

# Template for Classifying Best Practices in Teaching EU Matters

## 1. Basic Information

- Title/Name of the Best Practice: Olympiads on the European Union
- Country/Region of Origin: Spain
- Institution/Organization Implementing the Practice: Equipo Europa, in collaboration with various institutions such as the European Parliament Liaison Office in Spain, the Junta de Castilla y León, the University of Salamanca, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, and the City Council of Salamanca.
- Kind of activity: Informal/non-formal group activity conducted face-to-face.
- Target Audience: Secondary schools and VET schools (students aged from 15 to 17)
- Duration of the activity: The regional phase took place between February 23 and March 16, 2024. The final phase was held from April 19 to 21, 2024. Specific hours or units are not detailed.
- Accessibility: Participation is free of charge.
- Year of Implementation: The project was active in 2024, with plans for future editions.
- Contact Information: formacion@equipoeuropa.org

## 2. Description of the Practice

- **Objective:**  
*The primary goal is to enhance knowledge about the European Union's structures and electoral processes among students, fostering a sense of European citizenship and encouraging active participation in democratic practices.*
- **Description of Activities:**  
*This best practice focuses on organizing **European Union Olympiads**, an academic competition designed to enhance students' knowledge of European institutions, policies, and elections. The methodology involves a **multi-phase competition**, starting at the regional level and culminating in a national final. The activity fosters critical thinking, teamwork, and civic engagement among young participants.*

### **Implementation Steps:**

#### **Planning & Coordination:**

- *Define the competition's objectives, rules, and format.*
- *Establish partnerships with educational institutions and government entities.*

#### **Regional Phases:**

- *Organize local competitions in various regions.*
- *Select participants through quizzes, debates, or case studies on EU-related topics.*

#### **National Final:**

- *Bring top regional winners together for a final competition.*
- *Host the event at a recognized institution (e.g., university or government venue).*

#### **Awards & Recognition:**

- *Provide incentives such as certificates, scholarships, or study trips (e.g., a visit to European institutions in Brussels).*
- *Engage media and stakeholders to increase visibility.*

#### **Evaluation & Follow-up:**

- *Collect feedback from participants and educators.*
- *Use insights to improve future editions and ensure sustainability.*

- **EU Citizenship Focus Areas:**

*The Olympiads cover a broad range of topics, including:*

- *EU Institutions: Understanding the roles and functions of bodies like the European Parliament, European Commission, and European Council.*
- *Civic Participation: Encouraging active involvement in democratic processes within the EU.*
- *European Values and Fundamental Principles: Exploring the core values that underpin the EU, such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, and the rule of law.*
- *European Identity and Cultural Diversity: Promoting an appreciation for the rich cultural diversity and shared identity within the EU.*
- *EU Law and Policies: Studying the legal frameworks and policies that govern the Union.*
- *Democratic Participation and Elections in the EU: Focusing on the importance of voting and engagement in EU elections.*

Strong points	Weak points
<b>Interactive Learning Experience:</b> Students engage directly with European institutions and elections, enhancing their understanding through practical involvement.	<b>Limited Follow-Up Opportunities:</b> Post-competition engagement or continued learning opportunities may not be clearly defined.
<b>Incentivized Participation:</b> Attractive rewards, such as trips to Brussels and participation in Europe Day events, motivate students to engage deeply.	<b>Potential Accessibility Issues:</b> Schools in remote areas or with limited resources might find it challenging to participate fully
<b>Curriculum Enhancement:</b> The Olympiads complement formal education by providing practical insights into European governance and civic participation.	<b>Competitive Pressure:</b> The competitive nature of the event might overshadow the learning experience for some students.

