

Quick wins in teaching EU matters

1. Basic information

Title/name of the quick win: **Euroscola**

Country/region of origin: **Estonia**

Institution/organization implementing the practice: **VET schools, schools, EU institutions**

Target audience: **students aged 16-19**

Duration of the activity: **4 days of visit, 16 hours of student homework and group sessions**

Accessibility: **European Parliament application for in-person. Free for online Euroscola events**

Year of implementation: **2023**

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2. Description of the quick win

Description of activities:

Euroscola is European Parliament program that brings 600 students 4 times per year to Strasbourg. Aim is to provide knowledge on EU and European Parliament and discuss matters related to human rights, media and democracy, sustainability, equal opportunities etc.

In addition, the schools and students can take part of hybrid Euroscola online and watch it over web.

20 students of Kuressaare Ametikool participated on Euroscola in Dec 2023. The topic was human rights.

The program started by choosing the students according to their motivation to participate and current grades at school. During preparatory sessions students were formed into smaller groups. They created slideshows to discuss human rights, solidarity and Strasbourg and presented them to the other students.

During the trip to Strasbourg together with two teachers students got firsthand experience from European Parliament.

Kuressaare Ametikool was proud that Ats, a culinary arts student was the first of 600 students sitting in the Hemisphere to pick the mic and ask questions.

After the plenary session students took part of simulation of the work of members of European Parliament. During this they had a chance to discuss the human rights and solidarity with peers from other countries.

During off hours students and teachers had a chance to experience Strasbourg and French culture and compared it to own. Some even visited local military museum further away from the city centre.

After returning from Strasbourg the students prepared a display with photos and texts to disseminate Euroscola experiences to other students and teachers.

Why is this approach useful to teach EU matters?

Travelling abroad together with their peers is highly motivating for students. This motivation can be used to direct them for extra homework and self-study.

Visiting European Parliament gives strong first-hand experience, memories and emotions of one EU institution which is not accessible for most of the people.

EU can be abstract and far away for students. Visiting parliament building helps put direct connection to that.

Why is it a quick win?

Participating on Euroscola event has short timespan: 2 months with preparation, event and follow-up/dissemination activities. It can be arranged in both curricular or extracurricular way.

For some students it can be first time to travel abroad or fly. Joining a group event provides safer option to learn about the merits of Schengen for EU citizens and be ready to use free movement of labour during their future careers.

How to make this approach successful?

The difficult part is to get grant and accepted to join in-person as there are many schools (general education and VET) who want to use the opportunity.

Preparation and homework before actual Euroscola event are crucial for the students to gain most out of the visit. Students might not be aware of EU institutions, role and locations of European Parliament, topic of specific Euroscola.

As we organized the Euroscola participation in extracurricular way, the teachers to run the preparation phase had to be motivated as well.

European Parliament transfers the grant directly to teacher's personal bank account. Therefore, the teacher has to be ready to handle financial aspects as well.

We supported her by ordering the plane tickets and arranging accommodation. The more school gets the positive feedback to application the better.

600 students fill the hotels in Strasbourg quickly for Euroscola event. We got accepted quite late and it was difficult to find beds for 22 people.

Related resources

European Parliament on Euroscola: <https://youth.europarl.europa.eu/more-information/euroscola.html>

Additional notes:

For online participation it is possible to include Euroscola in classes. The dates and programme for next Euroscola events are published on European Parliament website.