

## 5. PARTNERSHIP

## DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED

Please note that this section must be completed **jointly** by all institutions participating in the Partnership and must be identical in each copy submitted to each National Agency.

### 5.1 SUMMARY

Summary of the planned Partnership. This description may be used by the European Commission and/or the National Agency when providing information on selected projects, so please be clear and precise and do not exceed 200 words.

More and more, life in Europe, European countries and societies are changed and challenged by migration and globalisation, while at the same time the EU countries are more thoroughly discussing, developing and implementing a common European identity. Both processes are interconnected and there are quite a few points which tend to cause controversy. It becomes obvious that a European identity must contain both unifying and separating elements. However, especially the unifying elements often result from dealing with something foreign or alienating.

TOGETHER IN EUROPE (TIE) is a project consisting of four schools from Poland, France, the UK and Germany in which the perception of and dealings with connecting and foreign elements within Europe will be highlighted, discussed and also questioned to add to the conception of a European identity. Working on various topics ranging from stereotypes about each other to describing different migrant groups in the end TIE will also add to the partners' perception of the own identity and will enable the participants to feel more European.

The final product of the project will be a book publishing the best results of two years of work, giving the same space to all partners and offering summaries in different languages.

200 words

### 5.2 CONTEXT

What is the general context of **each institution** involved in the proposed Partnership? Is there a specific context as for example: Are the institutions in disadvantaged areas? Do the institutions have pupils, staff or other groups with specific needs, e.g. pupils at risk of social exclusion, pupils with special needs, migrants, refugees? If so, please explain.

**All four schools participating in this project**, the Gymnasium Bad Nenndorf, Collège Wilbur Wright, St. Monica's RC Language College and I Spoleczne Liceum Ogólnokształcące, are schools of secondary education. Considering size and population they are situated in the most important European countries and are either situated in a city itself or in the vicinity of one. All four schools want to educate future Europeans, emphasising the importance of foreign language learning and the need to prepare their students for the common European labour market.

**The secondary school Gymnasium Bad Nenndorf** is situated in a rural and quiet area 30 kilometres west of Hanover. Among other things, the school clearly concentrates on European issues and modern languages, for example, implementing the CertiLingua Label of Excellence at the moment and teaching bilingual classes. Due to several reforms over the last years the total amount of pupils has risen considerably and their abilities as well as what is expected of them have somewhat changed. The number of students having a migration background is increasing and the need to start integration measures is becoming more obvious.

**I Spoleczne Liceum Ogólnokształcące** is the very first non-public comprehensive secondary school established in Poland during the period of political reforms of 1989. The school is situated in the heart of Warsaw, in the Old Town area. The school places itself among the best secondary schools in Poland achieving yearly results far above the national average. Both apt students as well as those who need special care – the sick, the disabled or troubled with psychological problems are accepted. What is more, children of political refugees are admitted and guaranteed free of charge education. Additionally, two students of special need can be admitted to each class by headmaster's consent.

Since its formation the school has been implementing educational programmes focused on combating all forms of racism and xenophobia, for example by participating in an international programme called the Global School. Moreover, active voluntary participation in non-governmental organizations like Amnesty International or Helsinki Committee together with involvement in various charitable actions are encouraged.

Building democracy and promoting respect towards human rights including the rights of ethnic, national and religious minorities are among the school's priorities.

As the Polish society is gradually becoming more and more multicultural, the process of European integration is influencing educational choices of the students. Therefore, the partnership within the multicultural European project is bound to help them perceive themselves as citizens of Europe who share European values and contribute to the development of mutual understanding and cooperation.

The **French** school is located in a small town (3000 inhab.) roughly 15 km from Le Mans (150000 inhab), 200 km west of Paris. This town is mainly industrial (food processing industry) and a good part of the children come from working-class families, often unqualified and socially deprived, another part belonging to the middle class. In fact, they don't take advantage of the proximity of the big city, and mostly spend their free time at home: the area therefore combines rural isolation and industrial features.

School results are in the average, or even better than the regional/ national ones. Yet, most of the pupils lack curiosity and ambition, and their career choices are not as good as they could be. A lot of children are afraid of going away, and would prefer a local professional training. Obviously, these pupils are far from feeling European. They are not familiar with foreign countries either. They can even feel threatened by the broadening out of the Union, and are prone to stereotypes and clichés. Nonetheless, immigrant families, who are an extreme minority, are integrated and suffer no segregation. There is no suspicion since they are familiar and part of the community. Special needs children are also well accepted: Therefore, meeting young people from other European countries should overcome the pupils' possible apprehensions, boost their curiosity and desire to get to know their European partners better. The target pupils (13-14 year old) all learn English, some of them also German, other ones Spanish.

