


LEARNING PROGRAMME

# Understanding the European Union (Institutions, Values and EU Decision-Making for Educators)

## 10-DAY COURSE

50 learning hours | Course programme

# Understanding the European Union (Institutions, Values and EU Decision-Making for Educators) – 10-Day Course

## Introduction and Description

This is a structured professional development course designed to strengthen educators' conceptual, pedagogical, and practical understanding of the European Union as a political, social, and educational project. In an era marked by democratic challenges, misinformation, and declining civic trust, schools are increasingly expected to foster informed, critical, and engaged European citizens. This course responds directly to that need by providing educators with a solid foundation in EU history, governance structures, decision-making processes, and value frameworks, while explicitly linking this knowledge to everyday school practice.

The programme explores the historical development of European integration, the rationale behind shared governance, and the evolution of EU values such as democracy, human rights, solidarity, and the rule of law. Participants gain a clear understanding of how EU institutions function, how legislation is developed, and how European policies influence national education systems and local school realities. Rather than presenting the EU as an abstract political entity, the course emphasises its tangible impact on citizens' lives, youth opportunities, educational priorities, and democratic participation.

A strong pedagogical focus ensures that participants move beyond factual knowledge toward meaningful classroom application. The course supports teachers in translating complex EU concepts into age-appropriate, inclusive, and interdisciplinary learning experiences that promote critical thinking, student voice, and democratic culture. Special attention is given to addressing diverse perspectives, fostering respectful debate, and developing critical EU literacy without promoting uncritical narratives.

Designed for teachers of social sciences, history, geography, citizenship education, and interdisciplinary subjects—as well as school leaders and Erasmus+ coordinators—the course supports both classroom-level innovation and whole-school approaches to European citizenship education. By the end of the programme, participants are equipped not only with enhanced EU awareness but also with practical tools to embed European values, participation, and institutional understanding into curricula, school projects, and international cooperation initiatives.

## Methodology and Assessment

The course is based on participatory, learner-centred, and experiential methodologies aligned with adult education and democratic education principles. Methods include interactive lectures, guided discussions, simulations, role-plays, case studies, collaborative workshops, and reflective practice. Participants actively engage with real-world scenarios, policy examples, and classroom applications, ensuring a strong link between theory and practice.

Assessment is formative and reflective, focusing on active participation, collaborative tasks, and the development of practical outputs such as lesson plans, project ideas, or school action strategies. Peer feedback, self-assessment, and facilitated reflection are integral components. Learning outcomes are evaluated through participants' ability to apply EU concepts pedagogically and critically within their professional contexts, rather than through formal testing.

# Learning Objectives

## 1. EU Historical and Conceptual Foundations

Participants will:

- Understand the historical context and key stages of European integration
- Analyse the political, social, and economic motivations behind EU cooperation
- Critically examine different narratives of Europe and European identity

## 2. EU Values, Rights and Citizenship

Participants will:

- Identify core EU values and their legal and educational significance
- Understand EU citizenship, rights, and responsibilities
- Explore value-based education approaches suitable for diverse classrooms

## 3. Institutions and Decision-Making

Participants will:

- Explain the roles and interactions of EU institutions
- Understand legislative procedures and decision-making mechanisms
- Analyse transparency, accountability, and democratic legitimacy

## 4. EU Policies and Everyday School Relevance

Participants will:

- Examine EU policies affecting education, youth, digitalisation, inclusion, and sustainability
- Connect EU priorities to school-level initiatives and Erasmus+ projects
- Translate policy frameworks into meaningful learning experiences

### 5. Pedagogical Application and Democratic Practice

Participants will:

- Design interdisciplinary and participatory EU-focused learning activities
- Foster critical thinking, debate, and student participation
- Develop action plans for integrating EU literacy into school culture

## Preparation

After registration participants will receive a pre-course questionnaire which will be used by the trainer to learn about participants' teaching backgrounds and to assess their exact needs. Before the beginning of the course a basic reading list will be suggested to participants to prepare for the training. Participants will also be asked to prepare a presentation about themselves, their professional context and their culture. The presentation will be presented on the first day of the course to facilitate networking opportunities. Participants will receive information about the country they are going to visit in order to prepare them for their cultural experience.

## Follow up

After the course participants will be asked to share what they have learned with the rest of the staff in their schools. Further books and articles to deepen the topic and contacts with some other practitioners all over Europe and in the world will be suggested by the trainer. The methods shared and explored and the bibliography given will allow the participants to complete and improve their educational path.

## Certificate

Certificate complies with the guidelines of the Erasmus+ programme and includes the topic, number of didactic hours, dates and location of the course. We can list the record of learning outcomes on the Europass Mobility Document on request of participants. In case a participant requires a specific format of certificate we can accommodate that if

requested at least one week before the start of the course. It is necessary to attend at least 80% of the hours in order to receive the certificate.

## Accommodation

We do not directly offer accommodation and subsistence and participants are responsible for organizing it by themselves.

## Paperwork

We also provide all the support with paperwork you might need for your Erasmus+ project documentation such as mobility agreement and registration letter.

