

COMENIUS SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

PROGRESS REPORT For multilateral and bilateral Partnerships Approved in 2009

General information:

Partnership title: Eco Citizens of Common Europe	
Partner countries: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom - England, United Kingdom - Wales	
Partnership type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Bilateral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>Multilateral</u>
Your institution is:	<input type="checkbox"/> The coordinator <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>A partner</u>
Name of your institution: 6th Intercultural School of Eleftherio-Kordelio Address: Davaki 18 - 563 34 Eleftherio-Kordelio Thessaloniki Greece Telephone: 2310761420 & 6977342637 (Papadopoulos Stergios- Headmaster) E-mail: sterpapa@otenet.gr Name of contact person: Keskilidou Ypermachia Telephone: 2310207612 & 6942431791 E-mail: mahikeski@yahoo.gr	

2. Partnership content

Please describe briefly the Partnership activities undertaken and the results achieved so far:

The main objectives of this Comenius Partnership, involving an exceptionally large number of partner institutions (as many as 16 schools from 14 countries), focus on the development of a shared European identity among the Project participants through raising their awareness of the issues of ecology, environment protection and healthy lifestyles, i.e. problems common to all inhabitants of our continent and our planet. Accordingly, all the Project activities carried out by our school and other partner institutions aim at meeting these objectives. They were planned in detail at application level (having received the maximum assessment by the National Agency of the coordinator's country) and were divided into 13 thematic blocks contained within the main subject of the Project. The activities conducted by our school during Year 1 of the Partnership were consistent with the following themes:

1. Acquainting the schools' communities with the project theme, work organisation
2. Land pollution. Problem of rubbish and industrial waste disposal
3. Air pollution, global warming and climatic changes
4. Energetic problems, conventional and alternative energy sources
5. The role of water in our lives. The problem of water pollution and the shrinking resources of fresh water
6. Wildlife protection in partner countries

Our school carried out a big variety of activities, including those conducted in the school (student shows, thematic workshops conducted by our teachers as well as representatives of a local ecological organisation, curricular and extra-curricular classes in different subjects linked with the Project theme, cross-curricular classes of the Comenius club combining elements of Art, Computer Science and the English language, extra-curricular Art classes, in-school and inter-school contests, ecological campaigns and other types of activities), outside the school (local study trips to places and institutions related to the Project theme, both within our hometown and to other regions of Poland; participation in thematic workshops arranged by a local ecological association) as well as activities conducted during working meetings of our team in several partner schools outside Poland, co-organised and conducted by the project coordinator, Mr Adam Kubera from Poland together with the hosts of each meeting. The latter resulted in creating joint products by all participant institutions.

Among the activities conducted on the school grounds of particular attention were theatrical plays and shows regarding the theme of ecology and environment protection performed by pupils of our school, including the following events: "The Earth is dying" and "Save the Earth" (for lower primary grades) dealing with the danger of the increasing pollution of our planet, as well as an ecological nativity play held as part of the Christmas celebration, in which all the decorations and actors' costumes were made of recyclable materials. Of special interest with pupils were numerous Art contests, including the Comenius logo contest (concluded with an online voting session to select the best logo for our Partnership), "A carfree day" contest, "The world of insects through the children's eyes" contest, "Ecological Marzanna (a puppet used as a symbol to celebrate spring coming)", "The Earth is dying" (for lower primary grades), "Eco-toy" Art and Crafts contest, creating cardboard bins for recycling in all classrooms of lower primary grades, creating posters about "Endangered animal species". The Comenius team of our school have also created a calendar promoting the Comenius Project as well as our institution - the Project coordinator. We have also made large-sized decorations from ecological materials showing the Project title as well as a huge Easter basket as part of the activity aimed to acquaint our school's community with Easter traditions in Poland and partner countries.

