



European  
Commission

EU support  
to local and regional  
authorities

# Regional partnerships *in school education*



Education and  
Training

More information on the European Union is available on the Internet (<http://europa.eu>).

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EU support  
to local and regional  
authorities

Regional  
partnerships  
*in school education*



# Introduction

## EU support to regional cooperation in school education

Tackling exclusion, empowering teachers, integrating recent migrants and making effective use of ICT. These are some of the many challenges faced by schools across Europe. Despite the differences in school systems and in educational and cultural approaches, many of these problems are common. When local and regional authorities in different countries work with schools to support education, they also face common issues. These include, among other examples, a lack of funding or resources, out-dated equipment and learning methodologies, and schools which work in isolation.

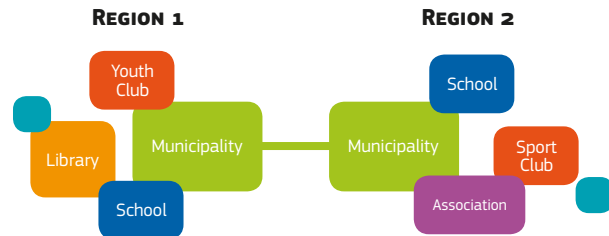
To support these challenges, in 2009 the European Commission launched Comenius Regio. As part of the European Union's Lifelong Learning Programme, Comenius Regio Partnerships promote cooperation between local and regional authorities in order to improve the quality of school education in the partner regions. These partnerships foster sustainable collaboration across borders and encourage participants to explore new ideas, share best practice and find common solutions. The cooperation also strengthens the European dimension in school education.

The involvement of local and regional authorities with a role in school education, such as town halls, regional ministries or municipal school boards, is fundamental to the success of Comenius Regio. Each two-year project involves at least two regions from different countries; and each region has at least three partners – the municipal authority, a school and one other organisation from the community. Partnerships can be larger and include many schools, local or community organisations, teacher training institutions, chambers of commerce, police departments and clubs or societies with an interest in education.

Together the partnerships can:

- ✦ help the region to develop and exchange best practice in school education;
- ✦ develop tools for sustainable cooperation; and
- ✦ strengthen the European dimension in school education.

**FIGURE 1 – AN EXAMPLE OF A COMENIUS REGIO PARTNERSHIP**



The involvement of many different organisations in the partnerships has been one of the attractions of the Comenius Regio scheme. Since its introduction in 2009, there have been more than 500 projects with 2 000 schools and 2 000 other local partners in over 1 000 regions in Europe. Despite the financial constraints on local and regional authorities, the Comenius Regio scheme has continued to be popular and the number of applications has increased twofold from 2009 to 2013.

Each partnership is based on local circumstances and reflects the needs of the school community. As well as flexibility in relation to its membership, each partnership focuses on its own area of work. This is likely to include organising school education, cooperation between schools and local partners, addressing common issues facing schools, and the development of stronger links between school communities in each region. Some projects have used Comenius Regio to complement existing arrangements for teacher and pupil mobility, staff exchanges and collaborative activities between towns and cities in the regions.

## Addressing a broad range of shared priorities

Cooperation is at the heart of the Comenius Regio action. This cooperation includes projects that provide opportunities for staff to accompany colleagues from other organisations as they do their job (shadowing), attend and organise conferences, seminars and workshops, and develop new resources, websites and videos based on their experiences. In total, more than 500 projects are contributing to the success of the whole initiative that seeks to:

- ✘ improve and increase pupil and educational staff mobility in Europe;
- ✘ enhance and increase partnerships between schools in Member States;
- ✘ encourage language learning and innovative ICT-based content;
- ✘ support teachers with different techniques and practices;
- ✘ enhance the quality and European dimension of teacher training; and
- ✘ improve pedagogical approaches and school management.

The flexibility offered by Comenius Regio encourages regions to develop projects which reflect local or regional priorities. In this brochure the projects usually fall into one of three broad areas:

- **Improving skills** e.g. increasing students' literacy and second language skills, and exploring new approaches to teaching mathematics and science;
- **Supporting equity** e.g. developing education programmes for disadvantaged groups, migrant pupils and their families, and reducing the number of pupils who either drop out or leave school early, for instance by providing careers guidance; and
- **Teacher development** e.g. exploring new approaches to initial teacher training and teachers' continuing professional development, and supporting school leaders.

Each project offers the partner organisations an opportunity to look at another country's system – and to reconsider their own with fresh eyes. This helps them to examine their assumptions about the way in which things are done, and to observe good practice in a different context. It also creates stronger personal relationships within a broader European context which can be the basis for future initiatives. In this brochure, there are many examples where existing approaches have been reviewed and new ones found. This includes imaginative ways to:

- ✘ build on the important contribution that families make to children's learning;
- ✘ involve children in more active, creative and innovative styles of learning;
- ✘ use feedback and assessment as a means of supporting children's learning in schools;
- ✘ encourage pupils to become more confident learners;
- ✘ support teachers through training and developing tools to tackle challenging issues; and
- ✘ involve the community in supporting children's learning.

The stories of success in this brochure provide concrete examples of the different kinds of outputs that the projects generate from the development of new curriculum materials and new teaching methods to a greater involvement of community groups in the life of the school.

Furthermore, they illustrate well how the synergy between Comenius Regio and other projects and initiatives contributes to a wider strategic approach to creating a European dimension in schools. Many Comenius Regio projects have been designed to complement existing activities, and this has greatly enhanced their effectiveness and impact.

## The benefits of being involved

Every Comenius Regio project starts by identifying likely outputs. This helps to provide a focus for the two years and ensures local priorities are addressed.

For schools involved in these partnerships, the outputs include new pedagogic approaches (e.g. Outdoor Learning, Bibliotherapy), the development of new resources (e.g. electronic toolboxes that can be downloaded from websites, learning and training modules for specific subjects, in-school access to public libraries), the organisation of local/regional conferences for the sharing of tools and best-practice, and the opportunity to work with organisations from outside the formal education system. For the local and regional authorities, the opportunity to learn from innovation, to encourage the community to become more involved in school education and the ability to disseminate effective practice provide significant added value. For organisations outside the school system, the benefits include an opportunity to understand school practice, to work with teachers on community priorities and to create long-lasting relationships with schools.

In some projects, participants have been able to work with larger networks and share their experiences at a national level. As well as benefitting participants, these projects have effectively 'changed practice' which is good for pupils, schools and the school system. By placing local and regional authorities at the centre of each project, the benefits can be disseminated widely to many other schools outside of those directly involved in the partnership. The learning from each may also be built upon after the work is completed. This does not simply maximise visibility for the projects and their outcomes – it ensures that these outcomes are sustainable in the longer term. In practice, this has been achieved through the creation of new opportunities, networks and institutional priorities. These include better integration of vulnerable pupils, such as immigrants or those with special needs, and investment in ICT equipment and in training for teachers to use it to best effect, to name but two.



For those involved in Comenius Regio, it is easy to identify the benefits at an individual, institutional and regional level. Participants often say that their project has included an opportunity to try out new approaches, develop new materials and become more confident about their own approach to school education. They also recognise that the involvement of partners from outside formal education contributes to their project's success as these partners can add valuable new perspectives and knowledge, and help to create impacts outside the school community. Finally, participants acknowledge the confidence that they gain from the realisation that challenges faced in schools and in the wider school community are not isolated examples – rather, they are shared by other countries in other educational systems.

