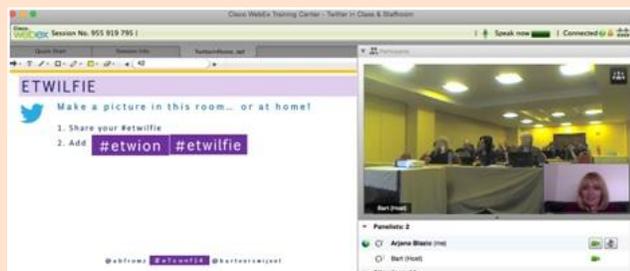


During my Fellowship year, Bart and I designed and led two learning events on the topic of implementing augmented reality in the classroom. 400 teachers took part in these two learning events. We enthused and inspired the participants, boosted their creativity and originality and encouraged them to let their imagination run wild with augmented reality. Most of the teachers had little or no experience with these new technologies before the event. But in less than two weeks of intense learning about the pedagogical use of augmented reality, they became more confident and started implementing innovative approaches in their classrooms. Some of them collaborated with other participants and their students and many of them tried out the activities at home with their families. The work they shared represents great examples of best practice of augmented education (ARieTW and ARETW).

In October 2014, a conference for eTwinning ambassadors was organized online. I was very excited about the invitation extended to Bart and me to talk about our learning events and to share our "secrets" with the eTwinning ambassadors. We talked about the "ingredients" that we use to create a place where our participants feel welcome, comfortable and happy to share the joy of learning with us.

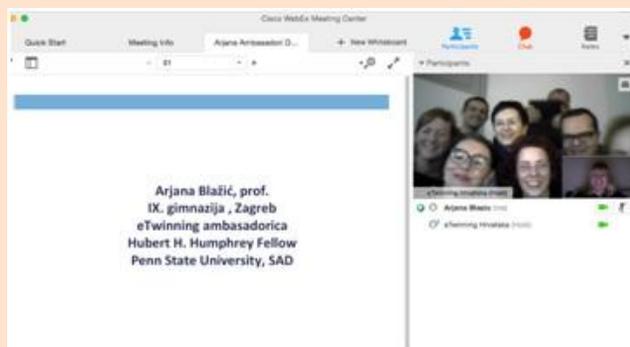


Last year's eTwinning Annual conference was held in Rome, which was too far for me to be there physically, so I joined eTwinners virtually. Bart and I delivered two workshops on how to use social media in the classroom and for professional development, which was a topic of one of our previous learning events.



During my Fellowship I delivered five webinars for Croatian teachers. The webinars were very well-attended and it was a huge pleasure for me to share my newly-gained knowledge with so many enthusiastic teachers from Croatia.

Another great event was the meeting of Croatian and Slovenian eTwinning ambassadors in Zagreb and again I joined them via Webex.



The most emotional and the most cherished moment of my American eTwinning year was winning COMET, the Croatian national eTwinning

prize for my eTwinning project Coursera Kids. My project partner from Greece, Lina Kalliontzi, also won the first prize in Greece! The Prize ceremony was held in Zagreb and I "Webexed" in to give a short presentation about the project. My headteacher, Ms. Svea Bielen was there to receive the award and take it to my school and to my students.



In June 2015 I successfully completed my studies and returned home ready to continue sharing my knowledge with eTwinners.





## Defining intercultural communication

by Adil Tugyan

Intercultural communication takes place when individuals influenced by different cultural communities negotiate shared meanings in interaction. What counts as intercultural communication depends in part on what one considers a culture, and the definition of culture itself is quite contestable. Some authorities limit the term "intercultural communication" to refer only to communication among individuals from different nationalities.



Other authorities, in contrast, expand the notion of intercultural communication to encompass inter-ethnic, inter-religious, and even inter-regional communication, as well as communication among individuals of different sexual orientations. In this sense, all interactions can be arrayed along some continuum of "interculturalness".

Interactions are most highly intercultural when individuals' group identities are most salient in determining the values, prejudices, language, nonverbal behaviors, and relational styles upon which those individuals draw. To the degree that interactants are drawing more on personal or idiosyncratic values, personality traits, and experiences, the interaction can be characterized as more interpersonal than intercultural. When individuals from different cultural backgrounds become more intimate, their interactions typically move along the continuum from more intercultural to more interpersonal, though intercultural elements may always play a role. For casual or educational communication, sensitivity to intercultural factors is key to success.

### Communication and Group Identity

Traditional theories of group identity recognize two types of group identity:

1. *Ascribed identity* is the set of demographic and role descriptions that others in an interaction assume to hold true for you. Ascribed identity is often a function of one's physical appearance, ethnic connotations of one's name, or other stereotypical associations.

2. *Avowed identity* is comprised of the group affiliations that one feels most intensely. For example, if an individual is assimilated into a new culture, then the values and practices of that destination culture will figure importantly in her avowed culture. A related concept is reference group. A reference group is a social entity from which one draws one's avowed identity. It is a group in which one feels competent and at ease.

Ascribed and avowed identities are important for understanding intercultural communication because a person from another culture usually communicates with you based on your ascribed identity; that is how you are being perceived by that other person. But sometimes your avowed identity – the groups with which you really feel a sense of comfort and affiliation – diverges from that ascribed identity. In such cases, the interaction is bound to be frustrating for both parties.

### 7 Steps to Intercultural Learning



|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Number One</b></p> <p>✓ Acceptance of own culture</p> <p><b>Number Two</b></p> <p>✗ Acknowledging the existence of Other cultures without judging them</p> <p><b>Number Three</b></p> <p>✓ Deeper understanding of own culture</p> <p><b>Number Four</b></p> <p>✓ Widening of cultural horizon and increasing the number of criteria of identifying other cultures</p> | <p><b>Number Five</b></p> <p>✓ Developing an understanding of and respect for other cultures<br/>Breaking down stereotypes.</p> <p><b>Number Six</b></p> <p>✗ Increased cultural alternatives:<br/>_ability to deal flexible with cultural rules<br/>_ability to take decisions in culturally challenging situations</p> <p><b>Number Seven</b></p> <p>✗ Ability to have constructive &amp; interactive relationships with and in other cultural environments</p> |
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### **How to persuade...**

by Tatjana Gulic

- ...your colleague to work with you on a project?
- ...your head teacher to add your school to a project?
- ...your community to support you with your projects?

A lot of times you are in a situation that you have very little time to talk and persuade your co-workers to join you in eTwinning projects or to give you some extra money you need. How to do it?

For such occasions you have to be prepared and you have to train. This type of speech we usually call "Elevator Pitch".



Start your speech with a "hook", a statement or question so you will interest your listeners to hear some more. You can start also with what you do, not necessarily what you are if they do not know.

Tell something about the content of your project, reason of your speech, what you want from that person or institution, and give them just a few details to make them curious. Also tell them why this project is important or useful to them.

Use plain language and at the end repeat the most important facts.

Of course you have to use different speeches to different people.

For a good speech you need to be prepared. You can test yourself to make recording of your speech. For more tips you can browse on these pages:  
<http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/4034-elevator-pitch-tips.html>,  
<http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/elevator-pitch.htm> and  
<http://www.businessknowhow.com/money/elevator.htm>.

### **eTwinning initial teacher training pilot project**

by Alessandra Cannelli

In the last years I have been involved in the training of trainee foreign language teachers and teachers of other subjects training for Content and Language Integrated Learning at Romatre University. I started proposing the use of technology applied to learning and step by step eTwinning has become more and more important in the syllabus of trainees.

This year I was asked by eTwinning NSS to take part in "eTwinning Teacher Training Pilot". It is an experimental project among European Universities for the use of eTwinning in the training of trainee teachers.

On the 26th and 27th May 2015 in Brussels was held the second meeting of the European and Italian Universities involved in the Pilot, which proposes the integration of eTwinning in the initial training.



Representatives from over 20 universities gathered in Brussels to exchange methods and practices of integration of eTwinning in the various paths of initial training of teachers, which are very different depending on the context and choices of each faculty and on the direct experiences of transnational collaboration undertaken through projects already in progress. Very important was the contribution of the students who brought their experience in eTwinning projects, confirming the great enthusiasm and motivation arising from working collaboratively in a vibrant and active community as that of eTwinning. For the National Support Services this has been an excellent opportunity to develop, together with representatives of the universities, a common strategy for monitoring the experiment and planning future steps, looking for a sustainable way over time to allow for a greater number of universities to participate in this type of activity.



Due to its characteristics of flexibility, sustainability and openness to innovation and to national and international comparison, eTwinning is especially suitable for the training of future teachers who increasingly will be called to use ICT in everyday teaching, to support communication and learning in a foreign language, to work on projects involving students in an active way and developing personalized learning paths that foster the development of key competences.

Hence the importance of the approach to the innovative reality of eTwinning since the initial teacher training, with the hope that eTwinning will become not only one of the numerous European projects, but a vehicle to introduce in a simple and natural way a different approach to teaching and learning, through the regular use of new technologies, communication in a foreign language and learning in a multicultural context.

Teams of trainees of different countries learned how to plan projects in a collaborative way, taking into account their contexts and aiming at improving higher-level thinking together with key competences.



In Europe the Pilot started in 2012 by the initiative of several British universities coordinated by the British Council and by Flemish universities in Belgium, Norway and Denmark, focusing exclusively on nursery and primary schools.

In 2013 and 2014, other countries, including Italy, joined and 20 institutions were involved in the final phase of the Pilot in the academic year 2014-2015. At the end of the Pilot, with a thorough evaluation of the experiences so far, the countries involved will develop a model of participation of trainees in eTwinning to be presented to the European Commission so that this can be a transferable model for other institutions.

Such a step would bring great benefits to eTwinning, especially in terms of the impact study

of the community, further legitimizing the project-based learning with eTwinning as a community of practice that is crucial for the continuous professional development of teachers, as well as a channel of innovation for the school as a whole. Other advantages are considered in terms of visibility, considering that all new teachers would be informed about the existence of eTwinning and so on all the possibilities Erasmus+ offers to the schools in Europe.

The Italian Universities participating in the project are the University of Florence, Genoa, Palermo and the Catholic University in Milan for the initial training of teachers of primary and pre-primary, and the University of Rome and the University of Tuscia for the secondary level. The European countries involved are the United Kingdom, Norway, France, Spain, Denmark, Iceland and Flemish Belgium.

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***From postcards to stone culture, eTwinning has no limits***  
*by Lina Pereira*

Every school year eTwinning is definitely part of our planned activities and each project is a new challenge and a rewarding experience for teachers and students. The postcards and bookmarks exchange to celebrate the European Day of Languages has been an excellent starting point in our school to involve our students in eTwinning projects. These exchanges have a very positive impact on the school community, promote a real contact with European languages and cultural diversity and it's real fun for pupils to get something from another school and country. This year the number of schools collaborating with us exceeded our expectations and we received postcards from all over Europe.

Inspired by the rewarding effects of this exchange, we decided to innovate by exchanging small samples of rocks and minerals with our European partners. We integrated our eTwinning work into our students'curriculum and lessons planning and joined science with languages, History and Citizenship in a successful interdisciplinary approach with very fruitful results for everyone. The main subjects involved were Biology, Geology and English. The students prepared the rock samples with information cards, wrote the partners'addresses in their Geology lessons and translated them in the English lessons. They also collected information about typical flora in our



region and we shared the best practices on common topics of our subjects, such as: cultural heritage, environmental issues, ecotourism, multiculturalism and others. Some collaborative activities were promoted like: field trips to explore our areas geologically, a common ebook and blog, a final exhibition organized by our students to display our project to the school community and a final meeting in a video conference with our peers abroad. This way the students could improve their knowledge, ICT, language and social skills while real pieces of our cultural heritage were rolling to each partner's country and enriching Geology museums of our school. Here is a Kizoa video about our rock exhibition: <http://www.kizoa.com/Video-Maker/d22069430k2555067o111/stone-culture-etwinning>.

I cannot avoid mentioning another eTwinning project developed this year in German language with great partners where we used several common motivating learning apps in German lessons, like the *quizlet*, *Google forms* created with our students, *voki*, *lino* and others. *Einfach Deutsch* was indeed an excellent project where we could explore many amazing ICT tools, very useful not only in foreign language learning but also in other subjects.

We believe integrating eTwinning projects in the students' curriculum improves their quality, evaluation and importance in the European educational space and everyone benefits with these exchanges of experience, values and teaching strategies. Our school environment also gets better when there are other teachers working and communicating collaboratively in the same project with their students; eTwinning projects foster students' participation and prepare them for the 21st century skills; they also help teachers to become more innovative. They provide everyone an endless brainstorming of ideas, where creativity has no limits; ten years have passed by and eTwinning is here to stay and surprise us all the time!

I have been very lucky with my projects due to the incredible partners I have met, most of them are already part of my best friends list and I have grown up so much with them personally and professionally. Our National Support Service is always there to support us and this year surprised schools with nice eTwinning flags for teachers who won National eTwinning Prizes (it should be followed by the other Support Services!). A big thank you to my awesome partners and all the students participating in eTwinning projects who made these projects happen!

As John Lennon said: "A dream you dream alone is only a dream. A dream you dream together is reality."





### **Continuity – experience – eTwinning**

by Teresa Zeppa

Virgilio Iandiorio: *"The newsletter that Daniela Arghir Bunea has been putting together for some years is an event not to be missed. Because we compare varied and important eTwinning experiences, that schools of Europe realize with enthusiasm and competence. Now that I'm no longer in service, I can look at my experience eTwinning as the observer from the bridge, watching the river water that flows under him. And in front of me, go, like in a movie, the first contacts established with schools in Poland (ten or more years ago) and then with France, Spain ... and the things made. What about the difficulties of the language of communication? Many No problems for me, I did not know many English words. No one is silent when he/she has something to communicate, and then he/she comes from a region (Campania) where the gesture is an effective aid language. eTwinning is learning for pupils and for teachers, it is personal involvement, it is "contagion" spreading in the school. Now, even though I am far away from the classroom, eTwinning continues in the institute, Liceo Classico di Pietradefusi, where I did my work, thanks to colleague Teresa Zeppa, which "tells" her experience as a teacher and as an ambassador, in her contribution to this Newsletter no. 5."*



Working on eTwinning has been a very beautiful experience and one of the best parts of my job! I was introduced to eTwinning by my ex headmaster, Mr Virgilio Iandiorio, who has always been a true European Citizen. These exchanges open students' mind on European experience, European possibilities, new friends.....Only through knowledge we can reach respect and friendship among European people from different countries.

One of my first projects was:"Medical herbs", with a school from Czech Republic. During the school year students sent email about medical herbs, their importance in the past, their actual use....Writing in English was a good exercise to improve the foreign language for the students of the two schools, the students improved also their ability about IT, Science, History... At the end of the school year the

teacher was in Italy with her husband: a good occasion to have dinner together in Salerno!

During this year we have had an eTwinning project about Orientation with a school of Romania. Students of the last year wrote emails about universities and opportunities in the two countries: some of the Italian students are probably going to study there! Without eTwinning they would not have known these opportunities.

From an old project, a cultural exchange was born with the Gymnazium in Brezice (Slovenia). This exchange has been brought on for many years: one year a delegation of about three teachers and thirty students go to Slovenia from Italy. The students are hosted in the families. The following year the Slovenian friends come to Italy. Wonderful occasion to speak English, to learn Slovenian and Italian words, to appreciate different food and nice sightseeing. Next year... we will certainly begin a new eTwinning project!

About five years ago I had the honour and the pleasure to be named eTwinning Ambassador by the National Agency Indire in Florence. We had some meetings in different towns (Pistoia, Rimini) where we met colleagues from all over Italy and we exchanged ideas about projects.

Since then I have organized meetings in different schools to bring this new form of teaching, which involves languages, IT and all the subjects that teachers want. In every school I have found colleagues willing to know, to understand, to motivate students.



I have been in different towns in the province of Avellino and Benevento: Pietradefusi, Apice, Monteforte Irpino, Frigento, Venticano, Montefusco, San Giorgio del Sannio...

I remember, in particular, a colleague who said: "After many years, at last I have heard something really new!"



**Diagnostic test, medication or maybe powerful antidote to the European (socio-moral) crisis? eTwinning can do it!**

by Christina Drakopoulou

The first meeting was about eight years ago. However we "gave" hands for three consecutive years between 2010 and 2013. In this splendid canvas we have worked and spent countless hours Greeks, Dutch, French, Turks, Italians. All the colours of the educational palette in unexpected combinations. One missing, and the result would not be the same, our memories would not be as rich as they are.

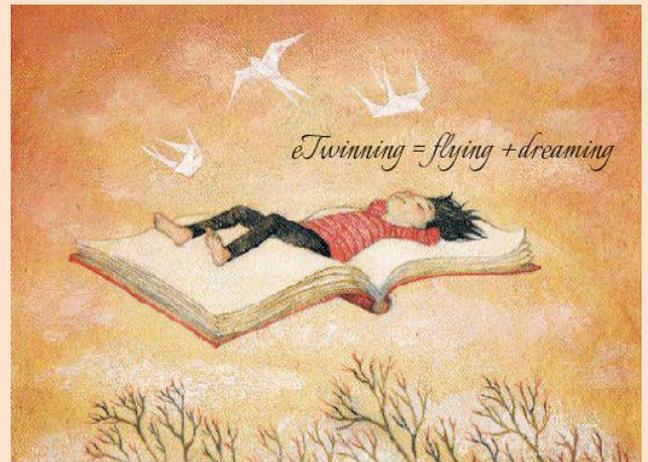
We will not talk about eTwinning projects. But for the main pillar of eTwinning, the edu-solidarity that guides to a whole purpose. The socio-economic reality - the crisis of the last five years in many parts of the world makes - the euro-twinning more urgent than ever.