### 3. Pedagogical Details (if these data are available)

- **Teaching Methodology:**

*The EU Olympiads employ a **project-based learning** approach, where students collaborate in teams to explore and understand European institutions and electoral processes. This methodology encourages active participation, critical thinking, and collaborative problem-solving among students.*

- **Resources and Tools Used:**

*Participants utilize online platforms and digital resources to research and prepare for the competition. Educational materials, such as brochures and booklets about the EU, are also provided to deepen understanding.*

- **Innovative Aspects:**

*The EU Olympiads stand out due to their:*

- **Experiential Learning:** *By engaging directly with topics related to the EU, students gain firsthand experience that goes beyond traditional classroom instruction.*
- **Networking Opportunities:** *Participants have the chance to connect with institutional representatives, fostering a deeper understanding of European governance.*
- **Competitive Spirit:** *The Olympiads introduce a healthy competitive element, motivating students to excel and engage deeply with the subject matter.*

- **Adaptability to VET Settings:**

*The structure and methodology of the EU Olympiads are adaptable to Vocational Education and Training (VET) settings. VET institutions in various regions can implement this practice by:*

- *Forming Student Teams: Encouraging students to collaborate in groups, leveraging their diverse skills and perspectives.*
- *Integrating EU-Focused Projects: Incorporating projects that align with vocational subjects, emphasizing the relevance of the EU in various professional fields.*
- *Utilizing Available Resources: Employing both digital and printed materials to support learning, ensuring resources are accessible to all participants.*

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#### 4. Outcomes and Impact

- **Measured Outcomes:**

*The EU Olympiads have successfully engaged students from various regions, fostering a deeper understanding of European institutions and elections. For instance, in 2024, the regional phase was conducted in 12 autonomous communities, culminating in a final event at the University of Salamanca on April 19 and 20. The winning teams were awarded a trip to Brussels to visit the European Parliament, and the top three schools were invited to Madrid on May 9 to participate in the official Europe Day event.*

- **Student/Teacher Feedback:**

*Participants have expressed positive experiences regarding the EU Olympiads. For example, students from the Colegio Sagrada Familia de Elda qualified for the national phase of the Olympiad, highlighting the event's role in promoting active engagement with European topics.*

[sagradafamiliaelda.com](http://sagradafamiliaelda.com)

- **Evidence of Success:**

*The EU Olympiads have garnered support from various institutions, underscoring their credibility and impact. The 2024 final in Salamanca was supported by entities such as the European Parliament's Madrid office, the Junta de Castilla y León, the University of Salamanca, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, and the City Council of Salamanca. These outcomes and endorsements reflect the EU Olympiads' effectiveness in educating and engaging students on European matters.*

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#### 5. Inclusivity and Accessibility (if these data are available)

- **How Inclusive is the Practice?**

*There is no specific information indicating measures to address diverse learning needs or cultural differences.*

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- **Accessibility of Resources:**

*The project's materials and tools are not detailed in the available information, making it difficult to assess their availability and ease of use. There is no mention of resources being provided in multiple formats or languages to accommodate various accessibility needs.*

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## 6. Alignment with EU Citizenship Education Goals (if these data are available)

- **Relevance to EU Citizenship Topics:**

*By engaging with institutional representatives and peers, students gain insights into the EU's structure and functions, promoting active citizenship and awareness of European democratic values.*

- **Policy Alignment:**

*The project supports the EU's educational objectives by encouraging young people to develop self-awareness as members of a social group and to become active citizens at local, national, or EU levels. It also aligns with national education policies that emphasize teaching values such as democracy and tolerance*

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## 7. Additional Notes or Recommendations

- **Challenges in Implementation:**

- **Regional Participation Variability:** *The Olympiads are held in 15 autonomous communities, which may lead to disparities in participation levels and resource availability across regions.*
- **Logistical Coordination:** *Organizing both regional phases and a national final involves complex logistics, including travel arrangements, accommodations, and event scheduling.*

- **Suggestions for Improvement:**

- **Enhanced Outreach:** *Implement targeted outreach programs to encourage participation from underrepresented regions, ensuring a more balanced national representation.*