## The impact on school education

The Comenius Regio projects have led to:

### > More effective pedagogy

Observing different styles of teaching has a much greater effect on teachers and other staff than just reading about it. The projects in this brochure show how school authorities have worked together to support teachers and school leaders in changing their teaching and learning style in the classroom as a result of their involvement in Comenius Regio. Local and regional authority staff have learnt how to promote more active learning in their schools, the use of assessment and feedback to promote learning, and using pupils' learning within the community as a context for school work.

### > More effective teaching resources

Those who are involved in developing teaching materials tend to be well motivated and understand how the resources can be adapted by municipal authorities and teachers to meet local circumstances. Throughout the projects in this brochure, there are clear benefits from developing, testing and amending pedagogic and work-related resources to meet pupils' needs.

### > Staff development

Comenius Regio is not just about observing practice, it is about using what has been seen to develop practical solutions in a local context. The European nature of the projects provides an additional challenge to assumptions about the status quo. This challenge aids reflection and stimulates more targeted and efficient training of school staff.

### > More reflective leadership

Much of the good practice experienced by participants in the Comenius Regio projects derives from decisions made by municipal and school leaders. New approaches, new ideas, new ways of motivating staff are all central aspects of effective leadership – many of the projects in this brochure illustrate how these experiences have been used to reform and modernise practice. Developing a culture which supports change and innovation is difficult – yet it is an important aspect of leadership for schools and authorities. With constant pressure on staff and high expectations from pupils, their parents, the community and wider society, it can be hard to look at education from a broader perspective.

### > Strengthening community links

Schools are not isolated institutions – they operate within the context of their local community. Comenius Regio provides an indispensable opportunity for municipal authorities to strengthen these links, as well as to act as a central pillar around which key actors from the community can come together to help create additional actions. These might focus on encouraging employers to work with learners on vocational qualifications, or on establishing new work placement opportunities for students, and new ways for them to learn through community activities, particularly in subjects such as drama, physical education and music.

Finding time to think about new ways of working is important – Comenius Regio is one way to do this as each project involves local and regional authorities responsible for school education and schools.

In 2011, 300 European participants from 28 countries attended the Comenius Regio Conference in Bordeaux. One of the important outcomes identified by this review was that the results were sustainable, as more schools could become involved and benefit from participants' original experience. In addition, best practice examples demonstrated that the Partnerships could form the basis for new networks and initiatives.



## The future

The EU's support to regional partnerships in school education is an important part of its drive to strengthen education systems which encourage young people to acquire the full range of competences they need for further study, employment and involvement in society. It can also make a great contribution to developing closer relationships between schools and their communities. This is an important aspect of the European Commission's plans for the new 2014-2020 education programme.

This brochure illustrates 16 projects that have benefited from the European Union's support and have successfully developed regional cooperation. With a view to informing, inspiring and motivating, these examples also invite you to become involved.

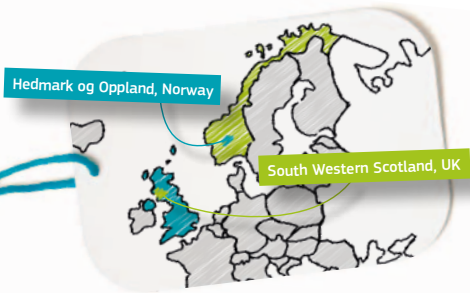




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## Improving literacy education

### PROJECT TITLE

Increasing literacy skills

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

Hedmark og Oppland, Norway

#### Coordinator organisation:

Ringsaker municipality

#### Partner organisations:

Nes primary school

Fagerlund primary school

Public library

#### Partner Region 2:

South Western Scotland, UK

#### Coordinator organisation:

South Lanarkshire Council

#### Partner organisations:

Crawforddyke Primary/Nursery

Lanark Primary/Nursery

Carluke High

Coulter/Lamington Primaries

Public library

### PROJECT PERIOD

2009-2011

### PROJECT WEBSITE

<http://ils-norwayandscotland.wikispaces.com/>

Comenius+Regio

Primary schools often look for innovative ways to develop literacy skills. Ringsaker municipality in Norway, and South Lanarkshire council in the UK, decided to compare their approaches to see whether greater use of libraries would help. There were two primary schools and a public library on the Norwegian team, and three primaries and a library on the Scottish team.

After shadowing each other in their respective schools, and visiting libraries in each region, the teams decided to strengthen links between the two environments. In Ringsaker, local librarians now work in schools. Pupils benefit from newly installed ICT systems that connect to the library and allow them to see if the books they want are available.

As a result of shadowing the Scottish team, the Norwegians also introduced new teaching methods. In South Lanarkshire, they use every minute of a lesson to show students how to improve. "Consequently, we learned to give more feedback and our pupils are now better guided," explains Anne Kari Thorsrud from the Norwegian team.

The Norwegians have also produced a new literacy plan in English and Norwegian. "It has four elements – learning letters, parent participation, reading and training teachers. The plan is now used in all 16 schools in our municipality," says Anne.

The Scottish team were particularly impressed by the Norwegians' 'outdoor learning', a practice that builds children's confidence and can transform their relationships with teachers. "Their overall approach inspired several of our schools to adapt their methods," Margaret Gibson from the Scottish team says. "For example, they helped us to identify the need for more in-service training, which we now do. The exchanges also made us appreciate the things we do well, and boosted our confidence," she adds.

The teams have produced videos to help teachers improve their methods, and these have been shared between the regions. They have also exchanged ideas on promoting quality improvement, for instance by holding a seminar on this topic for Ringsaker head teachers.

The project has had a lasting impact on participants. "It was truly inspirational and fascinating to compare – and draw upon – other teaching approaches from another region. I have been teaching for 30 years and never had such a valuable opportunity before," Margaret says.



## Using books for therapy



Can a reading help to change the behaviour of students with special needs? The authorities in the Municipality of Domžale, Slovenia, and the City of Łódź, Poland, decided to explore whether reading and discussing books with their peers could help them cope better with the problems that they face. The project also aimed to test whether this approach – known as ‘biblioprevention’ – could be used as a form of ‘therapy’ to prevent violent behaviour, as well. A kindergarten, primary school, youth centre and public library formed the Slovenian team. A secondary school, library and association for mentally handicapped young people made up the Polish team.

“Rodica primary school in Slovenia provided an example of good practice – it was able to show concretely the positive effects of ‘biblioprevention’,” Sabina Burkeljca from the Slovenian team says. “We held a national art and literary competition about books that have made a big impact on people’s lives. It attracted entries from all over the country and we subsequently published three collections of papers. One set of papers was from an international conference called ‘The magic of words’; another is called ‘Books that changed my life’, and the third is ‘Comenius Regio’ – documents generated by the teams.”

On their side, the Polish partners were inspired by the project to find new ways of working with special needs students. “We were able to introduce methods that decreased violent behaviour among students,” Katarzyna Wójt says. Methods used in the project included inviting students from the different regions to talk to each other about their hobbies and school life, present their home towns and countries and explore solutions to their problems with the help of books.

