

# Building a culture of inclusion through eTwinning



EN



Erasmus+



**Publisher**

Central Support Service for eTwinning  
[www.etwinning.net](http://www.etwinning.net)

European Schoolnet (EUN Partnership AISBL)  
Rue de Trèves 61, 1040 Brussels - Belgium  
[www.europeanschoolnet.org](http://www.europeanschoolnet.org) - [info@eun.org](mailto:info@eun.org)

**Editors**

Anne Gilleran, Irene Pateraki, Santi Scimeca, Claire Morvan

**Design Coordination**

Claire Morvan

**Language Coordination**

Danosh Nasrollahi

**Original Design**

Iddi fix

**DTP and printing**

HOFI Studio

**ISBN number**

9789492414830

Published in October 2017. The views expressed in this publication are those of the author and not necessarily those of the European Commission or of the eTwinning Central Support Service.

This book is published under the terms and conditions of the Attribution-Non Commercial-Share Alike 3.0 Unported Creative Commons licence (CC BY-NC-SA 3.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-ncsa/3.0/>).

This publication was funded by the **Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union**.



# Building a culture of inclusion through eTwinning

eTwinning is a vibrant community that has involved, in its 12 years of existence, almost 500,000 teachers working in 182.000\* schools. More than 61,000\* projects have been run, involving more than 2,000,000 pupils across the continent over the years.

eTwinning – the Community for schools in Europe – is an action for schools funded by the European Commission, via the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme. eTwinning incorporates a sophisticated digital platform that has both public and private areas and is available in 28 languages. The public area [www.eTwinning.net](http://www.eTwinning.net) offers browsing visitors a range of information about how to become involved in eTwinning; explaining the benefits the action offers and provides inspiration for collaborative project work. The restricted area for registered teachers, called eTwinning Live, is the individual teacher’s interface with the community: it enables users to find each other, interact, collaborate in projects and participate in professional development activities organised at national and European Level. When teachers work together in a project they have access to a restricted and dedicated area unique to that project called the TwinSpace.

eTwinning offers a high level of support for its users. In each of participating countries (currently 38) a National Support Service (NSS) promotes the action, provides advice and guidance for end users and organises a range of activities and professional development opportunities at national level. At European level, eTwinning is financed by the European Commission via the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme”. eTwinning is coordinated by the Central Support Service (CSS) which is managed by European Schoolnet (a consortium of 31 Ministries of Education), on behalf of the European Commission. The CSS liaises with the NSS and is responsible for the development of the platform, as well as offering a range of professional development opportunities and other activities such as an annual European Conference and a Prize Event which awards teachers and students for their involvement in outstanding projects.

\*Data as of September 2017.





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Foreword</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>1. Overview of the concept of Inclusion</b> .....	<b>9</b>
1.1. Inclusion: every learner matters and matters equally.....	9
1.2. Inclusive education in eTwinning .....	10
1.3. What this book offers.....	11
<b>2. Ensuring access to education in remote areas</b> .....	<b>13</b>
2.1 Teaching practices in isolated schools: the case for the small rural schools in Italy .....	13
2.2 Testimonies from teachers, pupils and head teachers .....	15
<b>3. Enhancing Intercultural understanding</b> .....	<b>22</b>
3.1 Six principles for enhancing Intercultural understanding.....	22
3.2 Testimonies and eTwinning projects on intercultural understanding.....	24
3.2.1 Testimonies from teachers, pupils and head teachers .....	24
3.2.2 eTwinning projects on intercultural understanding.....	29
3.3 Professional development building in eTwinning on the theme of cultural awareness.....	32
<b>4. Dealing with educational challenges</b> .....	<b>35</b>
4.1 Nobody should be left behind.....	35
Different opportunities for different needs ... ..	36
Do you like pistachios?.....	36
Extra tools for your toolbox.....	36
4.2. Testimonies from teachers, pupils and head teachers .....	37
4.3 Community building in inclusive education.....	44
<b>5. Conclusion</b> .....	<b>47</b>
<b>6. References</b> .....	<b>50</b>
<b>7. Links to eTwinning activities</b> .....	<b>52</b>
<b>Table of Countries Abbreviations</b> .....	<b>54</b>
<b>NSS &amp; PSA CONTACTS</b> .....	<b>55</b>





## FOREWORD

*“Everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and life-long learning in order to maintain and acquire skills that enable them to participate fully in society and manage successfully transitions in the labour market.”*



**Tibor Navracsics**

Commissioner for Education, Culture,  
Youth and Sport

This is the first principle in the ‘Pillar of Social Rights’, adopted by the European Commission in April 2017 to guide EU policies towards better working and living conditions for European citizens.

Inclusive education must not be a luxury. It is of key relevance for the type of society we Europeans want to live in. It is central to building fair and more cohesive societies. And it plays a major role in looking at ways to cope with challenges such as digitalisation, climate change and how to harness globalisation. Most children entering primary school today will probably end up working in job types that do not yet exist. Besides knowledge, they all need to develop a broad set of competences, resilience and ability to cope with change, regardless of their background or their specific educational needs. Inclusive education will help to achieve just that.

To be successful and to give each and every child the chance to profit from high-quality education, education systems have to address all forms of disadvantage and exclusion while promoting common values and citizenship as a backbone for social cohesion. They need to cater for diverse needs, abilities and capacities of all learners, for those having special educational needs, for those from disadvantaged backgrounds or living in remote areas and provide excellent education for all.

This edition presents a selection of excellent eTwinning projects and activities to promote inclusive education and our common values. It shows how eTwinning and all the teachers and pupils active on this platform contribute to addressing the educational challenges of today, answering them in the most creative and colourful way. Examples deal with a wide range of obstacles to education: the situation of schools in remote areas and their ways of connecting to the world via eTwinning, cultural diversity and the challenges of migration and learning difficulties.

eTwinning and its whole community contribute to fulfilling the vision set out in the Rome Declaration of March 2017 to work towards a Union “where young people receive the best education and training and can study and find jobs across the continent”.

I express my warm thanks to all the teachers and students who were involved in the different activities and projects presented in this edition. I would also like to thank the eTwinning community as a whole for their indispensable contribution to better and more inclusive education.



Diversity refers to all kinds of differences, such as ethnicity, religion, culture, language, different abilities, educational levels, social backgrounds, economic situations, health status etc.

Building inclusion in education is an on-going process, rather than a one-time effort. An inclusive curriculum is based on the view that learning occurs when students are actively involved, taking the lead and in making sense of their experiences (Udvari-Solnar, 1996). In that way, the teacher's role becomes one of guiding and facilitating learning while the pupils can work on their own pace and in their own way, within a common framework of objectives and activities like they actually do through project work.

## 1.2. Inclusive education in eTwinning

Since the beginning in 2005, teachers who work in eTwinning projects have as one of their aims to widen the horizons of their pupils. eTwinning projects open a window to Europe through activities that promote the understanding of inclusion, the development of common values and a positive response to diversity. There are many examples of eTwinning projects which give opportunities to pupils to acquire intercultural competences, to become aware of the democratic values and of the importance of social inclusion and active citizenship. For example, with a quick search in the eTwinning database, one can find projects like: "Filoxenia or xenophobia?", "In a Foreign Land", "Migration stories", "We are all migrants of this world", "We are different...we are equal...respecting our differences...", "You and I in the Mirror", "Accept me for who I am", "United in Diversity", etc. Through project work, pupils have positive interactions with their peers and realise that differences can be a positive source for learning, rather than the cause for negative comments and prejudices.

One of these projects, "Migrant and Refugees", awarded with a European Prize in 2017, involved students 12-13 years old from four European countries: France, Germany, Netherlands and Norway. The students explored the topic of migration, gathered information about the refugee crisis in Europe and gained a better understanding of what it means to be a migrant or a refugee, thus reinforcing their intercultural awareness. As a final outcome of their project, they printed a magazine with all their materials and opinions. One of these, Mariska's from France wrote: *"I would like to say one thing to anyone who is against those migrants: If you were bombed and living in terrible conditions on a daily basis, you would be happy that another country would welcome you and take care of you. So please, treat the others as you would like to be treated!"*

In addition to running projects, eTwinning teachers can participate in many other activities: Online Seminars, Learning Events, Professional Development Workshops and Groups. These activities offer teachers the opportunity to gain valuable knowledge on how to develop an inclusive climate in their classroom, to better educate their pupils by providing them with the skills and competences to combat racism and discrimination, and to help them feel part of a wider community, which shares the same concerns and the same dreams.