The **English** school is in the northern suburbs of the third largest city in England. It has always been a magnet for immigrant communities, sometimes attracting workers from former colonies such as the West Indies, Africa and the Indian Subcontinent, at other times taking in refugees such as European Jews. Recently there has been a major influx of Polish people looking for work. In terms of ethnicity, Manchester's Asian and British Asian population is considerably above the regional and national averages, as is the proportion of residents who identify as Muslim.

St Monica's was awarded Specialist Language College status in 2004 and Applied Learning Centre status in 2007. The school has the Sportsmark award, Healthy Schools status and International status. The results in all subjects are massively above national averages putting the school in the top 5% of public secondary schools in England. In the OFSTED inspection in January 2009 the school was judged to be "Outstanding" for the second time in a row. Although the pupils are predominantly white British in terms of ethnicity there are small but significant communities such as Italian, Spanish, Nigerian, Chinese and Polish. The fastest growing community is the Polish one. Integration is generally good but the pupils would benefit from a deeper understanding of problems presented by being absorbed into a new culture.

### 5.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE PARTNERSHIP

- What are the concrete objectives of the partnership?
- Explain what subjects or problems you intend to address.
- What approach will you take to achieve your objectives?

The general objective of the project can be seen as the attempt to raise the awareness of a European identity. On the one hand, this identity is diffuse and it is hard to define it exactly, yet it rests on shared cultural, geographical and historical backgrounds that are to be explored in the project. On the other hand, different influences from outside Europe can be witnessed in every country and they add to the concept of a shared identity. Due to this there will be two main objectives which the partners will concentrate on in one year each.

1. The objective of the project's first year is to achieve a raise of the awareness of a shared European identity itself by bringing together 'old' members of the EU - Germany, Britain, and France - as well as a "newcomer", Poland. The idea to address this problem derives from the perception that although the process of European integration has been going on for more than 50 years our students still very often see people from other European countries as foreigners, who they don't have much in common with. Our pupils, reflecting their families' ideas, usually have stereotypes: at best, we have to deal with ignorance and a lack of concern, at worst, with prejudices due to the heritage of the past and modern economic fears as European integration is sometimes even seen as something dangerous that may reduce their future perspectives. To approach this objective the task is to find out what is connecting us. To do so in year one of the project the first meeting of the partners will be used to prepare workshops in each school which, if possible, will be held on the same days and will deal with the same topics. Before the first meeting, pupils will prepare posters on the partner countries: their representations, positive or negative ones, should emerge from this preparatory brainstorming. We, as teachers, will supervise debates and help to challenge and hopefully overcome humiliating or badly-prejudiced points of views. A large group of students can participate, not only those who will attend the first meeting. On the first meeting participants will then be confronted with stereotypes existing in the other countries, and will learn how their own country is perceived: posters will trigger discussions, and each school will be able to find out what other partners need to know about them. Furthermore, the first meeting will be used to design surveys which will be conducted on the project days in each school to find out what is the same, similar or completely different in the everyday life of a European pupil. The project days, held at the end of January of each year, will be prepared for in regular classes. Besides the surveys dealing with aspects like school life, free-time activities, family situation, or use of the media, workshop topics would be the partner countries and the own country (responding to the stereotypes), relations between the partner countries, the history of the European integration, European institutions and companies, or Europe in pictures. To ensure that work on those days will be as effective as possible the topics for the workshops will be introduced to each school after the first meeting and students will be given time to do research, collect material and develop ideas of how to deal with their topic guided and supported by responsible teachers. The second meeting of the partners will afterwards be used to present the results of the project days, comparing and discussing them. If possible some of the first year's results will even form starting points for the work in year two.

2. The main objective of the second year will be to raise the awareness of "foreign or alien elements" or extra-European features in Europe to help pupils to understand and maybe accept as well as critically deal with them. The problem underlying this objective consists of the fact that, firstly, all European countries more and more feel the impact of a globalised world and that, secondly, it can be assumed that dealing with foreign elements and influences play a role in forming a European identity since those influences are similar in many European countries. However, many of those elements and influences are not understood and as a result new stereotypes, fear and even racism can arise.