Two international conferences on bibliotherapy, as it is commonly known, were held in Slovenia and also in Poland. These served as a platform to help to disseminate information about the project to educational institutions. The impact also extended beyond the regions through the appearance of articles in professional publications.

“The project made us feel that we were members of the wider community in the European Union,” Katarzyna says. “It also helped us to appreciate the value of new techniques that we were able to learn through shadowing teachers in another country.”

Sabina adds: “Both teams changed their views on work problems by looking ‘over the fence’ of their own country. The contacts we made with our professional peers abroad have been maintained after the project was completed.”

### PROJECT TITLE

Biblioprevention

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

Domžale, Slovenia

#### Coordinator organisation:

Municipality Of Domžale

#### Partner organisations:

Primary School Rodica

Youth Center Domžale

Public Library of Domžale

Kindergarten Domžale

#### Partner Region 2:

Łódź, Poland

#### Coordinator organisation:

The City Of Łódź

#### Partner organisations:

Grammar School No. 16

Regional Pedagogic Library, Łódź

The Association for Mentally Handicapped

Children and Young

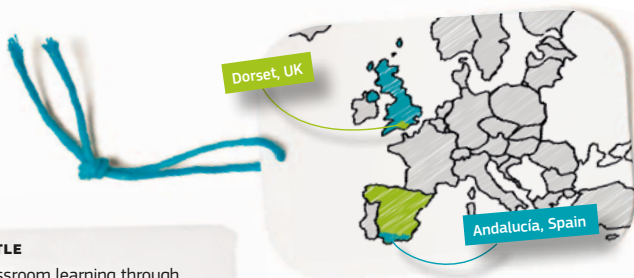
People “Closer to Yourselves”

### PROJECT PERIOD

2009-2011

### PROJECT WEBSITE

[http://www.etwinning.net/de/pub/connect/browse\\_people\\_schools\\_and\\_pro/profile.cfm?f=2&l=en&n=16906](http://www.etwinning.net/de/pub/connect/browse_people_schools_and_pro/profile.cfm?f=2&l=en&n=16906)



## Acquiring skills for life

### PROJECT TITLE

Effective classroom learning through an awareness of “Basic Competences”

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

Dorset, UK

#### Coordinator organisation:

Bournemouth Council

#### Partner organisations:

Shadows Professional Development  
 Avonbourne School  
 Glenmoor School  
 Bishop of Winchester Academy  
 Portchester School  
 St Michael’s Primary  
 Stourfield Primary  
 Moordown St John’s Primary  
 Malmesbury Park Primary  
 Pokesdown Primary

#### Partner Region 2:

Andalucía, Spain

#### Coordinator organisation:

Delegación de Huelva

#### Partner organisations:

CEP Bollullos - Valverde  
 CEP Huelva - Isla Cristina  
 CEP Aracena  
 Shadows Andalucía  
 IES San Blas (Aracena)  
 IES Delgado Hernández (Bolludos)  
 IES Rafael Reyes (Cartaya)  
 CEIP Dunas de Doñana (Matalascañas)  
 CEIP El Lince (Almoñite)  
 CEIP Manuel Pérez (Bollullos)  
 CEIP Manuel Siurot (Huelva)  
 CEIP Juan Ramón Jiménez (Cartaya)  
 IES La Palma (La Palma del Cdo)

### PROJECT PERIOD

2010-2012

### PROJECT WEBSITE

[http://educacionadistancia.juntadeandalucia.es/profesorado/pluginfile.php/16795/mod\\_resource/content/10/comenius\\_regio/index.htm](http://educacionadistancia.juntadeandalucia.es/profesorado/pluginfile.php/16795/mod_resource/content/10/comenius_regio/index.htm)

**In** 2006 the EU recommended that all students should acquire ‘key competences’ for lifelong learning. These competences are a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for personal development, social inclusion, active citizenship and employment.

Bournemouth Council, UK, and Huelva Education Board, Spain, wanted to design teaching materials to help achieve this. The two local authorities brought together teacher trainers and 16 primary and secondary schools to develop 32 topic-based ‘teaching modules’ to access science through English, for students who are not native English speakers. Their priority was to devise a model that could be used as a teacher training tool for authentic material development.

“We produced the 32 topic-based modules for teaching science at primary (5-11 yrs) and secondary (11-18 yrs) levels. They have been available to schools on a USB key,” explains David Vann from the UK team. “We have reached 4 000 students in secondary schools in Bournemouth, and junior schools are now using the teaching units too. They have also been used in English as a Foreign Language migrant education.” He adds that the modules’ effectiveness in teaching slow learners has been an unexpected bonus.

The Spanish partners have set up a website to disseminate the new teaching material and estimate that they can reach at least 60 000 teachers through Shadows Network across Europe. At a regional level, the project has already had a measurable impact. “In Andalusia, the 32 modules are now in use in schools all over the province,” Maria-Angeles Hernandez, responsible for bilingual teaching for the Huelva Education Authority, says. “They have been disseminated to all bilingual schools in the Huelva region, as well as into training centres.” Maria stresses the importance of the teams shadowing each other. “We learned from the UK to let students participate more – and our UK partners learned that we tend to leave nothing unprepared before starting a lesson. Combining these methods has resulted in a fantastic final product.”

David is clear about the benefits of participating in a pan-European project. “It is cross-cultural and cross-sectorial. The value of learning that others live and think in a different way is really important,” he says. And the impact is still being felt, with more ideas being put into practice.



## Inspiring students to go far



**H**ow do you create a school system to support students needing encouragement in maths and science, so that no one is left behind? And what new approaches can be adopted to help young people at risk of dropping out – such as those with special needs, or students from an immigrant background – to progress in regular schools without being separated from others?

The ‘Go Far’ project set out to tackle these challenges, uniting the Ufficio Scolastico Regionale per l’Emilia-Romagna, an Italian regional education authority, with Schulamt des Kreises Pinneberg, a German local education board.

The aim of the project was to identify and share best practice examples. Sharing ideas and experiences through meetings in each partner region resulted in a fruitful exchange of concepts – as well as the production of concrete teaching materials. These tools were compiled in a booklet and made available on a website in English, German and Italian. They were also widely disseminated to schools throughout both regions.



To inspire students in maths and science, the Pinneberg team helped the Italians to introduce new teaching methods. There were benefits for the Germans, too. “The Italians helped us to promote our teaching models in our own schools,” Sabine David-Gleißmann, Pinneberg project coordinator, explains. Annalisa Martini, the teacher in charge of the project in Emilia-Romagna, adds: “We have produced brochures, CDs and videos about working together on maths and science, which our German partners have placed in libraries for teachers to access.”

The German team also learned a lot from the Italians about how to address practically issues of inclusion. “Emilia-Romagna has been developing policies on inclusion for 30 years,” Sabine explains. “Schools work with politicians, educators and businesses to support students with special needs.” The Pinneberg authorities now work with headmasters, to help each school to promote inclusion. “It will have a significant influence on the standards of special needs’ education,” Sabine says.

Both partners highlighted the value of working together in each other’s country. “We showed how cooperation is possible – even with a language barrier and such different school systems,” Sabine concludes. And there was a valuable added bonus, too. “We have all developed lasting friendships.”