## 1.3. What this book offers

This book is an overview of how teachers have interpreted *Inclusive Education* in eTwinning and focuses on the three following aspects:

- 1. How to overcome geographical obstacles** faced by young people from remote or rural areas, and young people living on small islands or in peripheral regions
- 2. How to enhance intercultural understanding**, notably with young people from minorities and/or from disadvantaged socio-economic background: immigrants, refugees or descendants from immigrant or refugee families, young people belonging to a national or ethnic minority, young people with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion difficulties etc.
- 3. How to deal with educational challenges** and keep the full inclusion of young people with learning difficulties, school refusal issues, young people with lower level of qualifications or poor school performance etc.

For each aspect, we start by featuring projects and inputs from teachers, pupils and head teachers, all proposed by the eTwinning National Support Services. Projects on the topics of Inclusion and diversity are beneficial for all pupils, especially those who are at a disadvantage compared to their peers, because they face different obstacles. These pupils need more opportunities to participate equally in all offered activities and exhibit their talents and interests.

The projects are presented to give ideas to teachers and inspire them for future projects while the inputs from the teachers, the head teachers and the pupils indicate how eTwinning encourages understanding and recognises diversity in a positive and respectful way. The projects are divided according to the three aspects mentioned above but in many cases a teacher deals with more than one aspects in his/her classroom.

After the project presentation, the next section presents the professional development and community opportunities on the topic of inclusion with the aim to strengthen teachers' knowledge and skills to promote and support diversity and inclusion in their schools.

We hope that the following stories, examples and ideas will serve as a resource and inspiration for all teachers and will contribute to the efforts towards an inclusive education. Because after all, as Mahatma Gandhi said: **“No culture can live if it attempts to be exclusive”**.





## 2. ENSURING ACCESS TO EDUCATION IN REMOTE AREAS

Most countries have geographic areas that are challenging to their inhabitants. In some countries these areas are more numerous or vast than in others. Pupils who live in these areas often encounter problems such as a long distance to travel from their home to the nearest school or a small school with small number of pupils with no exposure beyond their immediate environment. Such pupils sometimes feel isolated from the rest of the world. Technology and projects like eTwinning can help teachers meet these challenges and help pupils communicate with peers in other countries as Giuseppina Cannella, an expert in the field from INDIRE (Italy), describes in the first section below. In the second section, five teachers and their pupils and head teachers from rural schools in Cyprus, Iceland, Greece, Portugal and French Guiana share their experience on working in eTwinning projects and describe how they felt that the other pupils were part of their class, as a student well defined.

### 2.1 Teaching practices in isolated schools: the case for the small rural schools in Italy



**Giuseppina Cannella**

INDIRE (National Institute of Documentation Innovation and Educational Research), Florence, Italy

The situation of rural isolated schools (based in the mountain and/or on islands) is a common issue in European countries (for instance in Italy, Ireland, Scotland and England, Germany and France). The normative situation is different from country to country and this aspect has an impact on the profile of the schools.

In Italy, mountain and insular areas represent 70 percent of the Italian territory with a population that experiences difficulties in daily living due to territorial constraints. Nevertheless, it is extremely important to guarantee equal opportunities and services to those who live in such disadvantaged areas, and the school is one of those social services that must be guaranteed. The issue related to the isolation of students living in mountains and on small islands affects 900,000 Italian students and 1400 schools.

The latest data reveal that between 2011 and 2016, 236 schools on the mountains (15% of all schools) have closed down, although the number of students has hardly changed in the last five years.

INDIRE, the National Institute for the Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research, based in Florence, has been studying the teaching practices of isolated schools, with particular attention to the ones based on mountains and small islands. The results of the research activities carried on by INDIRE regarding this kind of schools are concentrated in four main areas:

- ICT infrastructure
- school organization
- teacher training
- innovative didactic approaches.

INDIRE has mainly investigated teaching activities that integrate ICT into classroom practice to overcome isolation using distance education strategies. The results show that while, technology has been revealed as a driving force in guaranteeing the students the right to study, it is clear, nevertheless, that teaching activities need to be re-designed when using ICT. Which brings us to eTwinning.

eTwinning is a platform (both technical and educational) which truly supports schools and provides them with the tools, methodology and pedagogical environment enabling them to overcome their geographical isolation. Furthermore, the activities within the eTwinning Community focus on helping teachers to innovate and find the best approaches to help overcome the challenges of their varied situations.

For instance, two schools, the Istituto Comprensivo di Favignana (a small Sicilian island of the Mediterranean Sea) and the Istituto Comprensivo di Sassello (close to Savona, on the Liguria mountains) developed an eTwinning project for 224 students, during the school year 2016-17, about the weather forecast, with particular attention to the topic of the wind.

The learning objectives of the Progetto “Mar@Monti”<sup>1</sup> are shared between the pre-primary, primary and lower secondary school levels of both Institutes. Moreover, the teachers identify further transversal objectives such as:

- Experience inclusion of small schools using ICT, to overcome geographical isolation;
- Supporting teachers’ professional development identifying learning strategies that are specific for teaching at distance;
- Supporting distance collaboration between schools.

---

1 <http://www.ivg.it/2016/06/progetto-marmonti-gemellaggio-fra-favignana-sassello/>

The school in Sassello has developed a fairy story activity whose main character is the wind. The students of the lower secondary school collected information about the big snowfalls, tempests and floods of their region, which was shared with the students in Favignana as well as sayings and local habits. In Favignana, the students collected information about the winds and the local fishing tradition depending on the weather condition among the fishermen. The students of the different school levels met during the school year using videoconferencing system to share and present in the TwinSpace the final results. Through the use of eTwinning tools the students of both these schools went beyond the limits of their immediate environment to see and understand the larger world around them. Their teachers used ICT to support all students and allow enhanced collaboration, extended community engagement and “new ways of teaching and learning”.

## 2.2 Testimonies from teachers, pupils and head teachers

eTwinning offers a great opportunity to teachers and students who live in islands like Crete and Cyprus, rural areas and distant countries like French Guiana to feel part of the European



community, collaborate and interact with other European colleagues. The testimonies that follow, illustrate how eTwinning support teachers and students to overcome such geographical challenges.

**Project Title:** “Τάξεις χωρίς σύνορα -Classrooms without barriers”

**Partner Schools:** 2 partner schools (CY, GR)

**Level:** Primary

*Malouna Primary School is a very small school in a rural area, 25 km south of Nicosia. It is consisted of only eight students in all grades. Consequently, these students face many barriers regarding their education and socialisation. Through the eTwinning project*

(Τάξεις χωρίς σύνορα, Classrooms without barriers), these students had the opportunity to overcome distances and geographical obstacles, feel included, meet people from another European country, gain experiences, learn new things and most importantly make new friends. For example, one of the activities we carried out in the context of this eTwinning project was online meetings with a school in Greece, specifically in Rhodes island, the Kritinia Primary School. This school had similar characteristics with our school; a small number of students (thirteen totally) and a remote location. Each school learned from each other ways and practices of coping with similar problems. Students from both schools were excited, happy and very eager to talk, discuss and exchange information about their country, school, customs and even talk about a school play. Likewise, another activity that took place during this project and helped the students to feel included was the presentation of their local customs, recipes and monuments. This activity helped students to learn about other European places which are remote and isolated and at the same time made them more open minded regarding other cultures.

**Simoni Photiou** (Primary School Teacher and Headteacher)

**School:** Primary School Malounda, Cyprus

In this project, we had the opportunity to learn a lot about the school in Kritinia, their lifestyle and their culture. We became friends with the other children through the exchange of mails, online events and our common work. We came closer to people living in a different part of Europe, without taking a boat or a plane, and in the end, we became good friends.



