



**COMM-EDU:
COMMUNITY
AGREEMENTS
FOR EDUCATION**



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2021-2-IT02-KA210-SCH-000048370
PRELIMINARY RESEARCH ON EDUCATION TO ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP
THROUGH THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE EDUCATING COMMUNITY**



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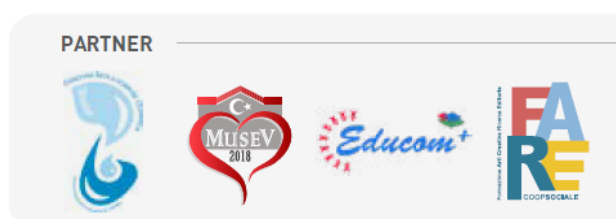
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The **general objective of Comm-Edu** is to promote an innovative approach to school and extracurricular educational offerings on the subject of active and European citizenship, in order to combat educational poverty and early school leaving, based on the creation of educational communities at the local level involving public-private partnerships and the most relevant stakeholders.

Specific objectives:

- Analyze the needs and good practices at the European level on education for active citizenship through the involvement of the educating community (global approach)
- Promote the development of learning communities at the local level, laying the foundations for the creation of a replicable model;
- Elaborate a template, valid for several European countries, for the establishment of learning communities at the local level;
- Promote awareness of the project's themes among local communities and the involvement and participation of students within the educating communities.

Project results

- Tools to reach and engage the local community;
- Template "Community agreement", for the development of a "community contract" between public, private, educational, and third-sector entities through which to establish communities of practice at the base of the model of educational offer dedicated to young people in the area.
- Creation of educating communities at the local level in the 4 partner countries;
- Establishment of dialogue between students, teachers, school leaders; local community representatives, parents, and potential stakeholders;
- Improvement of the educational offer dedicated to students on the theme of active and European citizenship;

Creation of links between different European realities in the field of school education.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

What were we investigating? The definition of the Global Approach to education

According to the European Commission document "School policy - A comprehensive and integrated approach for schools in the fight against early school leaving", school policies should be based on a comprehensive and inclusive vision of education based on the centrality of the student, in which high-quality education is accessible to all. To this end, it is essential to take a comprehensive and integrated approach.

The dimension of integration, defined as the **global approach**, is nourished by knowledge and skills from different fields and is achieved through collaboration between professionals working in different fields. It is therefore a complex dimension that implies a precise and relevant training of operators, preparatory to the creation of communities of practice able to promote shared planning among the different actors of the system.

This approach implies a cross-sectoral vision and closer cooperation with a wide range of stakeholders (cultural bodies, youth services, local authorities, third sector, companies, etc.) and with the community at large. The concept of the "global approach" allows for the embracement of the full range of stakeholders involved and their relationships with each other, recognizing that each stakeholder has a role to play in supporting pupils' educational journey and enriching their learning experience.

In this context, we also find the concept of the **"Educational Community Pact"**, included by the Italian Ministry of Education in the School Plan 2020-21, which aims to stimulate the realization of projects, innovative cultural and creative activities that leverage collective action and civic collaboration and collective action and civic collaboration and experiment with **forms of public-community partnership**.

The challenge of the project is to adopt, at the local level, a "global approach" strategy for school-based civic initiatives. This implies the structuring of common strategies between schools, associations, and public authorities, aimed at the co-design of educational pathways, which have already shown excellent results in

cases where they have been implemented, but which from "good practices" should become usual practices.

Objectives of the Comm-Edu preliminary research

The objective of the Comm-edu Preliminary research is to analyze the needs and best practices at European level on education for active citizenship through the involvement of the educational community (so-called global approach).

The aim of the research is reaching a better understanding of the state-of-the art of the existing good practices on active citizenship education through the involvement of the local community and the ideas, experiences, expectations of students, teachers and local stakeholders in the definition of community-based educational paths for citizenship education.

By carrying out these Focus Groups, the project can better understand the broader issues of citizenship education and community involvement in the education of young generations. Doing so, the desk research will help understand the actual tools, curricula and methods that are currently guaranteeing the development of community agreements between local stakeholders and schools, the eventual gaps in the connection with schools and local community for the promotion of citizenship education and the needs for every specific country.

3 main results are therefore expected:

1. identify and describe, in a comprehensive manner, the existing good practices on citizenship education through the involvement of the local community
2. identify key and innovative competences for citizenship education
3. identify ways to integrate citizenship education into the relevant education systems

We implemented **2 Focus Groups (FG)** that was carried out in each country:

- **n. 1 FG was to be carried out with at least 5 participants** (exponents of the community of reference, experts in the field of education/training) aimed at investigating the characteristics, potential, limits of the "global approach" methodology.
- **n. 2 FG was to be carried out with at least 10 students (aged 6-18)/teachers** from schools, in order to promote the participation of students and teachers.

Research report, containing the results of the national focus groups, which lead us to the emergence of needs and best practices that have emerged at European level

Preliminary analysis completed with the combination of each national reports designed in the partner countries.

