

DIDACTIC PRINCIPLES

Europe Alive has the potential to engage many students in an interaction in which they mimic the basic structure of the European legislative process and experience the interaction and power struggle between the main actors in the process. The students' interaction opens up a more active learning than they normally experience and is occasionally reminiscent of what is described in the literature as 'flow states'. Europe Alive enables accommodative learning in which new cognitive contexts are created.

Europe Alive is special in that it creates space for learning in a variety of ways. By assigning individual, unique roles to students, the lessons can motivate individuals exactly where they are in the learning process. Although everyone is taught at the same time, Europe Alive creates learning as a psychological process of the individual. All roles are part of different teams, and thus part of the learning process is also shaped by the interaction between the individual and the social and material environment, including the development of digital skills using the platform-based technology teaching method.

To become an active and democratic European citizen, one does not only have to put pen to paper and memorise facts by heart. Europe Alive is an innovative teaching method that integrates technology and the digital platform with traditional teaching activities, using a blended learning model (also called hybrid learning). This allows us to make the learning experience more flexible and unique for each individual.

Europe Alive is built on a framework of four pedagogical pillars:

Reduction • Simulation • Repetition • Reflection

We consolidate the students' knowledge with four good old tricks: reduction (- of complexity) is the mother of pedagogy and necessary to avoid drowning in details. In this course, the main principles and the EU institutions are examined in different ways and from different angles. And at the end of the course, the focus will be on reflection and position-taking. These pedagogical principles are combined with innovative teaching methods, including the combination of gamification principles with cooperative learning, which increases students' intrinsic motivation.

Europe Alive creates motivating, engaging learning through the use of the following methods:

- Learning through problem solving. This leads to increasing immersion and increases the need for collaborative and cooperative learning.
- Gamification methods, which aim to involve as many types of learners as possible. This creates anchored learning.
- Individual roles – for teams to function, they need to take on their individual roles. This gives them responsibilities and different tasks to complete throughout the day.
- High learning success with playful support. EaW can motivate many pupils at the same time without requiring large resources from teachers. This is made possible by the platform that manages the day and provides individual support to the students.

This is what they learn

The pedagogical intention is to enable students to identify some of the main features of how the EU works. It is not only a core social studies lesson, but also aims to strengthen students' political agency by seeing the EU not only as a distant regulatory and control apparatus, but also as a democratic instrument to which they themselves have access. For this reason, Europe Alive is a three-phase learning programme. In the first part, the actors in the legislative process and a case of transnational regulation – namely the free movement of workers - are presented. In the second part, the roleplay Europe at Work, the students take on roles as actors and see the regulation machine from the inside. The third part – "Europe after work" – is a group discussion in which the students respond to the main points of the first two parts. The first phase thus consists of an academic preparation. Students can then apply what they have learned in a safe learning environment that enables them to understand some of the more complex features of EU legislative procedures and negotiations. The final reflection phase ensures that students review what they have learned.

In addition to the learning outcomes of the core subject, participants have the opportunity to learn a range of skills, knowledge, general education, and competences:

Problem solving

Critical thinking

Building knowledge

Negotiation skills

Competent communication

Teamwork

Self-assessment

Soft and hard skills

So with Europe Alive, we are putting core EU content into a form that expands the learning space. We are not just focused on academic content, but create a learning environment where students can develop both soft and hard skills. Europe Alive is a unique, motivating, innovative and digital education offer.