**Kyriakos** (Age: 12)

**Project Title:** “User name: children Password: rights”

**Partner Schools:** 6 partner schools (DE, GR, IS, RO, SI)

**Level:** Primary

I am a teacher at world’s end. Our fishing village consists of 900 inhabitants and has only one road leading in and outside the village. Iceland has no trains and the public transport is an issue. Therefore, eTwinning offers a great opportunity to open our eyes to a completely new world. All children in our village, 6-16 years old, attend our school, so our classes consist of local, immigrant, gifted pupils and pupils with learning difficulties. Pupils have taken part in many eTwinning projects the last years and discovered the different cultures, religions and opportunities their peers have in other parts of Europe. By working together, collaborating in different activities, participating in online synchronous meetings, we have come one step closer to feeling what it is like to be in the centre of the world.

**Elín Þóra Stefánsdóttir** (Primary School Teacher)

**School:** Grunnskóli Bolungarvíkur, Iceland



It is very funny to write a book with other children in Europe and paint the cover with another school at the same time on the screen.



Jóna (Age: 10)

My class has been in many projects with the same school in Europe. I feel as if they are a part of my class.



Jón (Age: 10)

**Project Title:** “Planning our sustainable town”

**Partner Schools:** 2 partner schools (FR, GR)

**Level:** Upper Secondary - Vocational

*The geographic isolation is not the only obstacle in my students’ development. I teach in a vocational school in the southeast of Crete, in the southernmost town of Europe, with students of low academic profile and many students coming from an immigrant background, so things are much more complicated. Inclusion has always been the main goal when I design an eTwinning project. I grew up in Athens and when I came here, I felt the impact of the geographic isolation on my own career. eTwinning was a window to the world I could not reach so I felt the inclusive character of eTwinning for teachers too. That’s why I strongly believe that when my students work in a collaborative activity like planning sustainably a new city made by merging lerapetra*

and Brétigny-sur-Orge, together with students from France who have a different culture, a different perspective and different experiences, they move to a higher level of understanding how the world can be. ETwinning opens the students' horizons. While reflecting on their partners work (why do they do it this way?), they were questioning their own performance, they were trying harder and they liked it. In every eTwinning project, a little miracle happens.

**Maria Sourgiadaki** (Teacher in the Agriculture Department)

**School:** 1st Vocational Lyceum of Ierapetra (EPAL), Greece

Collaborating with the students from another country was a nice experience. The best part was when we designed the garden of their school that I considered at first that it was impossible. I want to keep collaborating.



**Giorgos** (Age:16)

The meaning of eTwinning is revealed in the experiences of the magical trips that is offering us, through the use of ICT technologies, even in the more remote areas of Europe. That's how the students' community widens; the knowledge, the culture, the tradition, the experience, the desire, the expression, transform into Art and Speech for the Virtue and they root in the most unexpected places, to the archetype of harmony in nature, that the Greeks called Kosmos.



**Aikaterini Tziri** (head teacher)

**Project Title:** "eTwinning Tree"

**Partner Schools:** 34 partner schools (AT, AZ, BG, CY, CZ, EE, ES, FI, FR, GE, GR, IT, LT, LV, MD, MK, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SL, TR, UA, UK)

**Level:** Primary

We live in Madeira Islands, in a beautiful archipelago situated in the middle of Atlantic Ocean and nothing would separate us from the others. "eTwinning Tree" was a partnership between schools from small and large countries and islands around Europe. Using innovative ICT tools students engaged in collaborative storytelling exploring European values and identity. In this project, children from both partner schools set on a quest to explore stories, acquiring lifelong learning skills of reading and writing. They have enriched their knowledge through inclusive and cooperative learning. Many partner schools have migrant children and familiar stories from their own background, which arouse their interest and motivation in learning and kept us closer to the other schools around Europe. Through experience, I can say that eTwinning projects increased

the children's self-esteem and their English language skills. I have had pupils who learnt to read and write better English through their participation in this project. As an enthusiastic eTwinner, I encourage children to start new projects so they will also experience the wonders of a borderless activity, as eTwinning is an asset to facilitate learning in all areas.

**Rosa Luisa Gaspar** (Primary School Teacher)

**School:** EB1/PE da Lombada, Ponta do Sol, Madeira



*eTwinning is fun, it is a different way to learn, as well as to collaborate with other students of our age group. I discovered countries in Europe, made friends, and learned more about human rights through the project. I travelled a lot during my classes.*



**João** (Age: 9)

*eTwinning was the main source of fun learning activities in my school. Our teachers were constantly trying to involve us in various projects and we got good memories and a huge amount of experience from them. Pupils felt as though there was “glamour” in the prospect of working with fellow pupils in other countries and pupils began to see a future where working with people across Europe is possible.*



**Célia Miguel** (head teacher)



**Project Title:** “In love with food”

**Partner Schools:** 5 partner schools (ES, FR, IT, NL, PL)

**Level:** Lower Secondary



*French Guiana is an ultra-marine French region located in South America and therefore one of the outermost region of European control. eTwinning is the window to Europe and offers my students the opportunity to meet virtually with peers and collaborate in educational projects. It is an excellent opportunity to broaden their horizons and develop their European citizenship and sense of belonging to Europe. Students love to discover the “profiles” of their European counterparts on the TwinSpace. I remember their reaction during my first eTwinning project, “Diversity through traditions” with a Polish partner, when they saw the snow in the photos. An activity that students particularly appreciated was the creation of recipes using common ingredients during the project “In love with food”. The goal was to imagine a recipe from five ingredients selected by an online vote of all participating students. The final product of the project was a magazine of recipes. The students particularly appreciated this project, which involved the tasting of their products and those of the partners that they also cooked at the end of the year.*

**Sandra Macabre** (English Teacher)

**School:** Collège la Canopée, French Guiana, France

*The participation in eTwinning projects is an enriching experience for our students which helps them feel valued. It is an opening in Europe in particular and in the world.*



**Patricia LEVEILLE** (head teacher)





## 3. ENHANCING INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

Education systems, schools and teachers are responsible to a degree for strengthening the child's cultural identity and values, whilst also helping to promote respect and understanding for the culture of others. Six guidance principles to that end are presented by Anna Triandafyllidou, expert from the European University Institute, in the first section. As students develop intercultural understanding, they learn to value their own cultures, languages and beliefs, as well as those of others. In eTwinning, students engage with diverse cultures in ways that recognise commonalities and differences, create connections with their peers and cultivate mutual respect. In this section, four teachers present how they work in their schools with pupils from different cultural and ethnical backgrounds and how eTwinning projects help these students to feel part of the class; three projects dealing with migration and refugees as well as Roma students are presented in the second section. Finally, there is an overview of the different opportunities for professional development on the topic of Inclusion offered to teachers the last few years.

### 3.1 Six principles for enhancing Intercultural understanding



**Anna Triandafyllidou**

Global Governance Programme (GGP)  
of the Robert Schuman Centre for  
Advanced Studies (RSCAS), European  
University Institute, Florence, Italy

Europe, at this moment in time, is faced with opposing trends. On one hand, some citizens appear to think that re-nationalising control, erecting borders, separating from fellow member states will make them more capable of addressing the global challenges of migration, asylum, or economic globalisation. On the other hand, we also witness other citizens showing spontaneous solidarity towards asylum seekers at train stations or at reception centres, transnational political and youth mobilisation across Europe.

In this complex, sometimes tense, context, there is an urgent need for effective approaches that can foster the integration of cultural and religious diversity in society bringing closer together native majorities, historical minorities and

post-migration populations. Education here has a key role to play in fostering acceptance and respect among young people, creating a sense of belonging and preparing students to become active citizens tomorrow.

While there is no one size fit all solution for integrating native or post-migration minorities and migrant populations, I would like to suggest below six principles that can offer guidance for developing appropriate education programmes and tools.

First of all, integration is a two-way street; it is not a challenge for the 'newcomers' or for the 'minorities'. It requires that both native majority and historical or new minorities make concessions and make 'space' for one another, co-creating a new self-concept for the nation, which respects the national history and feelings of the majority but also actively embraces migrants and minorities.

Second, there is no one-size fits all solution. Different societies and different minority groups requires different approaches, dependent on the history of each society, the composition of its population, the specific needs of newcomers, but also the resources available.