### PROJECT TITLE

Go Far

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

Emilia-Romagna, Italy

#### Coordinator organisation:

Ufficio Scolastico Regionale per l’Emilia Romagna, Bologna

#### Partner organisations:

IIS “Aldini Valeriani Sirani” (Bologna)  
 IC “Ferrari” (Parma)  
 “Convitto Nazionale Statale Maria Luigia” (Parma);  
 ISIS “Giordani” (Parma)  
 IPSIA Ferrari (Maranello – Modena)  
 ENAC Emilia Romagna (Fidenza)

#### Partner Region 2:

Schleswig-Holstein, Germany

#### Coordinator organisation:

Schulamt des Kreises Pinneberg

#### Partner organisations:

Jugendamt des Kreises Pinneberg  
 Rübekampfschule  
 Grundschule Bickbargen Halstenbek  
 Ernst-Barlach-Gemeinschaftsschule Wedel  
 Helene-Lange-Schule Pinneberg  
 Gorch-Fock-Schule Schenefeld  
 Brüder-Grimm-Schule Rellingen

### PROJECT PERIOD

2010-2012

### PROJECT WEBSITE

<http://www.kreis-pinneberg.de/Comenius+Regio/Comenius+Regio+Partnership.html>



## Preventing dropout in schools



### PROJECT TITLE

DROPS – Dropout prevention in schools

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

Berlin, Germany

#### Coordinator organisation:

Senatsverwaltung für Bildung,  
Wissenschaft und Forschung Berlin,  
Außenstelle Neukölln

#### Partner organisations:

Röntgen-Schule  
(former Kurt-Löwenstein-Schule)  
Alfred-Nobel-Schule  
(former Anna-Siemsen-Schule)  
Zukunftsbau  
Tandem BQG

#### Partner Region 2:

's-Hertogenbosch, Netherlands

#### Coordinator organisation:

Gemeente 's-Hertogenbosch

#### Partner organisations:

Hervioncollege, Koning Willem 1 College  
PSW arbeidsmarktadvies

### PROJECT PERIOD

2009-2011

### PROJECT WEBSITE

<http://www.comenius-regio-drops.eu>

**H**ow do you prevent young people dropping out of school? The regional school authority in Berlin-Neukölln and the municipality in the Dutch city of 's-Hertogenbosch wanted to find new solutions, particularly to support immigrant students. Two school administrations, four schools and three non-school organisations from the two regions came up with the idea of a toolkit for local authorities that would help them to recognise early on students at risk of dropping out, and thereby reduce their number.

The project, 'Dropout Prevention in Schools (Drops)', looked into good practice in both regions. Ten case studies were chosen from each side, to create the toolbox. They included 'Productive Learning' from Germany, which enables students to work for three days a week in a workplace of their choice, the Dutch 'Success Class', which gives students who have dropped out access to a vocation within six weeks, and the German programme 'Practice Class' that favours apprenticeships in areas such as tailoring, painting, cooking and carpentry over purely theoretical lessons.

The toolbox – which is in the form of a booklet, as well as available online – created huge demand, 1000 copies have already been distributed in the two regions, and in other countries. It is still too early to assess the response to the online version.

"Visiting projects in other countries had a big impact on our perspective," Theo van de Veerdonk, from the Dutch team recalls. Angelika Prase-Mansmann, from the German partners, adds: "It took time to understand the different school systems, but we found common ground."

"Meeting face-to-face allowed us to see our partners' reactions to our ideas," Theo says. They agreed they were tackling a substantial problem and needed realistic targets. "Our project could not reinvent the wheel. Our common idea was to exchange experiences and compile examples of good practice. We tried to do it in a way that allows other people - regions, schools and administrations – to adapt these examples," Angelika says.

She stresses the lasting benefits. "Drops changed everything for me and my institution. It improved collaboration not only at European level, but also on a regional level. The school authorities have to work with youth departments and schools, and after Drops there was a huge improvement in that cooperation."



## Staying on track

Provincie Antwerpen, Belgium

Vienna, Austria



**H**ow can you cut absenteeism among students, prevent them from dropping out of education or training, and help them to find work later on? The education authorities in Antwerp, Belgium, and Vienna, Austria, formed a partnership to develop better policy and tools to manage these issues.

The Antwerp Education Policy Division brought in vocational schools and advisors on truancy. The Vienna Board of Education's team also included vocational schools, along with an education and a sports network, and apprenticeship trainers for students with special needs.

The partners met in each city to examine each others' good practices and to see first-hand the vocational training and other examples of practical support being offered to young people. This enabled them to develop together an approach that cut across three key sectors: education, economy and social services.

The Belgian team was particularly proud that Vienna copied some of its truancy strategies. Four schools in Antwerp had students tracked over two years and concluded that an individually-tailored approach to building their confidence and self-esteem would achieve a better outcome. "Even though we are a much smaller city, Vienna seemed to appreciate our approach," Luc Claessens from the Antwerp group says.

Another aim of the project was to improve careers counselling, through the compilation of a toolbox containing case studies and practical approaches. The toolbox is available on line and includes guidance on how to measure students' progress, plus tips geared towards teachers, counsellors, school managers, policymakers and employers to help them to better support learners.

"We are trying to transfer our innovation on truancy reduction to more countries, as well as exploring how we can provide more targeted help for youngsters looking for jobs. This includes, for example, looking at ways to validate so-called 'soft skills'," Luc explains.

Herbert Seher from the Vienna team is equally enthusiastic: "We face the same issues, so it was valuable to look at new ways of tackling them. On our exchange visit, it was very important to shadow everyone involved, from teacher trainers to students."

Herbert stresses that the European partnership added significant value. "We always thought that we were alone with our problems. However, the project taught us that we do actually share these with other countries and, importantly, that there are solutions to be found together."

### PROJECT TITLE

Stay on track

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

Provincie Antwerpen, Belgium

#### Coordinator organisation:

Stad Antwerpen-Algemeen Onderwijsbeleid

#### Partner organisations:

Centraal Meldpunt Antwerpen

Arktos vzw – Vormingscentrum Antwerpen

Fonds voor Vakopleidingen in

de Bouwnijverheid Brussel

Talenterwerf Antwerpen

Leonardo Lyceum CDO Antwerpen

Don Bosco Werken en Leren Wilrijk

CDO Spectrumschool Deurne

CL&W TNA – Het Leercentrum, Merksem

#### Partner Region 2:

Vienna, Austria

#### Coordinator organisation:

Vienna Board of Education –

European office

#### Partner organisations:

KUS Network for education, social action,

sports and culture, Vienna

Jugend am Werk, Vienna

Vocational school for Gardeners

and Florists, Vienna

Vocational school for Construction, Vienna

### PROJECT PERIOD

2010-2012

### PROJECT WEBSITE

<http://www.stayontrack.eu>



## Developing healthy schools

### PROJECT TITLE

Developing health education culture in Italian and Lithuanian educational institutions

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

Kaunas Region, Lithuania

#### Coordinator organisation:

Culture, Education and Sport Department of Kaunas Region Municipality

#### Partner organisations:

Karmelava Balys Buracas Gymnasium  
Kaunas Region Educational Centre

#### Partner Region 2:

Puglia, Italy

#### Coordinator organisation:

Ufficio Scolastico Regionale per la Puglia

#### Partner organisations:

Istituto di Istruzione Secondaria di II Grado "V. Lilla"  
Direzione Generale ASL Brindisi

### PROJECT PERIOD

2010-2012

### PROJECT WEBSITES

<http://www.krs.lt/portal/portal/krs/lt/1/a150/130?pageId=3491157>  
[http://www.europeansharedtreasure.eu/detail.php?id\\_project\\_base=2010-1-LT1-COM13-02799](http://www.europeansharedtreasure.eu/detail.php?id_project_base=2010-1-LT1-COM13-02799)

Today, everyone is encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle – and where better to plant the seed than amongst children? With this in mind, education authorities in Puglia, Italy, and Kaunas, Lithuania, decided to exchange ideas about how to promote healthy living in schools.

