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The eTwinner

“eTwinning shows Europe at its best” This is how Michael Teutsch, head of unit of the DG Education and Culture of the European Commission, described eTwinning during the Eminent conference 2017.

Rewarding projects in eTwinning is one way of encouraging and strengthening eTwinning performance. eTwinning, which today has reached 500,000 registered educators, is a vehicle which promotes quality and innovation in education while transforming both pedagogical practices and whole school approaches.

The National Quality Label is awarded to individual educators with excellent eTwinning projects. These projects show: pedagogical innovation, curricular integration, collaborative activities, communication and exchange between partner schools, use of technology and web 2.0 tools as well as documentation of the results and impact of the project outcomes.

National Quality Labels are rewarded both to national projects as well as European projects. Educators working with European partners can also achieve the European Quality Label, indicating they have reached national and European standards. Finally projects obtaining a European Quality Label can also be nominated for the final eTwinning European Prizes sponsored by the European Commission.

“eTwinning should become a familiar word for everyone just like Erasmus+” This was the main emphasis of Rodrigo Ballester, EU Cabinet Minister for Education, youth, sport and culture upon opening the European conference “eTwinning and inclusion” which took place in St. Julians, Malta in October.

Rose-anne Camilleri

National eTwinning Coordinator

Daniela Vassallo
Kindergarten Assistant
Happy School, Gozo College

***Coding across the
borders:
educating children
for the future
Norway – Malta***

Following my last seminar in Oslo which regarded 'The Use of ICT in Kindergarten', a new project was initiated between Norway and Malta. The new project introduced coding to children as young as Kindergarten by using the ICT tools available in our schools.

We started this project in October and the first thing we did was a Skype call to introduce the children to each other. The next step was to familiarize children with arrows using arrows flashcards. During everyday activities, children worked with Beebot to find letters or numbers and they used the touch screen to play math games such as Tangram.

The Norwegian children gave directions to the OSMO bot and they had some interesting drawings. Both schools sent their respective flags to each other through a QR code.



As Christmas is approaching, the plan is to call each other again on Skype and sing a Christmas song to each other. After that, we will send a Christmas greeting to each other using a QR code. In January we will continue with our coding activities.

Our school encouraged all teaching staff to register on the eTwinning platform. I registered but I did not have in mind to start or participate in a project. In January 2016 I attended the Embed Awards since I had won the Primary Award and after the

My experience in eTwinning

Joan Camilleri,

*Kindergarten Assistant, St. Ignatius
College, Qormi St. Sebastian
Primary School*

ceremony a Kindergarten Assistant asked me to start an eTwinning project with her. I thought I should give it a try; we started a simple project together called “Inkantaw Flimkien bil-Malti”. In this project we had to teach our students songs in Maltese, take their video singing and upload it on twinspace where other members can watch it. We also uploaded photos of our students doing crafts related with the songs. Like this, our students learned to sing songs through other students. The project was open for Maltese Kindergarten Assistants and we had a very good response. I realized that my students were very enthusiastic to work in the project and learned very quickly the songs through the videos uploaded on the project. Furthermore, each member introduced her children so we made many friends. It was also useful for me because I made friends and found it easier to teach my students more Maltese songs. When I got the Quality Label and saw how the students found it interesting and fun-learning, I decided to start working on other eTwinning projects.

My experience in eTwinning is one of friendship, learning, sharing of ideas and information, collaboration, pedagogical value, excitement, enjoyment and satisfaction. One cannot put into words how much one can learn: one has to participate in a project to experience the real value of eTwinning and although one doesn't know the members of the project, one feels that she has friends from other European countries. The only regret I have is that I did not participate in other projects before and now I don't have the opportunity since I will be retiring from my career soon. I will be still communicating with some of my new friends on social media though. I encourage everyone to try an eTwinning project. Once you try one, you would want to try more projects when you see how much you learn from them and how many friends you make from different countries. You also realize how much the students learn from these projects.

eTwinning Annual Turning Inclusion



750 dedicated eTwinners and more, gathered in Malta for the eTwinning Annual Conference and showed beyond doubt that inclusion is

a celebration! The annual eTwinning conference, which took place between the 26th and 28th October, was held in St Julians.

In a world where friendship is valuable, eTwinning teachers, school leaders, and educators from all over Europe, demonstrated, discussed and analysed the importance of making friends and building alliances. Gender, age, ethnic origin, disability, economic disadvantages and the geographical situation may become variables of discrimination. Therefore, it is important to reach out to those groups who may be marginalised in our education systems, as a result of any of these variables, by equipping them with the necessary competences to successfully make the most of the opportunities available in our society.

The main focus of the conference was to share how eTwinning could be a tool to raise the capabilities of schools to address the three main factors of exclusion: cultural differences, educational difficulties and geographical obstacles. It can be concluded that eTwinning can turn inclusion into action via specific international projects, dedicated professional development opportunities and by networking teachers so that they feel part of an inclusive community.