To approach this objective it will be necessary to first find out about foreign or alien elements in each partner's area and country. Like in year one, the first meeting of the partner schools will be used to set up, agree on and prepare topics for the project days in each school. Likewise after the project days the results will be taken to the final meeting, presented, compared and discussed there. Topics for the second year's workshops will for example be food, biographies of local migrants, the impact of foreign plants and animals on flora and fauna, international trade e.g. using the example of clothes, professional football players from Asia, Africa and South America, or the impact of US-American TV shows. With regards to regional differences, however, the workshop topics in each partner school will somewhat differ. For example, exploring the Asian minority in Manchester, Eastern European work migration to Poland or the lives of Turks in the area of Bad Nenndorf will be possible focuses asking how each changes our surroundings and how it influences our identity or how much this is adding to our shared European identity.

3. To finish the project the third objective can be seen as an attempt to bring the two years together in a final product, which will be a book containing the best results of the work of each school. Experience in earlier projects has shown the problem that it is difficult to get to a result that both includes similar input from every partner and creates a lasting artefact.

To approach that problem the project's final outcome will be a printed book including the best results of the two years and giving the same number of pages to each participating school. Most of the contributions and articles will be published on the project's website before and this can help to decide which parts should be included in the final product asking for feedback on the work in each partner school. The book will be given to local libraries as well as to the contributing pupils to increase the motivation to achieve good results. To reduce the difficulties in expressing oneself the articles will be written in the mother tongue. However, an English summary (St. Monica's pupils will do so in French) at the end of each article will ensure that almost every reader can understand the gist. This will improve involved pupils' and the readers' language skills in the project's working language, English, while offering a realistic chance of using their foreign language.

#### 5.4 PARTNERSHIP AND DISTRIBUTION OF TASKS

Please explain the distribution of tasks between participating institutions and the competences required from each of them. Also explain how you will ensure the active involvement of all partners in common partnership activities.

**All four partners** will participate without exception in all activities and in the production of the final result. To ensure an almost equal share in the tasks and responsibilities each school will host the other partners once. Furthermore, each school will participate in the initial competition for the project's logo, designing the first set of surveys and setting up the website providing material about each school. Each school also will establish a group of pupils responsible for the promotion and implementation of the project, one of the tasks being to take care of a Comenius wall display in each school. At each school project days will, if possible, be held at the same time.

The **British** school in Manchester will host the partner's first meeting in November 2009 which will be used to reflect on the stereotypes the partners have and to prepare the first project days held in each school in January 2010. Furthermore, St Monica's is responsible for organising the printing of the final product, a book containing contributions from each partner.

The **French** school volunteered to host the second meeting scheduled for March 2010. The meeting will be used to present and evaluate the results of the first project days. Furthermore, the French school is responsible for setting up a questionnaire evaluating each activity connected to the project. For the pupils this will be called "journal of evaluation" and at the same time they can attach it to their portfolios - if available - to testify their participation.

The **Polish** school in Warsaw agreed on hosting the third meeting of the partners in November 2010 which will provide the chance to prepare the project days of the project's second year. Additionally, the Polish school volunteered to provide T-shirts bearing the project's logo which are to be worn by participating pupils and staff.

The **German** school is the coordinating school of the project. Therefore it was responsible for the preparatory meeting, which was held in early February 2009. Being the coordinating partner, it is also responsible for the intermediate evaluation of the project, using the material provided by the other partners. Furthermore, the German school is responsible for the onset and updating of the project's website presenting each school. Since the website is meant to present possible articles of the book the school is also responsible for collecting the material.

Gymnasium Bad Nenndorf will host the last meeting in March 2011 which will be used to present the results of the previous project days.

## 5.5 COOPERATION AND COMMUNICATION

Please explain how effective cooperation and communication between participating institutions will be organised.

The language used to communicate with all partners is English.

Four meetings including all partners are planned to evaluate the project's progress and to plan further and more detailed agreements. Especially the second meeting at the end of year one and the fourth meeting at the end of year two will be used to discuss and evaluate the work done. Furthermore, at these meetings provisional results of the work need to be presented to ensure the project goals can be realised.

To ensure that deadlines are realistic and can be achieved the group planning the project started to set up a schedule including everyone's holidays to know when the partners are available.

The partners agreed to send email to inform the other participants on the progress weekly. For the same purpose the partners decided to have a skype conference at least once a month on a set day (first Monday of every month, 8pm).

As well as taking some students to the meetings, students participating in the project will be encouraged to communicate with pupils from the partner schools via email, chat or even video conference. Some of the planned workshops on project days may involve necessary communication between pupils and they will be asked to comment on the results published on the Internet using email.