Inter-school and in-school events have also taken place on the school grounds to popularise the subject of ecology and environment protection, including the eco-knowledge contest "We live healthy lives because we are eco-aware" for lower primary grades, the workshops „Mummy,

daddy, I prefer water" also for grades 1-3, an ecology-related contest of student councils from several schools in our locality; a student assembly for lower primary grades "We care about the clean environment because..." held as part of the International Earth Festival celebration; a literary contest for grades 4-6 in which pupils created ecology-related rhymes, poems and stories (in their mother tongue and in English too). Grades 1-3 also attended a series of workshops entitled "Let's Save the Earth" carried out within the cross-curricular subject of the ecological education.

Our pupils have also participated in a contest involving primary and secondary schools of the Lodz region to collect waste electrical and electronic equipment and used batteries, extending their knowledge of recycling, in an international campaign of „Clean the World" in September 2009 and a cycling action to celebrate "A Car-free Day" on September 22, 2009 as well as the "Plant a tree" campaign conducted as part of the International Earth Day celebration on April 22, 2010. Each of these activities resulted in raising the awareness of the participant pupils and teachers regarding the need of environment protection through the promotion of various pro-ecological behaviours. The Project coordinator also established a connection with the local ecological centre 'Źródła', which resulted, among other things, in arranging recycling workshops in our school in December 2009 and the participation of pupils from all upper-primary grades in a series of thematic workshops held in the ecological centre, devoted to the themes of water pollution and the role of water in the environment, air pollution and the greenhouse effect, conventional and alternative energy sources.

Study trips and excursions were another important type of activity carried out in Lear 1 of the Partnership. Our pupils visited a waste disposal company where they became acquainted with the process of waste collection and disposal and the principles of recycling. They also went to the local sewage treatment plant to familiarise with the process of sewage treatment and water acquisition. Other places they visited were the botanical gardens in Lodz, where they learnt about the vegetation in Poland and other European countries, and the local ZOO, which gave them an opportunity to gain knowledge about the animal species kept in the ZOO as well as about endangered species of animals in Europe and other continents (they attended a theme-related lecture in the ZOO). Next to local trips we also arranged trips to other towns and regions of Poland. Here of particular importance was the trip to Wielkopolski National Park, where they became acquainted with ways of nature conservation in national parks and nature reserves, as well as the trip Rogow Arboretum (Lodz region), which was an excellent occasion for them to extend their knowledge on the plants of Poland and other European countries. They also visited the Museum of Forestry and the Centre of Natural Science Education, participating in workshops on the ecosystem of forest and endangered animal species.

A substantial number of Project activities our school conducted in Year 1 have been reflected in a variety of products created as a result of these activities, both locally and in cooperation with partner schools. These include a large number of powerpoint presentations (in the Polish or English language, depending on the complexity of a given topic) on the following themes: land pollution, recycling, air pollution, water pollution, the role of water in human lives and the necessity to save water resources, fireworks and their influence on the natural environment, conventional and ecological energy, ecosystems, national parks in Poland, endangered animal species, ecological holidays, and other themes). In addition to these products we also created a powerpoint in English to report on the course of the Project activities after the first and second term of Year 1, which was shown to partner schools during the working meetings of our Comenius team. Next to presentations made locally in our school we also created presentations and photostories jointly with other partner schools, including a presentation on endangered animals in Poland which is part of a joint product - a film showing endangered animal created jointly by a group of partner schools from the region of Northern Europe. We also created a joint presentation showing Easter traditions in partner countries, which will also be available in the form of a printed booklet.