The following is a summary of what took place during the conference:

During the first day, Rodrigo Ballester, member of the cabinet to Commissioner for Education Culture, Youth and Sport Tibor Navracsics, opened the plenary welcoming the conference participants and reminding them that they are the main players of eTwinning. Mr Ballester also added: *“eTwinning needs to grow, 500,000 members already, but we can be more ambitious!”*



l Conference 2017 ion into Action



Mark Penfold, Lead Teacher for Ethnic Minority Achievement in Babington College, Leicester, gave an inspiring and emotional keynote

speech entitled “The meaning, philosophy and practice of inclusion in a digital age”. Mark Penfold in simple and concise words reminded us the obvious: *“If you treat a lemon and a fig tree the same they won’t give fruit. Find the way the right way to treat each plant!”* He asked teachers and policy makers to stop confusing inclusion with integration, emphasising that inclusion entails change and in the long-term demands adaptation from everyone.

After this gripping keynote address, eTwinners attended the prize award dinner. The room was full of happy and satisfied faces. The projects brought together students from all over Europe aiming at improving students’ understanding of inclusion.

During the second day, the participants enjoyed 52 workshops from experienced teachers/trainers on different topics surrounding the theme of inclusion.

During the last day of the conference, Evarist Bartolo, Minister of Education and Employment of Malta opened the session with resonant statements that made strong impressions to everyone in the room. Mr Bartolo talked about the necessity of finding true inclusive practices and not pretentious ones where “one size fits all” and called for the need to put the universal declaration of human rights above cultural values and religion.

During the panel discussion, participants did not just listen to the panellists, but were actively participating, expressing their opinion through live voting.

Adapted from: <https://www.etwinning.net/en/pub/highlights/etwinning-annual-conference-in.htm>

eTwinning Awards

New eTwinner *Charmaine Attard (Hamrun SS Primary)*

Outstanding Whole School Effort

■ ***Love and Peace, from Classrooms to the World***

Michelle Saliba, Maria A Magro, Whitney Mintoff, Carmen Cassar, Susanne Fagerbakke, Crystal Vassallo. (Valletta Primary and Hamrun GP Primary)

Best National Project (Runner up)

■ ***I spy a Tricky Word***

*Sarah Mifsud (San Gwann Primary)
Melanie Caruana (Gzira Primary)*



Best National Project (Winner)

■ ***Kid's Art all Grown Up***

*Alexia Baldacchino (Higher Secondary Naxxar)
Romina Baldacchino (Marsascala Primary)*

Best European Project - Primary (Runner up)

■ ***Learning Adventures with Multicultural Mystery Skype***

Diane Fenech (Zurrieq Primary)

Best European Project - Primary (Winner)

■ ***Schoolovision*** *Maria Antoinette Magro (Hamrun GP Primary)*

Best European Project – Secondary (Runner up)

■ ***Thinking Outside the Bin!***

*Nathalie Scerri, Joanna Armeni, Romina Briffa
(St Theresa Secondary School)*

Best European Project – Secondary (Winner)

■ ***Waves of Tolerance*** *Melanie Cini (Tarxien Middle School)*

Fun Project of the Year

■ ***Folk Festival*** *Joan Camilleri, St Sebastian's Primary, Qormi*

Outstanding eTwinner of the Year

Michelle Saliba (Digital Literacy Support teacher – Primary)

**Year 4
students
from Lija
Primary
visit
fellow
students
in
Victoria**



Students attending Year Four at Lija Primary School, Malta were invited to attend the Gozo Collage, Victoria Primary School to meet the students who are in the same academic year.

These students are taking part in an eTwinning project entitled ***Exploring The Treasures Of Malta And Gozo.*** This is part of the Social Studies syllabus.

The Maltese students were welcomed at Victoria Primary by the Principal of the Gozo College Dr Denise Mifsud, by the Head of School Lelio Spiteri, and by the Assistant Heads.

The Maltese and Gozitan students had the opportunity to get to know each other through a game led by Mr. Ralph Camilleri, Assistant Head of Lija Primary School.

The students then went to the Don Bosco Oratory Theatre, to watch one of the productions from the ZiguZajg Festival in Gozo – Opera Antagonisti, an introduction to the world of opera. From there they went to the Citadel for fieldwork assigned during the eTwinning Project.

Before returning to Malta, the teachers and students from Lija were given a copy of the book, “The Going Up Book”, designed and written by last year’s Year Six students at the Victoria Primary School.



eTwinning Highlights

- **eTwinning School Label** to be launched soon. This will award schools supporting eTwinning;
- The **eTwinning App** has been launched;
- eTwinning has reached the record of **500,000 registered users**;
- **MeTP** – A tool which track the progress of eTwinners' digital and pedagogical competences development resulting from their involvement in eTwinning.
- 26-28 October 2017 - **eTwinning Annual Conference in Malta** Turning Inclusion into Action with 750 participants attending.



- **EMBED awards:** eTwinning annual national awards where eTwinners receive officially their National Quality Labels and European Quality Labels, as well as awards for projects.