Executive Summary – FARE (ITA)

FOCUS GROUP IMPLEMENTATION with the Stakeholders

For the focus group dedicated to stakeholders, it was decided to work with a group of local actors who belong to the community of Bettona, a population of 4,300 inhabitants, 10 km from Assisi, in Umbria (Central Italy). This community represents a significant sample from a demographic, social and cultural point of view with respect to the reference territory and has expressed its interest in participating in the project in order to finalize objectives and actions for the adoption of Community Educational Pacts and the creation of an Institutional Coordination Table.

Participants in the focus group: 2 councilors of the Municipality of Bettona (education and social services), 2 representatives of sports associations (football and biking), 1 representative of the school's parents' association, 1 representative of the parish oratory. In total, 6 stakeholders participated in the survey. The head teacher of the reference school did not participate as the meeting was held during a summer vacation. However, she gave her willingness to participate in the project as a stakeholder.

It was decided to organize the meeting in a familiar context for the community, the municipal library and to submit the questionnaire in the form of dialogue / discussion on the topics indicated. The facilitator acted as secretary by taking minutes, transcribing the responses and interventions of the participants.

Participants shared their point of view based on the area of origin and the activity through which they come into contact with young people.

There is a strong sense of responsibility towards the new generations and the need to respond to their personal and social education and training needs. There is widespread concern about the long-term impact of the pandemic and efforts are being made to understand how to bring young people back to sociability and active participation not only in view of community progress, but also as a support network for emerging hardships.

Currently, each of these actors is committed to carrying out within their own organization actions useful for the promotion of active and European citizenship among young people: mainly they act indirectly, creating an atmosphere and informal learning environments in which the founding values of the Italian and European constitution are absorbed by the children spontaneously, without explicit references.

All participants manifest the need to promote systemic actions, which go beyond the commitment of the individual organization, to define shared objectives within the community and work together to achieve these objectives, first of all, to give voice to the wishes and needs of children and young people, to understand with

them and from them how to give support in their growth process as individuals and as citizens.

The school is very committed to the topic of active citizenship, participates as leader and partner in various Erasmus and eTwinning projects, carries out innovative and interesting activities that promote active citizenship of children; however this school only refers to a target 3-12. There is no high school in this community, so the teenagers have to go to other cities to study for ages 13 and up. This means losing direct contact with them and their families. For this reason it becomes a priority for this community to implement coordination actions of all stakeholders and to work on tools and methodologies capable of activating the protagonism in young people aimed at active citizenship. The European dimension, which is difficult to perceive effectively in contexts, such as this one, of internal rural areas, can be further supported by the creation of twinning and exchanges of good practices with European cities.

FOCUS GROUP IMPLEMENTATION with the students and teachers

The children who participated in the focus group were identified through a call promoted within the school and the parish oratory. The sample of 8 students was therefore constructed to have a fair representation between kids attending middle school and teenagers attending high school. The sample is also representative of different levels of skills, some particularly high, while others even at risk of dropping out of school. Equal distribution was also considered in terms of gender.

Teachers who have been working in the territory of the Municipality of Bettona for several years have been involved and have more in-depth knowledge not only of school dynamics but also of the local community.

The two groups were invited separately, in order to put students at ease and avoid the "school interrogation" effect. For this reason, an informal and familiar environment was chosen such as the public gardens next to the stadium, where they usually go out and meet in summer. While an online meeting was held for the teachers, as it took place during the summer period and some of them were on vacation.

During the meeting with the students, a progressive dynamic was noted: at the initial disorientation and difficulty in giving answers, a dynamic and participatory atmosphere was gradually created thanks to which the students were able to express their opinion and only in some cases, they failed to give answers.

A perception of distance from the concept of active and European citizenship emerges in both students and teachers. It is a terminology far from their daily life. However, if stimulated to seek their meaning in their social and community dimensions, significant responses emerge and restore the community value of feeling active citizens.

They report a desire to systematically experience this active citizenship, to be helped and supported because they feel unable to take on small and large responsibilities. This difficulty is also witnessed by the teachers who note that in the transition from the planning to the implementation phases, the students lack

the leverage necessary to determine concrete action and an assumption of responsibility.

They all agree in recognizing themselves as European citizens and would like to better understand how and to what extent Europe is present in their everyday life, as well as believing that greater opportunities for meeting and exchanging, even online, if not traveling, could offer them significant opportunities for growth and awareness.

Good Practice in Active and EU citizenship – GP1	
<i>Institution implementing/coordinating the project:</i>	Farm Cultural Park
<i>Venue (s)</i>	Favara (Sicily, Italy)
<i>Partner(s):</i>	Local authorities, schools and communities
Website/ SM channels /resources or link for more info about the initiative: https://www.sou-schools.com/ https://www.procida2022.com/restart-from-the-future	
Overview of Activity	
<i>Title of the initiative/project:</i>	SOU School of Architecture for Children
Connection to the concept of the Comm-Edu project	
<p>SOU's Mission: TRAINING BETTER CITIZENS</p> <p>SOU, a project by Farm Cultural Park, is the first School of Architecture for children in Italy, the second in the world. It specializes in after-school educational activities, related to urban planning, architecture and the environment, community building, but also art, design, urban agriculture and food education.</p> <p>The mission of the School is not only to stimulate reflection, planning and action for the improvement of society but also the promotion and education of values of hospitality, participation, tolerance and solidarity, generosity and social commitment.</p>	
Target audience/ beneficiaries	
SOU is an after-school workshop activity dedicated to architecture and active citizenship for girls and boys aged 7 to 12.	
Age Level	7-12
Duration	The academic year
Good Practices to carry out with the Comm-Edu project	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To convey and stimulate the active citizenship of children and young people through the arts, creativity, inclusive and divergent thinking, the contamination of ideas; 2. Raising children and young people in an environment designed to improve their qualities and passions; 3. Involving professionals and children together in regeneration processes. 	