Third, education for diversity should incorporate both an individual and a group dimension. All students are equal and should be given the opportunity to learn and flourish. They should be recognised in their individuality, rather than being labelled as members of a certain national, ethnic or religious group, (this point is valid for both minority and majority students). At the same time, however, local and national education authorities should accommodate the collective expression of diversity where and as necessary in the school life: by respecting for instance religious and cultural festivities of large minority groups, by creating alternative courses for ethics or religion (concerning the teaching of religions where relevant, courses of philosophy of religion for atheists, or on the history and faith of minority religions can be made available).

Fourth, schools are an integral part of the communities in which they are located. Thus, as communities change, schools must follow suit. It often happens in inner city areas in large European cities that migrants and their offspring become the numerical majority. School realities: the composition of the teaching staff, the dress code, and the availability of courses taught should reflect the changing needs of the community that they serve. They could thus offer optional courses to teach the mother tongue of major immigrant groups, language courses of the national language for parents in the evening, adapt school uniforms (where applicable) to accommodate special dress codes; organise initiatives (e.g. community gardening) that bring together all families in the community and that offer a level playing field for both the 'natives' and the 'newcomers'.

Fifth, specific local or national educational rules and traditions should be interpreted flexibly so as to accommodate the special needs of minority populations. For instance, major exams should not be organised on a day that is an important festivity for a given minority group.

Sixth, programmes and policies put in place for native minority groups can be adapted to provide for 'new' minorities. Thus, where there has been a consolidated expertise for teaching a minority language or for guaranteed quotas aimed at ensuring that local minorities find sufficient places at Universities or that the teaching staff includes also teachers from minority background, such measures should be adapted to cater for the needs of migrant families. Such intercultural education expertise and resources are more precious than funding.

## 3.2 Testimonies and eTwinning projects on intercultural understanding

In today's increasingly interconnected and globalised world, eTwinning enable that the pupils directly experience foreign cultures with unprecedented ease. International collaboration during the formative years encourage the pupils to see things from different perspectives and help them to make more informed decisions. Bearing in mind that schools across Europe are seeing a rise in the number of children born and raised in a different country, eTwinning can prepare pupils to enhance intercultural understanding. This chapter is separated in two parts:

1. Testimonies from teachers, head teachers and pupils in schools with many ethnicities, Roma or migrant pupils
2. eTwinning projects dealing with the topic of cultural inclusion

### 3.2.1 Testimonies from teachers, pupils and head teachers

Learning together with pupils from a variety of cultural and social backgrounds, helps pupils to better understand different perspectives and to cope with diversity. Their teachers are faced with the challenge to integrate all pupils, support a culture of diversity and find effective ways to help all pupils succeed academically. The examples below present eTwinning projects which addressed successfully this challenge.

**Project Title:** "Language Creates"

**Partner Schools:** 6 partner schools (AT, CY, IT, TR, UK, UA)

**Level:** Primary

*Our school is a public institution located in Vienna, Austria. It stands out due to its multilingual and multicultural student population. Many of our pupils face disadvantages due to their socio-economic background while some pupils are refugees. Around 90 % of the pupils have different first languages other than German, the language of instruction. More than 30 languages are spoken at our school. One of the challenges is strengthening communicative language competences at our school, therefore "Language Creates" really fits our needs. The experience to work with*





We are a European Middle School and we want to promote Europe's founding values. A multilingual and multicultural education will open the door to Europe for our children. eTwinning gives the students the chance to make friends in Europe, communicate in English and learn tolerance. In addition, it is a great tool for teachers to network and exchange ideas.



**Christine Schiller** (Head teacher)

**Project Title:** "Giving Hope to Refugee Children"

**Partner Schools:** 12 partner schools (CR, IT, RO, RS, TR, TN)

**Level:** Primary



Thirty percent of our pupils' population are immigrants. When they first arrived at school, they were frightened and concerned. Pupils coming earlier helped the newly arrived pupils to feel integrated and communicate with the other pupils and the teachers. By participating in this eTwinning project, they felt really happy which helped them learn the language easier and in a more fun way. All pupils had the opportunity to learn about famous immigrants who made a difference in the country they arrived like Steve Jobs and Albert Einstein.

**Mustafa Gök** (Headteacher)

**School:** Arkarasi İlkokulu, Turkey

We came to Turkey 3 years ago. This project helped me to learn a new language and live in a new culture by participating in games, contests and school trips. This made me very happy.



**Rüzgar** (Age: 11)

My family and I ran from the Syrian war and we came to Turkey 4 years ago. Being a part of this project made us feel important and valued. I could barely understand a few words in Turkish and now I can easily communicate.

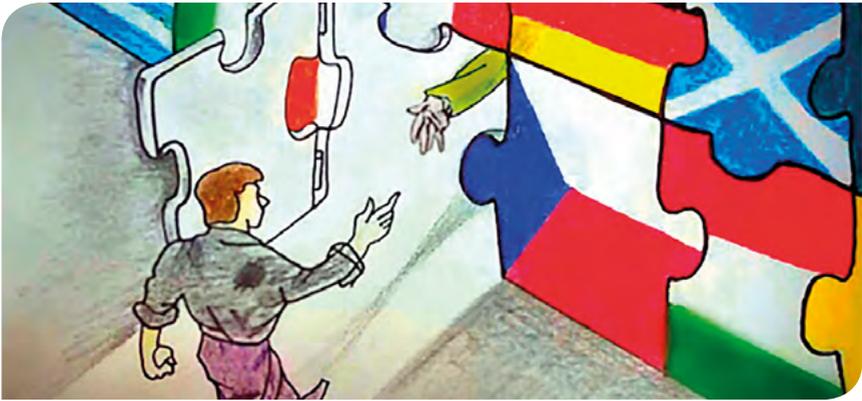


**Zehra** (Age: 11)

**Project Title:** “European Immigration”

**Partner Schools:** 3 partner schools (CY, FR, RO)

**Level:** Upper Secondary- Vocational



Working with eTwinning is the perfect way to improve the skills of my students who come from underprivileged backgrounds and different origins and thanks to this project, each one was able to collaborate actively at their own pace through a reflection on the theme of European Immigration. We did a survey in our 3 schools to know the origins of our students. The students were very surprised by the results as in France we had 54 different origins, 11 in Romanian and in Cyprus 9. They also worked together in international teams with our Cypriot and Romanian partners to make some research on the different waves of immigration in our respective countries. They realised that immigration is not a new theme and has always existed and thanks to this diversity, a culture of a country is reinforced. Besides improving their skills in ICT, in the French language because they had to present their project to others members of our school community and in English in sharing, debating and exchanging with our Cypriot and Romanian partners, they also gained autonomy, self-confidence and learnt to work with others in teams. They understood that diversity is a power and they have become more tolerant. They realised that they needed the others to work efficiently; exchanging ideas have opened their minds to other cultures.

**Murièle Dejaune** (English and French teacher)

**School:** Lycée des métiers Louis Blériot, Trappes, France

*I come from Burundi and eTwinning helped me learn about Europe. Interaction with my French, Cypriot and Romanian partners on the interesting subject of immigration has touched me a lot. I have improved my English too, since all the exchanges were in English. My best memory of this project is when we shared our thoughts on what caused people to leave their countries because I am very concerned with what was said.*



**Audry** (Age:17)

*I come from Portugal and I liked working with eTwinning because it is different as we have learnt with the other students and not with the teacher. I have learnt to work in teams, which is more interesting. I wanted to work more. We shared our ideas, which also helped me to think and to develop my own point of view. Having debates with other young people from Europe is great.*



**Fabio** (Age: 17)

*I am a headmaster who supports eTwinning projects because they are based on opening a cultural window at different levels: on the one hand inside my school (diverse origins and cultures of the students) and on the other hand with the exchanges with the partner schools. This diversity allows the students to work and to produce a real and shared project all together.*



**Fontaine François** (head teacher)

### 3.2.2 eTwinning projects on intercultural understanding

Since the first years of eTwinning many projects are dealing with the cultural differences in the different countries and one of their main objectives is to make pupils realise that, despite the differences or where they come from, they have much more things in common. In the last few years and especially after the Paris declaration, many teachers organised projects on the topics of immigration and the refugee crisis to raise awareness in their pupils and promote citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination as enshrined in the Declaration. Below, there is a small sample of projects dealing with these topics:

**Project Title:** “Migrants and Refugees”  
**Partner Schools:** 4 partner schools (DE, FR, NL, NO)  
**Level:** Lower Secondary  
**TwinSpace:** <https://twinspace.etwinning.net/9674/home>



Pupils in years 9 and 10 from 4 European countries explored the current humanitarian problem facing Europe, the migrant crisis. The aim is to raise awareness of what is happening not just in Europe, but in the world in general. During the project, they discussed what a refugee is and what he/she looks like to find out if there were stereotypes or misunderstandings. Then, they investigated the countries that refugees try to reach and the reasons for their choices. They had to reply to questions like: Why are the refugees leaving the Middle East? How do they travel from Asia to Europe? Where are they coming from? Where are they going? They also had interviews with people whose work is to support refugees, with NGOs, with parents who shared their experience as refugees and with other refugees. The final outcome is an e-book with the material of all their work ending as follows: *“Should the borders be closed? I personally think the borders should not close because what did the refugees do wrong to you? There are some people doing something wrong but everyone does something wrong. We do something wrong as well because we want the borders to close. So let them in!”*

**Project Title:** “Does the earth have borders? Migration and Human - Rights”  
**Partner Schools:** 6 partner schools (DE, GR, IT, PL, TN)  
**Level:** Lower and Upper Secondary  
**TwinSpace:** <https://twinspace.etwinning.net/9984/home>

The aim of the project was to provide the pupils with essential knowledge about the context of the new wave of immigration in the EU. The pupils were encouraged to watch and read the news, observe the situation around them, become aware of what is happening, take a stand and write about the topic from their own point of view with respect and understanding for

these people. They also studied the history of the Middle East and analysed the extracts from the Odyssey and the Aeneid to gain a deeper insight into the phenomenon of migration. They organised activities like the importance of home, what refugees take with them when they leave, the difficult journey, the new conditions in the host countries and they conducted an interview with an immigrant from Mali. The final result was an e-magazine composed of all the material coming in from the different activities.



**Project Title:** “Families of the world: Grixos and Trixos”  
**Partner Schools:** 2 partner schools (GR, TR)  
**Level:** Primary  
**TwinSpace:** <https://twinspace.etwinning.net/28442/home>

The idea behind the project is to raise cultural awareness so that the pupils realise that all people, regardless of their origin and their differences, share common characteristics and that not only everyone’s culture should be respected, but it should also be the stepping stone for someone to make their dreams come true. Pupils in the Greek school are mainly Roma. They lack motivation for coming to school and are easily bored. They struggle to acquire basic reading and writing skills as well as basic maths. eTwinning, first and foremost, offered them a sense of ownership: it was THEIR project, Grixos (one of the 2 main characters) was a boy like them, who lived in their neighbourhood and had the same likes and dislikes. Giving life to that character became increasingly important to them: they joked about him; they learnt through him, they sent him on a trip and worried if he is OK. Pupils created their character, gave him a name, created a doll, came up with his family tree and described his personality. This made pupils proud not only for their work but also for their origins.



### 3.3 Professional development building in eTwinning on the theme of cultural awareness

Cultural awareness in an individual does not occur naturally but it is developed and influenced by self-reflection, education, input from peers and families, exposure to media and many other factors. Since its inception twelve years ago, eTwinning has continuously offered teachers opportunities to explore this area through its various professional development activities and in this section we describe some of the more recent offerings.

In eTwinning teachers have the opportunity to attend online professional development events with both synchronous and asynchronous activities (Learning Events) or synchronous short events/webinars (Online Seminars) on various topics including the topic of Inclusion.

One recent example of heightening cultural awareness may be seen in the online seminar "Supporting multilingual classrooms", during which the experts Sara Breslin and Terry Lamb mentioned that linguistic and cultural diversity is now the norm in European classrooms. They provided an overview of the tools and activities developed and organised by the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe (ECML) in support of an inclusive, plurilingual and intercultural approach to teaching and learning. Another example here is another online seminar with the title: "Global Education & Interculturality in eTwinning", Rose-Anne Camilleri talked about the importance of global and cultural education to promote global citizens in a multicultural society and discussed the benefits and challenges of intercultural interaction during the implementation of eTwinning projects.

Teachers had the opportunity to interact through shared documents where they proposed what global education is for them and addressed different challenges they face like the lack of training on global and intercultural education.

Taking the example of a Learning Event, we have “The integration of newly arrived migrant pupils in daily school life” run by Erika Hummer and Alicia Bankhofer, participants reflected about their own identity and personal experiences and shared ideas on how to support the integration and inclusion of the newly arrived children in their class. They also discussed about the importance of overcoming stereotypes, ways to break down language and cultural barriers and activities where parents’ involvement is crucial for the successful integration of their children.

The experts provided useful resources like videos, vocabulary sets in Arabic and Farsi language and interesting links like: the EU Immigration Portal (<http://ec.europa.eu/immigration/>), the UN Refugee Agency (<http://www.unhcr.org/>) and the publication “Language teaching and learning in multilingual Classrooms” ([http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/repository/languages/library/studies/multilingual-classroom\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/languages/library/studies/multilingual-classroom_en.pdf)).

The participants as well created material that can be used in all classes with newly arrived migrant pupils. Specifically, they described the situation in their countries and their schools and proposed activities and actions they can take to better integrate newly arrived immigrants in their classrooms like images, songs and games. They were also asked to propose what answers they would give to the following statements: “We do not need them here!”, “The government is not doing enough to help the locals, only the refugees”, “They are too different, they are not like us, they do not want to be integrated.”, “What about our local learners? Are they not neglected when there is a focus on refugee learners?”

The teachers gave many answers; one of them is coming from Maria Ioannidou: “Migrants seem so different to us and we are so different for them. Let’s have an open mind and give them a chance, showing respect to the diversity.” All this material is available in an e-book.

In September 2017, a new featured Group with the title: “Integrating migrant students at school” was launched with the main aim to offer resources and ideas on the successful integration of migrant students at schools as well as open discussions on such an important issue for all educators. The moderator, Carol Barriuso, is proposing a compilation of teaching materials, games, videos, useful readings and eTwinning project examples related to the topic and invites the members to share their success stories and take part in different activities.





## 4. DEALING WITH EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES

One of the primary principles of diversity and main challenges to inclusion is that “one size does not fit all”, as Tony Geudens, an expert in the field from the Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities for Youth Network (SALTO-YOUTH<sup>1</sup>), states under the first section. This is something that teachers should take into account when they enter the class. When projects are built around the individual needs, interests and aspiration of pupils, then all pupils can actively contribute and being involved despite the challenges they may face. In the second section, six teachers describe how their pupils, who face learning difficulties, are hospitalised or have behavioural problems, worked in eTwinning projects and managed to show their talents and interests and feel accepted by the whole class. And as a head teacher points out: an eTwinning project is an example on how inclusion can be fostered in any kind of class, when you find the right way to work! Last but not least, teachers need guidance and support in this matter, and the last section highlights what eTwinning can do to that end.



**Tony Geudens**

SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion Resource  
Centre, Brussels, Belgium

### 4.1 Nobody should be left behind

Europe is more than economic cooperation. The Europe 2020 strategy does not only set out to reach smart and sustainable growth, **it should also be inclusive of all**. But in times of (perceived) social injustice, some young people turn away from society.

Hence the Paris Declaration 2015 that focuses on shared values such as citizenship, tolerance and non-discrimination. Education, both at school or in youth work, has a vital role to play to **address the needs of disadvantaged children and young people** and make sure they are not left behind.

But how do you **keep young people from disengaging**, with school, with youth work, with society?

1 <https://www.salto-youth.net/about/>

## Different opportunities for different needs ...

All people are born equal, indeed. But, at the same time, **everybody has different needs**. If we treat all young people equally in the strict sense, inevitably some of their needs will not be met. Other stakeholders should fill this gap (e.g. parents, youth work, peers) or the young persons will conclude that 'it is not for them'.

The Erasmus+ programme focuses on Equity and Inclusion. To allow everybody to enjoy the same opportunities, we need to give them **equitable (fair) support, tailored to their needs**, to be included Nobody would be against a ramp for a wheelchair user. But how do we accommodate young people who cannot sit still, who struggle with their identity, who don't master the language...