Here in Greece, there has been a redefinition of priorities, opportunities, available resources. The children in classes are not so enthusiastic and cheerful... they have ceased to think in terms of the "here and now" that corresponds to endless recreation. It seems that the uncertain future looks to bother even younger students. They become witnesses of the financial problems of their families. If foreign languages are taught with a view to certify basic skills for communication, to open horizons and to get useful job skills, today learning serves the prospect of a possible migration and a given mobility. Important sums invested in education are now available to meet basic needs such as food and electricity bills. This corresponds to fewer educational opportunities, school dropout. (Even young students are forced to look to find a way of living). Result: shrinking of the student population, closed schools, fewer opportunities, more pressure. As Noam Chomsky says: *"the easy victims in times of crisis are schools and teachers."* They are those who absorb the pressure and stress due to poverty, unemployment, unstable economic and social conditions.

In these conditions eTwinning is requested to assist in the curriculum with competitive skills in the field of the 21st century. New functionalities and activities closely linked to daily life (video conferencing, text writing for hanging on school blog) can involve students and guarantee future personalities with critical opinion and the courage to express it. eTwinning can also be an antidote to dropout or temporary absences from classes due to economic hardship. As an educational program -

institution, eTwinning can help to maintain a relatively good level in the language which is the bridge of communication and a precious way for removing misunderstandings.

There are students who enjoyed and earned so much from their experience. What if we could launch "transnational forum" within the eTwinning platform, where students open their wings to fly through modern topics where they can reflect the vision and ideas on the European world (colourful or critical world...)



eTwinning is also a weapon against stereotypes. The European generation receives various messages: in Southern Europe there was talk about the PIGS, the acronym which includes countries in deep financial crisis, but behind this sign there are families who fight to earn a living. The Northerners partners give the impression that South wastes valuable resources at the expense of other economies. The best way to "heal this hit" is to continue to support the eTwinning cooperation between schools in different countries. Communication, collaboration and cultural exchange demolish myths diligently built by short-sighted policies and discursive massive media.

Through eTwinning teachers we are given opportunities to improve ourselves and empower children illuminating dark spots seeking to define their lives and prescribe their future. By giving the example through our daily practice educators are protectors of children's rights by facing the recent model "deforestation of the public school and expulsion of the youth from the economy and society". We are in favour of quality time versus the tyranny of speed and the immediate effects. And the most important: Teachers we must rekindle the enthusiasm into the classes, inspire children that



something can change for the better, for the more qualitative, for the liberated! We owe this especially to the most oppressed and troubled students, some of them have only school as a support. Let us not disappoint them.



This video [https://www.dropbox.com/s/inx8vdjabvm4bv4/\(Ekpegfsi\)%20Education%20for%205th%20twin%20Newsletter%202014-2015.mp4?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/inx8vdjabvm4bv4/(Ekpegfsi)%20Education%20for%205th%20twin%20Newsletter%202014-2015.mp4?dl=0) is dedicated to all the children, all teachers who give daily battle to stand in the world!



### **Social inclusion through eTwinning projects: RED BALL**

by Xanthie Chouliara and Irineos Georgiou

*Inclusion means...*



Nowadays, without any doubt, everyone has his or her own view of a complex idea like inclusion. The dimensions, sections, indicators and questions provide a progressively more detailed view. Many people find that the notion of inclusion becomes clearer as they engage with the materials (Booth & Ainscow, 1998).



Inclusion involves change. It is an unending process of increasing learning and participation for all students. It is an ideal to which schools can aspire but which is never fully reached. But inclusion happens as soon as the process of increasing participation is started (Wertheimer, 1997).

**AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL IS ONE THAT IS ON THE MOVE.**

*Inclusive participation means...*

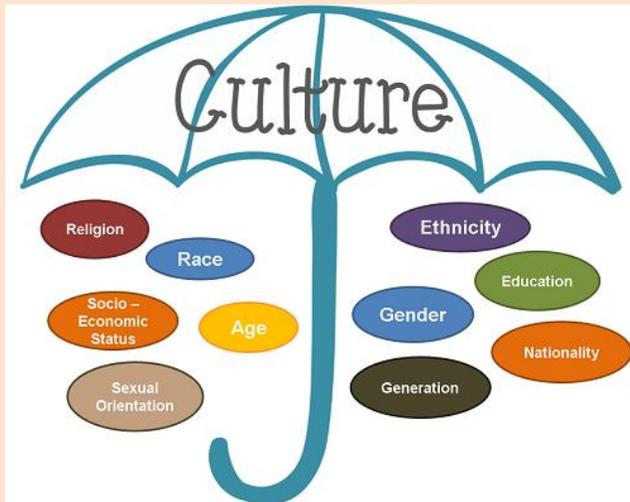
Learning alongside others and collaborating with them in shared learning experiences. It requires active engagement with learning and having a say



in how education is experienced (Hopkins & Jackson, 2002)

**INCLUSION STARTS FROM A RECOGNITION OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STUDENTS.**

*Inclusion in education involves...*



- Valuing all students and staff equally.
- Increasing the participation of students in, and reducing their exclusion from, the cultures, curricula and communities of local schools.
- Restructuring the cultures, policies and practices in schools
- Reducing barriers to learning and participation for all students
- Learning from attempts to overcome barriers to the access
- Viewing the difference between students as resources to support learning
- Acknowledging the right of students to an education
- Improving schools for staff as well as for students.
- Emphasising the role of schools in building community and developing values
- Fostering mutually sustaining relationships between schools and communities (Booth & Ainscow, 1998).

**INCLUSION IN EDUCATION IS ONE ASPECT OF INCLUSION IN SOCIETY.**

*Inclusion and exclusion's dimensions of school improvement...*

Inclusion and exclusion are explored along three interconnected dimensions of school improvement:

- creating inclusive cultures

This dimension creates a secure, accepting,

collaborating, stimulating community, in which everyone is valued as the foundation for the highest achievements of all. It develops shared inclusive values that are conveyed to all new staff, students, governors and parents/carers.

- producing inclusive policies

This dimension makes sure that inclusion permeates all school plans. Policies encourage the participation of students and staff from the moment they join the school, reach out to all students in the locality and minimise exclusionary pressures. And

- evolving inclusive practices

This dimension develops school practices which reflect the inclusive cultures and policies of the school. Lessons are made responsive to student diversity (Booth & Ainscow, 1998).



**STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN ALL ASPECTS OF THEIR EDUCATION.**

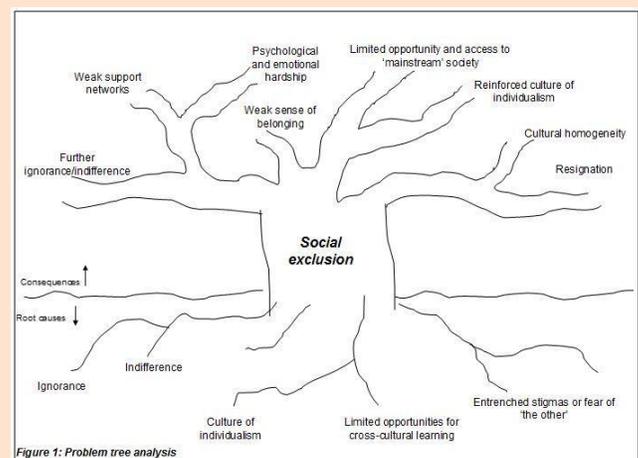


Figure 1: Problem tree analysis



Good practice: RED BALL



**REFLECTING  
EMPOWERING  
DEVELOPING  
BECOMING  
ACTIVE  
LIFELONG  
LEARNER...**

...is a project based on the theory of School Improvement (S.I.) where the progress and development of school itself, and education in general, starts from bottom up. Through S.I. we supported active lifelong learning, inclusive practices, reduce of learner's fail, elimination of prejudice and xenophobia.

Our vision was to empower ourselves (teachers and pupils) as lifelong learners using multiple ways and tools:

- learner's reflection
- inclusive practices
- collaborative learning
- non formal and informal education approaches and the study of culture – tradition



Thus all 11 educational institutions (10 were approved and 9 worked) from

- Greece
- Cyprus

- Poland
- Hungary
- Estonia
- Turkey
- Slovakia (they decided to leave the project after the first meeting)
- Bulgaria
- Romania and
- Italy

with approximately 2800 pupils from 5 -17 and 200 teachers shared joy of collaboration within and between schools and supported ways on ongoing learning and teaching (Comenius/eTwinning partners).

At this point RED BALL was supported as an acronym because we aimed to transform learning into joyful and likeable procedure, as the acronym suggested. Through this collaboration we managed to build strong connections and friendship between participants (teachers, pupils, and wider lifelong learning community), combating this way any possible prejudice and xenophobia between countries, establishing our European identity and managing school improvement for all. For this purpose, we studied, communicated, collaborated, came closer with project meetings, used media and i-technology, we implemented an ongoing and a final evaluation of the procedure, disseminated our work within and outside of schools, and produced ongoing and final and dissemination products.

*Briefly the Partnership mobilities/activities undertaken:*



2013

The first meeting was in Sofia (Bulgaria) on 25-31 October 2013 [http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/agenda\\_bu\\_1.pdf](http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/agenda_bu_1.pdf) The topic was theorizing on inclusive Education and Non-formal Learning (see bibliography).



2014

Thus we met for second time in Satu Mare (Romania) on 25-31 January 2014 [http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/program\\_in\\_romania\\_red\\_ball\\_corect.doc](http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/program_in_romania_red_ball_corect.doc). The topic of this meeting was a Training course on how to implement technology for enhancing educational inclusion.

Third project meeting was implemented in Turkey (12-18/4) [http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/draft\\_agenda\\_tu.pdf](http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/draft_agenda_tu.pdf) The topic was Implementing Non Formal Learning for combating xenophobia.

Fourth project meeting was realized along with pupils from some partners in Italy between 23-30/6/14 [http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/agenda\\_mobility\\_italy\\_06-2014\\_draft.pdf](http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/agenda_mobility_italy_06-2014_draft.pdf) The topic was activities that support multicultural education and inclusion in several fields such as dances, cooking, national games.

For the second year of the project the first meeting was in Zakynthos Greece between 29/9 and 5/10/14 [http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/comenius\\_project\\_red\\_ball\\_2013-2015\\_activities\\_zante\\_final.pdf](http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/comenius_project_red_ball_2013-2015_activities_zante_final.pdf) The topic was Official coordinators' evaluation of the first year activities and kick-off meeting.

Then in December 2014 partners met in the Estonian partner school, between 26-31/12 [http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/agenda\\_estonia\\_\(1\).doc](http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/agenda_estonia_(1).doc) The topic was applying tools for inclusion for increasing teachers' competences in the lesson planning.

2015

The third project meeting of the second year was realized in Bulgaria between 20-25/03/15 [http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/picture\\_109\\_\(3\\_files\\_merged\)\\_1.pdf](http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/picture_109_(3_files_merged)_1.pdf) The topic was implementing Index for Inclusion for school improvement.

Finally, the last meeting of the two years partnership was in Poland between 13-18/6/15 [http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/plan\\_of\\_the\\_final\\_meeting\\_poland.doc](http://red-ball.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/5/8/24585270/plan_of_the_final_meeting_poland.doc) The topic was evaluation and EST (European Shared Treasure) of the partnership.

### *The RED BALL products*

Our main final products are:

- a website (<http://red-ball.weebly.com/>);
- an interface platform (ODS community <http://www.opendiscoveryspace.eu/community/red-ballreflecting-empowering-developing-becoming-active-lifelong-learner-780501/>);
- educational scenarios/involvement in the international ODS awards about educational scenarios;
- eTwinning project <http://newtwinspace.etwinning.net/web/p105310/welcome/>;
- Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/261751927259535/>;
- presentation of schools, places, countries and educational systems;
- customs and a recipe book;
- a partnership vocabulary;
- CD with traditional music;
- brochures, logos, anthems, an art book, video conferences, cards (digital and postcards);
- educational games, collection of poems, art book of the partnership with paintings of national painters, article collection <http://red-ball.weebly.com/bibliography.html>;
- products exhibition;
- audio and videocasts with experts/universities;
- a quantitative and qualitative evaluation;
- EST database and a final book of the partnership activities.

### *The European added value of the RED BALL Comenius-eTwinning project...*



Throughout the present project we hoped to develop our skills as pupils, teachers and our institutions together in opposition to having to work in solitude.

Pupils coming from different backgrounds irrespective of their learning abilities or national background were taught of: (1) the way of using their full status European citizenship and equal



opportunities in education about their individual learning and development of skills (2) as well as the importance of language use with respect to the great significance of development in their foreign language competence, which is an essential part of life in the European Union. Our pupils were educated on: (3) respecting others irrespective of sex, nationality, abilities and socioeconomic status, (4) enhancing their capability in their feelings of belonging to the European family, (5) recognizing that they are members of a multicultural society, (6) having all the abilities of joining working teams and form friendship on occasions of staying abroad, (7) being able to gain knowledge of cooperation with pupils of different backgrounds and abilities while applying Information Technology throughout Comenius partnerships. Our aim was also (8) to make pupils feel interested in becoming part of the society of the region where they are studying in other EU countries and (9) to teach pupils tolerance towards diversity.

Teachers participating (1) enriched their expertise by exchanging ideas and professional experience with their colleagues working in EU countries, (2) had a picture of the education systems of the EU partner countries, (3) was motivated to maintain best practices and streamline their institutions, (4) applied inclusive practices in a variety of educational and regional backgrounds, (5) visited to the partner schools and enhance their knowledge about the practice of inclusive education.

Institutions (1) improved their European contacts, (2) hosted teachers working in the EU, (3) enhanced their educational perspectives in the EU, (4) implemented the notion of intercultural dialogue, (5) registered in LLP schools, (6) built relations with EU schools, (7) improved the prestige of their institutes and (8) gained acknowledgement abroad in transmitting ideas of the educational system.

The Management (1) gained experience in good European practices and (2) put emphasis on good communication with representatives of the partners in the official language.

#### *Sustainability...*

We are positively sure that we produced many outcomes which can be used by other partnerships, teachers, professionals and learners and wider LL community.

The vocabulary of the partnership is a great tool for use since it contains about 10 words/phrases in 9 languages in written and spoken version. It can be an assisting tool for teachers and pupils/students

who wish to communicate in basic with people from abroad or within their classroom.

The EST base of Red Ball offers a wide range of ideas for similar projects. New partnerships can enrich their repertoire of ideas and activities by studying some of Red ball activities.

The Evaluation Tool, which contains an initial and ongoing evaluation given to pupils of the partnership translated in 10 EU language can replace previous evaluations that co-existed and can support any new partnership's attempt for evaluating the procedure and knowledge of their students/pupils.

The ideas of Non Formal Education Approaches for Educational Inclusion can enrich and assist on implementing more successful inclusive practices within the classrooms.

The recipe Book of the partnership which contains New Years and Christmas recipes from all 9 schools can be used by local community and vocational schools for preparing Seasons' cooking.

The general idea of collaboration between school unit and academics showed great results at the improvement of teaching techniques, since academics can support learning as critical friends.

#### *Conclusion*



To sum up, Inclusive practices in eTwinning or/and Comenius projects, such as RED BALL, then, will not be approached as simplistic recipes or formulas but as social learning that will be developed in those small networks and communities of practice (Booth & Ainscow, 1998). In the long term, and if the different schools are networked together (as has been done in many countries, such as England (Hopkins and Jackson 2002)), they will share good practices and will discuss the different emerging problems.

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**eTwinning, an experience booster**

by Sandra Macabre



I am a teacher of English as a foreign language in the middle school la Canopée in Matoury, French Guiana which is an oversea French Department in South America. I joined the eTwinning platform in November 2011. How did I hear about eTwinning? I discovered about it by surfing the web. I use to surf the web to find about activities or competitions to motivate my pupils. A kind of routine can easily settle down in class if one does not renew his/her activities or does concrete learning situations.

Involving in this action seemed obvious not only because I grew with the European construction but because I wanted to offer my pupils the opportunity to broaden their horizons and their minds. We are not far from Guyana (a former British colony) and there is a common border with Suriname (a former Dutch colony) where English is widely spoken, most people think all the pupils are good at English. In fact, some have really a good level. Nevertheless, many pupils think English is difficult to learn, I mean academic English not slang. I want them to consider English as a tool, a mean of communication they can use wherever they go.

Everything went so fast. I was lucky to have an experienced partner for the first project I involved in on the first year. At the beginning, I just wanted to exchange about Christmas traditions but my partner from Poland wanted to do a school year long project. So, we did a project about culture and traditions. We did two projects together. She was really helpful!

On the first year, I also replied to a search for partners for a Comenius project and I was accepted



by the coordinator. One day or better said one night because of the time difference between French Guiana and Europe, we were considering about organizing a preparatory visit even if it was nearly too late and I proposed to set it up in my school. All the partners agreed. I was both excited and stressed at the same time. I had only two or three days prepare the official programme and invitations. Three partners from Germany, Spain and mainland France managed to come. The partner from Germany told me when she came for the Comenius preparatory visit that:  
\_ "French Guiana is a piece of Europe in South America."

That is true and pupils need to be aware of that fact and to benefit from it.