Good Practice in Active and EU citizenship – GP2

<i>Institution implementing/coordinating the project:</i>	UNICEF
<i>Venue (s)</i>	Worldwide
<i>Partner(s):</i>	Municipal governments, schools and communities
Website/ SM channels /resources or link for more info about the initiative: https://childfriendlycities.org/ https://childfriendlycities.org/strategies-child-and-youth-participation/	
Overview of Activity	
<i>Title of the initiative/project:</i>	The Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI)
Connection to the concept of the Comm-Edu project	
<p>The Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI) is a UNICEF-led initiative that supports municipal governments in realizing the rights of children at the local level using the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as its foundation.</p> <p>It is also a network that brings together government and other stakeholders such as civil society organizations, the private sector, academia, media and, importantly, children themselves who wish to make their cities and communities more child-friendly.</p> <p>In September 2015, world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Goal 11 of the Agenda specifically calls for making cities and human settlements safe, resilient and sustainable. This is the strongest expression yet by the international development community of the critical role cities play in our future. Building a child-friendly city can help local governments and other stakeholders fulfil the 2030 Agenda.</p>	
Target audience/ beneficiaries	
Children and Teenagers	
Age Level	0-18
Duration	The accreditation process takes about 3 years
Good Practices to carry out with the Comm-Edu project	
<p>Collecting Data & Monitoring Progress Assessing the situation of children, setting objectives and monitoring and evaluating progress as well as reporting on it. Independent accountability, including with children.</p> <p>Advocacy & Awareness-Raising Advocacy and awareness-raising of child rights throughout government and society, including independent advocacy for children.</p>	

[Child-Friendly Laws & Policies](#)

Enacting child-friendly laws and policies. Assessing the impact of these on children.

[City-Wide Strategic Plan](#)

Developing a city-wide strategic action plan with clear budget allocation and accountabilities for implementation.

[Budget Allocation](#)

Ensuring children get their fair share of resources.

[Child/Youth Participation](#)

Informing and involving children and youth and respecting their views and experiences; recognizing children and youth as partners and as individual human beings, rights-holders and equal, active citizens.

[Coordination & Partnerships](#)

Cross-sectoral coordination, leadership and strategic partnerships to maximize the impact of child-friendly policies and programmes.

Executive Summary - Educom+ (GREECE)

FOCUS GROUP IMPLEMENTATION with the Stakeholders

The Stakeholders that were chosen to participate in the survey are: one school principal, one language school owner, the president of the beekeepers' club of Karditsa, the president of a climbing sports club and the mayor of Lake Plastiras municipality. Our aim was to have people who share different profiles and serve different sectors but are connected to civic life and work with students and youths towards active citizenship.

With regard to the methods stakeholders already use in the field of promoting active citizenship among students, the most commonly used are:

- Online, group activities, discussion and brainstorming
- Targeted visits
- Projects
- Updatings through posters and social media
- Exchange of letters/cards/creative videos with learners of others schools in Greece and abroad
- participation in global learning contests
- training in First Aid toolkit
- competitions on local, European or even global topics like climate change, the pandemic, peace, etc.
- debates and panel discussions
- competitions
- art exhibitions

All Stakeholders answered that it is important to raise students' awareness on active citizenship as it is through this that they will become aware of local and global issues, they will develop essential life skills, and most importantly, they will be able to create the foundations for a different society of justice and equal opportunities.

All Stakeholders stated that they already try to support students' education on active citizenship. They organize raise-awareness activities, they adopt educational programmes (aimed at equity and social justice) where they encourage students to participate, they collaborate with organizations that support human rights and create educational activities, they cultivate students' political and environmental literacy through their involvement in nature summer schools etc.

As to the good practices already implemented by stakeholders of the local community with the educational institutions of the area, it is reported that there is cooperation between schools and local NGOs and other organizations such as the beekeepers' club, sports clubs, environmental clubs, etc. Among the actions that are undertaken, there are reading clubs through which active citizenship activities are encouraged, forest school activities, orienteering activities, charity work etc.

The Stakeholders seem to be aware of the term "Community agreements" but they stated that more information should be provided to them. Moreover, they answered that they firmly believe in cooperation among schools and the local community.

Finally, Stakeholders proposed interesting good practices that could promote active citizenship in the local community. Volunteerism seems to be the most popular suggestion, participation of students in afternoon voluntary groups where

they can work on topics such as local ecology, environmental protection, animal rights etc. Another interesting practice is their participation in newspapers, journals, podcasts, videos etc., on raising awareness with regards to local problems. Live streaming of the City Council meetings is also proposed together with the establishment of “active citizen” days in each municipality with speeches, workshops and thematic panels.

FOCUS GROUP IMPLEMENTATION with the students and teachers

Students who participated in this research are between 13-18 years old and attend public secondary schools in the area of Karditsa, central Greece. They filled in the questionnaire electronically, but there had been previous informative sessions with them in order to explain what they had to do, provide information about the project and clarify the term active citizenship.