The Italian group comprised the Brindisi Health Authority and a secondary school. The Lithuanian team included a school and an education centre.

An online survey was devised to identify student health problems. "It meant that our teachers formed a much closer relationship with the students. They treated each other as equals, which was innovative," Mario Andrisano from the Italian team says.

The survey identified the need for more action. "We have introduced a health programme called 'Unplugged' which is being monitored in our schools." Developed and tested by experts in seven European countries, Unplugged addresses tobacco, alcohol and drug addiction amongst adolescents. Through 6 teaching modules, students learn 'life skills' such as effective communication, self awareness and coping with stress. "In addition, to disseminate the good practice from our project, we organised a special regional event," explains Mario.

Virginija Kanapinskiene from the Lithuanian partners points out that "unlike in Italy, our students don't talk so openly. They tend to keep everything inside. Our survey showed that Lithuanian students take more medication than Italian students. We were astonished and shared the results with the region." The team published teacher training tools in a booklet and posted a range of materials on the project website. Feedback from the Lithuanian students also revealed that they were not doing enough sport. "We have set up another Comenius Regio project with Greece to tackle this," Virginija continues. "Since our whole region is promoting health in schools, we held a conference to show our results to our peers. Since then, schools have begun to introduce activities such as yoga classes on the premises for students, teachers and the community."

To undertake the project, both sides used interpreters – and still experienced a productive cooperation. "Working across borders creates a 'virtuous circle'", Mario believes. "We would like to inspire others to take part in European projects – it is a more effective way of working."





## Promoting a European dimension



Partners from two of the EU's newer member states set out to demonstrate the value of a Europe-wide perspective on early years education and to improve the ability of local communities to integrate special needs children into mainstream schools.

With these aims in mind, Ludza Municipality, Latvia and Svishtov Municipality, Bulgaria, teamed up. The Latvians brought in two pre-school education institutions and a youth club, and the Bulgarian team comprised the local authority education department, a kindergarten and a parents association.

During the project, administrative reforms in Latvia meant that the local authority became part of a larger municipality. Even so, the teams continued their collaboration. In Ludza, surveys were conducted to identify the kind of assistance that the target groups most required, and a support group was also set up for families with special needs. Two seminars and an international conference were organised and a CD and booklet were produced in order to share methodologies with those teaching young children with special needs.

"The project helped us to realise that there is still much work to be done. For example, we need to raise tolerance and understanding of special needs children among the younger generation, and we also need to adapt our education system," Svetlana Rimisa from the Ludza team explains.

In Svishtov, the project resulted in a new strategy for including special needs children in schools and kindergartens. "Teachers have gained valuable guidance in enabling special needs children to integrate. Alongside this, we are also working with parents to help them understand what is important for their children. As a result, the children now feel well-received in mainstream schools," Milena Bogdanova from the Bulgarian team says, adding "the personal stories of more than 30 children we worked with were inspiring."

The two regions have signed an official cooperation agreement, and Svetlana stresses the value of working at European level. "It broadened our horizons and gave us invaluable experience," she says. Milena adds: "Comenius partnerships give you the opportunity to get to know other cultures, ways of thinking and traditions, as well as creating long-lasting friendships."



### PROJECT TITLE

Public cooperation of Latvia and Bulgaria regions for integration of children with special needs into educational process / LABU for CHILDREN

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

Latvia

#### Coordinator organisation:

Ludza Municipality

#### Partner organisations:

Ludza pre-school education institution "Rūķītis"

Ludza pre-school education institution Nr.4

"Pasaciņa"

Ludza Youth Club "Lietussargs"

#### Partner Region 2:

North central region, Bulgaria

#### Coordinator organisation:

Municipality Svishtov,

education and culture section

#### Partner organisations:

Health Kindergarten

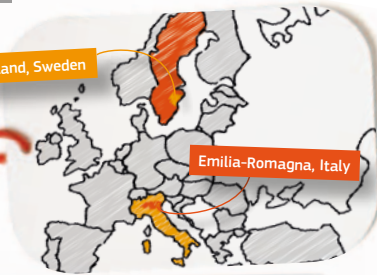
Parents Association "Child's heart"

### PROJECT PERIOD

2009-2011

### PROJECT WEBSITE

<http://www.ludza.lv/projekti/labu-for-children/>



## Helping immigrant students integrate

### PROJECT TITLE

Growing Up Together

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

Östergötland, Sweden

#### Coordinator organisation:

Regionförbundet Östsam

#### Partner organisations:

Utbildningskontoret, Linköpings kommun  
 Skäggetorpsskolan, Linköpings kommun  
 Berzeliussskolan, Linköpings kommun  
 Bäckskolan, Linköpings kommun  
 Specialverksamheter, Linköpings kommun  
 Utbildningskontoret, Norrköpings kommun  
 Djäkneparksskolan, Norrköpings kommun  
 Söderporten, Norrköpings kommun  
 Utbildningskontoret/Idrott utan gränser,  
 Norrköpings kommun  
 Ödeshögs skola, Ödeshögs kommun  
 Ödeshögs Idrottsklubb  
 Östergötlands Idrottsförbund

#### Partner Region 2:

Emilia-Romagna, Italy

#### Coordinator organisation:

Regione Emilia-Romagna – Assessorato alla Scuola,  
 Formazione professionale, Università e lavoro

#### Partner organisations:

Sweden Emilia-Romagna Network, Bologna  
 Ufficio scolastico regionala Bologna  
 Comune di Bologna  
 IPSCT Don Zefferino Iodi, Reggio Emilia  
 Scuola Media Secondaria Leonardo da Vinci – Einstein,  
 Reggio Emilia Comune di Reggio Emilia  
 Comune di Cervia  
 Comune di Forlì  
 Multicentro Educativo Modena “Sergio Neri”, Modena

### PROJECT PERIOD

2010-2012

### PROJECT WEBSITE

<http://www.gutproject.eu/>

How are immigrant students helped to adjust to their new schools? Östsam Regional Development Council, Sweden, and the local authority in Emilia-Romagna, Italy, tried to improve how foreign pupils are eased into primary and secondary schools in their regions by adopting practices from the other country.



Twenty organisations were involved in the partnership and they admit it took some time to understand the differences in the school systems and cultures. “In Sweden there are classes to train migrants in the Swedish language before they are put into the school classes. In Italy, immigrant students are put directly into the classroom and then given extra support,” Nicola Catellani from the Italian team explains.