Our Comenius project Peaceful Horizons – C.O.M.P.A.S.S has been approved by the Erasmus French national agency as well as the application of the nine partners. It is associated to an eTwinning project which awarded several quality labels by our national agencies.

I ran several projects around culture and traditions with partners from different countries. Nevertheless, I have never run a project with a partner from United Kingdom and that can be strange at first sight. Some teachers, when I tell them about eTwinning and the projects I am involved in, keep on asking me why I do not run a project with an English speaking country rather than other countries. It does not make sense according to them because students have to learn English with native speakers. Running project with other countries suppress the fear of level as our students learn English as a foreign language.

Two years ago, I decided to become an ambassador to promote eTwinning in the area and it benefits for both pupils and teachers whatever the subject. Most teachers think only teachers of languages can do eTwinning projects but it is a good way of showing them the interest of cross-curricular projects, co-teaching and collaborative practices.

At the same time, the English subject regional director of education asked to train teachers about eTwinning. I accepted last year because I wanted to be more experienced.

Eager to collaborate, I joined the Visibility and the Creative classroom groups.

Thanks to eTwinning, I am now a connected teacher with a Facebook and a Twitter account!

As a conclusion, I would say eTwinning offers the opportunity to meet teachers with the same interests and expectations from all over Europe. It is also a good tool for long life learning because it develops skills in several fields.



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**My eTwinning**  
By Emine Cag

First of all, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Emine. I am from Burdur, Turkey. I have been a teacher of English for 17 years and also have been working as an eTwinning ambassador since 2010. I have had so many excellent experiences thanks to eTwinning! Since I started to be interested in eTwinning, I have gained a lot of experiences such as my personal development, professional development and my teaching experiences.





My students and I really enjoy the time spent together during school time. My students have improved themselves both in foreign language and ICT.

I have participated in some national and international workshops, conferences, seminars about eTwinning, and they always help me to go further in my teaching career. I have seen how enjoyable and helpful it is to share something with other teachers from different countries.

Earlier this year, 2015, we applied for an Erasmus+ school education partnership project with my eTwinning project partners. And it was approved, so we are very happy because we have cooperated on eTwinning projects and we really want to meet each other and this will come true. I will take my students abroad for the project meetings, and this is very important for my students as they cannot afford to go abroad. They will meet their friends from Sweden, Belgium and Greece. I am very happy that they will have this experience.

In short, eTwinning has enabled me so many benefits! As an eTwinning ambassador, I am trying to help teachers meet eTwinning by organizing etwinning seminars and workshops in my city. eTwinning brings us love, peace, tolerance, kindness. Happy to be in the world of eTwinning!

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### **Learnenglish+ - Put a plus in language learning**

by Theodora Gkeniou

This year our team of three schools, from Greece (Theodora Gkeniou), France (Claudine Coatanea) and Poland (Lucy Nocon) worked collaboratively to produce our very own MOOC about language learning. Here are the main characteristics of our project:

**Content:** We no longer rely on a single course book. The content of our MOOC (videos, interactive maps, presentations) is created by teenage students for students.

**Form:** the traditional classroom is usually limited by the physical surroundings and learning takes place here and now. In our etwinning project time and space for learning are expanded since the participants work on the Twinspace platform, create and upload their materials, discuss on forums and collaborate on Google forms.

**Process:** the process of learning is not predefined or imposed by the curriculum and the teacher, it is democratically decided with the students through online and offline discussions, negotiating and voting. Furthermore the groups are arranged in a flexible manner taking into consideration the students' common interests and desires.

**Skills:** we do not solely address linguistic skills. We also develop 21st century skills by providing space for collaboration, by promoting learner independence and fostering creativity.

**Student role:** our students are neither passive nor isolated. They are active decision makers, transformed from consumers to creators of knowledge in a multicultural environment.

**Teacher role:** the teachers involved are not preachers. They are leaders and mentors planning, organizing, managing, making decisions and evaluating the project.

**Evaluation:** from top down, teacher led assessment, we move on to bottom up reflective processes whereby students self and peer evaluate and acquire metacognitive skills.





Subsequently the following learning outcomes were improved:

The students were able to recognize, relate, discuss and compose lexis and grammar at an intermediate level (B1+/B2) by creatively putting ideas to work in 6 different thematic areas.

They managed to think creatively, work as international teams, solve problems, become independent and self directed in their learning.

They were able to appreciate the value of intercultural communication and collaboration enhancing their digital skills.



Would you like to stay tuned? Follow us on Twitter and share your thoughts on #learnenglishMOOC!

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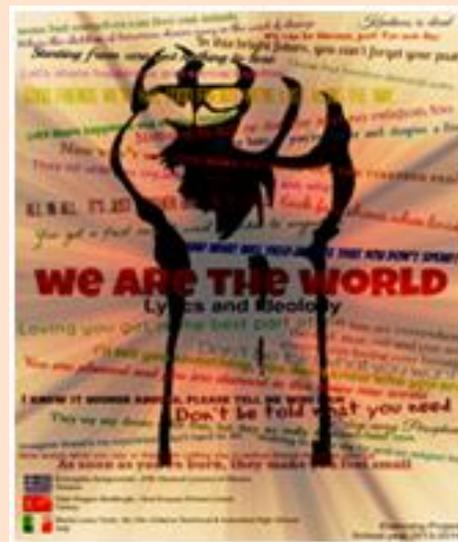
**What we were up to as the eTwinning club in 2014-2015?**

*by Eva Buyuksimkesyan, Talar Bedikoglu and Zabel Boyaciyan*

As the eTwinning Club of Ozel Esayan Ermeni Lisesi, we were very busy this year. As we have been doing eTwinning projects since 2009, we believe our students, teachers and school benefit a lot from collaborations. The 21<sup>st</sup> century learning can't be limited within four walls of a classroom. The opportunities that we have can easily open doors to new horizons. Bearing this on mind, we decided to find projects for our classes and almost each class from primary to high school carried out a project and the students enjoyed the experience very much.

Despite being involved in e-Twinning since 2009, we started the e-Twinning Club last year and the first project of our club 'WE ARE THE WORLD - LYRICS AND IDEOLOGY' carried out in 2013-2014

Academic Year was awarded both the National Quality Label and the European Quality Label this year. That was the first European quality label that we received and we felt the hard work we carried was praised and felt more enthusiastic about future projects.



This year, we started an e-Twinning project with 1st Geniko Lykeio of Edessa "Nikolaos Oikonomidis" in Edessa, Greece, and this one became very important for us because we managed to turn it into an exchange project so our friends visited us in February and we went to Edessa in April. In this project, the students of both schools explored and shared the long history of their schools. Through this exploration they found out their local , and at some points common past of their families and their communities.

We expect, thanks to this project, our students have become aware of their communities' past and their schools' achievements over the years and appreciated their own schools.





As we mentioned, we tried to find at least one project for each class at school. 'We Love Blogging' is another eTwinning Project with Grade 5 and Grade 7 pupils. They created a blog on their life, school, family, customs, traditions, daily life. Our partner schools were from Slovakia, Poland, Spain, Denmark and Romania.

Our 5th Graders also exchanged Christmas Cards with their peers from Poland. Moreover, they exchanged Easter cards and parcels including handcrafts for each other. Also 8th and 9th Graders sent their Christmas cards to Italy, Spain, Romania and Czech Republic.



The other eTwinning project that we want to mention is called "A Picture is worth a Thousand Words". We carried out it with a group of students from 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Our partner schools were from Greece, Poland and France. The name of our project was "A Picture Is Worth A Thousand Words" so the students selected photos on an assigned topic, attached short descriptions or stories and published them on a visual platform where all participants could be inspired to interact, evaluate and contribute with more photographs and comments or stories.

As part of our first task, students were asked to take photos of people in the streets and create a story about their lives. At the end of this task, there was a photo-story competition and students voted on the best two stories from each country. The two stories from Turkey got the highest vote rate. This task was followed by choosing photos which shook the world. All the students were asked to do research about these photos and were able to become more aware of historic events and social

issues. Each country also shared important pictures reflecting social, historic, environmental or cultural events of their own country and students had the chance to learn much more about each other's culture by researching and sharing information about each picture.

In the second part of the project, one of the tasks was working collaboratively on writing a short story of about one thousand words. The 1st group (Greek students) were given a couple of story openings to choose and write the 1st part of the story which the 2nd group would stick to and continue and then the 3rd and the 4th. Words would give more words and hence we reversed the title from 'A picture is worth a thousand words' to 'One thousand words are worth of what picture? After the story was complete, students from each partner country chose a picture to illustrate the story. You can read the story of these enthusiastic writers.

#### *The Last Chance*

**GREECE:** Time was running out. It was John's last chance to prove he could cope with the high demands of the match and his team's expectations. The semi-final between Greece and Poland was approaching to its end. 10 seconds remained to bring the winner that would face France in the final UEFA European Championship. The coach had called timeout and while he was giving instructions, John's mind was travelling away. His family had moved to Greece from Istanbul since he was a baby and at the age of 23, he was accepted in the National Greek team as a promising scorer. His school life was a complete failure because his stammering in speech and his frequent blushing when he felt anxious often triggered his classmates' laugh and jokes. His sport life was not happier either. He could feel instinctively that his teammates did not like him. Even the coach seemed to be prejudiced against him. He certainly encouraged him while training but in most games he was not given the chance to leave the bench often. And here came this moment. Two basic players got seriously injured so he was used as a last choice. You could see the stress and anxiety in everybody's face. It was too much load on his shoulders. Once again all his life ran ahead his mind. He was born...

**POLAND:** ...in Istanbul's district. The neighbourhood was very dangerous. There were a lot of gangs, which were constantly fighting against one another. That's why his mother decided to move to Greece. Unfortunately, the change of their residence didn't help in change of his father's behaviour. He was the



incarnation of evil. Every day he was maltreating John and his mother. But, in fact, John was more worried about his mother than himself. He loved her very, very much, he handled her like an angel, her smile was for him the most precious thing in the world. And one day, he was woken up by screams which got on from the kitchen. He peeped there through the crevice and saw the father bending over his mother with a big kitchen knife in his hand. John held his breath - his mom fell down on the floor. She was terribly bleeding. John immediately stepped into the kitchen and fell down on his knees next to the mother. At that time he saw his father escaping through the window but then not that man was the most important. The only person he was thinking about was his beloved mother who didn't move. He put his ear to her heart and realized that it was already too late. In an instant the whole world completely collapsed. He couldn't believe what he had just experienced. It was the worst time in his life. Despite the immense loneliness, pain, and a number of suicide attempts he walked away from it. It happened due to the fact that he found the passion...Football became his whole life. He couldn't give heart to people who so many times hurt him, so he dedicated himself solely to the only thing that made him happy. Nonetheless, demons of the past were still coming back to him. His secrecy, solitude and pain hidden in the heart discouraged the others from making friends with him. Teammates didn't like or appreciate him. Then, ultimately, he could prove his worth for so many years having been crushed by his father and buddies. He was playing as best as he could and it was a beautiful game. He was gliding like a bird over the grass and was gaining consecutive goals. Final seconds. Little lacking to win. Only one action! He was maneuvering among opponents and the noise of the crowd. One second. One look towards the man who overturned a trolley filled with hot-dogs. His penetrating eyes fixed upon him. His face..... Face of the man who took him away everything! The face of the murderer. The face of his father...Time stopped. ...

*FRANCE:* John was petrified. His father's face had haunted him for so long. He saw people screaming around him but could not hear them. His mother's beautiful face reappeared. Scream, blood, his mum on the ground, everything suddenly seemed so real. He was paralyzed. That's when he saw his father's smirk. The hate instantly resurfaced but he got back to his wits and saw an opponent running towards him. Then the only thing that mattered to him was to score a goal. He thought the whole world was watching him, and also the hotdog man. Commentators went crazy: "there is John, going

through the defense, oh my God, he's just passed Milik, dribbled Pesyko, the moment of truth, he gets a clear shot and ooohhh YEESSSS!!! Fabianski cannot stop this amazing shot!!!" He knew he was becoming a hero by scoring this goal and bringing his national team versus France in the final but he did not celebrate while all his teammates were running to him and jumped over him. He just stood in the middle of the pitch, looking fixedly at his genitor. As they got back to the changing rooms, his partners asked what was wrong, wondering why he had been standing there for two minutes staring at the hotdog man. Then John made up his mind to tell them about his story as he thought that would be relieving and somehow felt he had to finally share something with these guys who had always been prejudiced against him. His partners were indeed astonished as he told them the whole story. As John left the stadium, he saw a man cleaning a hotdog cart. He got closer to him, strangely willing to talk with this person he had hated for so many years, but finally stepped back, unable to move any further. At the same moment, John's father, who was actually behind him, put his hand on his shoulder.

*TURKEY:* John couldn't move for a second. He felt as if his heart would stop but at the same time he knew that he had to confront with his past, with the man that had turned his life into a hell. He finally was ready to look at his father in the eyes and he turned around. 'You've done a great job, boy! You made all of us proud,' said the man. John remained motionless and couldn't say a word so he just nodded his head and smiled back to the man. As the man was walking away, John wondered how he could have mistaken the man for his father. Has his past taken over his life this much? While these questions were lingering on his mind, he felt a sudden relief, a relief he had never felt before. The man was right. He made everybody proud of him. Finally, he realized that despite all the solitude, pain and secrecy he suffered all his life, he actually achieved his main goal in life. He proved everyone and most importantly himself that he was worthy. A bright future was waiting for him and he would never ever let the past haunt him again.





**Web 2.0 Compass Area:**



**Matching pairs on images**  
by Francoise Altamura

*I suggest a nice tool to use at the beginning of an eTwinning project, to get to know partners in a fun way: Matching pairs on images, by Gregor Lütolf. But this tool can also be used for other activities during the project, or simply during the lesson and even as self-study by students. I chose it because it is very simple to prepare.*

*This application is one of the many applications offered by LearningApps.org, which aims to collect reusable material created by teachers and available to all.*

*Register for free on this site: <http://learningapps.org/>. There are also several different templates – simple, to create new applications. You can record new applications into your account and then publish so that everyone can use your work.*

*You click on "Create App", you pick the applicaton: Matching pairs on images, by Gregor Lütolf. In this*

*model, text, images, sounds or videos can be paired with the image bookmarks.*

*Here is an example that I have prepared for you: <http://learningapps.org/display?v=pv2gfg3n501>*



*Examples on line:*

*fruit: <http://learningapps.org/20424>*

*with audio:*

*school stuff listening match:*

*<http://learningapps.org/939207>;*

*feelings: <http://learningapps.org/1597840>;*

*numbers: <http://learningapps.org/105626>.*

**Aurasma – teaching and learning with Augmented Reality**

by Loredana Popa



*We live in an era where technology has come to rival concepts we had only heard of in science fiction films or series and not making use of these new inventions would be foolhardy.*

*When we think of teaching, most of us use technology already, web 2.0 tools and maybe a few apps as well, but the concept of Augmented Reality takes it to a whole new level. It makes everything*



feel alive, it makes content interactive and learning a lot more fun and easy.

There are many brilliant ways of using AR in projects and in class, regardless of the topic or subject you teach. Delving into all of them is not the purpose of this article, however. My intention is to showcase one such app in particular, one my students and I have first become acquainted with through a Learning Event on eTwinning, led by a fabulously talented team of experts, Arjana Blazic and Bart Verswijvel.

But let's start from the beginning before you lose your patience and stop reading this article. Just what is Aurasma? It is a free app for iOS and Android mobile devices. Aurasma's image recognition technology uses a smartphone's or tablet's camera to recognize real world images and then overlay media on top of them in the form of animations, videos, 3D models and web pages. The image you use is called a trigger image and when scanned with the app it will trigger whatever the author used as an overlay, be it a video, an animation or a link.

There are certain things you should know before you start scanning for Auras. You can create them online (<https://studio.aurasma.com>), on your phone, iPhone or tablet, you can make them public or private and you can basically display the trigger images anywhere you need to.

Let me give you a few examples of how we have used Aurasma so far. In September 2014 we joined a project dedicated to the celebration of EDL (European Day of Languages). It was your basic EDL project, sending cards, speaking in other European languages and singing in a few of them as well. But then the Learning Event came along and I figured AR would be great for our project. I mean, we all create lovely exhibitions with the cards but it's just that, an exhibition – cards hanging on the walls, you read them and move on and that's that.

For this project, my 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students had created videos of themselves saying 1-2 sentences in every partner's language, about 13 languages give or take. We figured we could create Auras for the cards we had received from the partner schools so when anyone (mostly parents, visitors, other students) scanned the card from Poland, a video would start playing, a video in which one of our students was speaking in Polish. We did this for some of the cards, but kept the Auras private, for safety reason.

What integrating Aurasma into this project did was give it a new life, a new voice, so many voices in fact. The students were so proud and it motivated them to invest more in future projects. Now, what would an app review be like without a few samples? So, take your phones or tablets out (some brands may not be compatible, it happens to many other apps unfortunately, but don't let that stop you) and scan the image below and you'll see what we see every time we scan the exhibition. The trigger image is of the interactive Zeemap we created as one of the final products of the project Let's celebrate EDL together.



In the months to come we played with Aurasma some more. For another project called Young Europeans Speak 3.0 (or YES 3.0 for short), students had to create video or audio materials about any topic they wanted to share with their European peers, in one of the major European languages (English, French, Italian, Spanish or German). Those materials would be used as authentic listening comprehension materials in class. But since we wanted more people to be able to access them we included the videos in ebooks and the cover was enhanced using Aurasma.