The project's website will provide another way of communication providing a visitor's book to leave comments and messages as well as a contact address for anyone interested.

## 5.6 IMPACT AND EUROPEAN ADDED VALUE

What impact and benefits of European cooperation do you expect Partnership activities to have on persons (pupils and staff) and on the participating institutions?

Pupils:

- Pupils' European competence and knowledge about Europe will increase when learning about similarities and differences in Europe.
- Their sensitivity for different circumstances due to living in a European country will grow.
- They will eventually become more open-minded towards the unknown.
- Getting to know more about their political and cultural environment as well as accepting other identities will strengthen their own identity.
- At the same time, TIE will work against prejudices and racism towards non-European elements.
- Pupils will get practice in being a good host.
- Getting to know and communicating with other European pupils will show that most young people in Europe have a lot in common.
- Travelling to other European countries and dealing with other pupils there will make them feel more European.
- TIE can create a desire for travelling and discovering other European countries as tourists, students or workers.
- Their intercultural competence will increase because of having to deal with partners from other countries, eventually they will make new friends.
- Working on project days in groups will increase their team-work abilities.
- Pupils will improve their abilities to collect and organise material when preparing for workshops.
- As contacts will be based on emails and research will have to be done independently, pupils will have to use new information technologies.
- They will improve their presentation skills when presenting their results.
- By including pupils in the evaluation of the project their abilities of critical assessment will improve.
- In Poland, Germany and France foreign language learning will profit from communication between pupils and the need to present results in a foreign language. TIE will show them that they can achieve something together even if their language level is not perfect and that a foreign language is a tool to communicate, work, have fun and cooperate, which will increase the motivation to use the language.
- At the same time, British students will have to make efforts in order to be understood, and be patient and tolerant towards those who don't master their language.
- Families will benefit from the project as well: some of them will welcome young foreigners, and be in contact with different countries, languages or cultures. Those who won't accommodate other pupils will benefit from the fact that their children should be interested in the project and moreover be motivated to greater participation in school.

#### Staff:

- The participating teachers can widen their horizon through the exchange with other teachers.
- Through the exchange of ideas teachers can compare and reflect on their methods and teaching practice, possibly recognizing different practicable approaches.
- Visiting other schools and working in workshops on project days means an escape from routine enriching the teacher's daily life.
- Participating teachers can develop further competence as mediators and project organisers.
- In the workshops an interdisciplinary approach will be encouraged thus turning teachers into learners, too.
- Workshops will also mean team-work in each school and different ways of coping with it: teachers will get to know different management practices and various solutions to a similar problem-solving situation.

#### Participating institutions:

- The project offers chances of active learning and of working in projects, thus enriching each school's curriculum and teaching methods.
- The existing image of the school may change due to positive reports about the project in local newspaper and radio stations.
- Through the exchange of ideas with partner schools the own school can learn about own advantages or disadvantages as well as getting to know other approaches and solutions to similar problems.
- New partners will be won, envisioning follow-up projects between the partner schools, which will make the school as such more attractive for pupils and parents.

## **5.8 EVALUATION**

How will you evaluate, during and after the Partnership, whether the aims of the partnership have been met and the expected impact has been achieved?

During the project evaluation will be ensured in different ways including all relevant groups.

On each project meeting the responsible participants of every school will evaluate the progress of the project at their school to adjust our work if necessary. Especially the meeting at the end of year one will be important because both years will have the same structure offering the chance to learn from problems or difficulties arising in year one. This will also be supported by regular email contacts and skype conferences.

Another form of evaluation is offered by the website containing the possibility to post comments on the project or on certain articles and material. Furthermore, the students of each school will comment on the work done which also allows to judge whether the results are valuable.

In each school the project days will be evaluated by the participating staff concerning preparation, topics and learning value of the day. Additionally, after each step a questionnaire, the "journal of evaluation", will be filled in by the students participating asking for gains in knowledge, positive and negative aspects of the work and what they would do differently if they could.

At the end of the project, especially at the last meeting held in Bad Nenndorf in March 2011, all responsible participants will evaluate the whole project using notes they will have written down in a diary reflecting on the project's planning, communication and activities. In addition to that we will ask for a feedback on the final product of those who receive a copy of the book.

## **5.9 ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT**

If your partnership focuses mainly on pupil involvement, please explain to what extent they will be involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of project activities.

And/or

If your partnership mainly deals with pedagogical or management issues, please explain how all relevant staff will be actively involved in planning, implementation and evaluation of project activities.