This prompted a debate among the Italian schools about their approach. As a result, some of the methods used to assess the skills of newly arrived students have been changed. “Before, we did not have the tools for this. Now, we have transferred them from Sweden,” Nicola says.

On their side, the Swedish team was amazed at the number of projects in their partner region that were devised from a ‘family perspective’. “Traditionally, we focused more on individuals and not on the family. We realised that if we started to work with the family too, it would have a great impact on the children’s education,” Catherine Szabó from the Swedish team explains. “In Emilia-Romagna, schools work with intercultural centres that gather information and use interpreters who act as a bridge. Consequently, we are now forming an original mother tongue group and developing an intercultural centre,” Catherine adds. The changes are being introduced throughout the region.

Most of the partners now belong to a larger network of Italian and Swedish authorities, so they remain in contact. “Nordic countries have invested so much in education – you can really see the difference and learn from it,” Nicola says. “Because of the economic climate, it is crucial to innovate in education – and the best way is through exchange with other countries. You start not by looking in your neighbouring town, but by looking around Europe, to see what you can learn. Understanding and transferring practices is the real added value.”

## Encouraging inclusion, combating dropout



**I**t has been shown that students who feel included and engaged in the educational setting are at less risk of dropping out. With this in mind, a Spanish and Portuguese partnership decided to look at the causes of dropout, and develop new solutions to address it.

Xativa Town hall, Spain, brought in two schools and two training associations, while Paredes Town Hall, Portugal, brought in a secondary school and a school learning centre. The teams created an innovative learning community of regional and local authorities, secondary schools, teachers and teacher training centres, to establish the extent of dropout and to better support students at risk of exclusion. The partners also devised surveys for students, teachers and families to investigate why students dropped out. The project produced guides for teachers, trainers and local authorities in each of the team's languages. The materials have been published in brochures, CDs and on the project website.

"From 2013, local authorities are using the materials in schools. Although the long term impact cannot be assessed yet, we are already seeing positive results. For example, we are finding ways to involve disaffected students and to create a good atmosphere in the classroom. Students are clearly happier, which has helped prevent them from dropping out," Joan Vercher from the Spanish team explains.

Conferences and seminars were organised in both regions to disseminate material to other schools. "Around 600 participants attended the seminar in Valencia, including representatives from public bodies all over the region. We explained the methodology we have developed and how the project was being applied. As a result, five new Comenius projects in the Valencia region have started," Joan adds.

The two regions continue to explore the issues through their learning community. And although the cross-regional collaboration involved a lot of effort, the teams agree that it has been worth it. "Do not be afraid of the amount of work involved. The benefits are clear – for example, we now have lots of new resources, so I would highly recommend such a partnership," Pedro Mendes from the Portuguese team says.

"It was really useful to get a different perspective by exchanging best practice in both countries," he adds. "And of course the impact was greater than expected, since the initial project has been taken up by schools throughout the region."

### PROJECT TITLE

M.I.D.A.S. Improve inclusion – Reduce dropout. Solutions

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

Comunidad Valenciana, Spain

#### Coordinator organisation:

Ayuntamiento de Xativa

#### Partner organisations:

IES Sant Vicent Ferrer

IES Simarro

Centro de Formación de Profesorado

de Alzira (CEFIRE)

Asociación Innoeduca

#### Partner Region 2:

Porto, Portugal

#### Coordinator organisation:

Câmara Municipal de Paredes

#### Partner organisations:

Escola Secundária de Vilela

Centro de Formação Contínua de Vilela (CFAEP)

### PROJECT PERIOD

2010-2012

### PROJECT WEBSITE

<http://www.iessantvicent.com/projectes/midas>





## *Fitness for life*



### PROJECT TITLE

Cross-border advanced training of teachers "EuroMoqs"

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

Liège / German speaking Community, Belgium

#### Coordinator organisation:

OSU

#### Partner organisations:

Sportdienst der DG  
Autonome Hochschule in der DG  
Paul Gerardy Grundschule Burg Reuland  
Grundschule Kreuzberg  
Gemeinschaftsschulen Medell-  
Heppenbach-Herresbach

#### Partner Region 2:

Trier, Germany

#### Coordinator organisation:

Rhineland-Palatinate, represented  
by the control and service directorate  
Trier (ADD)

#### Partner organisations:

Ausonius Grundschule  
Grundschule Schöndorf  
Grundschule Reichertsberg  
Grundschule Speicher

### PROJECT PERIOD

2010-2012

### PROJECT WEBSITE

<http://home.base.be/vt6786479/euromoqs.html>

**H**ow do you teach physical education and sport in schools so that the benefits are long lasting? One way is through better training for school sports teachers. To this end, the 'EuroMoqs' project (Modular qualification in sport for primary school teachers) has been developed to offer advanced training for school sport and physical education (PE) teachers in Europe.

The Rhineland-Palatinate region in Germany has used the MOQS modules to develop a physical education and training programme for primary school teachers. The local authority in Trier decided to team up with its counterpart in the German speaking Community of Belgium, which has also developed such modules. The idea was to exchange modules across borders – 'EuroMoqs' was born. Teachers in primary schools from each region participated, aiming to improve the quality of sport and PE training by transferring EuroMoqs in phases. Eventually, it will become part of the curriculum for teacher training in each region.

"In our region only half of our sports in schools are taught by physical education teachers, in Rhineland-Palatinate it's even less," Norbert Kever, the responsible for school sport in the German speaking Community of Belgium explains, "so our German partners approached us to work together to improve training for PE teachers."

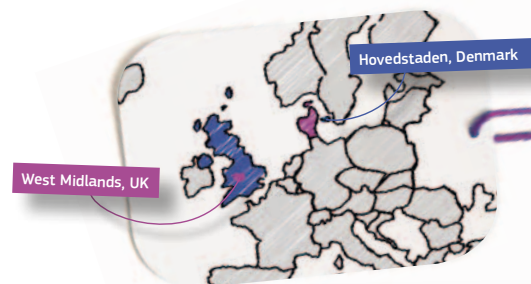
The project involved an exchange of PE lecturers between the two regions to devise the training methods. The teams produced a brochure and recommendations that are now being used in teacher training. "Some of the team members are very active in training teachers in sport – but it is too soon for us to assess the impact on students," Norbert says.

In Trier, students were given a chance to say what they thought after the first PE lesson with newly-qualified staff. "We received very positive feedback from the children, as well as the teachers," Theo Lamberts from the German team says.

The proximity of the two teams was a huge advantage for working across borders. "I would advise participants in Comenius Regio projects to do an exchange with a neighbouring country. It made it much easier for the two teams to meet and helped us to produce higher quality teaching material," Theo adds.

Norbert concludes: "A big bonus was that we speak the same language and that we had worked together across our regions for many years. Fortunately, we also have the same school sports curriculum – as well as the same aims."

## Supporting disaffected pupils



Students in danger of disaffection require specialist attention. Shropshire Council, UK, and Hvidovre Kommune, a local authority in Denmark, decided to compare their approaches to engaging these children. The UK team included a primary school and a university, and the Danes invited a school and a teacher training college to participate.

The project focused primarily on enhancing pupils' confidence, self-esteem, independence and employability by exploring how the outdoor environment can be used as a context for learning.