Now, YES 3.0 came after YES and YES 2.0, so one of the students from my school was the highlight of the first cover. She had represented both previous versions of YES at the national competition Made for Europe (where she managed to get into 2<sup>nd</sup> place both in 2013 and 2014), so we thought we could celebrate 10 years of eTwinning by recording a video message about the history of YES for all the new partners (which meant most of them). And just like before, scan the image below and you will hear and see her (the nerves got the best of her, so we used an 'improvised prompter' which may become visible in the video).



But we did not stop here... we all know how important dissemination is and how cool it is to present your school abroad or to visitors without the burden of creating DVDs. Just a few Auras is all you need. For example, in our school there is a room called the Comenius room, where we showcase all of our projects. The final product of our first Socrates project is the main attraction for all the visitors. It is a traditional Romanian house. We filmed the interior and created an Aura with it, as you will see by scanning the image below.



We included this image on a flyer and now everyone had the video handy.

The many incredible ways in which you can use Aurasma in class is what makes it so popular and successful. You can make videos of yourself explaining certain concepts, theories and add them to something as simple as a title on a piece of paper on the classroom wall. Whenever your students think they need a bit of help, they can scan the paper and they see you explain things all over again.

Has your school had projects that included project meetings abroad? How do you make that public? How do you make sure everyone can see a piece of that? Exhibitions and project corners are not interactive, so you can create Auras for the most important moments of the project meetings and add them to photos or postcards from that meeting. That way, all your students, their parents, visitors can see and hear for themselves and feel involved and motivated.

If you think creating Auras is a challenge, I can assure you that if my 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders learnt the basics in under 5 minutes, then anyone can. Enrich your projects and your classes with AR and see how your students' motivation goes through the roof. But be sure to talk to them about netiquette first, because Auras can be shared on social media, by email and just like any online platform, a bit of netiquette and internet safety is never a bad idea.

I would like to conclude this by inviting you all to scan a 20 dollar bill using Aurasma and be amazed. If you do not have such a bill, here is the trigger image:





## **Stepping ahead in our way of teaching**

by Ingrid Gallardo Sundqvist

### **LOCATION**

We are a primary school CEIP Lope de Vega located in Ceuta, a Spanish city in the North of Africa. We have got 9 classes of infant education and 18 of primary education classes each one with about 26 pupils whose ages go from 3 to 12 years old. In the recent years we have been fortunate with the incorporation of digital boards in nearly all the classes and notebooks and tablets in six classes so our way of teaching has been modified greatly.

### **DIGITAL CULTURE PLAN**

This year our school has joined the programme "Digital Culture Plan" and apart from receiving new hardware we have also enjoyed training sessions which have enabled us to implement useful web 2.0 tools in class for example padlet, powtoon and symbaloo. Thanks to them we are changing our traditional way of teaching and giving way to new form of understanding the learning and teaching process. New technologies are becoming powerful educational tools that foster our pupils' multisensorial capacity. The combination of texts, graphs, sound, images and animations and videos enable the transmission of knowledge in a more natural and dynamic way which is vital in the learning process. Our main aim has been to foster skills to search, obtain, process and communicate information and transform it in knowledge. This kind of resources helps our pupils to be active in their studies, not without forgetting the motivational ingredient of them. Research has shown that in contrast with the traditional way of teaching this advance helps pupils to absorb more information in a quicker form.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

We have used a lot of different software in class. Among them we can mention the following.

Symbaloo is a free social bookmarking service. With it teachers have created one personalised symbaloo for each participating class and have incorporated links to educational resources needed to put into practice our educational planning and that they share with the pupils and their families. Pupils have become familiar with it in a quick way and they use it to consolidate their studies. This also allows a better communication with parents because they are more informed of their children's progress.

Kahoot is a free game-based platform which has enabled our teachers to create games with questions of different areas.

Google Forms/Sheets with which teachers have undertaken tests, corrected with Flubaroo. Flubaroo is a free tool that helps you quickly grade multiple-choice or fill-in-blank assignments.



Flippity together with Google Spreadsheet have permitted the teachers to create a jeopardy-style game.

Padlet is a tool where pupils can create walls in which they can develop their writing skills or share their projects or information found. This last one has seemed to be very motivating, good examples of them can be found in one of the teacher's blog: <https://teachingingrid.wordpress.com/padlet/> where pupils have invented a collaborative story in <https://es.padlet.com/embed/bjmrwdj1bxxj> or where they have even created exercises to practise English: <https://es.padlet.com/embed/quoswqww9r1t>.

Powtoon, a presentation software that allows pupils to present their project in a cool way. Some examples of them are in: <https://teachingingrid.wordpress.com/2015/05/14/tr-abajo-unit-8/> and <https://teachingingrid.wordpress.com/2015/04/26/tr-abajos-unidad-7-5oprimaria/>.

This awesome situation has made possible that pupils that do not have the chance of using new technology at home or want to carry on with it after lessons to do wonderful projects like the ones done in an eTwinning project called Cooking cultures Project and that are published in the blog: <https://teachingingrid.wordpress.com/e-twinning/> where pupils have used the awesome tool of Glogster, a cloud-based platform for presentation and interactive learning, roughly saying they



generated digital posters with images, videos and texts embedded.

As for the conclusions reached at the end of this scholastic year we have to say that they are very positive as we have seen how the motivation in our pupils has increased greatly with this new form of learning but we do think there is still a long way to go.



Witnessing the changes that are taking place in our society as for these types of advances, it is vital for us, as teachers, to be prepared to face the challenge of adapting these new technologies and make them be part of our learning strategies efficiently and adequately so that our pupils could be prepared and could consider them vehicles that enable them to get the knowledge and to develop skills completely. Only so they will be ready to face the future request approaching.

Blogs you can visit to see this in practice:  
<http://elblogdeelisamori.blogspot.com.es/>,  
<http://pcdeceuta.blogspot.com.es/>,  
<http://lopedevegapcd.blogspot.com.es/>,  
<http://pcdanasalas.blogspot.com.es/> and  
<https://teachinginrid.wordpress.com/>.

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### Project trailers

by Eric Vayssie and Eleni Harzavalou

The title and the trailer are a project's entry points for future partners. They can also be the starting point of a brainstorming for creators before defining the project. We have proceeded in this way for projects of the trilogy "Ulysse".

"Ulysse 2014, l'Odysée du Twinspace" refers to Arthur C. Clarke's novel "2001: A Space Odyssey". The aim of the project was to create a collaborative writing about the adventures of Ulysse in space and time.



The link to the project trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9ckNHvM8r8>.

For "Ulysse 2015, la Toile de Pénélope", Penelope weaving her web gave us the idea to locate the adventures on the web, and educate students to a responsible use of the Internet.



The link to its project trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mdg1kOWpluw>.

The project theme of "Ulysse 2016, je reviendrai!" is the return. It is personalized by the character of Terminator - "I'll be back!" - and holds a reference



to "Dead Poets Society". The mode of expression will be poetry.



The link to the project trailer:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ph4wrALmONs>.

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**Digital resources at early ages in the eTwinning project "Fairytale between cultures"**

by Vasilica Gazdac

Using digital resources to kindergarten ages is still a step forward for IT skills training of children and the eTwinning platform offers space for presentation of the results through collaborative projects, teachers' groups, laboratories and webinars.

eTwinning project "Fairytale Between cultures" <http://twinspace.etwinning.net/4261/home> was conducted during the school year 2014-2015 in our kindergarten and gathered schools and kindergartens throughout all Europe: 2nd Kindergarten of Nea Triglia, Chalkidiki, Greece, Preschool Teacher Tsimpassi Eleni; Şehit İnan Er Akçam İlköğretim Okulu, Ardahan, Turkey, Preschool Teacher Ibrahim Onur Gökdoğan; Lopšelis-darželis "Krivūlė", Vilnius, Lithuania, Preschool Teacher Aida Makutėnienė; Regent's Park Children's Centre, London, United Kingdom, Preschool Teacher Violeta Korkucyte; School Tiberiu Morariu Salva, Salva, Romania, Preschool Teacher Vasilica Gazdac.

The project "Fairytale between cultures" aimed at sharing and exchanging ideas, thoughts and experiences between different cultures. Firstly, pupils found out about different countries by watching schools' presentations and playing interactive online games, such as a flag memory game, flag and country matching game and domino

game. They created and voted for the logo of the project. Secondly, the pupils used a Voki programme to create avatars and say 'once upon a time' in their native language. Then, they used their language and literacy skills, imagination and creativity to create a joint fairy tale, which was presented as an eBook. The pupils suggested the title for the fairy tale and voted for it. Finally, they participated in a collaborative and interactive online drawing for the cover of the book.



I have integrated the project into the existing curriculum by meeting Foundation Stage early learning goals in most areas of development and learning. For example, personal, social and emotional development (working collaboratively in groups; being independent; talking about their interests and opinions; turn taking and sharing), communication and language (listening to a story; retelling and sequencing events), literacy (creating their own stories; making drawings and ascribing meaning to them), understanding the world (learning about different countries and cultures; talking about differences and similarities; using a camera, computer and whiteboard), and creative arts and design (making drawings; creating a story).

During the project I tried to develop the following competences in my pupils: independence, awareness and tolerance towards diversity, communicating with each other, making decisions and respecting each other's opinions, developing creativity, language, literacy and ICT skills. The



pupils were keen to work on the project. They worked in small groups collaboratively, supporting and helping each other, sharing and taking turns fairly.



The pupils used technology to further the work of the project. For example, they used a camera to take photos of their school, classroom, favourite toys and/or activities to make a school's presentation to the partners. They also used the computer programme ([www.voki.com](http://www.voki.com)) to create avatars and a collaborative drawing tool, namely a realtimeboard programme, to create a joint cover of the fairy tale. The whiteboard was used to play interactive games and learn about different countries and flags. Staff and myself used different computer programmes, such as Slideshare, Padlet, Voki, Issuu, TripAdvisor, Tagxedo, PowerPoint and Realtimeboard, to present activities for the children, create a joint book and evaluate the project ([http://issuu.com/416534/docs/a\\_train\\_travels/1?e=10776030/1319363](http://issuu.com/416534/docs/a_train_travels/1?e=10776030/1319363)).



The technology used was one of the strengths of the project because of some partners familiar with some digital applications and contributed greatly to IT skills on pupils. We use Google apps for the construction of questionnaires and collect responses. We used digital map-Tripline. We use different applications for filming and posting movies on Youtube. We use PowToon and Padlet for presentations. We created a project logo using an application –LogoGarden. We used an online poll. We used different applications for QR codes. We used digital puzzle-jigsawplanet.com .We built Wordclouds-Taxgedo. The project added an international value for the children, school and myself. The pupils had an opportunity to explore and learn about various countries and cultures and work with the partners from different countries. Their language and literacy skills, creativity and imagination have been enhanced and ICT skills have been developed. They will have an opportunity to meet their friends on Skype in June. The project also had an impact on me as a teacher. I worked collaboratively with other teachers and had an opportunity to use some computer programmes. The school benefited from participating in this project by making links with different schools. The most successful result of the project was creating a joint fairy tale with the partners from other countries. The progress is seen throughout the project. The outcomes of the project are evaluated through pupils', partners' and staff questionnaires in the evaluation section. The project will also be shown to parents and they will be asked to provide feedback about the project.



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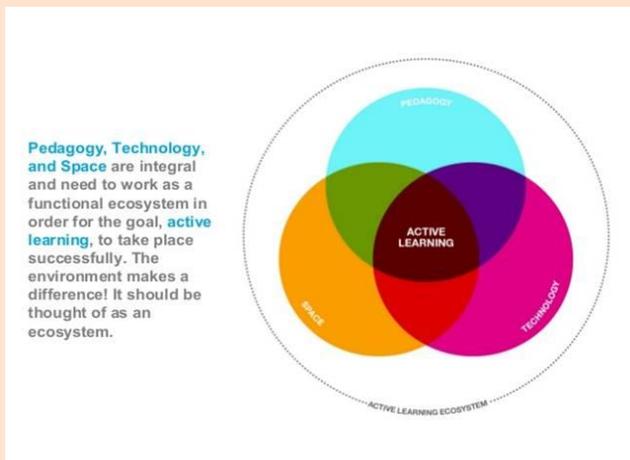
### **eTwinning teachers as realistic designers of learning environments**

by Mariella Fasanelli

Last spring the Italian teachers' association L.E.N.D., Lingua e Nuova didattica, Language and new Didactics, invited a few teachers – and I was among them – to keep some workshops for colleagues in the afternoon session of their Conference in Mestre dedicated to "Language teaching and new learning environments".

The challenge appealed to me since the reflection upon how to improve our learning environment takes up much of my and my colleagues' working time.

While preparing the workshop, the stimulating visualization made by Dr. Lennie Scott-Webber was a good starting point for me. As you can see there, three elements – pedagogy, technology and space – are on an equal footing in bringing about an active learning eco-system.



However, some questions may arise for most of us: can you easily access up-to-date hardware and software at school? are you entitled or allowed to physically modify our school environment in compliance with some of the most advanced conceptions of school architecture and design? Since most of us may not give a positive answer to these questions, I believe a realistic approach is strongly needed.

That is why the title of my workshop in Mestre became "Teachers as realistic designers of new learning environments". To my eyes, realism and innovation must go hand in hand, thus if you cannot revolutionize either the technological equipment or the physical space, you may still

more or less deeply innovate your teaching methods to meet the needs of learners living in a constantly and rapidly changing society (and, let me say that, teachers' needs for lifelong learning). Therefore it is up to us to make of our classroom "a place where learners may work together and support each other as they use a variety of tools and information resources in their guided pursuit of learning goals and problem-solving activities" (B.G. Wilson, *Constructivist learning environments: Case studies in instructional design*, 1996).

As I often happen to say, eTwinning projects are not the panacea for all the problems at school but in my experience they help teachers set learner-centred environments and design guided learning paths promoting cooperative and peer learning, employing problem solving activities and enabling the use of many tools and information resources.

eTwinning can support teachers in their effort at boosting the 21st century skills:

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>WAYS OF THINKING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Creativity and innovation</li> <li>· Critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making</li> <li>· Learning to learn/metacognition (knowledge about cognitive processes)</li> </ul> | <b>TOOLS FOR WORKING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Information literacy</li> <li>· Information and communication technology (ICT) literacy</li> </ul>                                                                         |
| <b>WAYS OF WORKING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Communication</li> <li>· Collaboration (teamwork)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                          | <b>WAYS OF LIVING IN THE WORLD</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Citizenship – local and global</li> <li>· Life and career</li> <li>· Personal and social responsibility – including cultural awareness and competence</li> </ul> |





**eTwinning for professional development and to boost student motivation**  
by Umit Cicek

In this article I want to focus on how eTwinning has changed the course of my professional development and increased motivation among my students.

Since I started teaching 9 years ago, I have tried to be in everything related to my students' education and eTwinning is my number one educational platform among others because of the fact that acquaintance with e-twinning has really had an amazing impact on my teaching and professional development. I gave up participating in local service-in-trainings or seminars after I started my eTwinning journey since, this is not to boast but, I already feel self-actualized thanks to the opportunities e-twinning provides. I must admit I would be quite a different and -highly possibly- an ordinary teacher if it weren't for e-twinning.

Let me briefly explain how eTwinning contributed to my professional development. On account of eTwinning, I:

- participated in 3 eTwinning learning events;
- participated in Transatlantic Educators Dialogue 1-2-3;
- discovered European Schoolnet Academy and participated in 4 courses provided by this platform (Future Classroom Scenarios, Competences for 21st Century Schools, Games in Schools, Creative use of Tablets in Schools);
- participated in eTwinning projects and was rewarded European/National Quality Labels;
- was selected for the 3 months eTwinning "Online Moderators Course" provided by the Central Support Service in Brussels;
- set up or participated in many Comenius, Leonardo, Grundtvig and Erasmus+ projects;
- met best of the best colleagues from all over Europe and exchanged ideas with them;
- discovered tens of web 2.0 tools which I can use in my everyday classes.

It was great experience to be involved in all the courses, projects, events I listed above; however "Online Moderators Course" has been the best possible way of extending my professional development. I had the chance to learn strategies to prepare content for and deal with online groups, read through many engaging materials, attend webinars and be involved in discussions in the forums, where moderators, experts and colleagues

shared sparkling ideas. After the course, one of the representatives of the Turkish National Support Service contacted me to ask whether I could set up and run courses for them, which I had never imagined until I started my eTwinning journey 6 years ago.



eTwinning platform has not only inspired my professional development but it also has had a huge impact on my students. For example, last year I participated in an eTwinning project, titled "Linking Europe" with 11 teachers from 9 countries and 16 students from my school involved. The main purpose of the project was to improve our students' communication skills in English. It was very touching to see some of the students with low skills in English were writing almost one page letters to their peers involved in the project, which I could have never imagined definitely. The students who did not even know the location of the partner countries have a lot to say about their foreign peers' traditions, lifestyles, cuisines, daily lives etc. now.

To conclude, eTwinning is the right, for me the best, platform for teachers who want to extend their professional development and find more involving and motivating ways of engaging students into the process of education.

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### **eTwinning for a change!**

by Nieves Méndez

Change and innovation are words so often heard and repeated in educational settings nowadays and the reason is not difficult to understand: educational systems are almost desperately trying to catch up with a society on the move – not always really successfully, though.

