



ELICIT European Literacy and Citizenship Education

Progress Report

Public Part

Project information

Project acronym: ELICIT
Project title: European Literacy and Citizenship Education
Project number: 510624-LLP-1-2010-1-FR-COMENIUS-CMP
Sub-programme or KA: COMENIUS
Project website: <http://www.elicitizen.eu>

Reporting period: From 01/10/2010
To 29/02/2012
Report version: 1
Date of preparation: 05/03/2012

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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

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Executive Summary

The ELICIT project was initiated by a group of partners who had already been working together on another COMENIUS project: *Intercultural Studies in Teacher Education to Promote European Citizenship (ISTEPEC)*. After clarifying the notions of Intercultural studies and European Citizenship Education and their many implications; after producing a number of worksheets on “How to teach EUROPE”¹, the partners felt that another step had to be taken in order to promote the integration of European Literacy and Citizenship Education in Teacher Education courses.

Indeed, if Europeans are to feel that they belong to a common space sharing common values, they must be encouraged to enhance their degree of European Literacy and to realize their responsibilities as European Citizens. Education plays an important part in this process: unless teachers and educational staff in general are made aware of the issues and provided with adequate training, such objectives cannot be achieved.

Some new partners joined the group and the consortium of 16 partners, consisting of a harmonious set of Universities, schools and associations, is very well distributed throughout the E.U.: from Bulgaria to Sweden and Spain and also includes “old” E.U. countries like Belgium, the Netherlands and France and some “newer” Member States, like Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria. The variety of cultural and historical backgrounds makes the joint venture all the more challenging and enriching.

In October 2010, the partners set to work to develop a *Reference Framework of Competences for Teaching European Literacy and Citizenship*. They see this framework as a basis on which to build European literacy and citizenship education into Teacher Education courses.

To accompany this *Reference Framework*, a *Database of Resources* is being collected in the various countries of the partnership and a *Portfolio of the European Citizen* is being elaborated.

A website is being developed: <http://www.elicitizen.eu>

The partners have now been working for 17 months, using the interactive platform on <http://www.aede-france.org> to prepare and upload their documents, to exchange their ideas and to finalise their tasks.

Three important meetings, Paris in May 2011, Bordeaux in November 2011 and Cordoba in February 2012, have enabled the partners to work in groups, to debate in plenary sessions and to assess their progress.

Public seminars were open to large audiences both in Paris (28 May 2011) and in Bordeaux (4 November 2011) to present the ELICIT project and to disseminate its provisional outcomes. Moreover, some partners have also held colloquiums and training sessions in their various cities.

With 19 more months to complete the project, the partners feel that they have already reached a satisfactory level of attainment.

¹ ISBN 978-963-7294-63-4, first published in 2007; second edition in 2009.

Table of Contents

1. PROJECT OBJECTIVES.....	5
2. PROJECT APPROACH.....	6
3. PROJECT OUTCOMES & RESULTS.....	8
4. PARTNERSHIPS.....	9
5. PLANS FOR THE FUTURE.....	10
6. CONTRIBUTION TO EU POLICIES.....	11

1. Project Objectives

The ultimate objective of the ELICIT project is that every citizen in the European Union feels that he/she is a **European citizen**. It means that he/she has acquired some basic knowledge about the European Union, its values and societal vision, its various cultures and languages, its history, its socio-economic issues and its geopolitical context and that he/she has developed the competences and attitudes of an active European citizen.

To make this objective attainable, the ELICIT partners have decided to concentrate their attention on education and teacher training. They have decided that it would be useful to produce references, resources and evaluation tools.

The ELICIT *Framework* aims at providing the conceptual references which teacher trainers, lecturers and institutional bodies could refer to when designing a course curriculum for initial or in-service Teacher Education in order to ensure that all teachers and other educational staff throughout the E.U. can develop and enhance European Literacy and Citizenship Education.

There is no shortage of resources from which to draw in order to implement such a European curriculum; however, the resources are scattered on bookshelves or on the Internet. That is why the ELICIT partners, in each of their various countries, have chosen to try and collect these resources; to arrange them according to the levels at which they can be used and according to the areas which they address. This *database of resources* will be available on the website <http://www.elicitizen.eu> at the end of the project.

As for evaluation, the partners have adopted the format of a portfolio, which can be used as a tool for self-evaluation as well as for external evaluation. Teachers and teacher educators are already familiar with portfolios: a *Portfolio of the European Citizen* could probably be fairly easily disseminated and adopted.