The topics presented above were also explored through various projects combining elements of Art and the mother tongue or the English language (posters and thematic illustrations, spatial forms such as eco toys) created by pupils of grades 1-4 and grade 6. Our pupils were involved in a regular activity of making ecological gifts for partner schools exchanged with them during working meetings (including eco-bookmarks, paper mache projects, salt mass forms, paper, cardboard, plastic bottles and other recycled and recyclable materials). All pupils of our school were involved in creating ecological Christmas cards that were exchanged with all 15 partner schools. The pupils also worked out and conducted an ecological questionnaire entitled "Which Christmas tree, artificial or real?". Most pupils also participated in exchanging letters with pupils in several partner schools, developing their communication skills in English. The latter could also be practiced through thematic online chats with partner schools from Cyprus, Greece, Estonia, Portugal and Turkey (with the help of worksheets containing questions linked with the subjects explored) and email exchange with pupils of these and other partner schools. Our pupils also created poems and stories associated with the theme of ecology and nature.

Our Comenius activities were recorded on a regular basis in the form of written descriptions, photographs or video films. The majority of activities and products created by our school have been made available on the Project website, which constitutes the main end product of our Partnership. Created and managed by the Project coordinator Mr Adam Kubera from Szkoła Podstawowa nr 113 in Lodz, Poland with the cooperation of coordinators in all partner schools, the website is a rich source of knowledge regarding the Project theme as well as the partner countries and partner schools. It is simultaneously a proof of our local and joint work and its multiple results. The website is available at the following address <http://ecoeurope.neac2.eu/>. Next to textual information it contains photographs of activities and their results, multimedia presentations and video films, text documents and other forms of documenting the course of the Project. The website also shows tools used by our team for evaluation purposes, a link to the Intertalk platform made available free of charge by our partner school from Holand, as well as an online blog.

In addition to the material achievements of the Project work, particular attention ought to be given to the non-material aspect of our shared work, associated with the expansion of the participants' knowledge regarding the Project theme and its objectives on the way of conducting a variety of interesting and important activities. The active involvement of the school's community in the Project work (including both teachers and pupils as well as parents and associated partners from, among other things, the local ecological association "Źródła") and their growing interest in the Project activities may be considered as an indicator of the consistent achievement of the Project goals in terms of raising the pupils and parents' awareness regarding ecology, environment protection and the need to lead healthy lifestyles. Another significant indicator of the positive value of our Project is the evaluation of its activities. It was conducted at several levels including the regular evaluation of single activities by means of evaluation questionnaires, regular monitoring of the Project activities by the Project coordinator and his colleagues, the periodical assessment after completing work on the successive thematic blocks, end of year evaluation. The questionnaires conducted among teachers, pupils and parents at the end of the first year indicate a good knowledge of the Project and its assumptions among the participants and their interest in the course of our Project work. The participants of questionnaires appreciate the numerous benefits the Project brings to the institution and the pupils in particular (opening to different European cultures through the collaboration with such a numerous team of partner schools and the participation of staff and pupils in working meetings of the partner group, the development of ICT-related skills and foreign language skills (in the English language), extending the thematic knowledge within ecology and environment protection, and other benefits).

According to the Project assumptions, all our pupils have had equal chances of participating in the Project work., which was particularly beneficial for the less gifted pupils, with special educational needs, frequently coming from socially and/or economically disadvantaged

backgrounds. As a result of their involvement in the Project, most of them have shown higher confidence in their abilities during regular school work and higher motivation to learn in addition to gaining more respect from other pupils. Eventually, the Project has also motivated the teaching staff to raising their pedagogic qualifications and linguistic skills through the participation in professional courses, training workshops, thematic conferences and foreign meetings. The latter have also contributed to shaping the attitudes of tolerance and openness to other nationalities and their cultures among our pupils, who were willing to join their foreign peers in shared Project activities and were pleased to continue their friendships.

The dissemination of the Project and its results is another important aspect of the Project work. It was done by publishing thematic articles in the Comenius section of the school journal, the exhibitions of Comenius products created by pupils, presentations of Project creations during events for the school's community and parent evenings, information about the Project and its results on the Project website. An article has also been prepared regarding our Comenius project that will be published in a local newspaper in September 2010. The project coordinator also contacted embassies of most partner countries, inspiring a big interest on their part in this unique Partnership of schools and providing promotional materials about partner countries to our schools.