In the last decades, we have witnessed the transformation of family patterns, the swift rise of mass media influence on people's lives and, above all, the birth of new ways of accessing information and knowledge, which undoubtedly results in a totally different kind of pupil attending our classes. However, have the teachers changed in the same way? As far as I am concerned, I can still see a dangerous gap between the model of teacher in service these days – educated according to methods and principles no longer suitable – and the students to whom our lessons are addressed. That is why a profound change is urgently needed. Without this change it is not easy to achieve the goals of any modern educational system.

The question that might immediately arise is *how* to do it. First of all, we have to be aware of the real picture. Paradoxically, in a world in which children and teenagers have all the information they might need at hand – ready to be keyed into any connected device – the role of the teacher is now more important than ever. Whereas they have fast and easy access to data, they sometimes lack basic personal resources to make good use of all the information they are flooded with; our students are so often deficient in motivation, self-esteem, self-confidence and personal goals, being these some of the most important reasons for failure and, eventually, dropping out. From my point of view, it is a must for teachers to provide students with what they really need to be successful in life: the chance to develop competences to become happy responsible citizens. Easier said than done, of course. But here is where eTwinning comes into scene. eTwinning provides a proper well-defined frame to update our methodology in a simple yet an efficient way.

Since eTwinning projects are based on collaboration with other schools and on web-based tasks, they are a good method to overcome lack of motivation and create an innovative working system. The only thing that we, as teachers, have to bear in mind is that it is not only information what is required from us but ways to find it and use it satisfactorily. We are to lead a process in which everyone in the

classroom has a relevant part, from decision making to the creation of a common final product. The students are not mere recipients or spectators any more but true agents of the learning process itself.



Teamwork is another key word. Students' collaboration with peers, not only classmates but also international mates, promotes social skills and reinforces responsible attitudes, for example, in the distribution of tasks to be done by specific deadlines. Working in teams creates an important feeling of belonging as well. The individual's contributions, very varied and all of them necessary to achieve the final goal, make self-confidence and self-esteem grow as by magic.

The teacher plays the leader role steadily supported by the rest of participants. All together give rise to a relaxed working atmosphere where learning can happen in a natural way.





In short, implementing eTwinning projects in the classroom facilitates the development of the key competences essential to the education of a person. From the most simple to the most complex in content and structure, they all require cognitive processes intrinsic to learning, foster creativity, encourage critical thinking and have a great motivational power. It is a safe way to put into practice a new methodology more adjusted to the social reality that school should never ignore.

Let us change for the better!

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***Closing the gap between family and school:  
The role of digital technologies – eTwinning  
professional development workshop in  
Guimaraes, Portugal***

by Laura Rita Pitariu

Project-based learning is a dynamic approach to teaching in which students explore real-world problems and challenges. With this type of active and engaged learning, students are inspired to obtain a deeper knowledge of the subjects they study. After many experiences in the eTwinning projects I was given the opportunity to participate in a seminar organized in Guimaraes, Portugal, between 6th and 9th November, 2014 as a result of a national selection of the submitted applications.

The purpose of the workshop was to justify the role of digital technologies in the eTwinning projects, as well as the necessity of involving parents and families in these projects. Consequently, we were given good practice examples of eTwinning projects during the plenary meetings. Furthermore, the four workshops that I attended were really helpful and showed us educational applications that can be used for the eTwinning projects.

The first workshop, *Creating Ripples* was led by Claire Morvan and its target was to create a dissemination plan, so that eTwinning projects have a strong impact on the school, students, teachers, school management, the media, families and the local community. It was also the workshop that I presented at the final meeting in front of my colleagues, the local television and the local authorities.

The second workshop, *Learning Science in Secondary Education Using Flipped Learning*, was led by Professor Joao Carlos and Fernando Franco Susa who taught us how to use blendspace classes on educational platforms. During the third

workshop, *Collecting History to Your Mobile Devices*, We used the *ThinkLink* application, while the forth workshop aimed to teach us *Kahoot*, another useful application to be used for our future projects.



Why education software and mobile applications? In today's classrooms, the rows of quiet listeners have given way to small groups of active learners, engaged in discussions and explorations. The teacher has changed his role from standing in front of the classroom and giving information to an observing monitor who tries to get involve and guide students to make their own sense of the world. The classroom expanded too, since new technologies connect students to the wider global community. Students need to know how to use new technologies, but also to be able to select reliable information they find on the internet.

Besides the educational aim of the workshop, we could also experiences pieces of Portugal: Porto and Guimaraes. This PWD was a new beginning for me in the eTwinning field, fostering a better understanding of this type of projects and creating for me relationships for future projects. I recommend teachers all over the world to attend such events and broaden their horizons for themselves and for their students.



**eTwinning school-family cooperation:  
excellent results**  
by Irene Confalone

I have happily enjoyed coordinating, guiding and working with my students on some eTwinning projects, step by step. There is nothing more special for a teacher than to find a good idea for a work and to involve students, parents, to realize a creative product. It is important to involve all the school or at least most of the students of the school in the project. The project is not just my class work. At the end of every project, it is more motivating to upload on eTwinning platform all our end projects to share them in large scale with our European friends.

This year, more than ever, I needed and I had the pleasure to cooperate with the parents of my students for the realization of products for my eTwinning project called: Arts Hopscotch, where creativity was the protagonist of the project in all its facets.

I was lucky to find very creative parents, I simply asked for some help and they have donated all their availability, time and love in creating products really particular. We have benefited enormously from this cooperation: me, because I enjoyed watching parents that do not speak with their children, so in this way they found the opportunity to share little moments together. Some little artists tried to show their progress to dad or mom. I have seen parents carve out time from their work and their commitment to help a school project known as: eTwinning.

I saw them producing works with passion and generosity that were admired locally by the companions of our school first, and after we uploaded them into the platform.

I saw organizing special events on the occasion of another project on eTwinning entitled "Forgotten Values", to showcase all the activities promoted by the project itself, where families have provided for the purchase and construction of an event for our guests from all over Europe. Also this time I have seen such harmony and joy in creating products together, made with love for Europe. Children have greater awareness of cultural diversity and within the European children they have created long-lasting friendship with peers across EU.

Children are encouraged to learn more about different countries in Europe. Children and parents

are more tolerant of cultural differences and recognize similarities between countries and share values.



We worked on the activities we intend to do together. We defined the desired results and end products of the partnership. I have seen so many parents working together and defeating their pride or their desire for superiority that destroys the individuality of everyone. I saw mothers knitting a long scarf for several long nights, I saw fathers who have collected pumpkins, fresh leaves and chose the best fruits to create a mandala, for our project. I saw much work done with precision to the common good of the school. All this had an aim: the school-family cooperation within eTwinning.





Now, I could not think of another eTwinning project without the families' collaboration to help their children and the school to grow up together. Then... let us cooperate together!

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### **Hurrayyy! eTwinning goes national!**

*by Esen Sandiraz*

I am a teacher of English and European Projects Head Coordinator at Toros College in Mersin, Turkey. I have been working with eTwinning projects for about 6 years. I am eTwinning projects and ITEC project teacher trainer in my country.

I would like to tell you about my eTwinning National Project "İlden İle eTwinning".



When I heard that eTwinning decided to run a pilot and open the platform to national projects to encourage collaboration of teachers and students from the same country, I got really pleased, phoned my colleague Adil Tuğyan, who is one of the most experienced Turkish eTwinners, and in a short time we decided to start a brand new national project together. We were aware of the fact that new eTwinners and less experienced teachers who don't speak a second language will take advantage of this new opportunity because it would give them the possibility to have an idea about collaborative learning and the opportunity to use eTwinning platform in their own language.

Our project was about getting to know each other's culture, historical places, local cuisine, and daily lives in different cities of Turkey. There were more than 50 participating schools in this project. We sent a mascot, a teddy bear, by post, that is travelling from one participating school to another.

The mascot stayed a week in each city and in each school. Teddy participated in lessons with the pupils, visited students' homes, had spare time activities and tried to get information about the city. During the visit, students took photos and videos, prepared slideshows, joined online lessons, used ICT tools, wrote down what he/she experienced and shared with other partner school students.

The subject and the aim of the project were closely connected with the school curriculum and our school education programme. The pupils improved their level of English, Turkish, maths, ICT skills etc. thanks to the project - mainly the communication skills.

The project is an example of innovative way of Language Teaching, too. Using a mascot motivated pupils and increased interest in language learning. Pupils and teachers developed ICT skills and improved their understanding of working together. The project taught tolerance and developed creative thinking.

Our project "İlden İle eTwinning" is a cross-curricular project housing a lot of pedagogical and educational aspects within:

- It was the first national eTwinning project consisting of 50 schools from different cities in Turkey.
- It had project and inquiry based learning styles because during the project class activities students created their own learnings by carrying out the activities individually and in teams. They searched for information and refined it and then reflected their outcomes to others for inspiration.
- It had technology integrated with the project activities in which students developed their ICT skills.
- It had a very well organized communication networks through internet and face to face.
- It had a very well balanced collaboration among the partners in terms of sharing the workload and responsibilities.
- It had clearly visible outcomes and products.
- It had the power to flip the classroom with our online classes with our partner school.
- It had joy and excitement while the students were waiting for Teddy to visit their school.
- It had the magic to make the school meaningful for the students away from monotonous regular classes.



- It was full of art inspired the students to sing, write poems, draw pictures.
- It had lots of cultural values enabled us to love our country more than ever.
- It had a positive spirit. Even in our worst times it gave us strenght to think positive to come up with solutions.

Considering all these aspects, we can frankly say that it was a project of a lifetime. We can also say easily and proudly that our project achieved the planned results successfully.

And lastly we would like to thank eTwinning for opening the platform to national projects!

Face-to-face project partners' meeting:



Welcome party for Teddy:



One of the online meetings:



Project mascots: Teddy and Meddy:



Teddy day at school:



Teddy at home:



Teddy at a local festival:





## **eTwinning at school for the construction of European citizenship**

by Brigida Clemente

### *Abstract*

The collaboration between English language specialist Brigida Clemente (an English teacher who has a B2 level of English) and Cristina Garruto, 4<sup>th</sup> grade Elementary School Teacher - ("De Amicis-Altamura" school of Foggia) has been the collaboration that, behind the involvement of students and their families, has started the eTwinning project entitled "Comparison of fairy tales", aimed at encouraging the learning of the English language, the use of ICT and the intercultural dialogue. Through this experience the students have learned to work together, on the eTwinning portal, with their classmates and with pupils from other countries. In this project the partner schools have worked together to transform a "typical tale of their country" in a presentation, created with software applications such as PowerPoint (with the designs of the students, photos, and their personal narratives and descriptions), with specific tools and online videos on YouTube. To make this experience even more concrete in the school, pupils have achieved the objects related to history, they have organized a show on the project at the end of the year, and invited their families. The schools are preparing for an exchange of hospitality among students.

### *Introduction*

The realization of an eTwinning project by the specialist teacher of English Brigida Clemente, Ambassador eTwinning for the Puglia region, made it possible to start a process of change, "internationalization computerized", with the aim of opening the school to the community dimension education and to promote transnational cooperation with other schools in Europe through the use of ICT, in order to help create and strengthen a shared sense of European citizenship. Participation in the project has, in fact, offered to teachers and students involved the opportunity to work together with colleagues and peers from schools in other European countries participating in the project on a topic of common interest, through a European platform for communities practices of teachers.

- The work was carried out through a twinning, as part of a platform, called eTwinning precisely, where it is possible for teachers and students know each other, communicate and collaborate in a secure, simple and fast in order to learn mode and innovative and quality teaching that

"exploit" new technologies and digital content.

- It is a form of innovation in education and organizational: European initiative created to integrate information and communication technologies in education systems and training and educating the understanding, enjoyment and production of media tools, through e-twinning of European primary and secondary schools. Introduced in 2004 as an action of the eLearning program, it is since 2007 part of the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013 (Decision of the European Parliament and Council no. 1720/2006 / EC), today Europe 2020 Strategy.
- Working with schools in different countries, provided an opportunity to both pupils and teachers is to, on the one hand, to deepen and improve their knowledge of the subject on which is based the project by comparing and sharing, for a another, to increase its ability to work in groups, planning and undertaking collaborative activities, to use information and communications technology, to educate the conscious use and proper tool of communication, improve the ability to communicate in other languages increasing their motivation.
- The teachers have implemented, by integrating an eTwinning project in teaching, these methodological principles, called by the National Guidelines for the Curriculum, learning through new technologies.
- Making this complex web of elements - Design, Technology, Documentation - fully exploiting the potential of teaching experience of working with a European has allowed to obtain the quality of an eTwinning project that, in fact, was worthy of several awards, national and Europe:
- Label for the recognition of the quality of European projects in the Italian school, national competition "Europe is changing the school" 2013 edition, Ministry of Education



Portal of Buongiorno Europe;  
eTwinning Quality Label from the  
Unità Nazionale eTwinning;  
European Quality Label from the  
Unità Europea eTwinning.



- promote social and interactive skills and encourage cooperation;
- use technology to create interest in students and involve them;
- develop the ability to organize, share and gather information to perform a specific task;
- stimulate and promote cooperative learning;
- help students to use their knowledge to exploit their potential and work to targets to achieve a common purpose;
- develop organizational autonomy of the students;
- educate for understanding the production of media tools;
- educate the conscious use and proper tool of communication;
- ensure that students are personally responsible for their work.

b) Specific objectives and learning outcomes:

At the end of the project, students will be able to:

- work cooperatively "extended" and organize their work to achieve a common goal;
- experience how the disciplines of study together with the use of computer technology allows us to go "beyond" the confines of the classroom ... and to Europe;
- check how to know more foreign languages multiplies the knowledge and friendships and opens up new cultural horizons;
- increase the authenticity of the learning process and interest through real experiences;
- build virtual communities among different schools and collaborative teams
- help to share different perspectives among students with different abilities, enabling the monitoring of experiences in different places;
- facilitate the use of approaches to monitoring and assessment based on the technologies and models of troubleshooting to improve the skills for "learning to learn";
- offer innovative ways to integrate the "just in time" and interaction in different educational contexts;
- close the gap and allow teachers and students to achieve different realities, actively collaborating in the implementation of activities;
- motivate students with innovative activities, new and interesting that cause them to interact and communicate in simple terms aspects of her own life and their environment;
- teach you to use a website as a tool for collaboration between schools in Europe;
- teach you to use chat for communication exchanges on teaching;
- present and create educational products through the use of shared tools and software.

### Objectives

Main objective was the one suggested by the European Commission, the "open education" promoting "actions to further open learning environments for the purpose of better education and effectiveness."

a) Transversal Objectives:

- improve knowledge of a foreign language and develop production skills and receive written and oral;



### Path structure

The project was divided into the following phases:  
1st phase: "research partner schools and collaborative writing project"

1. The design process started by the proposed design launched by Ambassador Bridget Clement in a designated area of the desktop, called "find eTwinners", the eTwinning Portal, which can be reached after a recording in the home. Through this function, the proposal was viewed by all faculty members and the community, those concerned have expressed their intention to participate. Subsequently, with the consent of an English teacher, the project was sent to the National Support Service for approval. The Italian teacher and English teacher, with the approval of the project, have become the founding partners of the project, all the others, however, partner administrators. The difference is purely operational, because the content and activities all partners are treated.
2. With the approval, the project became operational nell'are dedicated the TwinSpace where, as a first step, was shared a map of work in order to the different phases of the project, on which the partners have agreed on the design process.
3. The success of a project, in fact, is entrusted not only to attain the objectives, but also - and perhaps especially - the design process followed. For a European project is essential to assess how the mutual involvement of the partners.
4. The teachers of the different partner schools have started to design considering the idea and themes from which moved the project to direct activities towards the achievement of shared goals as a team work. But also and above all built in collaboration with distant actors, representatives of different cultures, adopting new ways of working, leaving us to question, in an exchange that virtuality can make frequent, allowing you to manage the "as you want, whenever you want, wherever want "information, much better than the meetings in person. In eTwinning project, perhaps more than in other experiences of collaboration, the European value of the experience is inherent in the way of dialogue taken to effectively implement cooperation. Since then exchanges that take place through information and communication

technologies, it was important to acquire and implement new technical skills, and the ability of evaluation and selection of tools to be adopted for the different activities of the project.



2nd phase: "To work together to know each ..."  
The partner schools, Italy, England, Greece, Turkey, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Slovenia have used the space for the eTwinning platform, the TwinSpace, to communicate via chat and forums, and to share personal presentations, the schools and the territory carried out by teachers with the help of the students, with application software (PowerPoint), online tools (Glogster) or directly on the pages of the wiki TwinSpace.

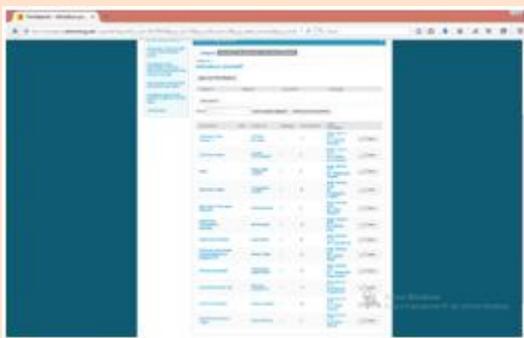
As part of this approach, media education, and then choose the right tool and learn how to use it for what it offered by the instrument, was used to fully grasp the meaning of a twinning.

The pupils have had a real reason to learn to use a new instrument and the teachers have a methodological approach to teaching operation, based on the implementation of collaborative activities in the form of interdisciplinary laboratory with the use of new tools and new languages of multimedia.