## Fee: 800 €

## Cancelation policy

We have a flexible cancellation policy in force at the moment and you can cancel your registration up to 30 days before the course and receive a full refund. In case you don't cancel the registration more than 30 days before you will not receive any refunds, but you will be able to choose to attend any other confirmed course session later (within 6 months) without any additional costs. In case you are not able to travel, your school can send someone else to take instead of you and you can change the details of the participant any time before the start of the course at no additional cost.

| TENTATIVE PROGRAMME (50 didactic hours - 5*45min per day) Monday to Friday | |
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| Day 1 | Europe and the Origins of the European Union |
| 09.00 - 09.45 | Introductions & Icebreakers |
| 09.45 - 10.30 | Course Overview & Learning Agreement |
| 10.30 - 11.15 | Europe after 1945: Why European cooperation emerged |
| 11.15 - 11.30 | Break |
| 11.30 - 12.15 | From the ECSC to the EU |

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| 12.15 - 13.00 | Historical narratives of Europe in school curricula |
| Day 2 | EU Values, Principles and Citizenship |
| 09.00 - 09.45 | Core EU values |
| 09.45 - 10.30 | EU citizenship and identity |
| 10.30 - 11.15 | Fundamental rights and the Charter |
| 11.15 - 11.30 | Break |
| 11.30 - 12.15 | Teaching values in pluralistic classrooms |
| 12.15 - 13.00 | Workshop: values-based classroom activities |
| Day 3 | The EU Institutional Architecture |
| 09.00 - 09.45 | Overview of the EU institutional system |
| 09.45 - 10.30 | The European Commission |
| 10.30 - 11.15 | The European Parliament |
| 11.15 - 11.30 | Break |
| 11.30 - 12.15 | The Council of the European Union and the European Council |
| 12.15 - 13.00 | Simulation: “Who does what?” |
| Day 4 | How EU Decisions Are Made |
| 09.00 - 09.45 | The ordinary legislative procedure |
| 09.45 - 10.30 | Qualified majority voting and consensus |
| 10.30 - 11.15 | Transparency, lobbying, and accountability |
| 11.15 - 11.30 | Break |
| 11.30 - 12.15 | From Brussels to the classroom |
| 12.15 - 13.00 | Role-play: EU law in action |
| Day 5 | EU Policies That Matter for Education |
| 09.00 - 09.45 | Education and training in the EU |
| 09.45 - 10.30 | Erasmus+ and European cooperation |
| 10.30 - 11.15 | Digital, green, and social priorities |
| 11.15 - 11.30 | Break |
| 11.30 - 12.15 | Inclusion, equity, and lifelong learning |

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| 12.15 - 13.00 | Reflection and mid-course review |
| Day 6 | The EU and Everyday Life |
| 09.00 - 09.45 | The single market and consumer rights |
| 09.45 - 10.30 | Mobility, work, and study across Europe |
| 10.30 - 11.15 | Environmental and climate action |
| 11.15 - 11.30 | Break |
| 11.30 - 12.15 | Media representations of the EU |
| 12.15 - 13.00 | Classroom activity design |
| Day 7 | Democracy, Participation and Youth Voice |
| 09.00 - 09.45 | Democratic participation in the EU |
| 09.45 - 10.30 | Youth participation and EU programmes |
| 10.30 - 11.15 | Student voice and school democracy |
| 11.15 - 11.30 | Break |
| 11.30 - 12.15 | Participatory methods for teaching EU topics |
| 12.15 - 13.00 | Workshop: planning a student-led EU project |
| Day 8 | The EU in a Changing World |
| 09.00 - 09.45 | The EU as a global actor |
| 09.45 - 10.30 | Enlargement, neighbourhood policy, and diversity |
| 10.30 - 11.15 | Current challenges |
| 11.15 - 11.30 | Break |
| 11.30 - 12.15 | Critical EU literacy |
| 12.15 - 13.00 | Reflection and discussion |
| Day 9 | Teaching the EU Across the Curriculum |
| 09.00 - 09.45 | Interdisciplinary approaches to EU education |
| 09.45 - 10.30 | Project-based and inquiry-based learning |
| 10.30 - 11.15 | Assessment of EU-related learning |
| 11.15 - 11.30 | Break |
| 11.30 - 12.15 | Adapting content for different age groups |

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| 12.15 - 13.00 | Tailoring ideas to participants' school contexts |
| Day 10 | Individual support, presentations & Closing |
| 09.00 - 09.45 | Action Planning for School Implementation |
| 09.45 - 10.30 | Preparing the final presentations and individual support |
| 10.30 - 11.15 | Final presentations and feedback |
| 11.15 - 11.30 | Break |
| 11.30 - 12.15 | Evaluation & Reflection |
| 12.15 - 13.00 | Validation of learning outcomes and certification |

*This is only a tentative timetable. The exact hours or the course might differ and will be announced for each session 2 weeks before the start. However, there will always be a total of 5 didactic hours per day and all will be in line with the Erasmus+ quality standards. The trainer might slightly modify the content in response to the needs of the group.
**Cultural and social programmes will be organized in addition to the academic programme. The exact cultural and social programme depends on the location, season, weather, etc.