Our important role as the Project coordinator for the large team of 16 schools needs to be mentioned finally, which brings special honour to our institution as well as posing numerous challenges, which we have been trying to face to the best of our capability. Full responsibilities of managing the Partnership were taken by the coordinator, Mr Adam Kubera. In our efforts to ensure an effective conduct of the Project work we placed particular emphasis on the monitoring of the Project course in all partner schools through regular communication with coordinators and teachers involved in the Project work in all partner schools (by email, online communicators, phone communication and discussions during working meetings) and providing assistance and support in the Project execution. The coordinator is also involved in the administration of the Project website, updated regularly with materials provided by all partner schools, as well as in supporting partner schools in the organization and conduct of working meetings attended by all partner schools by preparing and conducting working sessions aimed at meeting the objectives set for each meeting. We are thankful to our partners for their big involvement and attention given to our Project and are glad about the substantial positive feedback regarding our coordinating work that we have received from partner schools during both informal discussions and through questionnaires used to evaluate working meetings.

What problems/obstacles, have you met in the implementation of the Partnership, if any? How have these problems been solved?

Despite a very extensive range of our Partnership we have not met any major problems preventing an effective conduct of the Partnership. It was possible, among other things, by planning the Project activities very carefully at application level along with assigning specific tasks to staff and pupils to be fulfilled throughout Year 1 of the Project, and the consistent fulfilment of these tasks. The great majority of activities planned at application level were carried out at the time set at application level, in accordance with the thematic division within the main subject of ecology and environment protection. Some activities (local excursions to ecology-related institutions, for example) were conducted earlier or later than the assumed time, which resulted from the necessity to fit in with the available dates set by these institutions to accept student groups (excursion to sewage treatment plant), poor weather conditions (activities planned for the winter period) as well as illness-related absences of teachers and pupils (an important obstacle in the case of such a busy calendar of activities). In view of the above circumstances we decided to postpone very few of the activities planned for Year 1 (such as an excursion to a nature reserve) to the beginning of Year 2, which also had its positive results such as the additional opportunity to revise the knowledge and practise skills regarding the subjects planned to explore during Year 1 of the Project.

Due to a large number of schools within the Partnership, which resulted in difficulties to agree on dates convenient for all partner schools, we decided in our first working meeting in Denmark

to conduct student online chats every 2 months (instead of monthly, as planned before). The subjects planned to discuss during the sessions that could not take place, however, were still covered in the form of email exchange between pupils and cooperative work during the many working meetings conducted in Year 1. Besides, due to technical problems with the quality of the Internet connection in some partner schools as well as different periods of holidays and days off for different schools which made it impossible to have all the partners available online at the same time, we split into 4 teams of 4 schools for the sake of the chatting sessions.

The main problem regarding the collaboration within such a large team of schools has been arranging dates for working meetings and other joint activities convenient for all partner schools (on account of different holiday periods and days off in different schools, and other reasons beyond our control). However, we tried as much as possible to stick to the calendar of meetings planned at application level (the only exception was holding a meeting in Portugal in February instead of April, as planned originally. Due to a large number of meetings throughout the year (which is a natural consequence of a Partnership of many schools) it was not possible to attend the thematic conferences and training courses in Slovenia and Sweden planned as optional meetings for partner schools. However, the Project coordinator, Mr Adam Kubera and the coordinator from the Bulgarian partner school in Varna, Mrs Julia Dobрева attended a study visit of LLP in Rotterdam in January 2010, which preceded the working meeting of project coordinators held in the same institution, sharing the knowledge and experience acquired in the meeting with other partner schools. We also changed the idea of holding regional working meetings meant for 3-4 schools only as it would result in preventing some schools from attending meetings which they originally intended to participate. Instead of regional meetings, however, we still develop the concept of regional work on the way of splitting into regional teams of schools (based on their geographical proximity and the resulting similarity of issues they need to face within ecology and environment protection.

