



Summary of good practices of dropping out prevention

C6 Teacher training in Náchod, Czech Republic 15-17th November 2021

Erasmus+ project: European Citizenship – Cultural heritage unites us

1. How are methodological approaches to motivate students to continue studying understood in the different participant countries and how are carried out?

The contact with other countries and schools has offered us the opportunity to share information and new points of view about the topic in order to understand which are the most common methodological approaches to motivate students to continue studying as prevention of early dropping out.

First of all, all countries agree with the fact that not only discipline is important for the prevention of early dropping out but primarily, providing students with skills and personal experience gained within school projects and activities helps to prevent it.

All schools use different approaches to motivate students in their study and to develop their entrepreneurial and other skills, such as presentation, organization, communication skills.

- a. The coordinating **Czech school of Academia Mercurii** motivates their students for studying by building their entrepreneurial spirit and improving their skills. Doing so, the school strengthens the self-confidence of their students, shows them the practical use for their theoretical knowledge and skills which motivates them to continue studying when seeing opportunities for their future employment. The experience of the Czech school is that these students are less prone to dropping out before the end of their education. They do it via simulations of a company (JA Student Companies as a part of school subject called Applied Economy in the 3rd year of study) and internships of students (done in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd year of study, the range of activities and hours spent in the internship varies according to the branch of study and the year of study). International school-exchange programmes, such as Erasmus Plus, help increase the motivation of students too!
- b. The **Danish school Vordingborg Gymnasium & HF** employs a combination of extra-curricular activities and a large focus on individual students' general well-being. Each student is closely monitored via a set support structure to ensure their continued attendance and welfare. If students experience personal issues that might interfere with their studies, inter-personal problems, or even academic challenges, they have a wide variety of options through which to get help. The school has several levels of support such as Class Teachers who are in a position to provide advice based on their more personal relationship with the student. Students also have the option of speaking a Coach, who can provide advice without having an eye on absences, grades, etc. Guidance counsellors are also involved if the issues are more far-reaching, and they



have the authority to tell teachers to be more attentive to an individual student's needs. For the school's HF students, the school provides internship options and jobtraining, and the STX students are provided with options for academic internships at the various tertiary schools and universities in Denmark.

- c. **IES Joaquín Turina, Madrid, Spain** considers motivation as a value in itself, providing recreational, language-learning and educational activities to be attached to the regular school curriculum in order to facilitate and enhance students' motivation and incorporation in the real world outside the schooling system. By partaking international programmes such as Global Scholars (year 1) and Global Classroom (year 3) students are tested on oral skills and rhetoric and supplied with a general knowledge of internationally tackled issues. Year 4 and Entrepreneurship is a project set up in coworking with local companies which consists of a four-day open-door programme aimed at contacting schools, business and trade at a local level. Furthermore recreational activities, such as contests and gymkhanas are yearly organized so that scholars and students (from secondary school and secondary education) compete and prove their general knowledge. International school-exchange programmes, such as Erasmus Plus, add up extra motivation to our educational community.
- d. In the **Maltese school of Sacred Heart Minor Seminary**, due to their educational legislative system, they have very few drop outs since students are obliged to stay within an educational institution up till sixteen years of age. Parents are asked to send a message on the school mobile phone in order to inform the senior management team about the absence of their student and the reason why. After three days, guardians or student's parents are obliged to provide a doctor's certificate indicating suitability for school. If they fail to do so, parents or guardians are approached by local authorities and if no amends are put in place, they could end up in court and fined even up to 10,000 euros. As a means to counteract this situation, as a school they aim to intrinsically motivate students to engage in the learning process and take an active role in their education. As a school, they offer the possibility for all students to choose a vocational subject of their choice including but not limited to hospitality, health and social care, engineering, etc. They will enable students to amalgamate theoretical with the practical component of the subject, thus motivating them into loving learning by seeking its validation and importance in their everyday life, and potentially their future career. Apart from such subjects, they also offer them an applied approach to these vocational subjects which means that the syllabus is more focused on the practical and applied content, rather than theoretical. These applied subjects (SEAC) also offer a different pedagogical approach to students. They also offer the opportunity for students to choose Prince's Trust program as an optional subject. This program is targeted towards students of lower learning abilities and those struggling with literacy problems with the objective to engage them in learning in a fun and educational manner. As a school, they strive to make learning enjoyable and applicable to student's life as much as possible and so they organize numerous outings outside the school including bars, restaurants, hotels, farms, manufacturing companies, and so and so forth. This is often done in conjunction with a week long career experience offered to our students, where they have the chance to visit a place of work and experience a real working day with other professionals, outside of the school premises. Learning support assistants are also present in each class so to facilitate the learning process by simplifying certain concepts, code switching to English or Maltese as deemed necessary whilst assisting the teacher in carrying out group activities, demonstrations, quizzes, etc. Interactive whiteboards, tablets and robots are also a good way to