2. Project Approach

As stated in the Executive Summary, some of the partners had already worked together; the new partners joined the project because they had shared some other projects with one or two of the 'original' group. As a consequence, it was rather easy to agree on a common methodology.

All the partners were well aware of the declining figures of participation in European elections; all the partners were convinced that the future of our youth could only be envisaged within a European Union which could ensure peace and foster confidence.

The need for enhanced European literacy among our students is patent; the core of the matter lies with educating teachers and head teachers and alerting inspectorates and educational authorities.

The partners decided that one of the possible ways to develop European literacy and responsible European citizenship was to produce tools which could be used at the highest levels in each Member State.

Based on the recommendations published by the E.U. (2006: *Key Competences*, 2007: *Improving the Quality of Teacher Education*; 2009: *Professional Development of Teachers and School Leaders*; 2010: *Europe 2020, an Agenda for New Skills and Jobs*), a first framework was elaborated. It was then presented to teachers, inspectors and head teachers. The network of associated partners proved very active and useful at this stage. After several of these consultations, a second, then a third version of the framework were produced. The version which is annexed to this report was validated at the meeting in Córdoba at the beginning of February 2012.

The ELICIT partnership includes secondary schools, universities, teacher education institutes, inspectorates and the civil society, represented by associations whose aims are to promote European citizenship education. Some members of these associations have held, or still hold, high positions in the educational hierarchy. Such a combination of partners ensures a significant added value to the project both from a pedagogical and a political point of view.

Moreover, the geographical span of the partnership makes for the integration of varied cultural and historical approaches to educational issues.

Internal evaluation of the project is entrusted to a group of six partners, mixing universities and associations from five different Member States and the European Association of Teachers, which can provide an overall view of educational matters throughout the E.U.

ELICIT's quality plan is monitored by our Hungarian partner who has a solid experience in quality assurance processes and modalities.

Evaluation of the ELICIT products is conducted in real life contexts, with teachers and teacher trainers, whose input is taken into account at each stage of the development of the project.

Dissemination had been planned in the initial approach, through public seminars, conferences and teacher training sessions. Such events have already taken place, making the ELICIT *Reference Framework* known to large audiences, including educational authorities. They have enabled the partners to get valuable feedback.

Dissemination is also ensured via newsletters and websites. All in all, newsletters are distributed to thousands of correspondents.

“Open Letters” on the subject of teacher training and European citizenship literacy have been, and will be, sent to candidates in presidential (or other) elections in the Member States of the partnership and distributed through the medias.

The University of Córdoba has proposed to introduce a “*European Mention*” in teacher education qualifications; this proposition has been taken up by the other universities and teacher education institutes of the partnership. A meeting will take place in April 2012 between the University partners to develop the contents of this *European Mention*. This is a concrete example of the ELICIT exploitation strategy.

3. Project Outcomes & Results

The major achievement of the ELICIT project is the production and dissemination of a *Reference Framework of Competences for Teaching European Citizenship Literacy* in nine languages: Bulgarian, Dutch, English, French, Hungarian, Italian, Rumanian, Spanish and Swedish.

The ELICIT partnership includes organizations from eight Member States, so there should have been only eight linguistic versions of the *Reference Framework*, but one of the participants from the European Association of Teachers is Italian and she volunteered to write the Italian version of the document, thus providing a larger scope for dissemination.

This *Reference Framework for Teaching European Citizenship Literacy* is directly connected to the objectives of the project, because it provides the theoretical basis on which national educational institutions, universities and teacher training institutes can build the European dimension into Teacher Education courses.

The second outcome, a *Database of Resources* is currently under construction. The partners have started collecting resources in their national and regional environments and posting them on the ELICIT interactive platform of <http://www.aede-france.org>

When the task is completed, in the next stage of the project, the *Database of Resources* will be moved to the ELICIT own website: <http://www.elicitizen.eu>

This *Database of Resources* is closely linked to the objectives of the project, as it will provide, in a unique space, a valuable source of documents and links offering information about the E.U. and a large variety of publications in all formats to substantiate *European Citizenship Literacy*. All this will be in the nine languages of the consortium.

In order to facilitate access to this *Database of Resources*, the link to <http://www.elicitizen.eu> will be communicated to educational organizations throughout the E.U. as well as to associations and forums which deal with European matters. It will also be relayed on EDUCAVOX <http://www.educavox.fr/> and on Facebook/AEDE-France. The aim is to attract not only students, teachers, teacher educators and educational staff, but also the larger public.