In Shropshire, so-called 'Forest Schools' have proved effective in enabling children with challenging behaviours, as well as those with special needs, to boost their personal and technical skills through hands-on learning in a woodland environment. "This is actually a Scandinavian invention," Steven Taylor, of the UK partners, explains. "But the Danish team was nevertheless inspired by how we had developed the concept."

Danish coordinator Lotte Aabye concurs: "We have now built three Forest Schools and the results speak for themselves. Students are better readers and writers. They also interact more easily in social situations – for example, when they go to the supermarket with their family. This is a really good result," Lotte says.

As part of the project, the students in Shropshire learned social and communication skills to help increase their chances of finding work. "They receive a specific qualification that they can present to potential employers", Steven explains. And there were other benefits, too, for the UK team. "We formed close links with the Danish teacher training college. In fact, one of the most sustainable outcomes is an exchange programme set up by the Danes."

Another key aim of the project was to help the teachers themselves to provide better support to students at risk of underachievement. "In the UK, every teacher knows each child's capabilities, and every head knows the strengths and weaknesses of each teacher. We have learned the benefits of assessing work that way," Lotte says. So much so that, since August 2012, all 15 schools in the Hvidovre region have changed how they are managed. "Headmasters now make a plan, set a target for teachers and follow up. It's quite a new approach," Lotte explains.

The Danish coordinator is keen to recommend others to participate in a European project. As she concludes: "I learnt how much culture influences how we behave. It is far more significant than I thought."

### PROJECT TITLE

Improving engagement and learning capacity for disaffected pupils

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

West Midlands, UK

#### Coordinator organisation:

Shropshire Council

#### Partner organisations:

St Laurence CE Primary School

Edge Hill University

#### Partner Region 2:

Hovedstaden, Denmark

#### Coordinator organisation:

Hvidovre Kommune

#### Partner organisations:

Engstrand school

Læreruddannelsen Zahle

### PROJECT PERIOD

2009-2011

### PROJECT WEBSITES

<http://www.city-m.eu/project-details/vrs/pr/improving-engagement-and-learning-capacity-ID-47>

[http://www.europeansharedtreasure.eu/detail.php?id\\_project\\_base=2009-1-GB1-COM13-03670](http://www.europeansharedtreasure.eu/detail.php?id_project_base=2009-1-GB1-COM13-03670)





## Exploiting web-based learning

### PROJECT TITLE

Student's guidance in IT-based open learning environments

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

Niedersachsen, Germany

#### Coordinator organisation:

Stadt Osterholz - Scharmbeck

#### Partner organisations:

Haupt- und Realschule Osterholz-Scharmbeck

Europäisches Institut für Innovation (EIFI) e.V.

Volkshochschule Osterholz-Scharmbeck

Hambergen / Schwanewede e.V.

Initiative D21 e.V.

#### Partner Region 2:

Halland, Sweden

#### Coordinator organisation:

Varbergs municipality

#### Partner organisations:

Peder Skrivares Skola

Lindbergs skola

Läraryrket - the Swedish Teachers' Union,

Varberg

Läramas riksförbund

### PROJECT PERIOD

2010-2012

### PROJECT WEBSITE

[www.LearnDesk.eu](http://www.LearnDesk.eu)

When every student in a school is using a computer, how can web-based learning be exploited most effectively? The municipality of Osterholz-Scharmbeck, Germany, and the municipality of Varberg, Sweden, decided to investigate this.

“Our partners were an NGO, three schools in a public-private partnership focusing on IT use, and an adult education centre,” Ulrich Müller from the German team explains. “We wanted to put in place a system for e-learning in schools, so during the project, Osterholz-Scharmbeck started to plan a new school based on ‘responsible self-learning’ without classrooms,” he explains.

Schools in Varberg were already supporting e-learning, so the Swedish team decided to experiment with a ‘LearnDesk’ that enabled students to contact teachers for help out of school hours. “We decided to test the model from 8am to 8pm for five days. Teachers were also available in school from 4pm to 8pm,” Magnus Lindblad from the Swedish team recalls. “It gave us the opportunity to look at working hours, as the model assumes that teachers can help during and after school hours.”

Teachers meanwhile realised that they could use classroom time in a different way. “Instead of using lessons to watch a movie or to read a text, they focused on discussion. It’s too early to evaluate the full impact of that particular approach because it’s a big change,” Magnus explains. The team also found that many students who were hardly seen in class participated more when using the web. “Our new standard, ‘One student – One computer’ means that teachers can help students to feel more safe and confident,” he adds.

The ‘LearnDesk’ itself has been tested in some schools in Varberg and it has inspired the German municipality to take a new approach to e-learning. “We saw that our Swedish partners were implementing ICT in a way that we can only dream about,” Ulrich says. “In Germany, teachers are employed by the region and the municipality cannot instruct them to use equipment,” he goes on to explain. “However, as a result of the project, schools themselves can suggest the use of e-learning management systems – and we have the budget to give them what they want, for example, better broadband.”

Ulrich is also clear about the value of working on a cross-border project. “Varberg showed our younger teachers in particular what might be possible.” Over in Sweden, Magnus agrees. “The things we take for granted – such as teachers’ relationships with students – can be truly eye-opening for someone from the outside.”



## Making the best use of ICT



**I**nformation technology is increasingly being used in schools, but how can it be used to best advantage? The administrative district of Celle, Germany and the municipality of Tuusula in Finland joined forces to find out.

Each local authority paired a secondary school and a training organisation from their region, to investigate the use of ICT in the classroom and in teacher training. Their final report recommended that classrooms should have a mobile laptop projector unit with access to the Internet, and that, importantly, staff members must be trained in making the most effective use of the new equipment.

To this end, several training opportunities were put to the test in the project including school internal training with external support, cross-school training, participation in expert conferences and lifelong learning programmes (job shadowing).

“In our Finnish partner school, ICT was not that high on the agenda – we had to persuade our peers that it was important,” Jürgen Ganzer from the German team says. The project changed this. “We identified the need for interactive boards and tablets for lessons,” Ilkka Mäkinen from the Finnish team explains. “These are now part of our daily school life. In fact, a budget has been set aside for the tools and for the training.” He also goes on to explain that the impact has been even wider. “We are part of a bigger region of 10 communities that are now working together to formulate an ICT strategy for the next decade,” Ilkka says.

The project’s recommendations were enthusiastically taken up in Germany, too. “We had to make the case that tools like laptops were needed,” Jürgen recalls. “We held a seminar at government level in Hannover and within weeks, schools were given new equipment. The authorities have said that they will now invest in the things that schools really need and that teachers will use.”

And that’s not all. Alongside the introduction of tools and training opportunities, the project has also produced a website that contains a survey on the use of new media in the classroom, for teachers to download.

The partners are quick to agree upon the value of the ‘European’ dimension. Even certain logistical issues – such as coordinating timetables between two countries with different school years – did not stand in the way of their collaboration. Indeed, so fruitful was their partnership that they are now working together on a new project focusing on student health.