motivate students towards learning in a fun and interactive way, mainly focusing on a visual approach including games and videos.

As a school, they emphasize the importance on informal education such as sports, museums, music, art and drama and students are encouraged and awarded points for such activities, which eventually will improve their overall school performance certificate (school leaving certificate). They also offer students the opportunity of a weekend long live in possibility in Malta, where the students have the chance to develop personally and academically through an informal approach. During this weekend, students have the chance to discuss what are their strengths and weaknesses in relation to teaching and learning, with the aim to improving one's academic life. The school concert, open evenings, sports days, foodie days and more help the student into feeling more part of the school community where his or her needs are met. They also strive to take an all school approach to prevent drop outs, often including other stakeholders from even outside the school such as psychologists, occupational therapists, family members, extended family members, etc as a means to facilitating a student's life.

2. How do the schools of the different countries work motivation of students (general summary)?

a. Simulations of a company (Czech school)

Obviously the support of creation of entrepreneurial spirit and skills is related to a practical experience of the establishment of a company and the best way to experiment and practise is doing a simulation on settling a company.

Junior achievement: It means a bridge between formal and informal education where students can also practice real situations related to entrepreneurship. In this case they deal with a real product and with real money. Students need to find funds and sponsors who can provide them. A product promotion is needed to improve its feasibility and a product sale is also needed to recover the money invested. Fairs are also organised as a way to share knowledge among the students involved in the project.

b. Internships

Student internships in companies is a way largely used in the countries that take part in this project. They could be recognised as another subject in the syllabus. In some cases the students work experiences in companies are compulsory and in others these are optional, but in both cases that kind of activity is taken in account for the school year qualifications.

c. Specific lessons

Specific subjects are taught in order to achieve the entrepreneurial spirit considered as a way of motivation of students to continue studying among the students. They could be economy lessons to familiarize students with ordinary facts of the companies. Or they could be career guidance lessons too, to show the steps which lead to the establishment of a company. Another idea is to introduce students in practical and creative lessons to promote entrepreneurship, more practical and less



theoretical. These specific subjects could be taught in the compulsory secondary studies or in high school (post compulsory)

d. Other activities

Different kind of collaborations with the university: practises, visits and so on. Certain social activities, such as student cafés, movie nights and board game afternoons, are also arranged to create a school that is positive, inclusive and welcoming. Some of these are arranged by the school for the students, and others are organised by and for students as well. The participating schools also frequently make use of inter-departmental collaborations in the daily classes. These could include collaborations between geography and social studies, math and history, as well as physical education.

3. Which methodologies can be considered as the most effective to motivate students?

To summarize we can agree with the fact that all the countries coincide in three methodologies which help prevent dropping out.

- The first one is experiences like setting up their own company (semi real or fictitious) in order to reach and encourage their autonomy and creativity.
- The second one is internships in companies. This is considered very useful in order to establish contact with the real world.
- Finally, each school attempts to create a positive and inclusive school which students look forward to attending. All participating schools utilise inter-departmental collaborations in order to create greater connectivity between the various subjects, and the participating schools also provide extra-curricular activities such as social events for their students which strengthens social cohesion and reduces the risk of students dropping out early.