Teachers who participated in this research have more than 20 years of experience in education and teaching. They work in secondary schools in the area of Karditsa and they teach various subjects. There was an informative session with them prior to the completion of the questionnaire where they were informed about the project and had a discussion on active citizenship in school education.

All participants provided wonderful definitions on what active citizenship really is. Some of the keywords that reflect the essence of their answers is that active citizenship is:

- equal participation in civic life
- empathy and respect for our fellow man and the world in which we live
- being informed about public issues, rights/obligations, defense of common goals
- the quality of being a citizen
- active participation in political and social opinion-forming or decision-making structures

According to the answers given by both students and teachers, active citizenship is important for the development of local communities as it gives the opportunity to their citizens and residents to grow and develop. It is also important, because citizens defend common goals (e.g. Environmental Protection, consumer rights, Education and training, etc.) in the local communities they belong and it helps connect others and build a better society.

Both students and teachers answered that active citizenship is not sufficiently taught in the Greek schools. There is a course on social and political education in the official curriculum taught in junior high schools but this is not enough. They also stated that the methodology used in teaching about civil issues should be changed and become more student-centered. Students' critical and creative thinking should be strengthened through democratic dialogue and dialectic in the classroom, so that students interact as members of a multicultural society and participate in political events.

Students answered that they face many challenges when trying to get familiar with active and European citizenship. For a start, lack of time and the fact that it is quite a complex concept make it difficult to learn more about it. Poor funding and ignorance politicians show towards the importance of local events is another

challenge, together with insufficient information, the indifference of teachers and the attitudes of other children.

Teachers answered that they also face challenges when teaching about active and European citizenship. The demanding curriculum and the pressing course material does not leave time for teaching concepts such as civic engagement and set up activities to support it. Teachers feel that they are not given time and space for meaningful initiatives and competitiveness and lack of teamwork in the Greek schools make it difficult for active citizenship to grow. What is also important is that the dimension of European citizenship has been undermined in recent years due to the covid -19 pandemic which did not give the chance to people to travel and strengthen their European identity.

Students feel that they need further motivation in order to engage more in active and European citizenship activities. They say that it would be nice if schools held more events regarding things that contribute to active citizenship, such as clean-up campaigns, charity events and so on. The possibility to have contact with students from abroad would be motivating as well together with team work on projects and initiatives in the field of active and European citizenship.

Teachers reported that they would use a number of strategies in order to motivate students to learn more about active citizenship. These strategies include:

- the CLIL method as well as the creation of school networks through Erasmus+ programs
- ICT tools, videos, experiential teaching
- experiential learning through actions
- dramatizations and theatrical activities for the cultivation of empathy
- creative writing
- digital storytelling
- educational games
- strengthening of free expression and action

Students stated that they need support in order to implement active and European citizenship in their local communities. Indicatively, they answered that they need financial and organizational support from the Municipality, they need local libraries to help print posters and with the help of youth clubs inform their members and other citizens. Summarizing their answers, it could be written that help from the municipality and the state seem to lie in the heart of what students need.

Regarding the strengthening of Active and European citizenship education, teachers came up with some very interesting answers regarding the support they need. They believe that hosting students and teachers from foreign countries may remain the shortest and most experiential way in the direction of cultivating active and European citizenship. Financial and practical support from associations and organizations in terms of exchanges and implementation of related actions as well as the organization of participatory events on world events, anniversaries, celebrations, actions contribute to the informal experiential teaching of Citizenship. They also believe that the local community could strengthen the dimension of Active and European Citizenship in education through the active and interactive participation of its members in school events, in presentations of students' works and creations, in dissemination days of relevant European programs, etc.

Good Practice in Active and EU citizenship – GP1	
Institution implementing/coordinating the project:	SALTO YOUTH NET
Venue (s)	Online
Partner(s):	
Website/ SM channels /resources or link for more info about the initiative:	
https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/see/activities/active-european-citizenship-and-identity/citizenship-europe/	
Overview of Activity	
Title of the initiative/project:	“Young people's citizenship and Europe”
Connection to the concept of the Comm-Edu project	
<p>The course provides new insights on the topic of active and European citizenship as well as possibilities to explore ways to address them with young people. The course is consisted of animated videos, interactive inputs, practical tasks and inspiring webinars. In relation to the Comm - Edu project, it could act like a repository of resources that teachers and youth workers can use in order to teach students and young people about active citizenship.</p>	
Target audience/ beneficiaries	
<p>-Mainly lower and upper secondary students</p> <p>-young people in the community</p>	
Age Level	13-25
Duration	The course is structured in six modules, which will be opened gradually over six weeks.
Good Practices to carry out with the Comm-Edu project	
<p>Through animated videos, interactive tools and practical tasks, students and young people will be encouraged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore and challenge the learners' notions of Europe and citizenship and provide them with new insights; 	

- become more aware of the civic, political and social issues that are important for young people across Europe;
- find and make connections between local youth work practice and transnational youth work in Europe

Good Practice in Active and EU citizenship – GP2

Institution implementing/coordinating the project: Finnish municipalities

Venue (s) EU wide: Finland

Partner(s):

Website/ SM channels /resources or link for more info about the initiative:

2. Overview of Activity

Title of the initiative/project: “Youth Governments”

Connection to the concept of the Comm-Edu project

This project provides a picture of how schools and local communities can promote young people’ participation in decision-making processes. Enhancing their participation contributes to the promotion of citizenship and the promotion of early engagement within community life.

