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The eTwinner

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Dear eTwinners,

Welcome to the 9th issue of our eTwinning newsletter. This year's annual theme – Democratic Participation – has been well reflected in all our eTwinning activities and events. The emphasis has helped both learners and educators to reflect and be more aware of its importance. Democracy needs to be nurtured from a very young age and education is the place where it needs to happen and a mindset developed. eTwinning provides the vehicle for such a mindset with opportunities where both teaching and learning can thrive.

**Dr Rose-anne
Camilleri**
*National
eTwinning
Coordinator*

Vincent Carabott
EO (DLTS)



Some 100 educators from State, Church and independent schools earlier on this year attended a seminar on Self-reflection on Effective Learning by Fostering the use of Innovative Educational Technologies (SELFIE) at St Nicholas College Secondary School, Dingli.

SELFIE is a tool designed to help schools embed digital technologies in teaching, learning and student assessment. The free tool is available online and was developed by the European Commission with a panel of European education experts. Maltese schools were among the first group of European schools that took the opportunity to use the tool during the 2017-2018 scholastic year.

The seminar was organised as a collaboration between the Directorate for Digital Literacy and Transversal Skills at the Education Ministry and the eSkills Malta Foundation.



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The Foundation launched the eSkills National Strategy 2019-2021 last March. A specific recommendation in the strategy is that of implementing the SELFIE tool in State, Church and independent schools in collaboration with the directorate.

The two main guest speakers at the seminar were Dr Panagiotis Kampylis from the European Commission JRC-IPTS and Sean Gallagher, principal at Attymass National School, Ireland. Dr Kampylis' presentation focused on the benefits the tool has to offer to schools and the snapshot it provides of how digital technologies are embedded in teaching and learning. Mr Gallagher provided examples how his school analysed the feedback gained through participating in SELFIE and how a whole school plan was developed to bring the necessary changes. The seminar was also addressed by DDLTS director Grazio Grixti and Carm Cachia, chief administrator at eSkills Malta Foundation.

The seminar included six workshops that covered the six areas featured in SELFIE: Leadership, Infrastructure and Equipment, Continuous Professional Development, Teaching and Learning, Assessment Practices and Student Digital Competence. The participants in each workshop came up with a plan on how a school would go about to improve teaching and learning in their respective area.

All schools now have the opportunity and are encouraged to participate in SELFIE during the current scholastic year.

BRIDGING ETWINNING AND ERASMUS+

A joint workshop between EUPA & eTwinning NSS

A joint workshop between European Union Programmes Agency (EUPA) & eTwinning National Support Service (NSS) was held at the Digital Literacy Centre in Hamrun on the 18th October 2019, hosting over 45 educators coming from all across the educational spectrum. The eTwinning NSS, in collabora-

tion with the European Union Programs Agency (EUPA) organised this joint seminar for schools interested in exploring the opportunities and possibilities in bridging eTwinning and Erasmus+.

The director for digital literacy Mr. Grazio Grixti opened the seminar by welcoming all



participants, emphasizing the positive impact such projects have on both educators and students in enhancing digital key competences and 21st century skills, while promoting the concept of global citizenship.

The eTwinning Coordinator, Dr. Rose-anne Camilleri, proceeded in giving a brief overview of how eTwinning supports Erasmus+ projects and how the use of its platform can be an asset in the collaborative and networking aspect of the project.

Ms. Graziella Brincat, a Digital Literacy Head of Department (Handaq Middle School), shared her practical experiences in bridging eTwinning with an Erasmus+ project demonstrating the benefits reaped from integrating both.

A detailed overview of the Key Action 1 and Key Action 2 partnerships was given by EUPA staff : Mr. Christopher Gatt, Ms.

Jessica Giordimaina and Ms. Christine Ciappara together with EUPA Programmes Manager Ms. Nathalie Buttigieg. Following this, participants were split into two groups according to the programme they were most interested in. During the workshop educators shared project idea possibilities and discussed the actual Erasmus+ application together with the workshop leader. The seminar concluded with up-to-date information of the upcoming deadlines and other meetings, support and seminars.

This seminar was a highly successful opportunity for educators from all levels to discuss, brainstorm and learn about creating potential Erasmus+ and eTwinning projects. The experts from both eTwinning and Erasmus+ very willingly guided and answered queries providing expertise and support to the participants present.

ETWINNING SCHOOL LABEL AWARDS CEREMONY

Daniela Scicluna - HoD (Digital Literacy & Transversal Skills)

Well done to the 6 Maltese schools/centres which this year were awarded with the eTwinning School Label title:

- Digital Literacy Centre
- Gozo College Sannat Primary School & Special Unit
- Gozo College Rabat Primary School
- Gozo College Kercem Primary School
- St. Theresa College Secondary School
- St. Clare College Sliema Primary School

This prestigious award, was granted by the eTwinning Central Support Service, based in Brussels. This award which was introduced in 2017, is an acknowledgment of the hard work and commitment of not only individual eTwinning teachers but also teams of teachers and school leaders within the same school. These schools are pioneers and recognised as leaders in areas such as: digital practice, eSafety practice, innovative and creative approaches to pedagogy,



promoting continuous professional development of staff and promoting collaborative learning practices with staff and students.

The award ceremony was held on the 4th October at The Digital Literacy Centre in Hamrun. Before the awards, teachers from each awarded school shared their good practices as well as the benefits and challenges they experienced throughout their projects. It was evident that the discussions and sharing of successes, challenges and solutions employed were very fruitful to both teachers and their administrative team present.