The activities carried out were all aimed at mutual understanding by the students, who were therefore



fully motivated and very enthusiastic towards achieving those objectives.



### 3rd phase: "ALL AT WORK ..."

In the life cycle of the project, a variety of activities have been carried out, for which, from time to time, the partners have chosen and agreed on the methods and tools to use. From the design phase of work to the realization of a shared workspace, synchronous interaction in the documentation of the project: ICT has offered several solutions. The project has grown so inside a practical work that you fully understand the meaning in the making and that can be treasured by the class or for the benefit of other classes, therefore, a good practice.

Within the project activities have been marked by stages shared, and have been divided on the basis of the results to be achieved in each case. If, in fact, collaborated to present the various fairy tale characters, the students applied to make them known to the partners producing drawings and descriptive texts. If the collaboration was about the appearance of the environments, the students were concerned to be accurate and timely work in descriptive and narrative.

Each stage of the project has been a result of that, as he allowed the partners to go forward hand in hand, to have a contact and an ongoing discussion in the performance of work. Working together has been an important stimulus to learn, to do their

best, to meet deadlines and to be open to collaborative comparison, the construction of knowledge.

The classes of the various partner countries have chosen the stories to tell. In each class, the children read and discussed the fairytale in their mother tongue; the different fairy tales were illustrated by students using a variety of techniques to draw and paint the scenes. The scenes were commented in English. Photographed images or switch to the scanner were then placed into PowerPoint presentations or with an online tool (Glogster), with narration of the story in English. Digital presentations complete with comments in English have been gradually uploaded to the TwinSpace so that all classes could watch and read the different fairy tales produced by the partners and compare them to your own.

Communication between the partner schools was marked by stages and organized in TwinSpace through:

- the use of the diary of the project, where they were shown the achievements or work completed and the next steps and timing of work;
- management of project activities where, from time to time, were inserted entries, corresponding to the stages initially agreed, the activities to be carried out and were given time in which to publish their work;
- the blog, used to exchange during the school year greetings for the holiday, to make proposals or simple greetings, and from teachers that pupils;
- the bulletin board in the staff room, where the founding partners of the project were organizational communications of the progress of the project;
- the folder of files in the dining pupils, used by them to place documents containing your presentation;
- the dashboard of real students in the hall, used by the previ to exchange greetings and to know;
- the use of the mailbox of the home page of the TwinSpace, by which there was an exchange of information on activities carried out or to be carried out, on experiences made, the problems encountered and how to solve, etc ...

The use of technology in design and media education is indispensable during the whole design process, as an initiative of "new literacy" for students but also for adults, beginning with the parents. Initially because the teachers have sought partners for the project, one of which, the other founder, is a partner in a project of the previous school year, at which it was decided to work together again. So in TwinSpace you have drawn



the guidelines of work to do. Then, still with the TwinSpace, pupils were invited and they have discovered the technology as a valuable tool for socialization and openness to the world through a conscious communication and corrected by the media. Students have also learned how to use software, educational tools and webapp to create their own collaborative contributions. They also learned to transfer their paper works in digital format, in order to share them with fellow "far away" which, otherwise, would not have been able to work. They had a consistent approach with the media lab of the school and have learned to use the computer to perform the activities of the project from home and with the help and involvement of parents.

In the final phase, the students organized an exhibition of their work and a dramatization of the story for a show on the project at the end of the year in the school.

Parents were involved in the creation of objects related to myths and preparing the play and exhibition.

The results of the project were displayed and presented to the local community and the press.



#### Documentation and evaluation of the course

The evaluation of the course is the result of a consistent and focused documentation, for three aspects, adds value to the project:

a. Documentation as culture  
Document to be made available to others his own experience, "what I do and what I cannot do." And 'therefore also a call for help, if it becomes part of a circuit system.

b. Documentation as a method  
Document to exit moments of approximation and instead lead to a reconstruction of the historical memory of what was done, how it is done and what has been achieved.

c. Documentation as a tool  
The spread and strengthening of the culture of documentation in the school are key to increasing the quality of project experiences.

The quality of experience becomes a quality of reflection on experience. The documentation before you along the way then as a reflection on the experience in retrospect, is a stage of deepening crucial to capture innovation has made or to prepare the ground for future innovation possible.

Document to reflect critically about the processes and products, to start itineraries development of awareness and self-assessment.





Specifically, the documentation was published through the tools mentioned above (the diaries of the project, task management, the blog, the dashboard of real folder of files, the bulletin board announcements and use the mailbox).

In addition, the content created by the students were subjected to evaluation and facilitated autonomy in carrying out activities related to the production and empowered themselves as "authors of their learning."

This evaluation path is perfectly consistent with the development of an authentic learning closely connected with the experience of the real world (Muirhead, 2002) that seeks to stimulate:

- the development of critical thinking skills;
- connect learning in the classroom with the daily and professional life;
- the integration of the study of individual and group work;
- the development of learning transferable (transfer of learning).

The educational intervention carried out in the project has promoted a strong integration, a project synergy between teaching, learning and assessment.

It has facilitated the integration of disciplinary knowledge, of learning content to the concrete objectives of learning.

*Future developments*

The eTwinning project, already complete in itself, may now lead to a real twinning through the participation of the partner schools to the key action 2 (KA2) of the new program Erasmusplus.

Founded in 2005 as an action of the eLearning Programme, 2007-2013, eTwinning has been part of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) and from 2014 is part of the actions of the Erasmus+ 2014-2020 between platforms information to support cooperation for innovation and good practices, especially for the education sector.

A "good practice" in the Institute experienced Includes Foggia which combined technology fables opening to Europe. The European integrated project in the course curriculum has allowed to analyze the possible articulation between the technological dimension, the narrative text (stories) and the development of language and communication skills.

The use of a technological environment has encouraged the development of divergent thinking and allowed to mobilize different cognitive styles.

The learning of language skills has enhanced the contribution of other disciplines.

The natural attitude of pupils to communicate, socialize, interact allowed to expand space, time and mode of contact and social interaction, while developing their sense of European citizenship.

The interplay between the disciplines has contributed to the fact that the school would open Europe

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### **"Stories in a Photo" – Collaborative creative writing in eTwinning projects**

by Ana-Maria Ghioc

"Stories in a Photo" –

<http://twinspace.etwinning.net/6647> – is the joint initiative of the Romanian team from "Grigore Moisil" National College which I coordinated and the Turkish team from Türk Telekom Nurettin Topçu Sosyal Bilimler Lisesi, coordinated by my colleague, Özgür Ergin. The springboard for the project lay in the fact that our students are avid photographers, their accounts on social networks bursting with selfies and other photos. However, they do not show the same enthusiasm in our writing classes, their most frequent complaints being that they lack creativity or imagination, that they cannot advance past the first two lines of a story, or – worse – that they have no story to tell. To trick them into writing or better said to unlock their writing potential we resorted to their own photos and turned them into writing prompts for the activities in the project. In addition, to lower their anxiety and encourage active participation, we organized them in groups, both national and mixed-nationality, throughout the preparatory activities and the main activities of the project, our rationale being that peer collaboration would spark mutual inspiration and lead to language improvement.

The two main activities of the project consisted in writing stories starting from the footage provided by the partner team from the other country. The national teams were further divided into groups of four that worked together in weaving a story based on the photo they had received. The tasks were gradually introduced, the first one including a photo as a starting point for storytelling, whereas the second one presented students with the challenge of integrating elements from three photos in spinning a good yarn. The photos had to deal in the first case with the topic of 'feelings', while 'communication' was the theme for the three photos set that each group took. In choosing the topics we have considered their relevance to the lives and interests of teenagers, in order to later trigger engagement during the writing phase.

To smooth the path ever more, the main activities in the project were preceded by preparatory activities in which the students got the chance to interact in mixed nationality groups. The first one was a storytelling game which involved the contribution of each member to the common narrative paragraph. Given the first line, the team had to develop a paragraph, each member adding one sentence to the shared text. The second

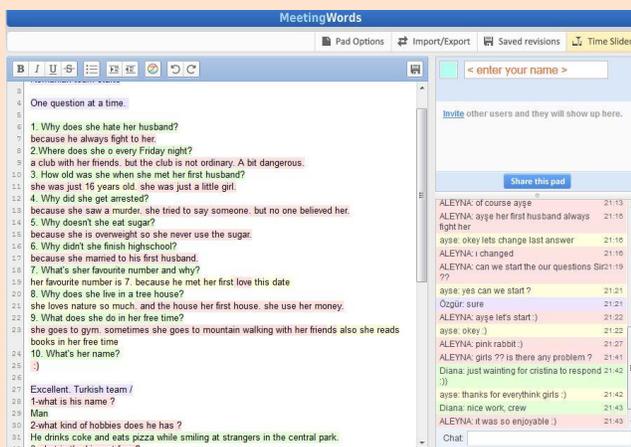
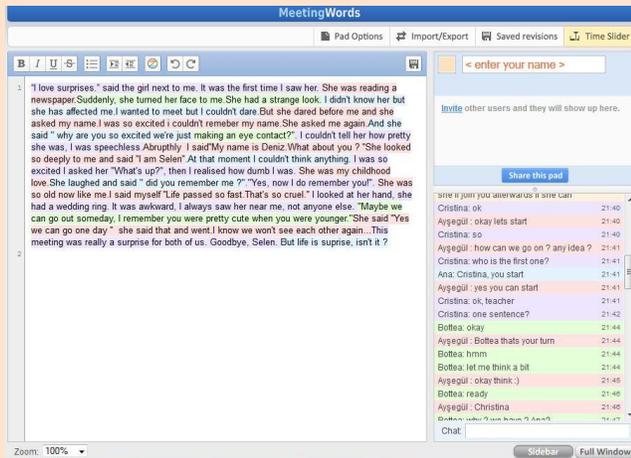
activity focused on building characters for a story, knowing that stories revolve round the lives of characters. In mixed groups of four (2 students from Romania, 2 students from Turkey), students asked their counterparts guiding questions that acted as a red thread in the creation of the profile of their characters.



During the preparatory stage, which fostered collaboration in mixed nationality groups, but also while working in same nationality groups we made use of ICT tools in order to facilitate communication and allow for easy peer-editing and reviewing. We chose MeetingWords, which is a web-based editor with a chat function incorporated, for most of the creative writing work we did inside and outside the classroom. However, teachers can opt for other alternative tools such as Titanpad, Google Docs or justpaste.it depending on their needs. The last one also offers you the possibility of pasting images into the editor or embedding videos or audio files, which can prove to be invaluable in a creative writing



endeavour. What we loved about MeetingWords was the chat feature that enabled students to plan and discuss before, while, after writing and gave us teachers a peek into the dynamics of the writing activity.



Throughout the collaborative creative writing activities, especially in mixed-nationality groups, but not only, students had to interact in English in order to generate ideas, produce, edit and improve the quality of their narrative texts. Along the way, students had to negotiate meaning and structure and to make their writing more comprehensible concentrating on coherence and cohesion rather than mechanics. Another important observation was that more linguistically able students helped their peers by asking questions to clarify the meaning of words and ideas and offered support and guidance. Also, the students made recommendations to their peers regarding books that could make an interesting read, thus stirring their curiosity and whetting their appetite for reading.

As in any project, there are questions that left us teachers pondering. How can we better exploit

visuals in collaborative creative writing activities? How can photography taking techniques positively influence composition writing? How can we pair students to stimulate the creative flow of ideas and promote new language acquisition? The beauty of eTwinning is that we can further explore these topics and experiment by launching yet another thrilling project.

### **The small children and the greatest composers** by Svetla Popova

eTwinning is a wonderful way in which teachers can go to look for new ideas and interesting methods for working with children. These projects provoke us - to think, to be curious, to share our experience. They charge us and inspire. The benefits of implementing eTwinning projects in education are sufficiently proven in time. The effective international cooperation is simultaneously implementing innovative teaching methods, an incentive for self-improvement and professional qualification.

Very important condition for success and mutual benefit is finding a suitable partner. I had the exceptional luck to meet Małgorzata Kalińska from Poland - incredible professional and methodist. We created the "European composers" to exchange ideas on enrichment of compulsory educational content of the subject Music in preschool.



I can talk for hours about the wonderful partnership and friendship with children from Poland and incredible Małgorzata. I will begin with: *Why the project is innovative?* "European Composers" completely changed the standard music lessons in both countries - organization of classrooms, learning content, teaching methods and communication.



1. Learning biographies of composers aren't included in preschools in Europe. We studied the biographies on various interactive ways. 2. Methods of Carl Orff and Batia Strauss are unknown to massive pedagogical practice. We used them as the main educational methods. 3. Activity "Drawing on association" is little known in preschools of Europe. We used it as a way of perceiving the nature of the musical work; illustrate its parts and metric pattern. We made the original individual educational folders; the drawings are located in them. 4. Reading and playing on musical scores - has never been included in the learning process of music in preschools. We created author scores and our children read them. 5. Understanding the note durations and their reproduction in children's music orchestra - absolutely unknown activity for preschoolers throughout Europe. Our children can read and play on scores. 6. We created original educational games-tests, players, puzzles, cube games, test cards.

All project activities were set and implemented in the curriculum.

I invited composer Krasimir Miletkov as a representative of Bulgarian composers to visit one of our classes and personally acquaint us with his music works for children. He arrived from Sofia to Shumen specifically for meeting with us. Our friends from Poland took part and participated via online video conferencing.

#### *How we collaborated?*

1. Małgorzata Kalińska created a project logo. Our parents funded us - we ordered 50 hats and badges with the logo. So we have our own insignia. 2. We created two songs. Song of Małgorzata was chosen by the children almost unanimously for a song-anthem. 3. Bulgaria created a real poster for Carl Orff and sent it by post to Poland. Poland finished it. Poland started real poster for Chopin, send it by post. Bulgaria finished it. We use these posters always in music lessons. The children made folders "European Composers" - with pictures of the composers, nationality and drawing on the associations on their work. We use these folders at the present time also. 4. We arranged exhibitions of the project products in both countries. 5. We celebrated together Grandma Marta. We made martenitsi and dolls with the help of parents and grandparents. We sent parcel in Poland. The children from Poland learned Bulgarian song for Grandmother Marta and decorated the entire kindergarten with martenitsi made of them. It was an amazing experience for children from both countries. 6. We used various free online tools and

platforms to make our project interactive and educational. We created folder "ICT TOOLS". There you will find links to all the tools that we have used - 14 in number and 6 programs to install.



The activities during the project are interesting, useful and innovative for European education. Our general blog <http://bgpl2013.wix.com/composers> is an excellent illustration of European cooperation between teachers, children, parents and University. We rewrote the European educational standards. Anyone who is interested in innovative teaching methods, new educational products and creative unusual ideas can visit our website and contact us. Everything we create is public and can be used around the world, not just in Europe. All music can be downloaded for free. All created interactive biographies are in English and Russian. The book with music scores can also be downloaded and used by anyone. General site navigation is easy and convenient. All materials are on topics and activities. We have created a special place for



parents, we have e-book with their opinion about the project. Every European teacher can benefit from the treasury we have created and use it according to his/her needs - training games, entertainment, creativity, software.

*What is most valuable?*

In the process of project work the kids constantly surprised us with proposals for the study of various composers. It was necessary to cover the need for awareness and so the initial work plan is constantly expanded and updated. We invited students and lecturers from University of Shumen to help us in preparing the music lessons. Prof. A. Atanasova, after one of her visits to kindergarten shared that the children from the project have more high musical skills than children from 1st to 4th grade in school.

Małgorzata and I share common European values and are working professionally to build a common educational space, topic "European Composers" is a constant and an integral part of our compulsory educational programs. In my kindergarten many students come to practice and with undisguised curiosity included in our activities. We won awards for "European Composers" - national and European quality labels, first place at the Annual awards of HRDC and NSS Bulgaria, an award of Union of Bulgarian teachers.

Do not forget something very important: we acquire new knowledge in a fun way, playing together... And last important thing: if you want to be competitive on the educational market, use eTwinning space for professional qualification and for improving personal skills!

Thank you, Małgorzata!

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**Christmas Truce - Best UK eTwinning project 2014-2015**

by Diana Linford

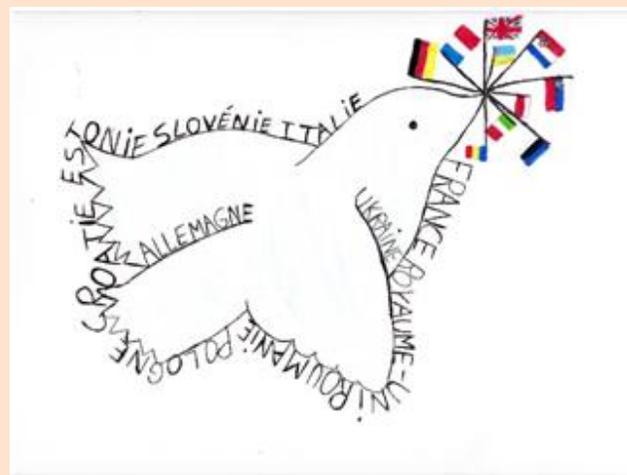
"Christmas Truce" won the UK 'Whole School' Award and the UK eTwinning prize for best project for 2014-2015.

*The project*

The project included schools in 10 countries: Croatia, England, Estonia, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Romania and Ukraine. Many of the project partners had worked on projects together previously. We therefore were able to plan the project together, using Google Docs and a conference Skype call.

The project was linked with the Christmas Truce in 1914 in World War 1. Soldiers are reported to have stopped fighting, to have exchanged gifts and to have sung carols – Silent Night in English and German - at Christmas in 1914.

