



Internationalisation
in Higher Education
for Society

>>> EU into the schools

#IHES project

“EU into the schools” involves university students in teaching at secondary schools on various aspects of the European Union such as EU values, origins, institutions and decision-making, and key policies, especially the internal market and economic and monetary union. The project builds on the previous cooperation with secondary schools. The IHES project enriched the activity with internationalization dimension by focusing more on internationalization values. The “EU into the schools” was organised by the Department of Political and Social Sciences of the Faculty of Law, Palacky University, and ran in the 2nd semester of the academic year 2021/2022.

1 WHAT IS THE GOAL OR REASON FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PROJECT?

Regarding the secondary school pupils, the main objective is to improve their knowledge about the EU, the EU dimension of the Czech politics and the EU impact on citizens. By this the project aims to improve pupils' ability to form attitudes based on facts and to distinguish better between the fact and misinformation. It also supports the university students by giving them a teaching experience and improving their communication skills. In the wider societal context this activity is meant to diffuse internationalization into the secondary education, to raise major awareness about the interrelationship between the Czech Republic and the EU and to increase the sensitivity to misinformation.

2 WHO ARE THE BENEFICIARIES?

The project has two target groups: Czech secondary school pupils and Czech university students. The pupils are the primary target group in society, but the project also explicitly sees the teaching university students as a target group that will massively benefit from the interaction described above. Secondary school institutions also benefit from this, because a part of the curriculum is covered by those who are specialized in the EU (university students supervised by a tutor-academic). The project also strengthens the role of university and its faculty in dissemination of knowledge and skills into the society. Thanks to the IHES project the university faculty added the internationalization dimension to the activities planned for secondary education.



3

WHO ARE THE PARTNERS IN YOUR UNIVERSITY?

The project focuses on two actor groups according to the IHES matrix. The first and key target group are university students who have returned from a study abroad period. Their role is to teach Czech pupils about the EU, values and other EU aspects as described above. Secondly, it involves outgoing academics. In this case, those are professors who either already went abroad or are planning to go abroad. Their role is to supervise an individual student who will teach in a classroom. This construct is necessary to allow the student to have two roles: that of an actor and that of a target group.

4

HOW DID YOU REALISE THIS PROJECT?

The realization of the project "EU into the schools" was based on a previous cooperation between the university faculty and Slezské gymnázium in Opava. The project was implemented in classes dedicated to the civic education, in which the students get knowledge from different social areas, including the EU. The project took place in classes for the pupils of 2nd (pupils at the age of 7), 3rd (age of 8), and 4th (age of 9) school year.

The tutor at the university faculty instructs the university student responsible for the teaching in how to give the lectures to the secondary school pupils. The tutor also supervises the presentations to improve their quality. The university student prepares activities for the secondary school pupils as e.g., a simulation of decision-making process in the EU, and supports a discussion about the EU and its impact in the class. The university student also discusses with the secondary school pupils about different misinformation on the EU which they have encountered. After the teaching, the tutor receives feedback on the classes by the secondary school teacher and the university student.



5 WHAT ARE THE MOST RELEVANT ENABLERS OF THIS PROJECT AND HOW DID YOU CONVINC THEM TO PARTICIPATE?

The project required the interest from both parts. Slezské gymnázium in Opava was interested in cooperation on EU topics already years ago and the university faculty was interested in expanding its cooperation with secondary schools with the aim to establish a net of "faculty secondary schools." On the part of the university faculty there have been academics specialized in the EU, but especially willing to transmit their knowledge to the students and to supervise the university student responsible in teaching.

6 WHAT WERE THE MAIN OBSTACLES YOU ENCOUNTERED AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THEM?

During the realization of the classes on EU integration we have encountered two types of problems. One problem is to find university student which would like to participate in this activity and to get teaching experience. Thus, we put emphasis on the motivation in which the personality of the tutor plays a role, and the experience sharing between students (student motivates student). Also, the university faculty must facilitate the university student to realize this activity from organizational point of view. On the part of the secondary school principal obstacle were insiders (other teachers) with Eurosceptic attitudes which interrupted teaching student during the classes. After that, the teachers divided better roles and responsibilities for different subjects.

The most difficult part is to motivate the university student to teach and to acquire this experience. The tutor thus motivates the students in classes and supports experience sharing between the students.

7 WHAT WERE THE KEY "DO'S AND DON'T'S" THAT YOU LEARNED WHILE SETTING UP AND RUNNING THIS PROJECT?

On the part of "Do's" is necessary to keep and maintain a close personal contact between those responsible for the activity on the part of university faculty and the secondary school. Loosing personal contacts often leads to quitting of such activity. Then, to motivate the university student so as she/he would like to get teaching experience and work with them (e.g., supervising the materials or discussing doubts about teaching). Keep close contact with smart and enthusiastic students. The secondary school pupils should be actively involved in the classes. Thus, we can recommend asking questions, thinking about the EU influence in their life, or using examples from the life of pupils. On the part of "Don't's" we do not recommend monologue teaching without or only limited interaction with students.