The limited budget for the Project (in view of the real needs to finance all the activities planned for 2 years of the Partnership, especially the participation of our school in all working meetings held in 15 partner institutions during 2 years) resulted in our decision not to attend the working meeting No. 4 in Portugal. As the coordinating school, however, we did our best to support the hosting school in arranging and carrying out the meeting and achieving all the assumed objectives. As well as this, in view of holding 2 successive meetings in the United Kingdom (England in June 2010 and Wales in September 2010) and the financial difficulties involved, we decided to send a team pupils to one of the 2 meetings only (instead of both, as was planned in the application form), which decision was taken by most partner schools.

A conduct of such a big Comenius Partnership as ours, with 16 schools in 14 countries, would be much easier and more effective (especially as regards the financial aspect) if there was a possibility to gain additional financial grants from the National Agencies, which consequently would enable the participation of a higher number of pupils and staff in all working meetings. It seems to be a very important aspect of the Project execution in the case of a unique multinational Partnership of 16 schools such as ours.

Mobilities carried out between 1.8.09 and 31.7.10 (add rows if necessary)

Mobility description	Nr of participating staff	Nr of participating pupils
Working meeting of partner schools No. 1. Hjertebjergskolen, Hjertebjerg, Denmark. 23-29 September 2009. Meeting of project coordinators, head teachers and representatives of staff from all partner schools. Defining and assigning project tasks by coordinators from all partner		

<p>schools, discussing the ways of project evaluation. Working out the observation grids for the documentation and assessment of the project work. Defining the themes of student chats. Planning the joint activities to be conducted during project meetings as well as discussing each school's local activities throughout the project duration. Discussing the project website organization. Fixing dates of working meetings to be held in Year 1. Acquaintance with the Danish education system. Discussing the ecological problems facing Denmark.</p>	2	0
<p>Working meeting of partner schools No. 2. Istituto Comprensivo 2, Taormina, Italy. 03-10 November 2009. Meeting of pupils and staff from all partner schools. Sharing experiences and discussing the Project website development. Sharing materials and exchanging information on the course of the Partnership in all the schools. Conducting joint work by pupils and teachers of all participating schools regarding different types of land pollution and the effect they have on the environment. Participation in workshops about recycling and the pollution of seaside areas. Acquaintance with the education system of Italy. Creating joint products: art projects and multimedia presentations on recycling and land pollution as well as a video film showing selected activities during the meeting. Discussing the ecological problems facing Italy, and the island of Sicily in particular.</p>	1	2
<p>Working meeting of partner schools No. 3. Stichting LMC Voortgezet Onderwijs, Eenheid Zorg, Rotterdam, Holland. 22-24 January 2010. Meeting of project coordinators and representatives of staff from 11 partner schools. Discussing the progress of the Project work, presenting the results of the first-term evaluation from all participant schools by coordinators along with discussing the tools applied for evaluation. Conducting the joint work on the Project website by coordinators. Presentation of the Intertalk multimedia platform, planning online meetings of coordinators. Exchanging experiences by the participants regarding the conduct of projects within the Lifelong Learning Programme. Acquaintance with the education system in Holland. Discussing the ecological problems facing this country.</p>	0	0
<p>Working meeting of partner schools No. 4. Agrupamento de Escolas do Castelo da Maia, Maia, Portugal. 04-10 February 2010. A meeting of coordinators, staff and pupils from 8 partner schools. Sharing experiences and discussing the Project website development. Sharing materials and exchanging information on the course of the Partnership in all the schools. Conducting joint work by pupils and teachers of all participating schools regarding the basic environment- and ecology-related issues facing the area of South-West Europe (problem of water pollution and the shortage of water, litter and waste disposal, air pollution and traffic noise). A trip to an ecological farm, participation in workshops on the problem</p>	0	0