#### Planning

In each school there will be a group of pupils responsible for promoting, planning and implementing the project. This mainly voluntary group of pupils organised in clubs will be interested in the project and is explicitly given the chance to decide on topics and ways of dealing with them. Furthermore, they serve as a means of carrying the project's ideas into the schools talking about it in their classes.

### Implementation

The Comenius wall display will be taken care of by pupils, if possible some students can help to run the project's website using an open source programme which can be operated easily. At the beginning of the project the Comenius group will be responsible for organising the competition eventually leading to the project's logo.

Each school will send a certain amount of pupils to the meetings either as representatives of groups that have achieved the results which are to be presented or as pupils who want to organise certain topics for project days. They will be hosted by pupils and their families who themselves want to be good hosts and can show their school and area to their guest.

On project days as many pupils as possible are supposed to take part in the workshops. Pupils can choose the workshop they want to participate in, thus increasing the motivation to deal with the topic and the responsibility for the workshop. Certain workshops can be organised and run by pupils itself under the guidance of a teacher. Before the project days students also need to do research on their topics, collect material and develop ideas on how to deal with the topic.

### Evaluation

Besides using any chance of talking to participating pupils, after each activity (meetings, project days) those involved will be asked to evaluate the activity itself filling in a "journal of evaluation" offering room to write down what they have learned, how they liked the activity, what they would change if they could.

Another form of evaluation is provided by the project's website offering the chance to comment on existing results. This will be encouraged by the responsible teachers.

An indirect evaluation of the project's results will be done by letting pupils participate in the decision which articles should be chosen for the book.

## **5.10 INTEGRATION INTO LEARNING AND/OR OTHER ONGOING ACTIVITIES**

If the project focuses on pupil involvement, please explain how the project will be integrated into the curriculum / learning activities of the participating pupils in each of the participating organisations.

And/or

If your partnership mainly deals with pedagogical or management issues, please explain how the project will be integrated into the ongoing activities of the participating organisations.

In the project the group responsible for promoting the project will benefit most from planning and conducting the project because to a certain extent they can influence the project according to their interests and needs. Since each school's Comenius group is dealing exclusively with project matters they will/can be organised into extra-curricular clubs if the school's organisation doesn't allow an incorporation in regular classes.

On project days the amount of pupils involved should be as high as possible. Whereas in smaller schools the whole school can work together in the bigger schools certain grades - matching the grades in partner schools - will participate completely. To prepare for the project days different students will be asked to set up workshops for the project days and they will be responsible for the workshop itself.

Due to the project's topic and issues there will be many links with existing curricula so that it will be easy to involve many different subjects which in turn will profit from dealing with related topics in detail. Subjects which need to be mentioned here are history, geography, politics, ethic/religion, biology, art, native language classes, and PE.

In foreign language classes, namely English and French (in Britain), the summaries for the resulting articles will be studied, touching on aspects of language and structure. Additionally, those classes offer help in fostering communication and they can be used to comment on the results available on the website using the foreign language.

If possible, certain groups of partners can work on joint related projects besides the main activities which arise from regular classes and use the project's infrastructure.

## **5.11 DISSEMINATION AND USE OF RESULTS**

How will you disseminate and use the results, experiences and, where applicable, products of the Partnership?

- in the participating organisations?
- in the local communities?
- in the wider lifelong learning community?

### In the participating organisations

In each school a Comenius wall display will showcase the work done by different partners and ongoing activities as well as presenting some results. In order to enhance a community spirit between partners, a logo will be chosen in a competition between all four schools, to be used whenever needed. T-shirts will be designed and worn by the target group on project days.

Furthermore the schools' websites will be linked to the project's page offering more information to everyone. Additionally, in school the staff and students will be informed on a regular basis by the responsible teachers. At the end the final product will be placed in each school library.

In the local communities

During the project local newspapers and radio will be invited to report on the project days and project meetings to disseminate information about the project's issues and results. Furthermore, on project days non-school institutions and organisations will be included and accordingly will receive an example of the work concerning them. In the end the final product will be given to local libraries.

In the wider lifelong learning community

After the project has ended it is planned to make the final product available on the Internet allowing everyone interested to profit from our results but also to comment on them.

Each school will participate in local Comenius conferences sharing their experience with other schools interested in organising a project. Furthermore, some of the partner-schools will also work as teacher training establishments extending the Comenius idea to future schools and also to their fellow trainees.

After the project has finished further cooperation between the partners will be considered so that the cooperation will last longer than the project itself. In following Comenius projects we can share our experience and knowledge with our next partners.