

S.OU.L - Europe shapes our lives

Separation movements such as Brexit and the rise of nationalist ideas have made it more important than ever before to BRING the EUROPEAN IDEAS and VALUES CLOSER to the YOUNG GENERATION. In our project we will help the young people to DISCOVER their EUROPEAN SOUL. This includes information about the EUROPEAN UNION, its institutions, laws, political decisions and challenges. It also means finding out about our common EUROPEAN CULTURAL and HISTORICAL HERITAGE and also EUROPE'S DIVERSITY. The main focus of the project will be on five topics (work & migration, sustainability, studying & travelling, participation and culture & European values) that serve to show how the EU is present in our everyday lives.

The project aims to teach a comprehensive BASIC KNOWLEDGE about EUROPE (its common heritage and its diversity) and the EU (its institutions, principles and political decisions). We want our students to discover their INTEREST in EUROPE. They will find out how our everyday lives are shaped by Europe but also how we can shape Europe as ACTIVE EUROPEAN CITIZENS. The project also supports the school community in ACTIVELY LIVING and SHAPING EUROPE.

Another aim of our project is to strengthen our students' LANGUAGE COMPETENCE and computer skills. Other transversal skills such as communication techniques, the ability to work in teams, critical thinking or intrapersonal skills such as enthusiasm, perseverance and self-discipline that cannot be obtained through formal education will also be supported by the project.

The project will involve students at the upper secondary school level, ages 15-18 from five partner schools. We plan to organise 11 transnational learning activities and one teachers' training course in different countries during the two-year project. 12 students and two teachers from each country will participate in these each year. All participating schools will visit two other countries and will receive students from the two others during the two years, so that at the end of the project they will have worked with all the European partner schools. After the first year the teachers involved in the project and two students from each country will travel to Brussels together for a hands on experience of the EU in action. In the time between the learning activities the student groups will meet on a regular basis to prepare the transnational meetings, develop and fill in questionnaires and acquire the theoretical basis for a successful work with the international partners.

The transnational learning activities in the other European countries are essential for both the students and the teachers to learn how to communicate and work in mixed teams with other students from different cultural backgrounds and practise their foreign language skills. The project will raise awareness of the European dimension in the different schools as it involves five distinctly different countries (four of the schools are currently working on an Erasmus+ project together, the fifth school from Slovakia is also experienced in Erasmus+ projects but new to our team).

During each mobility the students will work in bilateral teams on one of the five topics. Experts will be invited and excursions eg. to sustainable shops or culture cafés will be made. In mixed teams the students will develop their language and communicative skills and they will have a hands on experience of the similarities and differences in Europe. The results of the first year (texts, maps, diagrams and pictures etc.) will be shared on TwinSpace and thus made available to all the other partners. The aim of the first year is to create posters

for exhibitions in all our schools showing the results of all mobilities to the school communities. Our visit to Brussels after the first year will also be documented and added to the exhibition and published on our schools' hompages and in the local press.

In the second year the students will use the material produced in the first year to acquire the necessary theoretical knowledge about Europe. Their aim is to produce the outline for an event (party, European café, European food week, formal discussions, tourist fair etc.). During the mobilities they will try out a 'smaller version' of their idea. After the mobilities each school has to choose at least one of the events produced by the bilateral teams and carry it out.

As a long-term effect of the project we will help Europe get the attention it needs. Our school communities will be aware of the ideas, principles and challenges of the EU and we will know how Europe shapes our lives and what we can do to shape Europe. The students and teachers involved in the project will have acquired knowledge, skills and competences that can help them become more active European citizens. As all the results will be published on TwinSpace they can be used again in the future to add a European dimension to our school lives.