<p>of water shortage and the ways of using hydroenergy. Discussing the first findings of the questionnaire on nutritional habits and healthy lifestyles, prepared by the host school and conducted in several partner schools. Attending school lessons in different subjects in the host school by the pupils from partner schools. Acquaintance with the marine ecosystem during a visit to a local Oceanarium. Activities aimed to promote healthy lifestyles (participation in a sporting and gymnastics session by teachers and pupils from the participant schools. Creating joint products such as art projects and multimedia presentations by pupils presenting detailed accounts of activities carried out during each day of the meeting. Acquaintance with the education system in Portugal.</p>		
<p>Working meeting of partner schools No. 5. Dimotiko Sxoleio Psevda, Pseudas/Larnaka, Cyprus. 09-14 March 2010. Meeting of coordinators, staff and pupils from all partner schools. Sharing experiences and discussing the Project website development. Sharing materials and exchanging information on the course of the Partnership in all the schools. Conducting joint work by pupils and teachers of all participating schools regarding the role of water in our lives, the problem of water pollution and its consequences, the need and ways of saving water in the context of water shortage problem facing countries of Southern Europe. Participation in cross-curricular workshops combining Nature Studies and IT regarding the ecosystem of the forest. Creating joint products such as art projects, a multimedia presentation, a large-sized textile banner promoting the idea of saving water, a dictionary of water-related terms in the native languages of partner countries, a presentation of outdoor games popular in partner countries along with a sporting contest between partner schools, and a video record of the activities held during the meeting. An excursion to a nature reserve in the mountains of Trodos. Acquaintance with the education system in Cyprus.</p>	2	0
<p>Working meeting of partner schools No. 6. Fjellsrud skole, Lorenskog, Norway. 27 April-1 May 2010. Meeting of coordinators, staff and pupils from all partner schools. Sharing experiences and discussing the Project website development. Sharing materials and exchanging information on the course of the Partnership in all the schools. Conducting joint work by pupils and teachers of all participating schools regarding the basic environment- and ecology-related issues facing the area of Northern Europe, especially Norway and other Scandinavian countries (excessive deforestation, land pollution, advancement in the use of the so-called green energy). Attending a local event devoted to environment protection, participation in workshops exploring various types of alternative energy, a study trip to a large water plant combined with the participation in educational workshops on conventional and alternative energy.</p>	2	3

<p>Attending a gymnastics and music session in order to promote healthy lifestyles. Planning regional products by 3 teams of schools from different regions of Europe - a booklet on ecological problems facing countries of South-East Europe, a calendar on endangered animals and plants from South-West Europe and a photostory on endangered animal species in the countries of Northern Europe. Creating joint products such as art projects, a multimedia presentation, a photo exhibition and a video record of the activities held during the meeting. Acquaintance with the education system of Norway.</p>		
<p>Working meeting of partner schools No. 7. Priorslee Primary School, Telford, England. 21-28 May 2010. Meeting of coordinators, staff and pupils from all partner schools. Sharing experiences and discussing the Project website development. Sharing materials and exchanging information on the course of the Partnership in all the schools. Evaluating Year 1 of the Partnership by all partner schools, discussing the relevant documents including the progress report after Year 1. Conducting joint work by pupils and teachers of all participating schools regarding the problems of wildlife protection in partner countries (especially local plants and animals). Participation in a workshop about endangered plant and animal species, a thematic excursion to the zoological garden in Chester which holds an impressive centre of natural education. Attending thematic classes in the field of languages, art, music and sport within the theme of the Project held by Wrockwardine Wood Arts College in Telford. Visiting a traditional Victorian farm, acquaintance with the operation of an eco farm. Creating joint products such as art projects, multimedia presentation and a video record of the activities held during the meeting. Acquaintance with the UK's education system, lesson observation, discussions on the application of innovative methodologies for primary and secondary level education. Discussing ecological issues facing England.</p>	2	3
Total number of mobilities	9	8