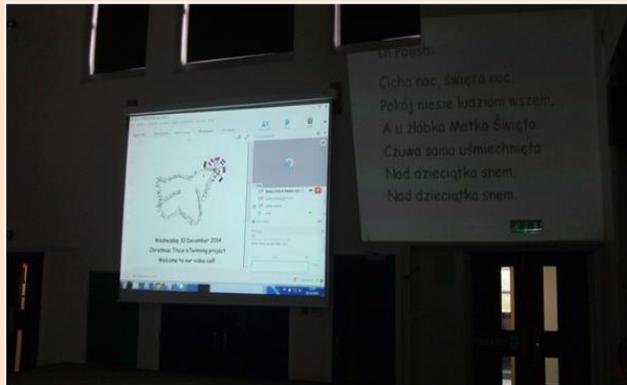
The project started with the pupils designing a logo for the project, and voting for their favourite logo. All the pupils had to consider the themes of the project and were all involved from the very beginning. The winning logo was designed by one of the French pupils.



As a remembrance of the first Christmas Truce, the highlight of our project was a video carol concert on 10 December 2014 when we all sang Silent Night together in the languages of the project, as well as traditional carols from each country. Pupils also told each other of the work they had done in the project. This was a very moving event. John Cooper, headteacher, at Steeton, England, commented: "This is an amazing achievement for

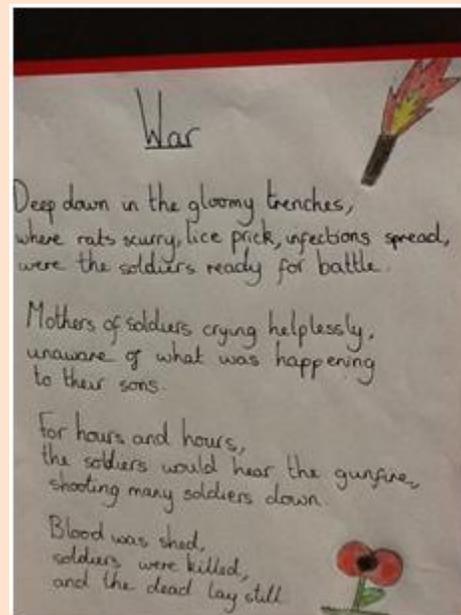


everyone who took part in the project – the international Christmas Assembly was a very moving culmination of the Christmas Truce project; helping all our children focus on the centenary of the First World War.”



To prepare for the carol concert, our pupils made videos of Silent Night in their own language. These were shared on the TwinSpace <http://twinspace.etwinning.net/248/home> so that we could all learn the words in the other languages. During our national 'Ofsted' school inspection in November, we were learning Silent Night in Croatian, which the inspector loved joining in with! Inspectors' comments included: "Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils... have a high level of awareness of global issues."

Pupils also researched events in World War I and this was shared on the TwinSpace (and later in the ebook) so that they could learn from each other.



At Steeton, the whole school visited the village War Memorial and laid wreaths on 11 November to remember those from the village who had died during the war. We contacted the local 'British Legion' and they strongly supported us in this event.



We also exchanged Christmas cards between all the schools in the project – at Steeton we posted these on 11 November, during our visit to the War Memorial. The children loved receiving the handmade cards from all around Europe. We made a display in each classroom of the school. In addition, our partner in Slovenia asked for some additional cards which formed a display in their school to raise money for the repair of the local



lighthouse in Piran. Pictures of this exhibition were shared on the TwinSpace and are in the ebook.



Some pupils also made Christmas cards using Scratch programming. These were shared on the TwinSpace.



Pupils explained on the TwinSpace about Christmas customs in their country. Again, this was planned so that the pupils could learn from each other – and learn about each other's countries. I believe that eTwinning makes this kind of co-operation and peer learning possible and helps to break down barriers and prejudices.



Christmas celebrations in Poland

The project concluded with pupils and teachers reflecting on the project. The pupils loved taking part in the quizzes which were designed to test their learning from the project.



*Pupils at Steeton, England, taking part in one of the project's quizzes*

All the work from the project was collected into an ebook:  
[http://issuu.com/djlinford/docs/ebook\\_christmas\\_truce\\_d9566b9fe580c0?e=15687093/12028554](http://issuu.com/djlinford/docs/ebook_christmas_truce_d9566b9fe580c0?e=15687093/12028554). This includes links to our video files, and to the reports on the project in the media in England, Poland and Ukraine. The UK NSS was allowed access to the project to help with webinars on using the new TwinSpace.

The project was featured on the UK National Support Service (British Council) Schools Online newsletter in a feature called "Peace on Earth" (<http://britishcouncil.cmail2.com/t/ViewEmail/r/AA7E58170B44C9FC2540EF23F30FEDED/B804ED7C121891D6C45D7BC1A387288D>) and in a British Council case study entitled "What does a project look like?" (<http://www.britishcouncil.org/etwinning/what/case-study>).

The project brought the pupils of our schools together, both literally and metaphorically. It was a real privilege to take part in the live carol concert via video call. By exchanging information about World War I, the children gained a much deeper understanding of the history of the war. The exchange of Christmas cards was a further reminder of the Christmas Truce of 1914 when the soldiers exchanged small gifts.



*Colleagues*

I have met and worked with some very special colleagues through eTwinning. I am very sad to report that one of the teachers in the school in Rome, Susanna Serpe, passed away during the project. I met Susanna in Lisbon at an eTwinning conference and she became a very dear colleague; we worked on a number of projects together. Even despite the language difficulties caused by her illness, she tried to follow the project and asked Paola Arduini to report to everyone how she missed the school and eTwinning projects. She was always very supportive and enthusiastic and I will greatly miss her.

We also had some good news: two colleagues in the project had babies this year, and I send them all my very best wishes.

*Future plans*

I hope to work with all my international partners again. Mojka Lavrič, Sophia Voitolovska and I have already worked together on another project ("Keep cool – stay warm"). Steeton and the school in Rome will take part in reciprocal Erasmus+ KA1 job-shadowing visits in 2015-16. We have already held a skype call for our pupils to teach each other some English and Italian. Anna Szczepaniak in Poland, and I at Steeton, have also held a skype call for our pupils to teach each other English and Polish.

The ebook will remain as a lasting archive of the project and we hope it will be used as a reference in the future. Daniela Bunea in Romania is developing a site meant to exploit the ebook starting the school year 2015-2016 (<http://christmastruce19142014.weebly.com/>).

*UK Prize*

The project was awarded the accolade of best UK eTwinning project for 2014-2015 at the UK national conference in June 2015. The assessor's comments included: "...encompasses the whole school team approach, fully collaborative and delivering motivating active-learning actions throughout; immaculately planned, delivered and recorded on the twin space to an extremely high standard; use of innovative technologies to ensure full partner participation and engagement is outstanding, with live joint Carol singing and highly creative cross-curricular activities; genuinely integrated into the school curriculum and those of the partner schools; very imaginative feedback processes employed in this project, evaluations from the students and staff; a classic eTwinning project and the legacy materials generated provide a wonderful resource for others to use; a most impressive and exemplary eTwinning project."



*Finally...*

eTwinning is a wonderful organisation, which has enriched my teaching career and the curriculum for all our pupils. Thank you to all my eTwinning colleagues and to everyone who makes eTwinning such a special organisation!





### **eTwinning in my class**

by *Nathalie Scerri*

I have been conducting eTwinning projects for the past five years, and each year I observe that by the end of the project, my students would have developed in terms of maturity, creativity and independence. Including eTwinning as part of the curriculum enriches the students' motivations and learning skills. It allows for project-based learning, where the student is always at the centre of the activity. This approach engages the students deeper. It encourages students to work together, to share ideas with students in their own class, and with partner students in other countries. Students experience the pros and cons of working in a team, learn how to listen to others' opinions and how to collaborate with each other. They learn how to plan their work, and develop time-management skills. In my case, it enhances a better working relationship between the students and myself too. We spend so many hours, even when not at school, discussing through social media (my students are 14-15 years old) various ideas and possibilities of improving our project, that by the end of the project, I consider the students as my friends. eTwinning induces improved academic performance and a higher quality of work. Why? This is because students are at the centre of it all, they become active learners, and they have fun learning. Learning has a real purpose.

A good example of the above is this year's project entitled "Care2Feed". The name of the project 'Care2Feed' is a description within itself. The project focuses on ways of how each one of us can take care of mother earth to be able to feed a population of nearly 10 billion people in the year 2050.

Apart from working with six foreign partners, I also collaborated with two other school colleagues. The aim was to reach as many students as possible. The three subjects (Art, Biology and ICT) worked together through a thematic approach. The project explored various ways of how each individual can be sustainable for a better future. The areas of focus were: Food, with particular focus on the healthy food, sustainable diets and wastage of food due to overbuying or excess cooking, water which is everyday becoming a scarce resource, sustainable use of land and sea, future food options, importance of the 4Rs and the EXPO message: Feeding the planet, Energy for life. This project was worked in parallel with the 'Together in EXPO' missions and competitions. All partners in this project were actively involved in the EXPO competition, and in fact, I can proudly state that

each country, including Malta, separately won part of the organized EXPO competitions.

I was in charge of the Biology part. Care2Feed project had several Biological moments! My favourite activity in this year's project was the part whereby the students were asked to dream about the ideal Malta in 2050. A group of Biology students researched ways of how they would want Malta to be like in 2050. The Art students sketched their ideas, and the end results were then shared with the ICT students who in turn used Minecraft to project their dream Island. They managed to build a smart island based on all the Biological environmental facts discussed throughout the Biology syllabus. Students actually had fun learning these topics, to the contrary of what usually happens during a traditional lesson.



In conclusion, including eTwinning in my class as part of the learning process has helped students to build their knowledge through a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Learning through a project, as opposed to the regular classroom with text-based focus, brings out the wide range of capabilities students might have. My role was more of an advisor (suggesting which material to focus on), of an observer (observing that each student was giving her share) and of a time-keeper (ensuring that all work was finished on time). The students were relaxed in a rather friendly atmosphere! Through my experience, when students are interested in what they are doing and when they are free to use their areas of strength, they achieve at a higher level. eTwinning allows for such experiences!

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### **ICT and eTwinning projects in vocational and theoretical schools**

by *Eva Toth and Emese Cîmpean*

Any project involving vocational students can be defined as innovative: they are the students who perform the lowest in primary school, they have behavioural problems, they are very demotivated due to all the negative learning experiences of failure in their previous studies. In our international projects we try our best to combine practical and theoretical subjects to make students use their skills in practice. They work in pairs, groups, they have to divide the roles between them and take the responsibility for their creation. Being in a project is something really new to them as vocational students are seldom part of such work and they often have negative experiences about learning. Besides, we want them to use the English language, to collaborate, to get to know applications that can develop their digital competencies, to make them creative thinkers, to help them discover their own values, both personal and professional.

Our projects deal with topics that appeal to both their everyday lives and their future jobs, such as beauty, technology or creating one's own business. The works often include going to companies and interviewing experts (visiting Microsoft Hungary in Budapest or the local beauty centre) so that students can see the links between their learning and the real world and use their communication skills both in their mother tongue and in English. Through our projects, we intended to develop our student's entrepreneurial skills and to prepare them for their future jobs, for life.

Our common projects in the school year 2014-2015 were "Beautylicious" and "Let's get down to e-business".

"Beautylicious" had the following partners:

- ISIS "G. Curcio", Italy;
- Nagykáta Ipari Szakközépiskola és Szakiskola, Hungary;
- 1st TEE-EPAL ASTROUS, Greece;
- Bozüyük Anadolu Öğretmen Lisesi, Turkey;
- Çavdarlı Şehit Er Hüseyin Öğüt Ortaokulu, Turkey;
- COLEGIUL TEHNIC DIMITRIE LEONIDA PETROSANI, Romania;
- „Petru Rareş" National College, Beclean, Romania.

Our project was about beauty - exploring cosmetics, beauty ideals, components of cosmetics,

music about beauty, illnesses related to beauty ideals maybe. Interviewing specialists and setting up some guidelines and finding disbeliefs about beauty. The project's main aim was to combine theory and practice: it not only involved subjects such as English, Chemistry, Anatomy but vocational way, they could see how theory can be used in practice, to work with what they have been learning so far. Students clearly identified goals for the project, worked and then compared the result of their work. This way, they managed to broaden their horizons, since they had a multicultural and intercultural approach. We shared our responsibilities and made the research on the same topic more valuable. The fact that some of the partners have been working on projects before and are willing to continue collaboration is a proof of the great communication and learning environment we managed to create and maintain. We took advantage of various online tools, like polls, quizzes, collaborative documents, to fulfill the needs of our project. The biggest outcome were definitely the two visits outside the school (going to sing Christmas carols and going for an interview at a local medical center - they were made by our Hungarian partner, but we all benefited from their research). Our Italian partners went to other schools to present our project and in particular a power point presentation about tooth care. We visited hair beauty salons and created presentations about and for our project. But the most important part is the common newspaper we were able to realize and all the collaborative work we have done, because it was the result of the whole team's work.



Links to project's sites:

<https://www.pinterest.com/evatoth547727/beautylicious/>, <http://twinspace.etwinning.net/2265/home> and

<https://www.pinterest.com/emese cimpean1/beautylicious/>.



"Let's get down to e-business" partners:

- „Petru Rareș” National College Beclean, Romania;
- Nagykátai Ipari Szakközépiskola és Szakiskola, Nagykáta, Hungary;
- Obchodní akademie a VOŠE Tábor, Tábor, Czech Republic;
- Pentapolis Upper Highschool, Pentapolis Serres, Greece;
- Cihangir Ortaokulu, İstanbul, Turkey.

In the project, students had to found their own companies based on their interests or studies. Once the companies were all up, students divided the roles within the business among themselves and also decided what vacancies they had. Then they had to write their CVs and apply for positions at other companies. Our aim was to make vocational students realise they can use the internet for meaningful learning purposes. Besides we wanted them to use English language, to collaborate, to get to know applications that can develop their digital competencies, to make them creative thinkers, to help them discover their own values, both personal and professional. The project involved many innovative tools: brainstorming (Padlet, linoit), creating videos (Windows Movie Maker), presentations (MS Powerpoint), photo editing softwares (Notegraphy, MS Autocollage, recitethis), cooperation (Google Docs, Symbaloo, Thinglink, Titanpad), Augmented reality (QR codes), videoconference (Skype), mindmap (coggle), evaluation (OneDrive survey), social media (Facebook and Twitter).



The culmination of our project was in a visit to Microsoft Hungary in Budapest to see how a real company works and what they are doing in the field of education. This outing meant a lot to my students and they enjoyed being at a world-famous company where they would have never got to without eTwinning.

The most successful result of the project was giving once again a lot of self-esteem and worth to our

students who were able to see themselves what they are capable of if they believe in themselves. Our project was awarded by Assoclic Romania with four computers (through the IT donations program coordinated by Ateliere Fără Frontiere), which helped us work on the project in the classroom, and which are going to be used by the students for the next year's eTwinning projects.

Also, we decided to continue with simulating companies, therefore, we registered three of them on <http://www.roct.ro/>. Students have learned a lot about how to register a company, how to create a CV, how to apply for a job, how to run a company and so on. And, most of all, they discovered that they are similar to other European students, fighting the same problems, so, they collaborated on finding creative solutions. It would have never happened without eTwinning.

Links to project's sites:

<https://www.pinterest.com/evatoth547727/lets-get-down-to-e-business/>,  
<https://www.pinterest.com/emese cimpean1/lets-get-down-to-e-bussiness/> and  
<http://twinspace.etwinning.net/959/home>.

And here is Eva's third project for the school year 2014-15, in cooperation with another Hungarian teacher, Lívia Margittay from Nyíregyháza:

"Addicted to Technology" - partners:

- ATATÜRK İLKOKULU, KÖPRÜBAŞI/MANİSA, Turkey;
- FATİH SULTAN MEHMET ANADOLU İMAM HATİP LİSESİ, AVCILAR / İSTANBUL, Turkey;
- Nagykátai Ipari Szakközépiskola és Szakiskola, Nagykáta, Hungary;
- Sipkay Barna Kereskedelmi, Vendéglátóipari, Idegenforgalmi Közéiskola, Szakiskola és Kollégium, Nyíregyháza, Hungary;
- ISIS "G. Curcio", Ispica (RG), Italy;
- Heinrich-Hertz Berufskolleg, Düsseldorf, Germany.

Links to project's sites:

<https://www.pinterest.com/evatoth547727/addicted-to-technology/> and  
<http://twinspace.etwinning.net/6844/home>.

In the project we tried to see how much technology affects our everyday lives. We saw not only its bright side, but also the dark side and students were to question their own uses of devices. We also discovered what devices used to exist before modern technology. Students, being specialized in



commerce, also compared prices of devices of different shop lines and countries. They make a wish list of the devices they would like to have, also collect devices used in the past. We also discovered the modern technology slang and music about technology. We closed the project by setting up some guidelines for using technology and a virtual online quest in the world of augmented reality.

The project involved many innovative tools: brainstorming (Padlet, linoit), designing newspapers (Sway), creating videos (Windows Movie Maker, Photopeach), presentations (MS Powerpoint), photo editing softwares (Notegraphy, MS Autocollage, recitethis), cooperation (Google Docs, Symbaloo, Thinglink, Titanpad), Augmented reality (QR codes, Aurasma), videoconference (Skype), mindmap (coggle), evaluation (OneDrive survey), creating PowerPoint games to test each other's knowledge, presentations using Sway, infographics.

