

## Building bridges

The *VoiceS of Teachers* newsletter forms the bridge between the teachers, teacher trainees and teacher trainers for promoting activities of this Comenius Network.

**RECURRING THEMES**  
Each newsletter deals with:

- Outcomes of conferences of the network.
- Coming events
- (Scientific) articles interesting for the VoiceS audience.
- Activities undertaken to within the network.



## CONFERENCE INSPIRATION Call for papers

### Come2Graz - International Week 2018: VoiceS Conference INSPIRATION – Intercultural Communication and Diversity

Students, teachers and staff of higher education institutions as well as schools and all members of the VoiceS-network are invited to participate in the **Come2Graz – International Week 2018, 25 – 28 April** with the topic "**Intercultural Communication and Diversity**".

University teachers/staff from all our partner institutions are invited to take part within the framework of teaching assignment and staff training.

Participants are warmly invited to submit abstracts of workshops posters, research and elevator pitches addressing the following topics:

- Intercultural communication,
- cultural and language diversity,
- music and arts education.
- **Schools:** schools are especially invited to present projects and/ or their school at the market place on Thursday afternoon.

Deadline for submission: January 15th, 2018

Application: <https://www.phst.at/international/veranstaltungen-projekte/international-week-voices-conference/come2graz-international-week-2018/?L=1>

**VoiceS-Network:** [www.european-teachers.eu](http://www.european-teachers.eu)

**Graz Tourism:** <https://www.graztourismus.at/de>



## Being a European Teacher...

Are we really European Teachers? Of course, in our passports we have a symbol of the European flag like the number plates on our car. And we are teachers, so that makes it clear that we are European Teachers doesn't it? At the other hand, we read in the newspapers about Brexit, about the referendum in Catalonia to become independent from Spain and the struggle in Europe to agree about economic, social, migrant, defense, financial issues etc. For sure, we are European because we live geographically seen in this part of the world and we are teachers. But that is not enough, in my opinion.

We live in a more and more globalized world, a world with many questions demanding an answer from us how to prepare children for the world of today and tomorrow. A world more complicated than in the past, a world where we are expected to be critical, creative, and where we can take different roles depending at the context that we are in. A world and a Europe appealing for understanding of diversity and different identities children and adults have. A world of different moralities. The geographical unity is not enough.

Maybe the biggest task for us as European Teachers is to make children aware that Europe and the World that they are living in so that they can start to make their own choices. But is that what we are teaching at our primary and secondary schools. Is that what we teach at our universities to our students who want to become teachers? I don't think so. Still we are testing the knowledge of our children and students in what we say the main subjects like math, languages, history etc. Let's be honest we know better than that, we can do better than that!

The debate about the future of Europe is in full swing. "Education and culture are the key to the future –both for the individual as well as for our Union as a whole. It is how we turn circumstance into opportunity, how we turn mirrors into windows and how we give roots to what it means to be European, in all its diversity." (President Juncker, 14 November 2017) This is why European leaders have decided to discuss the future role of education in strengthening the sense of belonging together and being part of a community.

The outcome of these discussions should be more than that education should lead to new jobs and economic growth. We have to be aware that all persons living in the European Union can participate in society, and have equal opportunities.

Therefore, we need teachers who can and want to call themselves European teachers, teachers who are interested in the other one, in society, in diversity, identity etc. Teachers that want to participate active in the European Society that we form together.

Let's be inspired by the next conference of our Learning Teachers Network VoiceS in Graz. Hope to see you all to discuss when we can call ourselves a European Teacher.

Henny Oude Maatman

## **New International minor: Saxion University for Applied Sciences (Netherlands)**

### **Global Citizenship in Education & Social Practice**

*were global meets local*

#### **Why this new minor?**

The world of the young professional is characterized by a growing global interconnectedness between people, organisations and cultures in general. New technologies and the ongoing processes of globalisation make it necessary to think afresh about the concepts of identity, diversity, nationality and citizenship and about the way we identify ourselves as professionals. People are in permanent contact with the global, even in the local realm, and intercultural encounters are a daily reality in our villages and neighbourhoods.

An important question for 21st century citizenship is how to manage identities. Identity is no longer linked to a particular local community, but to a multitude of communities both local and global. The burden of identity is shifting more and more onto the shoulders of the individual. Another important question for modern citizenship is how to deal with ethical issues in a world of diversity. Global Citizenship refers to the challenge for people, professionals and communities to engage with all these global and local identities and moralities and enable people to work together in a globally connected and intercultural environment.

#### **Set up of the minor:**

This minor wants to facilitate students from different study programs to work together in a multidisciplinary team. We will combine the knowledge, insights and skills from these different (and international) backgrounds to create a dynamic and explorative environment to study Global Citizenship in the context of various (international) practices, especially **teaching and social work**. We focus on the local communities and neighbourhoods in the Netherlands. We always compare the educational and social practice in the Netherlands with these practices in the home countries students come from. This comparison will help students to think critically about these different practices and inspire them to become an innovative and reflective professional.

#### **Running times:**

Semester 1: September 2018 – Dec./Jan. 2019 / Saxion Location Deventer

Semester 2: Feb 2019 – July 2019 / Saxion Location Enschede

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## IMPACT project!!!

In December 2016 a group of five primary schools and Saxion University started the IMPACT project. After approval of the application schools from Portugal, Italy, Turkey, Catalonia and the Netherlands prepared the first meeting in Barcelona, last May. The second Teacher Training Week took place in Portugal in November. In total the schools will meet five times until 2019.

### What is the IMPACT-project?

The IMPACT-project focusses on empowering teachers to become European entrepreneurial teachers. During the training weeks they will get the opportunity to strengthen their teaching skills. All participating teachers will present the challenges and strengths of their schools and will exchange their visions on education through which all participants will get a broader view on the current situation of education in their partner countries. The teachers will create sustainable partnerships. This way they can share new ideas on education from their own countries with the partners in Europe and use those ideas to make a next step in developing school policy.

Through concrete projects in their classes the knowledge about education in other countries is shared. Children will work together with children in other countries and become aware of the differences and similarities between them.

One of the goals of IMPACT is to get more schools involved. Teachers from the partner schools are ambassadors of the project in their countries and will actively approach other schools in their countries to get involved in the project. Teachers and children will communicate with each other by using digital means, such as Twinspace. This way teachers will improve their digital competences, an important part of their profession.

On the project page of Twinspace the progress of the project is shown and information is publicly accessible. Each school will make a digital portfolio to show their development during the project.



Do you want to know more? Please visit our Facebook page (search: *impacterasmus*)

Paul Stuit  
Saxion University



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