

LEARNING PROGRAMME

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

5-DAY COURSE

25 learning hours | Course programme

Understanding the European Union (Institutions, Values and EU Decision-Making for Educators) – 5-Day Course

Introduction and Description

This is an intensive professional development course designed to enhance educators' European literacy and their capacity to teach the European Union in a critical, engaging, and pedagogically meaningful way. As schools across Europe are increasingly expected to promote democratic values, active citizenship, and informed participation, teachers require not only factual knowledge about the EU, but also the pedagogical competence to translate complex political structures into accessible and relevant learning experiences for students of different ages.

The course offers a coherent introduction to the historical development of European integration, the foundational values underpinning the European project, and the institutional architecture through which the EU operates. Participants develop a clear understanding of how EU institutions function, how decisions are made, and how European policies influence national education systems and everyday school life. Particular attention is given to the relevance of EU citizenship, fundamental rights, mobility, and participation, emphasising how European governance intersects with young people's lived realities.

Beyond institutional knowledge, the programme places strong emphasis on critical EU literacy. Participants are encouraged to explore multiple perspectives, address misconceptions and Euroscepticism, and foster balanced, inquiry-based approaches rather than prescriptive narratives. The course supports educators in navigating sensitive topics such as democratic legitimacy, diversity of viewpoints, and the role of media and information in shaping perceptions of the EU.

Designed for teachers of social sciences, history, geography, citizenship education, and interdisciplinary subjects, the course also supports school leaders and Erasmus+ coordinators seeking to strengthen European dimensions within their institutions. By linking EU content to participatory pedagogies, project-based learning, and whole-school approaches, the programme empowers participants to embed European values, democratic practices, and institutional understanding into curricula, school culture, and international cooperation activities in a sustainable and context-sensitive manner.

Methodology and Assessment

The course employs participatory, learner-centred, and experiential methodologies grounded in adult education and democratic education principles. Learning methods include interactive lectures, facilitated discussions, case studies, simulations of EU decision-making, collaborative workshops, and reflective activities. Emphasis is placed on linking theoretical understanding with classroom practice and real-world school contexts.

Assessment is formative and process-oriented, focusing on active participation, collaborative engagement, and the development of practical outputs such as lesson plans, project ideas, or school-level action strategies. Peer feedback, guided reflection, and self-assessment are integral components. Learning outcomes are evaluated through participants' demonstrated ability to critically understand EU structures and apply this knowledge pedagogically, rather than through summative 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: 400 €

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 (25 didactic hours - 5*45min per day) Monday to Friday	
Day 1	Europe, the EU and Why It Matters for Schools
09.00 - 09.45	Introductions & Icebreakers
09.45 - 10.30	Course Overview & Learning Agreement
10.30 - 11.15	Europe after 1945 and the origins of the EU
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	Key stages of European integration

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	EU Policies and Everyday School Life
09.00 - 09.45	Education, youth, and EU competences
09.45 - 10.30	Erasmus+ and European cooperation
10.30 - 11.15	Key EU priorities shaping education
11.15 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.15	The EU in everyday life
12.15 - 13.00	Teaching the EU across the curriculum
Day 5	Individual support, presentations & Closing
09.00 - 09.45	Designing EU-focused lessons and projects
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.