

Open SESAME! **Sharing Enthusiasm, Stories and Actions in Millenials' Europe**

Project Summary

Active citizenship is more than active learning. It means taking actions starting from our own communities. One of the very first communities we belong to is school; which is the right place where teenagers can switch from "user mode" into "actors' mode". We are 5 partners from Italy, France, Spain, Germany and Latvia, some dealing with general education, others with vocational courses, all of us deeply committed in finding ways to initiate students into active citizenship. We work with students aged 14-18, some of them very responsible, others passive towards school and life; we also have several students with special needs and difficult social background. We have different stories and individualities but our common aim is to keep the doors of our schools open for extra-curricular activities which can connect more what we do during the lessons with the real world and what we have a passion for. The core idea of the project is to establish a set of CLUBS on different topics and interests to engage students into active participation and help them become responsible citizens of Europe. According to the partners' expertise and to the students requirements, the main clubs will be focused on the following fields of interest: Science - initiatives will range from simple and challenging experiments that students can do themselves, to science contests, a science fair at school, participation to local, regional or national contests, field trips and explorations. Debate - students will be taught what a debate is, how to organize ideas, how to express them with coherence. The Debate Club can explore relevant issues like discrimination, climate change, bullying, violence against women and children, refugees in Europe, life after a quarantine. Art and Music – art is a universal language embracing endless possibilities, offering a way to break down barriers and build a sense of community. Members of this club can help each other to explore new frontiers. Whatever their art interests and skills are, this club can be the catalyst for students' commitment or the perfect place to experiment emotions connected to their inner self. Geocaching - moving on to stage 2.0 of a previous Erasmus+ project, Geocachers in each school will extend and maintain educational caches and trails and lead field expeditions. They will connect to action-bound discoveries and cooperate with local Tourist Boards. Exploring the "Gamification"

opportunities of Geocaching might be a new challenge. No Hate Speech - the club aims at developing youth participation and citizenship, also including Internet governance processes. The Flipped Week - a week in which the schedule of the lessons is totally flipped and students become teachers, janitors, office clerks - and viceversa. Summer Camp - a city camp in which older students tutor the younger throughout games, challenges, explorations, creative writing and speaking tasks, under the supervision of the teachers. Students from partner schools travel to volunteer as language experts. These are the Clubs we will start with but others will follow, depending on the students' initiatives and creativity. Each partner school is an expert on one of the fields, so during each mobility the others will be trained on how to make a step forward, supported in planning actions or offered a new insight. The TwinSpace will be the tool used to support common work and exchange of ideas and materials. Other tools will be used such as school blogs, youtube channels, weebly. Clubs are established and boosted within the framework of the project, and will be then maintained by the students thanks to the acquired skills and expertise. Older students will leave the school, newcomers will join, the ones "in the middle" will maintain the clubs existence. Teachers monitor and coordinate activities; but students will take roles of responsibility in the clubs: director, secretary, press agent; and with the passing of the years they will take over. Students' Mobilities will be based on the Couchsurfing philosophy with students hosting partners in their homes. School communities will participate to clubs and to school dissemination events. Collaboration with local institutions will be of great support. Local media will be involved in order to understand the potential of the project and advertise it. These past days have put our certainties to the test and shed light on what is meaningful. For sure now we understand better what the word resilience means. As teachers, throughout our career we had already witnessed how powerful our actions become if supported by trust, and if we all join forces without stepping back or hiding behind excuses. There is no future in our schools if we do not challenge our students to share the leadership and get involved. If at the end of these two years they will decide to focus on totally different initiatives, it won't be a failure but the confirmation we are rowing in the right direction.