### PROJECT TITLE

ISATT – ICT in School, Administration and Teacher Training

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

Lower Saxony, Germany

#### Coordinator organisation:

Administrative district of Celle

#### Partner organisations:

Christian-Gymnasium Hermannsburg  
Studienseminar für das Lehramt  
an Gymnasien Celle

#### Partner Region 2:

Uusimaa, Finland

#### Coordinator organisation:

Municipality of Tuusula

#### Partner organisations:

Hyrylän lukio, Tuusula  
Jyväskylän yliopisto / Rehtori-instituutti  
Jyväskylä

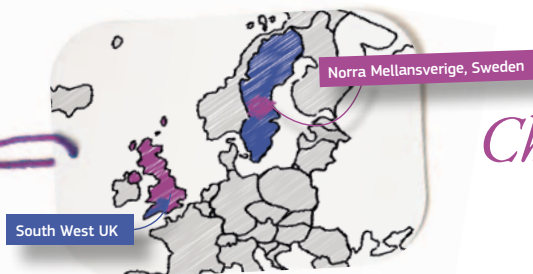
### PROJECT PERIOD

2009-2011

### PROJECT WEBSITE

[www.isatt.eu](http://www.isatt.eu)





## Changing the culture



### PROJECT TITLE

Classroom Leadership in Real Life

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

Norra Mellansverige, Sweden

#### Coordinator organisation:

Förvaltningen för lärande och kultur,  
Hudiksvall

#### Partner organisations:

Bromangymnasiet, Hudiksvall  
Umeå Universitet, Umeå

#### Partner Region 2:

South West UK

#### Coordinator organisation:

Devon local authority children and young  
people's services, Exeter

#### Partner organisations:

Newton Abbot College, Newton Abbot  
Keywords, Newton Abbot

### PROJECT PERIOD

2010-2012

### PROJECT WEBSITE

[http://www.europeansharedtreasure.eu/detail.php?id\\_project\\_base=2010-1-SE1-COM13-04704](http://www.europeansharedtreasure.eu/detail.php?id_project_base=2010-1-SE1-COM13-04704)

A school's teaching culture underpins how students are inspired to learn. With this in mind, the local authorities of Hudiksvall, Sweden, and Devon, UK, decided to compare their approaches to continuing professional development for teachers. The aim was to create a new training model, so that staff members could enhance students' personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS). The model was based on the UK PLTS framework that supports the curriculum.

The partners realised the size of the task when each team visited the other's school. "Our team experienced a kind of culture shock," Bitte Åström from the Swedish team recalls. "In Sweden, the relationship between students and teachers seems relaxed to the point that students might not appear motivated. This is because teachers act like coaches who guide students and are co-learners, rather than 'experts' who can answer every question. The Devon teachers picked up on this – and saw that our curriculum gives us freedom to work in an 'entrepreneurial' way."

As a result, there has been a culture change in the Devon schools. "Teachers have moved closer to being facilitators, rather than just teachers. We learned how to take greater risks in planning student-led activity, allowing more creativity and giving them more control over their own learning," Bill Houldsworth from the Devon team says.

On their side, the Swedes realised that they could benefit from adapting Devon's PLTS model to their school culture. Bitte says: "We had too many students who were not fulfilling their potential. This model gives us the tools to give everyone a chance to be successful."

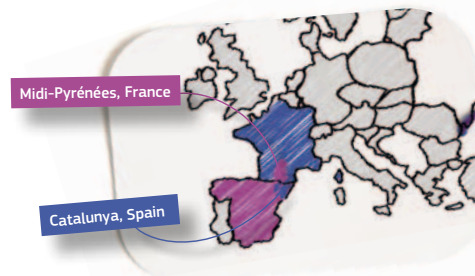
The project produced a new teacher's professional development plan. Hudiksvall Council was so impressed that it is introducing the plan into all schools in the area over a three-year period.

The impact has been felt throughout the UK region, too. "We held a final conference on developing attitudes to learning. It was an opportunity for local authorities to disseminate our model regionally," Bill explains. "We are also using it in our training for schools and local authorities around the country."

The value of working across borders has been long lasting. "It showed us that there is always another way – better and different," Bill concludes.



## Learning through theatre



Can students learn a shared sense of European cultural values? The Catalonia Department of Education in Spain, Toulouse City Hall and Toulouse Academy in France brought together schools and theatres in a pioneering project. The aim was to learn about another culture through theatre.

“We were working at the frontier of curricular and non-curricular learning”, explains Neus Lorenzo from the Catalan team. “Drama is not in our curriculum, but we held theatre workshops that allowed learning outside school. After the project, some students wanted to go on to study theatre, whilst others wanted to go on to study French.”

“We wanted to pool education ideas, share theatrical practices, enrich teachers’ experience and improve students’ skills across the Pyrenees,” Michèle Courtin from the French team says. “We gained a better understanding of each other’s education system and developed partnerships between the world of education and theatre,” she adds.

There were also other benefits. “This was the first time that schools and the City Council worked closely on a European project. It was very important because, since then, the relationship between us has significantly improved,” Michèle adds.

Through theatre training seminars for teachers and school theatre festivals, the Catalans benefitted from the links that the project created between the two environments. “On the one hand, it enabled us to put new activities into schools, and on the other, it gave students the opportunity to go to the theatre,” Neus says.

Toulouse holds an annual theatre festival and 30 students from Spain showed their work at the 2009 event. “It was the first time the theatre has invited a foreign group to participate. We are now doing more international work – for example, with foreign writers. And we do preparatory work with the students beforehand,” Michèle explains.

The Catalans are still feeling the impact of the project, too. “We keep in contact through the annual Toulouse theatre project. We have also integrated one of their programmes – reading aloud in the theatre – into our reading plans in schools. It shows that ideas can still be shared, even though the project is, technically, finished.”

### PROJECT TITLE

Let’s play theatre to cross borders–  
(Fem teatre per travessar fronteres)

### PARTNERS

#### Partner Region 1:

Catalunya, Spain

#### Coordinator organisation:

Servei de Llengües, Department of Education,  
Generalitat de Catalunya

#### Partner organisations:

Àrea d’educació de l’Ajuntament  
de Mollet del Vallès  
IES Vicenç Plantada de Mollet del Vallès

#### Partner Region 2:

Midi-Pyrénées, France

#### Coordinator organisation:

Mairie de Toulouse & Académie de Toulouse

#### Partner organisations:

Théâtre National de Toulouse  
Lycée Rive Gauche de Toulouse

### PROJECT PERIOD

2009-2011

### PROJECT WEBSITES

<http://www.gencat.cat/educacio/ComeniusRegio/>  
[http://blocs.xtec.cat/jornadafrances/  
comenius-regio/](http://blocs.xtec.cat/jornadafrances/comenius-regio/)





If you are interested in organising a project with partners in another region of Europe such as the ones featured in this brochure, you can find background information and advice on the European Commission's website at <http://ec.europa.eu/education>. This website includes details on eligible regions, the types of partner organisations which can be involved and the range of activities that can be undertaken with EU support.

You can also discuss your ideas with the national agency managing the EU's education programmes in your country. A list of national agencies and their websites is available at [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/national\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/national_en.htm).

From 2014, EU support to regional partnerships in school education will be made available through the new programme for education, training, youth and sport which will run until 2020. Information on this programme is available at <http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus-for-all/>.

European Commission

**EU support to local and regional authorities**  
**Regional partnerships in school education**

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