



Project "street law for French" uses a form of teaching that students first used at Georgetown University in Washington DC. It is based on the premise that raising legal awareness among non-lawyers, especially those from socially excluded groups, can help them escape an unsatisfactory social situation. More generally, it can help everyone empower themselves by knowing their rights. In this case, this method is applied in teaching students from France coming to the Czech Republic under the Erasmus+ programme. It is based on the language skills of these students and their knowledge of French realities. The project is a regular course at the Palacky University Faculty of Law, within which French students teach secondary school students in bilingual secondary schools in the Olomouc region. At the Law Faculty, students choose a topic, which they then develop for interactive teaching, test their "lesson" on their classmates in the protected environment of the Faculty, and then teach the lesson to the secondary school students. When selecting a topic, care is taken to ensure that the topic is topical and interesting. For example, one of the topics was the attack on Charlie Hebdo magazine. Students teach in pairs and are supervised by two academics from the Law Faculty – specialists in law and in the French language.

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

The aim of this project with respect to the senior citizens is to improve their understanding of topics with international relevance that concern them. It also promotes improving seniors' communication skills and ability to distinguish better between facts and misinformation. One of the key objectives is, therefore, to improve the ability of seniors to formulate informed opinions. With regard to university instructors involved, the project creates opportunities for introducing innovations in their teaching methods and strengthening communication skills with senior audiences. They also want to understand other peoples' realities better and spread the values of internationalisation. Overall, the project strengthens the integration of elderly people in higher education and improves the dimension of internationalisation of university programmes and activities aimed at and involving the elderly.

## 2 WHO ARE THE BENEFICIARIES?

The project has two target groups: Czech secondary school students and French Erasmus exchange students. This is usually the first time French students encounter the street law method. In general, the street law method is based on the premise that we learn the most by teaching others. French students must study the topics discussed in detail before they teach secondary school students. They, too, are thus broadening their own horizons, consisting of their experience. On the one hand, they study the subject matter; on the other hand, they have to adapt their teaching to the linguistic abilities of secondary school students. They also have to think about the form of teaching and, in general, teaching methods to engage secondary school students. The emphasis is on interactive teaching that engages students. *(continue on next page →)*

## 2

### WHO ARE THE BENEFICIARIES?

... French students become experts on the topic at hand. Looking at the project from the perspective of secondary students, they experience international elements in their learning process. Secondary school students are exposed to different styles of expression in the French language, they can engage with native speakers. Already the fact that the lecture is held by a person other than the regular teacher and that person is from a foreign country increases the student's interest in the lectures and the topics covered by them. The question of age also plays a role: the French students are close to them in age, so the secondary school students are more motivated to believe them. Finally, secondary school students familiar with the subject matter being taught are given a different perspective on it through the discussion and experience with international students.

## 3

### WHO ARE THE PARTNERS IN YOUR UNIVERSITY?

There are two lecturers involved in carrying out the project work at the university. The first one is a teacher of professional legal subjects and is therefore responsible for the accuracy of the content of the lessons taught by the French students. The second is the teacher of French language specialised in legal French, who is responsible for the linguistic aspects of the teaching, its adaptation to the language proficiency level of the secondary school students and the use of professional terminology. In a broader sense, however, the possibility of implementing the project depends on the incoming students. The links with the French universities, the quality of the students they select and their interest in taking such a course are therefore also important.

## 4

### HOW DID YOU REALISE THIS PROJECT?

The course „Street Law for French“ was conducted in cooperation with Slovanské gymnázium Olomouc and Gymnasium Hranice, two secondary schools with extended teaching of French. Students of different years participated.

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### HOW DID YOU REALISE THIS PROJECT?

... The course was modelled on a course previously taught at the Palacky University Faculty of Law – “Street Law”. Several francophone students participated in bi-weekly seminars. The very first seminar each semester was dedicated to an introduction to street law methods. At the second seminar, students proposed the themes they would like to prepare. They received feedback from both instructors and other students regarding the extent of the topic they wanted to cover and the suitability of the topic selected. The topics they could choose were any topics related to human rights, European law, international law, or fundamentals of the functioning of the French State system (while considering to what extent the topics may be of interest to Czech secondary school students).

Pairs of students prepared a handout that shall help them to lead secondary school students through the course and a methodological booklet for the instructor. The methodological booklet provides important information that helps the instructor (the teaching French student) to plan the activities depending on their length and to create a proper overall structure of the lesson. It also provides guidance to the regular class teachers who can use materials and know-how in other classes if they wish. The three following seminars are conceived as training lessons. One or two teams present their prepared lesson in a way as they would conduct it in secondary school. Their peers and tutors impersonate their future students. They, hence, can see if all of their activities work well and are comprehensible and whether the time management needs to be adjusted.

At the end of the semester, students are accompanied to high schools and they can present their lessons to secondary school students in a real environment.

## 5

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

First, it is necessary to identify international students willing to participate in the course, in this case, French exchange students. To offer the course to exchange students regularly, it is important to have a sufficiently developed network of cooperating French universities that are willing to send their students to Olomouc and can ensure the quality of their outgoing students. In the case of the Palacky University Faculty of Law, the institution has a long tradition of cooperation with French universities. The group of French Erasmus students is usually sufficiently large to find enough students interested in this specific course. *(continue on next page →)*



## 5

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... It is also important that French students who do not know what street law is are willing to enrol in such a course. Here it is vital that they are informed (preferably in advance) about the course's content and why it can be considered unique. In this regard, the instructor specialising in legal French is very active, communicating with incoming students at the beginning of the semester, providing information and motivating them to join the course.

The second enabler is that secondary schools are willing to incorporate this activity into their curriculum. As far as secondary schools are concerned, personal links with schools work here, as well as good experiences from other schools and positive references. The school, or at least the particular teacher, must feel that this project is beneficial. It has proven motivational if the project does not require adding extra work for the teacher and if the lesson fits into the curriculum of their course. Often the ability to present the project, but also the willingness of teachers to incorporate new elements into the teaching, have proven to be crucial aspects. Finally, it is also necessary to have support from the management of the Faculty of Law, which recognizes the importance and is willing to support also courses that focus more on professional skills (and also teaching and communication skills) development rather than on substantial issues. This is the case with the Faculty of Law therefore this was not an obstacle in the case of this project.

## 6

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

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... Ultimately, we do not get as many French students enrolled in the course as we would like. We address this challenge by personally motivating students at the semester's beginning. When it comes to obstacles on the secondary school's side, the challenge is motivation to allow the international students to convey a lesson. Positive testimonials and targeted outreach to specific French teachers, as well as reaching out to school management provided a remedy to this problem.

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" motivation is the key for both international students and secondary schools, their teachers and students. The best motivation is personal: by approaching international students individually to join the course, by positive references from other secondary schools or their teachers. Positive references can be obtained by showing that both teachers and students enjoy the class. This is ensured by emphasising the interestingness of both the topic and the forms of teaching. As to the Don'ts, the experience had shown significantly less success with accepting the project at secondary schools when we offered it through the school management. The schools approached only via the school management either ignored our efforts or directly refused the offer without stating or having any clear and relevant reason.