St Theresa Secondary School eTWINNING EXPERIENCE

Romina Briffa - Joanna Armeni

The school has been actively involved in eTwinning projects since October 2010. All projects were awarded the National Quality label, and the European Quality Label. Our school is currently coordinating its first Erasmus+ KA29 project with the name “Evolving Patterns

of Diversity”. Some of the school’s projects were: Be Smart Don’t Start, Care2Feed, Mission 2020, Let’s Make the Best of Nature, Natural Curiosities, Colour M@tter and The Book of Nature. As the titles suggest the themes revolved around health, food, nature and art issues.

Two projects were awarded at a European level, these being AL-C2H6OL awarded the eTwinning prize in 2013 and placed runner up in the secondary school category whereas Health4Life was awarded the eTwinning Prize in 2014 and placed first in the secondary school category.

We did have our good share of challenges along the way. In Secondary schools it has become impossible to carry out a project as part of the lesson due to the vast syllabus and other school activities. In the past years our school has experienced a burn out due to several changes in school administration and changes in the general educational system, including the changes in the syllabi. The lack of Wi-Fi working properly throughout the school makes it somewhat rather impossible to work. In our situation it has also been impossible to communicate with other schools through eTwinning Live.

eTwinning has left its positive impact on our school and students throughout these years. It has helped to encourage professional development, it has enabled us to work through a secure online platform and has also encouraged collaboration and exchange of good practices amongst educators. It has helped improve pedagogical



activities and relationships between teachers and students.

Working on an eTwinning project has many benefits that by the end of the day outweigh all the challenges. It is an interesting and rewarding experience for all those involved. eTwinning has empowered our students with the ability to work in a team and shoulder responsibilities. It has helped to increase a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship within our students and most importantly it has proved that project-based learning is an ideal learning skill to motivate students to learn and be more inquisitive. eTwinning has the power to enhance the focus of the 5C's altogether, these being collaboration, communication, creativity, critical and computational thinking.

Let's Share the Joy



Sundays are surely not associated with schools! However, for the second consecutive year, the main hall of Gozo College Middle School was again packed with students participating in the main event of the short eTwinning project 'JESC 2019! Let's Share the Joy Together', which, as its name implies, is closely related to the Junior Eurovision Song Contest.

The idea behind this activity is that students coming from different European countries, meet in their respective school to watch the final of the festival together. While doing so, they share the joy and enthusiasm in their different places through short video connections.

During the activity, those present in their respective schools also voted for their favourite songs. The votes were later summed up so that a single classification is issued. Voting is a very exciting moment particularly at the Gozitan school as participants do so in a digital way

using their devices. Results are displayed automatically and updated as each participant submits his/her own vote.

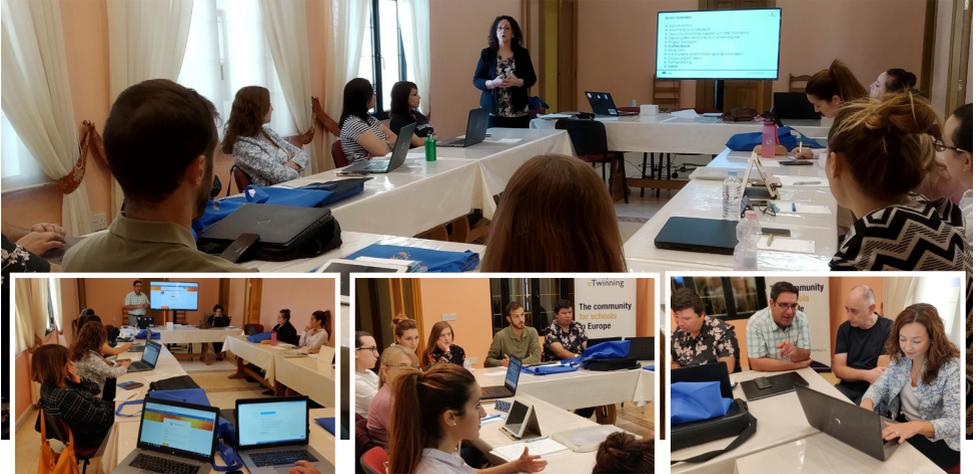
Though the project reaches its peak on the day of the JESC final, it is to be noted that the project duration takes a couple of weeks. During the weeks leading to the JESC final, participants from the different European schools are given the opportunity to introduce themselves, their respective countries and schools as well as the national representation in the song context. The project also offers the opportunity for participants to share geographical and cultural knowledge. In some schools, including the Gozitan one, Kahoot games were organised based on such knowledge.

It seems that this project is going to become part of the annual school calendar.

eTwinning Seminar

Victoria Gozo

eTwinning in the Classroom



Another fruitful seminar just concluded on the island of Gozo. On the 9th November 2019 a group of educators participated in an eTwinning workshop where various projects were showcased and eTwinning explored as an innovative pedagogy.

The workshop commenced with a general overview of the eTwinning concept and its importance in the educational spectrum by Dr. Rose-anne Camilleri the eTwinning Coordinator. This was followed up by a walkthrough of the eTwinning platform and the various tools available in eTwinningLive by the eTwinning ambassador and head of department (HoD) for digital lit-

eracy Mr. Mario Xerri. Participants explored the platform and its uses in the classroom on their respective laptops.

Project examples and practical tips were demonstrated by Ms Ramona Mercieca, a secondary school teacher from Gozo Middle School.

Ms Antonella Giles, HoD for digital Literacy and eTwinning National Support Service lead the participants to explore other Web2.0 tools which educators can use to enhance the learning experiences of their students.

The seminar concluded with the participants discussing potential project ideas and partner finding.