Every school develops a ‘democratic’ project. At a local community event the representatives of the schools vote for the best projects, and decide how much money should be distributed to each. The Helsinki-project is school-based and, like other schools in Finland, selects representatives via elections to go on and represent the school at the local Youth Government. In some cases youth are selected through churches and/or the youth centres.

Target audience/ beneficiaries:

School students and youths

Age level: between 13 and 20

Duration: Non fixed

Good Practices to carry out with the Comm-Edu project

IDENTIFYING OUR ISSUE

PHASE 1

The aim is to find a way to improve the well-being of those at the school, as well as the school's image. The Council of Europe considers discussing 'well-being for all' an essential element of living in a community. It has developed a participatory approach to support citizens' initiatives to re-think the objectives of social progress. It is embedded in the Council of Europe's New Strategy and Action Plan for Social Cohesion. The importance of each one's well-being for the collective well-being should be stressed, aiming at pointing out to a more global approach on things, removing ourselves from the "I" to the "we".

RESEARCHING OUR ISSUE

PHASE 2

Students and teachers start researching about the importance of "well – being" both in the school environment and in the community in general. Then, participants (Students and teachers), are invited to participate in a three hour session in which they are invited to answer three questions:

- ✓ What does well-being mean for you?
- ✓ What does ill-being mean for you?
- ✓ What do you, or can you do with regard to your well-being?

These questions are later put to groups of citizens to emphasise the relationships between their individual lives and their environment. It is hoped that by understanding individuals' perceptions the group will be able to determine what is essential for everyone. For each session the 'world café' approach is followed. Participants are firstly divided into groups of 8 to 10 on the basis of similarities (age, sex, occupation, etc.) to discuss the three questions – on their own and then as a group. Then, multi profile groups are formed that attempt to define the criteria for well-being in an inclusive way and taking into account all the criteria defined by the single profile groups.

PLANNING OUR ACTION

PHASE 3

All groups (students, teachers, other members of the local community) design everyday activities that can be implemented and tested by them on an everyday basis for a period of 2 -3 months. These activities mainly focus on their mental and emotional state while at school or at work. Each week they complete a check list with questions about their feelings and general psychological state. After this period is over, they are gathered and reflect upon the activities they implemented and on whether they feel better than the initial period.

TAKING ACTION

PHASE 4

In the final phase of this initiative, all groups create short videos where they share their experiences or the activities they implemented, they write articles on the local

press, they post on the social media and they organize the “The well-being matters” days, an event where interesting talks, workshops and events will take place.

Executive Summary - MUSEV (Türkiye)

FOCUS GROUP IMPLEMENTATION with the Stakeholders

The 1st part of the Focus Group interviews were managed with 2 social scientists, 1 deputy mayor from the municipality, 1 expert in the district governorship, 2 people from the local sector, 1 person from the business world with the 7 stakeholders' participation in total. Utmost care was taken to select the participants from the stakeholders involved in the project, and the presence of both a political representative and an official from the regional authority responsible for education provided us with very useful feedback. The presence of experts in the field, business world and local sector representatives also contributed significantly to the research.

According to the stakeholders' opinions, face-to-face and internet resources are an active way to the active education of European citizenship. It has been concluded that practical training on active citizenship is given to the young generations, esp. Education in the early ages, especially in cooperation with the municipalities, local authorities and with the schools are strongly important. Children's councils working under municipalities in Turkey, or the European Union's studies on Active Citizenship today, research and project results shared on the internet, internet-based resources based on images and interactions, and projects carried out can be given as examples.

Another point whose determination was shared in the stakeholder interviews is that the concepts conveyed in the training on active citizenship cannot be removed from being abstract concepts at an early age. While the students have difficulty in understanding these concepts, the fact that the education cannot be saved from the theoretical content makes the process even more difficult. Therefore, diversification of materials and resources, diversification of information and communication technologies and outdoor education opportunities are essential.

As has been tried before in Turkey, competitions between schools, or maybe between the classes, the transfer of knowledge to the students with the demonstration or drama-based approach which may be coordinated between schools, between the classes and a strong cooperation between groups are solutions that still couldn't be used effectively.

Another point that is persistently shared by the stakeholders is that when it comes to active European citizenship, more visits to European institutions and on-site observation of the process would be beneficial.

Active and European citizenship training are provided with the best practices shared by the stakeholders, Erasmus Projects, Quiz Competitions, events, ceremonies, concerts, annual days, remembrances, role models are other ways to use for the Active Citizenship education.

As a result, the stakeholders participating in the research believe that increasing practical and applied education opportunities instead of theoretical education on active and European citizenship will make a more permanent education possible.

They also drew attention to the usual activity of travel to Europe and Erasmus+ in active European citizenship education.