### Do you like pistachios?

What happens when you put a bowl of pistachio nuts on the table? Nobody wants the closed ones. They are too difficult to crack. **Idem with young people**. Professionals have the tendency to pick the low-hanging fruit, the easy ones.

But the most disadvantaged ones need our attention most. You probably heard about how **every euro spent in early intervention pays itself back manifold** in a later stage of life. Positive opportunities at young age keep them away from unemployment, hospital or prison when adult. The earlier we start to combat exclusion, the more we prevent scarring effects.

### Extra tools for your toolbox

**One size does not fit all**. Some young people might not be made for school for whatever reason. Non-formal classroom methods (e.g. eTwinning, learning by doing...) can keep young people on board. SALTO has a **Toolbox full of non-formal methods**<sup>2</sup> (from youth work) that bring a breeze of fresh air to your classroom.

Often young people face **challenges beyond your curriculum**. Open-minded schools and teachers can cooperate with youth work to empower young people to overcome their difficulties based on equal footing. Youth work puts young people in the driver's seat. (Erasmus+) youth projects give young people some **time-out**, important **soft skills**, renewed **motivation** and a clearer **orientation** in life so that they are back on track to become the fully-fledged person everybody aspires to be.

**Because nobody should be left behind.**

---

2 [www.salto-youth.net/toolbox/](http://www.salto-youth.net/toolbox/)

## 4.2. Testimonies from teachers, pupils and head teachers



In schools, there are always teachers who feel compelled to help the “closed pistachios” and pay a lot of effort to “open them”. Some of these teachers describe below how they foster the education of disadvantaged children by eTwinning projects specially designed to address their needs in collaboration with other colleagues around Europe.

**Project Title:** “Sound Mind in a Sound Body”  
**Partner Schools:** 4 partner schools (CZ, HU, IT, RO)  
**Level:** Upper Secondary- Vocational

*eTwinning projects are of essential use in vocational schools where students have problems with behaviour, learning and sometimes socialization. Our students are usually the ones who perform the lowest in primary school, who have negative learning experiences and sometimes it is a real effort to keep them at school. In our projects, we try our best to combine practical and theoretical subjects to make students use their skills in practice. These are skills that their future workplace is looking for and we must do our best to provide them with. During the projects, students can discover what they excel at and hence compensate for their previous experiences. By finding topics that appeal both to their everyday life and to their trade, we manage to engage*

and motivate them, for example, shooting a Christmas video, making cookery videos at home or meeting our project partners for a day of teamwork and fun. When watching the first video, the rest of the students reacted: “is there still time for us to make our own video at home?”. They feel that they are wanted, they are valuable people and worthy of success.

**Eva Toth** (English teacher)

**School:** Nagykáta Ipari Technical and Vocational School of CSZC, Hungary

Projects helped to keep up my interest and attention while bringing us together as a group at the same time. I especially liked the videos: I could show what I am good at.



**Annabella** (Age: 20)

**Project Title:** “A birthday card for Rebeca-getting viral on eTwinning”

**Partner Schools:** 195 partner schools (AL, AM, BA, CZ, DE, ES, FI, FR, GE, GR, HR, IT, LT, MT, NO, PL, PT, RO, RS, SI, SK, SE, TR, UA, UK,)

**Level:** Lower Secondary



This project’s primary activity was sending birthday cards to Rebeca, a special student who lives at the Hospital due to chronic health problems and physical disabilities, allowing her to feel part of a great community of pupils. The project grew beyond all expectations and Rebeca received over 3000 birthday cards, and continues to receive some still. The TwinSpace was invaded with songs, videos, images and pictures sending best wishes to Rebeca, making every new day a special day for our special girl! With great joy and motivation, she goes to the hospital school, anticipating the moment when she opens her adapted computer and sees the surprises that her European peers leave for her every day. This project developed our students’ humanitarian values

and allowed them to experience the joy of giving without expecting anything in return. It also developed friendship and the sense of empathy with other children's problems and inspired a desire to communicate in a foreign language. It helped the students understand that they can remain pupils even in hospital. This project also aimed to encourage long stay and recurrent patients in hospital school settings to use ICT (video, email, podcasts, blogs) and to develop links with other young people. Rebeca is currently making her own digital thank you cards to send to all the schools that congratulated her on her birthday.

**Ana Madalena Paiva Boléo Adragão Pina Fernandes** (Art teacher)

**School:** Agrupamento de Escolas Patrício Prazeres, Portugal

*I really enjoyed receiving all these postcards. I did not know eTwinning before. I was surprised to see so many letters. It was a very amusing birthday. I loved being with my colleagues and teachers celebrating this very important day.*



**Rebeca** (Age: 14)

*I loved this project. We felt so close to Rebeca and we were able to share our work!*



**Leonor** (Age: 12)

**Project Title:** "We are able to..."

**Partner Schools:** 6 partner schools (AL, ES, GR, LT, PT, SI)

**Level:** Primary

*eTwinning project participants are children with various development disorders and other disabilities. Proper learning environment and carefully selected tools allow children with special needs to successfully participate into eTwinning activities. During the project, "We are able to..." the children of my class had a cooking lesson, which helped them to develop cognitive skills and strengthen fine motor skills. While making snowmen from various food products, the learners had an opportunity to perform practical tasks: to peel an egg, cut carrots into small pieces, make a product from various types of food. This practical workshop involved all learners into one single activity, developed independence, promoted communication and cooperation, developed fine motor skills. Having achieved the final activity, the learners experienced the joy of learning in a positive way and gained valuable practical experience.*

**Ingrida Jureviciene** (Special education teacher)

**School:** Kedainiai Special School, Lithuania



*I have problems with writing, but I managed to make a perfect snowman from food products. I am so happy with this achievement, because I have learned how to peel an egg in a correct way.*



**Greta** (Age: 10)

*Through the eTwinning project, the pupils acquired practical skills that are necessary in everyday life, as well as broadened their cognitive abilities and developed general competences. These activities promoted learners' self-sufficiency and diminished their dependency on adults.*



**Virginija Kairiene** (head teacher)

**Project Title:** “eTwinning dream”  
**Partner Schools:** 4 partner schools (ES, GR, IT)  
**Level:** Upper Secondary- Vocational

*The project “eTwinning dream” helped partner students with learning difficulties (in the classes there were some dyslexics) to study English. They could not write or read the language in the textbooks and did not have the same opportunities as their classmates. Our project, based on the*

creation of real communicative contexts, helped students learn English thanks to real interaction between partners and skipping the use of textbooks in favour of online and offline language exchange. All the activities used ICT in such a way that students had the need to use the language to speak with their partner peers and exchange ideas. In this way, they found a great motivation and did not think about the fear of making grammar mistakes. Communication was the objective. Some of the online activities were playing games during videoconference meetings, working and collaborating on common online blackboards, writing messages on the smart boards or using codes and avatars, chats and collaborative docs. The offline ones were mostly about recording videos and posting them into the TwinSpace so that they had the possibility to be used by partners; collaboratively preparing documents to be read in order to play with them (this helped students with special needs), language games and online quizzes to be solved. This method helped dyslexics, as they did not think about their difficulties. They achieved the objectives like the rest of the class who found many benefits as well.

**Marina Screpenti** (Primary School Teacher)  
**School:** Istituto Comprensivo 3 Chieti, Italy



*I didn't realise we were studying. It seemed we were only playing and communicating with friends. I usually have no difficulties with English but my friend cannot write and he cannot read as well. With this project, he could do the same activities like the rest of the class.*



**Paolo** (age: 9)

*The eTwinning dream project and the platform were great and let students overcome their difficulties. It is quite common that students with learning difficulties have problems with English. The project helped them to feel like the rest of the class.*



**Maria Assunta Michelangeli** (head teacher)

**Project Title:** "The Sound of Silence. International communication by sign languages between Italy and Portugal"

**Partner Schools:** 2 partner schools (IT, PT)

**Level:** Upper Secondary

*I am not a teacher for special needs students. The project I would like to talk about started from the need of a whole class to understand the strength and importance of the "silent language" (Italian sign language) used by one of our pupils. This year, all my class of 14-year-old pupils came from different schools. This year, we also had a deaf student (with a light cognitive deficit) who could only express herself by sign language. As the communication was so difficult, the other students did not make an effort to know her better and communicate with her, so I decided to create a project in which she could be the medium between the class and "the world out there". Finding other teachers willing to start a project based on sign language took quite a long time but finally I met an enthusiastic colleague from Portugal at her first experience with eTwinning but highly skilled to deaf students. I helped her to use the platform and she helped me to work with Lia and despite the fact that Italian and Portuguese sign languages are very different, we worked on cultural contents exchanging simple signs with great results.*

**Simone Bionda** (English and Spanish teacher)

**School:** I.I.S. Barsanti - Salvetti, Italy

*I enjoyed the project. I taught some signs to my classmates, maybe I could be a teacher one day!" I cannot wait for the new project next year!*



**Lia** (Age: 14)

This eTwinning project is an example on how inclusion can be fostered in any kind of class, when you find the right way to work!