We managed to integrate many subjects, like English, English for Special Purposes (selling electronic devices), IT and Training Practice. The project developed many 21st century competences: life and career skills (using your professional knowledge for specific purposes), innovation (being in a project), IT skills (using IT for specific purposes not just Facebook, doing independent research), social awareness (how does technology affect our everyday lives? does it also have dark sides? Discussing very important topics such as cyber bullying and identity theft), responsible decision-making (work in a group and divide the roles, present your findings and teach the others), collaboration (group work, pair work).

In conclusion, eTwinning projects are a great chance for many students all over Europe, and the use of technology facilitates the communication between their schools, helps teachers and students to learn and grow each day – together.

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### **Experiences from the seminar "How to make a good collaborative eTwinning project"**

*by Dalibor Todorović*



"How to make a good collaborative eTwinning project" was a seminar organized by the eTwinning National Support Service of Slovakia in hotel Saffron in Bratislava between 21 and 23 May 2015. The seminar was intended for school teachers from Austria, Germany, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatian, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Albania who work with children aged 12 to 18 years. The aim of the seminar was to establish cooperation with European counterparts and launch European projects using eTwinning portal.

Regarding the fact that Serbia officially joined eTwinning in January 2015, eTwinning National Support Service of Serbia enabled the participation of five teachers from the Republic of Serbia at this seminar and invited interested teachers who work with children aged 12 to 18 years to apply for participation. Interested teachers needed to meet the following basic requirements for the registration:

- work in schools in the Republic of Serbia, with children aged 12 to 18 years;
- are registered at the eTwinning portal;
- have participated in at least one eTwinning project;
- speak good English since the seminar was being organized in the English language.

Besides these basic requirements for choosing participants, the candidates who were the founders of at least one European eTwinning project had the advantage over the other candidates. They also had to submit basic information about their project, how they organized working with children within the project, the way they cooperate with European partners, which items are included into the project, how the project's theme is linked to the curriculum and which TwinSpace portion of the portal and tools were used by the project.



Candidates who met the above requirements and were shortlisted on the basis of the entire application were then interviewed in English. The final decision on the selection of participants from Serbia eTwinning National Support Team Serbia was made on the basis of the entire registration of candidates and the interview. When choosing the participants the geographical representation of schools from different regions of Serbia and types of schools were also taken into account.

The following teachers from Serbia participated: Milica Mladenović, English language teacher at the Legal Business School in Niš, Vesna Prugić Mileusnić, Serbian language teacher from high school "Mihajlo Pupin" in Novi Sad, Aleksandra Danilović, math teacher in primary school "Svetislav Golubović Mitraljeta" in Batajnica, Dejan Zekavičić, English language teacher in elementary school "Milan Blagojević" in Lučani and Dalibor Todorović, teacher of informatics and computer science in elementary school "Sreten Mladenović Mika" in Niš.



The seminar began on May 21st with introductory speeches held by the officials and representatives of National Support Services of Slovakia and Austria. Martin Gradl from the National Support Services of Austria gave a lecture on the synergy between eTwinning and Erasmus + program and introduced the School Education Gateway portal [www.schooleducationgateway.eu](http://www.schooleducationgateway.eu).



After that a workshop for introducing participants was organized. They were divided into seven groups where each group had to identify their experiences, goals and expectations from eTwinning and to present the conclusions of their group. The facilitator of this activity was Lubica Sokolíková from the National Support Services of Slovakia.

On the second day there was a workshop on conflicts and differences. Its aim was to help selecting partners on projects and deal with problems in cooperation and it was held by the lecturer Lenka Práznovská, a clinical psychologist.



The next workshop introduced the Desktop and TwinSpace for new registered users, moderated by Jana Jamříšková from Slovakia.

In the afternoon sessions there was a workshop called "How do you do?". In this workshop participants learned how to implement the selected web 2.0 tools for interaction and exchange, as well as for presentation and creation in order to build a secure, interactive and creative project activities and how to integrate them in various stages of eTwinning projects.

Tools presented for the interaction and exchange were: Socrative, Mentimeter, Kahoot, Answergarden, Stickymoos, Todaysmeet, Tricider, and tools presented for creating and presenting were: *Jig Saw planet*, *Walkie*, *Animoto*, *Audiopal*, *Blabberize*, *BombayTV*, *Fotobabble*, *PictureTrail*, *Present.me*, *QuizIt*, *ThingLink*, *Slidetalk*. The moderator was Bart Verswijvel, from the Belgium National Support Services.

The next workshops was "Be creative, let your mind have fun". In this workshop, participants tested several tools for increasing the level of creativity of students and teachers in the eTwinning projects. These tools can be used in various subjects and support the fun that can be experienced while



learning. The facilitator of this activity was Zuzana Kurillová.



On the third day some examples of good practice of the best eTwinning projects were shown. They were presented by Kornélia Lohyňa from Slovakia, Maria Kurz from Austria and Jasna Mulalič and Marina Svečko from Slovenia.



After that workshop participants got a task - designing eTwinning projects in teams of five teachers. Then came the presentation of ideas, comments and suggestions. Facilitator of this activity was Gabriela Podolanová from National Support Services Slovakia.

The seminar was very successful and all the objectives of the seminar were completely fulfilled. For me it was a very useful experience, especially the workshop on conflict and differences in order to assist in the selection of partners on projects and resolve problems in co-operation led by Lenka Práznovská, a clinical psychologist. In current practice, I had no bad experiences with the project

partners, on the contrary, but this workshop drew my attention to something I had not thought of - that it might not always be so. That is why it is one of my strongest impressions of the seminar and something I'll dedicate greater attention to in the future.

A person who made a very strong impression on me was a charismatic Bart Verswijvel from Belgium National Support Services with his workshop "How do you do?". I particularly enjoyed the opportunity to meet him personally as he was engaged in some parts of courses I have attended within the European Schoolnet Academy.



I also find as very significant the explanations obtained in connection KA1 and KA2 projects Erasmus+ mobility of students and teachers illustrated by examples from the personal experience of participants from Austria.

The conclusion from the last workshop - "The integration of eTwinning projects into the curriculum" and presented examples of good practice - for me is of the most importance and represents the official confirmation that I have correctly understood the essence of eTwinning and that I am on the right way. This method of implementation has proved to be the most effective way of realization of the eTwinning project activities that encouraged me to initiate new projects consistent with the curriculum of my subject.

I decided on several projects for the next school year with colleagues from Slovenia. We proposed themes and activities and already jointly prepared proposals which will start from October 2015. I have already registered one of the agreed projects at this seminar.



My plans for the future are certainly to continue improving my eTwinning projects, to follow eTwinning webinars and Learning events, to promote and disseminate eTwinning in schools in the region and on social networks. I'll certainly pay special attention to pedagogical aspects of TwinSpace and to the greater involvement of students in direct communication with pupils from the partner schools, which is proved to be the most impressive segment of the projects in practice for them.



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### Teaching English through creative story writing

by Loredana Popa

We all know that nowadays children would rather spend time online than read or write, which makes it that much harder for English teachers, like myself. Students no longer feel motivated to read a short story, to write a few paragraphs and the reason why had eluded me for a while... but when it did reveal itself, it was like a friendly slap on the back of my head. Now, would you write something if you knew the only feedback you were going to get would come from your teacher and your peers? Would you read a story just when you are not invested in it? No, you would not.

So, there it was one day, at the beginning of October 2015... an invitation to an eTwinning project called "Let's write a story". After discussing the idea with all my 6<sup>th</sup> graders, that is 3 entire classes, we decided to take a leap of faith and try it out. We would work during the classes, after school, from home and put all our talent to the test. Each school would send one list of 20 words monthly, 10 nouns, 5 verbs and 5 adjectives and all the other schools would write and illustrate stories with as many lists as possible and post them online. The best part was that the lists we would send our partners contained words the students had come across in class or outside it during that month.

And so it began... a project that would alter our take on reading comprehension, writing and teamwork. 23 schools from Poland, Czech Republic, Greece, Georgia, Spain, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Italy, UK, Latvia, Romania, Ukraine, Netherlands and the Republic of Moldova got to know each other first by means of videos and pictures. Next, each school created the teams that would work together on the stories. Each team had between 4 and 8 students. Finding the ideal team configuration was a hard one to crack.

We all have those students who prefer not to get involved but get credit, and those who do all the work so their team wins, those who like bossing people around and those who would love to work but lack the confidence. No matter how you create the teams there will always be complaints. So, we had to change the teams as we went along. First, I let my students pick their own teams, made sure they all understood that each one had a specific role in the team, according to his/her strengths. I also asked them to write a sentence or two on what every member of the team did and give that to me together with the story at the end of the month.



As expected, some did, some didn't, some finished their stories, others were struggling. It was time for an intervention and an honest discussion on what worked and what didn't. The main problem was getting everyone involved, invested, trusting everyone to be their best. There was no room for egos, they had to push everyone just as hard and praise everyone the same.

It was time to get them out of their comfort zone, so we changed teams. We put all the names in one hat and did it the old fashioned way. The first response was: "I don't want to work with X, he/she does nothing or he/she is good for nothing, barely knows any English". That stung since I thought all my students were above that. But I explained that there were simple tasks that could be assigned to those whose level of English was low, tasks such as translating the lists into Romanian, or illustrating the story, keeping tabs on what the team members do, documenting the work with photos. And then of course, everyone has ideas, everyone is creative and incredibly good at making up stories, so brainstorming became part of their routine. Every time they would present a story I would add more questions to it and sometimes the new elements they added to their story as a response to my questions were absolutely stunning.

But how do you make this kind of a project work in class? Well, first of all, you can't do it during every class, but once a week, for about 25-30 minutes they could move the desks, take out their phones, use my laptop, their tablets (just 2-3 but still enough) and get creative, inventing a world of their own. It was never quiet, dull, they were on their chairs, on the floor, at the window, in the adjacent room (our Comenius room) using the computer. Sometimes, they would mingle and borrow gadgets from another team or negotiate who uses the laptop. It was a matter of trust. Trusting them and empowering them. I trusted that they were working on the stories and not playing games, although sometimes that happened too, mostly when they had run out of ideas. I never nagged, threatened or took their devices away, because they were doing a bit of teambuilding, learning from each other, exchanging ideas, getting to know each other better. That is vital in a team and sometimes a team that is really in sync can achieve more than any hardworking team could. Playing and working go together.

Soon, we began reading other stories in class. Our English book is not appealing or modern, so we gave it up completely. Instead, we read our partners' stories, sent our feedback, enjoyed their

feedback, revised grammar by correcting mistakes we found in the stories, revised vocabulary by creating new lists. Slowly, they gave up Google translate, writing the stories in Romanian first and started thinking in English. It was a joy and the most amazing part was that they were aware of their improvement.

Since children like to improvise and assert their creativity as much as they can, the next episode will probably not surprise you. During one of the classes, a group of students decided to be reporters and interview the teams while they were working on their stories. One student was the reporter, one was the camera man, one was holding an improvised prompter just in case and the teacher was following them around in disbelief. The first time they did this, there was a lot of laughter, many students refused to talk, others barely said a few words. But we all shared a good laugh when we saw the footage. And they were all extremely proud when the partner schools praised them for their courage. A few weeks later, we did it again, this time with two different teams of reporters, one interviewing the teams and one evaluating the progress and the project by asking their colleagues several questions. This time around, more students talked, some even volunteered to answer questions, corrected themselves as they spoke in front of the camera and smiled realising how fluent they had become.

But that was not all. At the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, they were supposed to have a national evaluation of sorts, which would assess their reading comprehension skills as well as their writing skills. So, it goes without saying, we used all the stories our partners had written to practice. Some were really short and simple, others more complex and with lots of new vocabulary. There was something for everyone and that gave them confidence. They enjoyed offering feedback to real people in real time, knowing those people would read their stories as well and send some impressions and thoughts. And that kept them motivated. We created ebooks for each month and a website where they could comment and read all the stories, as well as see what their peers thought of their 'creations' (<http://letswriteastory.strikingly.com>).





Making it to the national phase of the competition for final products of European projects, Made for Europe, in 2015 and getting in 2<sup>nd</sup> place was a recognition of their dedication, creativity and imagination.

If you want to see our videos, the tutorials to the web tools some schools used for publishing their stories, or our interviews, you can check our TwinSpace page called "Videos – tutorials and students' videos", available here: <http://bit.ly/1fyavXa>.

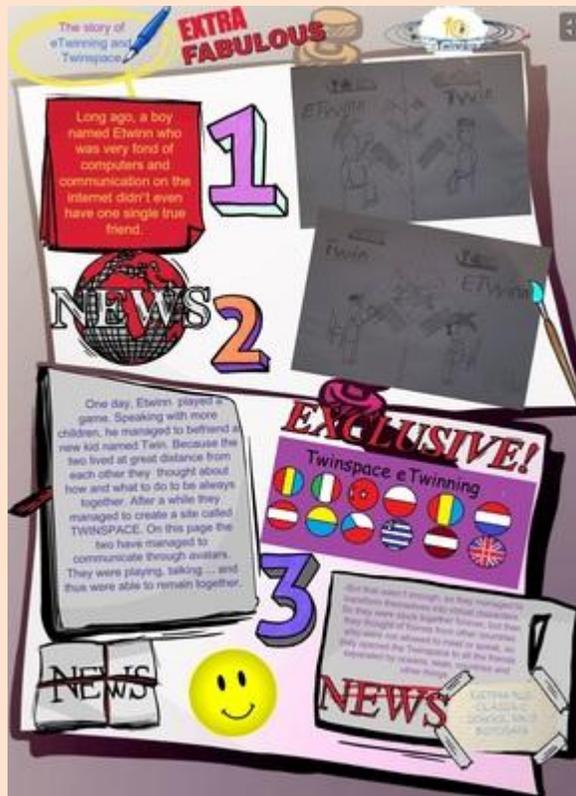
This was the story of our project, which put a new spin on learning a foreign language through writing stories, all thanks to eTwinning, which for us has come to be a way of life.



Speaking of which, some of the students even made up stories about how eTwinning came to be. You can check them out by accessing these links: <http://bit.ly/1fyeO4O>, <http://bit.ly/1D0B6qQ> or scanning the two QR codes below:



And just to give you a taste of how this project made use of students' imagination, here is the glog on the origins of eTwinning – Glogster is a Web 2.0 tool that allows users to create virtual posters combining text, audio, video, images, and hyperlinks and to share them with others electronically; it is a cloud-based platform for presentation and interactive learning; a teacher can create Glogster accounts for all her or his students in a class:



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**Show, share, spread: 3 keywords for a successful eTwinning project**  
by Veronique Sarrere

On Friday June the 12th 2015, Jean Giono's students of the European section really wanted to share the results of the two-year Comenius/eTwinning project which is entitled VIOLA (Values In Our Lives Always) with their parents first but also with the local authorities among them the Mayor of le Beausset and his collaborator as well as the teachers who were involved in the project. So, they invited all of them to an open evening at J Giono Secondary School in le Beausset.

They did everything they could to make sure this evening was a complete success for everyone and so they fully ensured the performance from the beginning to the end.

On stage, in turn, they started with presenting videos that showed pictures of the different countries they were hosted in such as Austria, Denmark, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, the Czech Republic and they added France since they also hosted partners last May. Their comments were



enthusiastic and relevant of what they experienced over the 2 years of the project.

The second part of the evening was devoted to an Augmented Reality exhibition with QR codes. Such an event was made possible thanks to a partnership with the Canope network which provided students with tablets and a Wifi system. Thus, the visitors had the opportunity to see all the students' activities on line, have a look at the TwinSpace... be active and share.

The whole project included sharing values and partner teachers had to adapt their teaching to the British model, a values-based education which was already implemented in the UK school but which was totally new for the others.



In France, teachers had to find solutions to implement their subjects: French, English, Spanish, History, Music, Art, Physical Education and Documentary Research in the school-curriculum. They chose to embed them in particular parts of the curriculum whereas in UK schools they had them taught and reinforced in any lesson.

Moreover, the diversity of the students' backgrounds: private school in Vienna, laic school in France and in the Czech Republic, Catholic schools in Italy and Spain, school for refugee children in Denmark meant that students showed different approaches to the project. They created many resources developed between themselves using a wide range of ICT tools.

They started from scratch and they ended with a Manifesto of Values which was formulated so that

young people not only in Europe but all over the world could truly aspire to having Values in Our Lives Always. This Manifesto could be signed on line by the visitors via the created website in our exhibition space.

In order to disseminate our project, we wrote articles for the local newspaper (Var Matin and La Provence) and we used social media such as Facebook and Tweeter to share our work and the website of our school to keep the parents informed, as well as the website of the DAREIC of the Rectorat of Nice.

Our exhibition has been seen by all the pupils of year 7 and year 10 of our school. Exhibiting values that are important within modern society in order to behave as good citizens revealed very positive and so we hope to open a «route for a new citizen» next year at Jean Giono Secondary school.

Such successful projects also result from the quality of the Learning Events I followed during this school year (LE Augmented eTwinning Reality and Integrating eTwinning into the curriculum), which allow us to provide our students with challenging tools and new ideas.

Such inspiring examples!

In short, this exhibition was a big moment of life-affirming and sharing for everyone and to share a meaningful verb in the eTwinning action.

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More information on **eTwinning, the EU Programme for schools** is available on the Internet: [www.etwinning.net](http://www.etwinning.net)

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