FOCUS GROUP IMPLEMENTATION with the students and teachers

When we have a look at the profiles of the participants to the 2nd Focus Group of interview, the student groups were between the ages of 15-19 and consist of Vocational High School, Anatolian High School and Imam Hatip (Religious) High School. The students' departments were formed with informatics, religion, and electricity-electronics. General high school students have no department assigned yet. When we look at the profile of the teachers, they consist of mathematics, science, history and computer teachers. Gender equality and balance were considered in the research which was also useful to reach the desired result at the end. The participants were not interfered with while answering the questions, the necessary environment was provided for them to express themselves freely, and they participated in the research with their consent. In this direction, the common answers and comments given to the 8 questions asked to the participants.

When we had a look at the first contribution from the students and the students, it is seen that the participants are active and familiar with European citizenship. Participants understood the term active citizenship correctly and provided valuable information about it. Most of the participants see active citizenship as a title that seeks solutions to the problems of that country and contributes to the country's reaching more prosperous levels. They see European citizenship as a citizen who is devoted to the nation, dealing with the problems of the whole of Europe and even the World.

The students and teachers give importance to citizenship consciousness for the development of the communities in the following common question. Environmental awareness, social sensitivity, increase competition among the countries of the world and increase the level of welfare, each individual should actively think and defend their country with the citizenship consciousness.

In another common question that followed, the most striking result was the importance that teachers attributed to the participation of families in the process.

What draws attention in the next question is the students' thinking that they do not have enough knowledge, and the teachers' determination that the reason for this approach of the students is that there is more information to be transferred in this direction.

The common opinion of both teachers and students is that theoretical courses and numerical courses are included in the curriculum more than necessary. There is a belief that if it is reduced, space can be opened for social courses such as Active Citizenship.

A significant contribution can be made in this area with activities and organizations that local authorities can provide, as in Erasmus+, and perhaps more frequent mobility opportunities to Europe.

The general opinion of teachers and students is that active citizenship will reinforce a more constructive approach to global problems and thus the desire to live in different cities in Europe.

Good Practice in Active and EU citizenship – GP1	
Institution implementing/coordinating the project:	T.R. Ministry of National Education with EU Türkiye Delegation
Venue (s)	Türkiye
Partner(s):	Schools in Türkiye, regional authorities
Website/ SM channels /resources or link for more info about the initiative: http://abyiogren.meb.gov.tr/proje-hakkinda/#faaliyetler1	
Overview of Activity	
Title of the initiative/project:	I'M LEARNING ABOUT THE EU
Connection to the concept of the Comm-Edu project	
<p>Students involved in this initiative were competing each other on behalf of their schools to check who know best about the EU and its institutions. They are getting awareness of what European Citizenship is, what is the main institutions work how. This good practice is to ensure that the society has a high level of knowledge of the EU's values, policies and practices for fundamental rights. The good practice aims to raise awareness of the EU, especially among high school students, through effective educational measures.</p>	
Target audience/ beneficiaries	
<p>It covers students between the ages of 10-18 studying in schools affiliated with the Ministry of National Education. Agerange is;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary School • High school level students. 	
Age Level	10-18
Duration	3 years Competition: 30 min/season/competition Picture, slogan, short stories, competitions, travel to Brussels
Good Practices to carry out with the Comm-Edu project	

The activities to be carried out during the good practice, which aims to increase the knowledge level of students aged 10-18 in the EU through educational activities, are as follows:

- Administering a questionnaire to secondary and high school students to measure their level of knowledge about the EU,
- Preparation of information materials,
- Organizing pictures, slogans, short stories and quiz competitions,
- Providing capacity-building training.

Successful implementation of these good practice activities under two project components will lead to the following results:

- The EU's values, fundamental rights and policies, EU institutions and duties will be measurably enhanced through awareness-raising materials on Turkey's accession process and its reforms.
- Students and teachers will increase their knowledge of the EU through participation in systematic educational activities.

Good Practice in Active and EU citizenship – GP2

Institution implementing/coordinating the project: CODACONS (IT)

Venue (s) EU wide

Partner(s): Bahçelievler Anadolu Lisesi (TR), Progeu (IT), Oyder (TR), infoebit (IT), Platon Schools (EL), Aristotle university of Thessaloniki (EL), OpenEurope (ES),

Website/ SM channels /resources or link for more info about the initiative:

<https://www.takeaction-europa.eu/>

2. Overview of Activity

Title of the initiative/project: Citizenship education for an inclusive and sustainable future

Connection to the concept of the Comm-Edu project

The good practice, consortium has just released a Curriculum which represents a guided pathway to increasing the social and civic competencies of European youth by transferring and adapting an effective teaching methodology and improving the capabilities of teaching institutions in providing their students with tools and knowledge to foster their active participation in the society.

TAKE ACTION Curriculum provides an action-oriented civics education that promotes long-term civic engagement and builds collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills that students will need throughout their lives. The final aim is to inspire civic participation, allow students to experience real-world democracy and teach them how to effect policy change.

Target audience/ beneficiaries

They are students that cover the age range from high school level. It is a transfer of innovation from a take-action named project in USA.

Age level: between 13 and 19

Duration: each phase is 16 hours and 30 lessons

Good Practices to carry out with the Comm-Edu project

IDENTIFYING OUR ISSUE

PHASE 1

In this first phase, students critically examine their community and identify issues that they are personally interested in exploring. Teachers need to be cognizant of supporting student voices and striking a balance in helping students choose appropriate topics. This youth-adult partnership allows both students and teachers to contribute to the decision-making process of choosing a community issue.