**Andrea Bernabè** (head teacher)

**Project Title:** “Wonders of magic window”

**Partner Schools:** 3 partner schools (HU, PT)

**Level:** Primary



The pupils who participated in the project are struggling with serious learning obstacles. They are pupils with special educational needs, who have a number of partial abilities that hinder their learning process. Their social competence and their ability to connect have become more difficult, so they need to be integrated into the whole society. Developing areas identified through the intervention of expert opinions require them to solve dull and embarrassing repetitive tasks. However, the eTwinning project activities, which are fun and engaging, provide them with a learning environment that meets the challenges of the 21st century. Knowledge acquisition is informal, as the wide range of programs and applications of ICT applications provide them with a great experience in project implementation. They can enrich their knowledge base in this international community that provides useful competences to them. Their self-confidence, self-esteem increases greatly in each action, performance, competition. Students who experience many failures recognise themselves as valuable people through what they experience during eTwinning projects. These “pioneering kids”, once slightly rejected and disregarded, are all of

a sudden becoming the pride of the school, showing their ranking and diploma in eTwinning. Overall, it can be said that participation in the eTwinning program can become a revolutionary new way of special educational development. A kind, helpful, understanding, cheerful community is a remedy for children with special educational needs, studying under integrated conditions and struggling with complex difficulties.

**Irma Szeverenyi Ujhelyine** (Special Education teacher)

**School:** Zuglói Benedek Elek Gyógypedagógiai Módszertani Intézmény, Hungary

*I'm delighted to be part of eTwinning because it was interesting and exciting. I managed to know many computer programs and applications. And I could even play a role in a performance! My teachers and my classmates were proud of me.*



**Balázs** (Age: 13)

*It is of great help to our school that our students with special educational needs have participated in eTwinning. In a project covering international levels, they can develop informally and playfully, which has a beneficial effect on their learning processes.*



**Mónika Czető** (Deputy Director)

### 4.3 Community building in inclusive education

Many powerful projects have been described so far in this book, and according to the input coming from pupils, the eTwinning projects really helped them to feel part of their class, exhibit their talents, and work with students from other countries. Their teachers managed through their project work to support all learners and make them feel valued. However teachers themselves also need a specific kind of support in order to offer more to their students. Teachers need new ideas that they can implement in their class but they also need to present their work to their colleagues. eTwinning offers the opportunity to teachers to do just that; they can join the eTwinning Featured Groups, which are online private communities for eTwinners to discuss and work together on varied topics.

One of the groups is dedicated to “Inclusive Education” and run by a Croatian English teacher, Marijana Smolčec. It is mainly focused on inclusive students and inclusive classrooms, but also about inclusion in general and has more than 2700 members.

The group is aimed to all educators who want to improve educational skills and strengthen their competencies in teaching students with learning disabilities or special educational needs, but also gifted and talented students. This is a support group where teachers can share their experiences, materials, activities, as well as participate in live events dedicated to different type of students.



Since 2015, there have been 10 expert talks with guest speakers from the USA, Israel, Croatia, Brazil, Canada and Ireland. The group also organises annual and monthly online activities where teachers share their favourite web tools or projects that worked well in their classrooms. There are also Twitter chats on various topics from inclusive students to cultural diversity. All the Live events, group activities, Twitter chats, various member materials, group ebooks etc. are stored within the group itself and are always available to its members.

Members have the opportunity to express their views on different topics and share good practices. For example, in one of the Twitter chats they all agreed that *“students need real life skills and they should be approached equally because they can be creative and talented in their own way. Teachers’ task is to help them”*.

Experts have given their insights on inclusion like Donal O’Reilly, deputy principal in the Killorglin Community College and eTwinning ambassador in Ireland, who stated in his expert talk *“Inclusive and Accessible Classroom”*, that: *“The road to change is to embrace change, be proactive, open your mind, reflect and change what is in your control”*. He asked the participants to tell who has the greatest potential to create the inclusive and accessible classroom and most of them replied that teachers have the potential if they have the will and the passion in the work they are doing. Brian stated that *“in eTwinning everybody is equal, all students are equal in this. No matter who you are, what your background is, eTwinning gives you the sense of being part of a greater community, it ties into the inclusive classroom”*.





## 5. CONCLUSION



**Anne Gilleran**  
Senior Pedagogical Manager  
eTwinning Central Support Service,  
European Schoolnet

As we said at the beginning, inclusion goes hand in hand with embracing diversity, and the greatest challenge any society faces is how to get the balance right.

**“United in diversity”**, the motto of the European Union, first came into use in 2000. It affirms how Europeans have come together, in the form of the Union, to work for peace and prosperity, and at the same time being enriched by the continent’s many different cultures, traditions and languages.

Europe has always fostered the notion of strength in diversity and a fully inclusive society, which is not only enshrined in legislation but also makes for a rich cultural weave in our societies. Throughout this book on eTwinning, we have seen that young people are generous and want to be understanding and inclusive, provided that they are guided in the proper way, in all types of challenging situations be it geographical, cultural or educational.

The eTwinning examples from French Guiana and Madeira are wonderful examples of the borderless nature of eTwinning’s sense of inclusion to those children who may suffer from a sense of geographical exclusion; what of the amazing example of the work done by young people in the project Migrants and Refugees, where they focused the efforts of trying to get into the shoes of the ‘other’ to understand and empathise with the situation of people who are in a state of cultural upheaval as they seek to build their lives anew in a foreign county and in so doing change their attitudes and opinions; The story of Rebeca, confined to hospital, yet overwhelmed by the good wishes pouring into her from young eTwinning pupils across Europe is a great example of how children want to be inclusive, want to reach out and understand, want to make other children feel appreciated. These are only a few of the examples of course but every story in this book contributes another thread to that cultural weave which is the strength of our European society.

eTwinning teachers have shown that they are willing to rise to the challenge of helping their students to reach out to others with generosity and creativity. Despite dystopian tendencies of modern media, good will, generosity and a willingness to share and understand exists, and flourishes in the members of the eTwinning community.





## 6. REFERENCES

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS supporting the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism (14.06.2016):**

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/repository/education/library/publications/2016/communication-preventing-radicalisation\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/library/publications/2016/communication-preventing-radicalisation_en.pdf)

**Declaration on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education (2015):**

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/repository/education/news/2015/documents/citizenship-education-declaration\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/news/2015/documents/citizenship-education-declaration_en.pdf)

**Europe 2020, a European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (2010):**

<http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/pdf/COMPLET%20EN%20BARROSO%20%20%20007%20-%20Europe%202020%20-%20EN%20version.pdf>

**European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture, 2014. Erasmus+, Inclusion and Diversity Strategy-in the field of Youth:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/reports/inclusion-diversity-strategy\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/youth/library/reports/inclusion-diversity-strategy_en.pdf)

**UNESCO, 2017. A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education:**

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002482/248254e.pdf>





## 7. LINKS TO ETWINNING ACTIVITIES

### **Learning Events:**

<https://www.etwinning.net/en/pub/highlights/learning-events.htm>

### **Online Seminars:**

<https://www.etwinning.net/en/pub/highlights/online-seminars.htm>

### **Online Seminar: “Supporting multilingual classroom”:**

<https://youtu.be/4cyqIChuXuU?list=PLlktD7Jqy0HwhgB2tMdAhcaRxs0yIQQNG>

### **Online Seminar: “Global Education & Interculturality in eTwinning”:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=anF15LGjGtA&t=4s&list=PLlktD7Jqy0HwhgB2tMdAhcaRxs0yIQQNG&index=18>