As regards the third outcome, *The Portfolio of the European Citizen*, a first draft was elaborated at the Córdoba meeting in February 2012. A lot of work remains to be done on this *Portfolio* and it will be the main objective of the second half of the project.

The partners will study existing European portfolios produced in various areas, in order to make sure that this ELICIT *Portfolio of the European Citizen* comes as a complementary tool and does not conflict with any already published evaluation tool.

4. Partnerships

Considering the specific nature and objectives of the ELICIT project, it was necessary to be able to work in close collaboration with partners from all over Europe.

Because the issue at stake is to introduce *European Citizenship Literacy* into the training courses of teachers and other educational staff, considering that education is NOT a competence of the European Union, the ELICIT partners were well aware that regional and national educational contexts had to be taken into consideration from the very beginning. However, above the regional and national discrepancies, the core attitude was, is and will be: “Think and act EUROPEAN”.

One of the strong points of this ELICIT partnership is therefore the large range of countries involved, from a cultural, political and geographical point of view.

The partnership covers most of the E.U.: from Sweden in the North, to Spain in the South, from France, Belgium and the Netherlands in the West to Bulgaria and Rumania in the East, including Hungary in Central Europe. Moreover, the participation of the European Association of Teachers ensures a complete European coverage: indeed, AEDE has national sections in 25 European Members States where it will disseminate ELICIT outcomes and results.

The partnership has achieved the creation of real, active, living European common grounds in the area of education and teacher training. Partners from the “older” E.U. countries (Belgium, France, The Netherlands) were never in a position to think and say: “We know better!” Input from ALL the partners were always solicited and taken into account.

The added value of working together in a European partnership can be seen at different levels: developing a capacity for listening to one another, increasing negotiating competences, clarifying notions and concepts, putting regional and national viewpoints into perspective, identifying common grounds, building a sense of *Europeanity*...

The associated partners, who were involved in the “testing” phases of the project, played a double role: providing feedback and disseminating results. A very enriching episode consisted in meeting ELOS representative, Wim Horsch, during the Bordeaux seminar and contrasting the two approaches. A cooperation agreement was signed at the end of the meeting between ELICIT and ELOS.

The public seminars were great opportunities to awaken the interest of other organizations, such as associations of Head teachers, regional authorities, national Agencies, national ministries of education, for example.

5. Plans for the Future

At the Córdoba meeting in February 2012, the partners outlined their future plans: the next steps will be to complete the *Database of Resources* and to elaborate the *Portfolio of the European Citizen*.

Similarly to what took place during the first half of the project, the partners will work together, combining actions with their local teams, in cooperation with their associated partners, and collaboration with the other ELICIT partners via the collaborative working platform.

The opening of the ELICIT website: <http://www.elicitizen.eu> next month will mark a decisive step in the dissemination and exploitation processes. The conception of the website has been entrusted to a small independent company based in the Netherlands.

Three major meetings will take place (Brussels in September 2012, Sofia in May 2013, Kecskemét in September 2013), each with its specific objectives.

In the course of those meetings, public seminars will be held, to disseminate results.

The University partners will meet in Córdoba in April 2012 to discuss and develop the *Common European Mention in Teachers' degrees*.

At the end of the project, the *Reference Framework for Teaching European Citizenship Literacy*, the *Database of Resources*, the *Portfolio of the European Citizen* and the website, <http://www.elicitizen.eu> will be presented to the European Commission, General Directorate for Education and Culture; to the National Agencies; to the Ministries of Education in the eight Member States; to Universities and Teacher Education Institutes. Dissemination will be carried out in seminars, colloquiums and conferences, as well as through professional Journals and Newsletters.

A COMENIUS training course will be prepared and advertised, after the completion of the project.

6. Contribution to EU policies

This ELICIT project aims at contributing to EU policies in the field of Education. The ELICIT *Reference Framework for Teaching European Citizenship Literacy* is rooted in recommendations published in the Official Journal of the E.U.

- *30-12-2006: Key Competences for Life Long Learning;*
- *12-12-2007: Improving the Quality of Teacher Education;*
- *12-12-2009: Professional Development of Teachers and School Leaders;*
- *26-5-2010: Europe 2020, New Skills for New Jobs Initiative.*