RESEARCHING OUR ISSUE

PHASE 2

In the second phase, students spend time researching their issues and setting a goal. They examine multiple sources and perspectives to better understand their community issue. Teachers may invite guest speakers into the classroom to address specific topics of interest. Students explore a variety of digital and print resources on topics. Teachers and students work together to review headlines of local news and events, develop questions, evaluate sources, and examine the evidence.

PLANNING OUR ACTION

PHASE 3

In this phase, students develop an evidence-based argument for their issue and create a plan of action. The plan of action can include a variety of products, such as persuasive letters to adults, web-based advocacy projects, or hands-on acts of service.

TAKING ACTION

PHASE 4

In the final phase of their projects, students share their advocacy projects with members of their families, school, and community. This phase supports the students in developing communication skills to raise awareness of a particular subject.

Executive Summary – OSD Cesarica (CROATIA)

FOCUS GROUP IMPLEMENTATION with the Stakeholders

The stakeholders involved in the research were 10 persons: 1 president of the local community/municipality, 6 representatives of the Council of Parents, 1 teacher adviser who is also a representative from the City of Zagreb in the School Board, 2 representatives from the Association O.A.ZA. After more than 25 years of the same political option now we have the new city government and some of their first decisions were about solving the problem with waste and including local schools in an experimental civic education program called Škola i Zajednica (eng. School and community) but only at high school level. Our school implements similar activities in many programs and with O.A.ZA Association (please check good practice examples). But those activities are not obligatory and they are not of systematic value. All of those workshops offer learning about the environment and cultural diversity. Students are only consummate and implementations without much more active influence in the local community and without detection of current problems, finding the solutions and solving them. More encouragement and more sensitization is needed to notice the problems of the social community and education aimed at participating in solving them. It is necessary to develop skills that students will be able to use in real life.

It means that our discussion with the stakeholders were very actual and that we realize that we really need civic education in all schools but we miss educators, the Civic Education Curriculum approved by the Ministry of Education and a financial framework. There are few associations that offer civic education workshops and projects but they are not implemented in all schools. So, these workshops and activities need extra time, and educators who are able to do it. Such an approach requires communication and cooperation with the local community and representatives of the local government because students are taught about real problems of citizens. In this context the stakeholders answers referred to activities we did and they recognized our intention to put the students in rule of an activity citizens.

FOCUS GROUP IMPLEMENTATION with the students and teachers

The student groups are male and female between the ages of 11-13 and consist of public elementary school Osnovna skola Dobrise Cesarica Zagreb. When we look at the profile of the 5 teachers, they consist of 1 language teacher, 1 science teacher, 1 primary education and 2 informatic teachers. Gender equality and balance were considered in the research. In the study, no intervention was made on the participants in answering the questions, and they participated in the research with their consent. The focus group was organized in a form of open discussion. To encourage the discussion we have used the questionnaire developed by COMM-EDU partners and video resources in the questionnaire.

Focus group discussed the waste problem, migrants and lack of interest for youth wishes. For example, students believe that “they deserve a space where they can spend their free time and maybe if they have such a place they will also discuss the local challenges/solutions”. They were excited about the possibility that in the future they have such a place. We discussed the possibility that they use libraries for similar purposes but they think that libraries are too small for their plans. They

promised to think more about these possibilities. They also discussed migrations. They noticed that in Zagreb many migrants came and they think that we must help them but also that when they grow up they will maybe work in another country/city of Europe and that even if they leave Zagreb we must be interested in solving the local challenges. Students noticed problems in waste management and suggested promoting recycling and responsible approach in solving local challenges.

Good Practice in Active and EU citizenship – GP1	
Institution implementing/coordinating the project:	O.A.ZA Održiva alternativa zajednici Eng. Sustainable Alternative to the community
Venue (s)	Croatia
Partner(s):	Osnovna skola Dobrise Cesarica Zagreb
Website/ SM channels /resources or link for more info about the initiative:	
Oasis for Kids - Udruga O.A.ZA (oazainfo.hr) (8) Udruga OAZA - YouTube	
Overview of Activity	
Title of the initiative/project:	Project Oasis for kids
Connection to the concept of the Comm-Edu project	
<p>Project Oasis for kids started because of the need in a few schools of Zagreb to establish school gardens. The goal is to take care about the school environment but also to promote in the local community the Sustainable development goals (SDGs). Every May we organize a Garden festival for the community. The association O.A.ZA (which is coordinator of the project) publishes in 2021 project research results that prove the high level of the quality and impact to the students and a local community. The project has been implemented in the school curriculum of the Osnovna skola Dobrise Cesarica since 2014. The project is co-funded by the City Zagreb Education Office, Croatian Ministry of Agriculture and different European donation sources which means that they sign agreements and have documentations about the project activities.</p>	
Target audience/ beneficiaries	
-all students (age 7-15), teachers and other staff -local community	
Age Level	7-65
Duration	2 months in spring and 2 months in autumn
Good Practices to carry out with the Comm-Edu project	

Through workshops prepared by ESC volunteers in cooperation with educators from O.A.ZA and teachers students:

- Active participated in urban gardening workshops (work with earth, seeds, plants, garden tools, composting);
- Active care about environment protection (biodiversity of animals, trees, plants, human impact on the environment);
- Active cooperation with ESC volunteers, development of transversal skills and development of the cultural competences;

Good Practice in Active and EU citizenship – GP2

Institution implementing/coordinating the project: O.A.ZA

Venue (s) EU wide: Croatia

Partner(s): European Solidarity Corps (ESC) volunteers

Website/ SM channels /resources or link for more info about the initiative:

[Green Fingers - Udruga O.A.ZA \(oazainfo.hr\)](http://oazainfo.hr)

Testimonies of the volunteers on Facebook: [\(3\) #greenfingersproject - Explore | Facebook](#)

[ESC GREEN FINGERS - Growing School Gardens - spring 2022 testimonies \(part 2\) - Udruga O.A.ZA \(oazainfo.hr\)](#)

Garden festival: [\(8\) Green Fingers EP03 - Vrtni festival Dobriše Cesarića - YouTube](#)

2. Overview of Activity

Title of the initiative/project: Project Green fingers

Connection to the concept of the Comm-Edu project

Every year about 24 ESC volunteers from different European and Asian countries prepare outdoor workshops for the students. Topics are ecology, cultural diversity and civic education. Every group of volunteers cooperate with the school and students for 2 months (in spring and autumn). Some volunteers stay longer (9-12 months) and with them students build stronger connections. The project activities are very well accepted in our local community thanks to posts on social media that promote international collaboration, cultural exchange and human values. Collaboration with volunteers means that we offer a lot of opportunities

for discussion about differences and similarities about topics from Civic Education.

Target audience/ beneficiaries:

Students (age 7-15), parents, teachers, local community

Age level: any age

Duration: Non fixed

Good Practices to carry out with the Comm-Edu project

CONCLUSIONS:

As the European Union began to expand its regional sphere of influence, after 2004, it expanded its sphere of influence, especially with its eastward expansion. In addition, it has increased its claim to host very different cultures (Eren, 2014)¹. This multicultural unity has increased the importance of education for EU citizenship and necessitated attaching more importance to the necessity of the same citizen awareness. The ongoing process of globalization and European integration requires the new generation of Europeans to increasingly engage politically at multiple levels, as well as to be able to live, work and integrate a growing level of diversity in their daily lives (EU Parliament, 2022)². The Comm-Edu project, which was prepared for this purpose, carried out preliminary research with the participation of its stakeholders in order to investigate innovative techniques for EU citizenship education and to gather good examples applied in Italy, Croatia, Greece, and Turkey.

Focus Groups (FG) were managed in 2 parts, one with the stakeholder members (regional authority representatives, members of CSOs, NGOs, and the school heads or assistants of the school managers, etc.). The second FG was formed with the students and the teachers. A part of the results was the same as the results that emerged in the previous studies in the field. Additional results were also faced which were mostly the new technology-based definitions, or the new educational approaches like gamification, Artificial Intelligence, etwinning, Erasmus+-based opportunities, etc.

When it comes to giving main definitions are as follows;

- Diversification of tools and activities (ICT tools like videos, experiential teaching, online or face-to-face group activities, discussions, brainstorming, targeted visits, project/mission-based learning, social media campaigns, exchange of letters/cards/creative videos with learners of other schools in local and abroad, participation in global learning contests, -debates and panel discussions, competitions, art exhibitions, etc., Experiential learning through actions dramatizations and theatrical activities for the cultivation of empathy, creative writing, digital storytelling, and educational games) to be used in active citizenship education,
- Active participation of the parties in the process,
- The importance of the Community-based togetherness
- Carrying out active citizenship training with all segments of society on a more game and activity-based basis.
- Carry out the citizenship education from the local level to a global approach
- Increasing opportunities provided by programs such as Erasmus+, etwinning, and EPAL, so that different cultures can come together more, European citizens meet more frequently in activities closer to each other.

¹ Eren, T.M., 2014., **THE ENLARGEMENT POLICY OF EUROPEAN UNION AND THE FUTURE ITS SOFT POWER**, *Trakya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, Volume 16 Issue 1 (359-374)

² EU Parliament, 2022., **REPORT on the implementation of citizenship education actions**, retrieved from https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-9-2022-0060_EN.html, retrieved on 02/02/2023.

In Summary, it is clearly seen that the ICT and activity-based solutions, to use the new educational approaches, platforms or technics are necessary to take students' attention and motivation to active citizenship education.

SUGGESTIONS for the FUTURE:

As seen in the preliminary field research of the Comm-Edu project and the desk literature review, it is seen that there is still work to be done in EU active citizenship education. Therefore, activating the treasured opportunities provided by the Erasmus+ program will be beneficial for active citizenship education. Considering the distance taken since the Socrates or Comenius programs before the Erasmus+ program, it is seen that EU-wide project studies with broad participation will be beneficial. The collaborations to be realized for this purpose will make it possible to create the tools, activities, and curricula determined within the scope of the Comm-Edu project (Rosso, 2022)³.

³ Rosso, A., 2022., YOUNG PEOPLE SHAPE THE FUTURE OF EUROPE - A MIRROR OF THE ERASMUS GENERATION, retrieved from <https://www.esn.org/young-people-shape-future-europe-mirror-erasmus-generation> retrieved on 02/20/2023.