### **eTwinning Inclusive Education Live Event “Inclusive and Accessible Classroom”:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XbOte8rDEvo>

### **“The integration of newly arrived migrant pupils in daily school life” Learning Event’s e-book:**

<https://learninglab.etwinning.net/files/collabspace/1/61/961/18961/files/bcec5566.pdf>



# TABLE OF COUNTRIES ABBREVIATIONS

Member States	Abbreviations
Austria	AT
Belgium	BE
Bulgaria	BG
Croatia	HR
Cyprus	CY
Czech Republic	CZ
Denmark	DK
Estonia	EE
Finland	FI
France	FR
Germany	DE
Greece	GR
Hungary	HU
Ireland	IE
Italy	IT
Latvia	LV
Lithuania	LT
Luxembourg	LU
Malta	MT
Netherlands	NL
Poland	PL
Portugal	PT
Romania	RO
Slovakia	SK
Slovenia	SI
Spain	ES
Sweden	SE
United Kingdom	UK

Erasmus+ Countries	Abbreviations
Albania	AL
Bosnia and Herzegovina	BA
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	MK
Iceland	IS
Norway	NO
Serbia	RS
Turkey	TR

eTwinning Plus Countries	Abbreviations
Armenia	AM
Azerbaijan	AZ
Georgia	GE
Moldova	MD
Tunisia	TN
Ukraine	UA

# NSS & PSA CONTACTS

## Get help in your language

The National Support Services (NSS) and Partner Support Agencies (PSA) represent eTwinning in your country. You can contact them directly for support or training via the contact details below.

### ALBANIA

Educational Technologies and Statistics Department  
Ministry of Education and Sport of Albania

### ARMENIA

National Centre of Educational Technologies  
National eTwinning Plus website: <http://etwinningplus.amedu.am/>

### AUSTRIA

Nationalagentur Erasmus+ Bildung  
(National Agency for Erasmus+ Education)  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.at>

### AZERBAIJAN

Ministry of Education  
Bureau on ICT for Education  
National eTwinning Plus website: <http://www.ict.edu.az/>

### BELGIUM (FRENCH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY)

Ministère de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles  
(Ministry of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation)  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.enseignement.be/etwinning>

### BELGIUM (DUTCH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY)

EPOS  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.be>

### BELGIUM (GERMAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITY)

Jugendbüro der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft V.o.G.  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.jugendbuero.be/unsere-programme/etwinning/>

### BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Agencija za predškolsko, osnovno i srednje obrazovanje  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.aposo.gov.ba>

### BULGARIA

Център за развитие на човешките ресурси  
(Human Resource Development Centre)  
National eTwinning website: <http://etwinning.hrdc.bg>

## **CROATIA**

Agencija za mobilnost i programe Europske unije  
(Agency for mobility and EU programmes)  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.hr/>

## **CZECH REPUBLIC**

Dům zahraniční spolupráce – Národní podpůrné středisko pro eTwinning, Národní agentura programu Erasmus+  
(Centre for International Cooperation in Education – National Support Service for eTwinning, National agency for Erasmus+)  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.cz>

## **CYPRUS**

Foundation for the Management of European Lifelong Learning Programmes  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.org.cy>

## **DENMARK**

Styrelsen for It og Læring (STIL) – Ministeriet for Børn, Undervisning og Ligestilling  
(National Agency for IT and Learning)  
National eTwinning website: <http://etwinning.emu.dk>

## **ESTONIA**

Hariduse Infotehnoloogia Sihtasutus  
(Information Technology Foundation for Education)  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.innovatsioonikeskus.ee/et/etwinning-1>

## **FINLAND**

Opetushallitus  
(National Board of Education)  
National eTwinning websites: <http://www.edu.fi/etwinning> & [www.edu.fi/etwinning/svenska](http://www.edu.fi/etwinning/svenska) (Swedish)

## **FRANCE**

Canopé  
Bureau d'assistance national eTwinning  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.fr>

## **FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

Национална агенција за европски образовни програми и мобилност  
(National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility)  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.mk>

## **GEORGIA**

National Center for Teacher Professional Development (TPDC)  
National eTwinning Plus website: <http://etwinningplus.ge/node/17>

## **GERMANY**

Pädagogischer Austauschdienst des Sekretariats der Kultusministerkonferenz  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.de>

## **GREECE**

CTI “Diophantus” Computer technology institute & press  
Ινστιτούτο Τεχνολογίας Υπολογιστών και Εκδόσεων (ITYE - ΔΙΟΦΑΝΤΟΣ)  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.gr>

## **HUNGARY**

Oktatási Hivatal – Pedagógiai-szakmai Szolgáltatások Koordinációs Főosztály  
National eTwinning website: [www.etwinning.hu](http://www.etwinning.hu)

## ICELAND

Rannís - Icelandic Centre for Research

National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.is>

## IRELAND

Léargas, The Exchange Bureau

National eTwinning website: [www.etwinning.ie](http://www.etwinning.ie)

## ITALY

INDIRE - Istituto Nazionale di Documentazione, Innovazione e Ricerca Educativa  
(National Institute of Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research)

National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.it>

## LATVIA

Jaunatnes starptautisko programmu aģentūra

(Agency for International Program for Youth)

National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.lv>

## LIECHTENSTEIN

Agentur für Internationale Bildungsangelegenheiten (AIBA)

National eTwinning website: <http://www.erasmusplus.li>, <http://www.aiba.li>

## LITHUANIA

Švietimo mainų paramos fondas / Nacionalinė agentūra, atsakinga už Erasmus+

(Education Exchanges Support Foundation / National agency for Erasmus+)

National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.lt>

## LUXEMBOURG

ANEFORÉ asbl

Agence Nationale pour le programme européen d'éducation et de formation tout au long de la vie

National eTwinning website: <http://www.eTwinning.lu>

## MALTA

Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education Department of eLearning

National eTwinning website: <http://etwinning.skola.edu.mt>

## MOLDOVA

East Europe Foundation Moldova

National eTwinning Plus website: <http://etwinning.md/>

## NETHERLANDS

EP-Nuffic

National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.nl>

## NORWAY

Senter for IKT i Utdanningen

(Norwegian Centre for ICT in Education)

National eTwinning website: <http://iktsenteret.no/prosjekter/etwinning>

## POLAND

Fundacja Rozwoju Systemu Edukacji

(Foundation for the Development of the Education System)

National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.pl>

## **PORTUGAL**

Direção-Geral da Educação – Ministério da Educação  
(Directorate-General for Education – Ministry of Education and Science)  
National eTwinning website: <http://etwinning.dge.mec.pt/>

## **ROMANIA**

Institutul de Stiinte ale Educatiei  
(Institute for Education Sciences)  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.ro>

## **SERBIA**

Foundation Tempus  
National eTwinning website: <http://erasmusplus.rs/>

## **SLOVAKIA**

Zilinska Univerzita (University of Zilina)  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.sk>

## **SLOVENIA**

Center RS za mobilnost in evropske programe izobraževanja in usposabljanja – CMEPIUS  
(Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and Educational Training Programmes – CMEPIUS)  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.cmepius.si/solsko-izobrazevanje/etwinning/>

## **SPAIN**

Instituto Nacional de Tecnologías Educativas y de Formación del Profesorado  
Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte  
(Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports)  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.etwinning.es>

## **SWEDEN**

Universitets- och högskolerådet  
(The Swedish Council for Higher Education)  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.utbyten.se>

## **TUNISIA**

Centre National des Technologies en Éducation  
National eTwinning Plus website: <http://www.cnte.tn/index.php/parteneriat/etwinning>

## **TURKEY**

MEB Yenilik ve Eğitim Teknolojileri Genel Müdürlüğü  
(Ministry of National Education: General Directorate of Innovation and Educational Technologies)  
National eTwinning website: <http://etwinning.meb.gov.tr>

## **UNITED KINGDOM**

British Council  
National eTwinning website: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/etwinning>

## **UKRAINE**

NSBC “Ukrainskiy proryv”  
National eTwinning Plus website: <http://www.etwinning.com.ua/>





[www.etwinning.net](http://www.etwinning.net)