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Program to Combat Climate Change

What is the Climate Change Program?

This program is the result of the Erasmus+ Project 022-1-LV01-KA210-SCH-000082391 "Road To a Green Future" and has been developed, in accordance with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, by a team of teachers and trainers involved in this project from Turkey, Latvia, Italy, and Spain, with the aim of raising awareness and training the school community on climate change and promoting concrete actions to achieve sustainable development goals. In a rapidly changing world where increasingly extreme climatic phenomena, rising temperatures, greenhouse gas concentrations, glacier melting, and sea level rise are observed, schools assume a fundamental strategic role. Simply narrating climate change is not enough; it is necessary to introduce "climate education" into programs and promote the active citizenship of young Europeans, inspiring them to become protagonists of change through the adoption of virtuous behaviors to build sustainable, inclusive, fair, and peaceful societies.

During the C2 mobility of the Project held in Italy from March 11th to 15th, 2024, the project partners collaborated on the preparation of the program by identifying the content, activities, strategies, initiatives to include, and methods to integrate and

adapt the program into school curricula and extracurricular activities. This program will provide students with the knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm needed to become environmentally responsible citizens.

Why Teach Climate Change?

"Less you know about something, less value it has for you, and therefore, it is easier to destroy," the words of indigenous activist Nemonte Nenquimo, addressed in an open letter to the leaders of the Earth while the Amazon was burning, emphasize the importance of a deep understanding of climate change, which can be conveyed to the new generations primarily through schools. Through climate education, we can increase students' awareness of environmental issues and encourage them to connect their lives to climate change. By addressing these issues with a multidisciplinary approach, which is cross-cutting to all teaching subjects, we will enable students to understand the multifaceted nature of environmental challenges, fostering critical thinking essential to navigate an increasingly complex world.

Who is the "Program to Combat Climate Change" Created For?

The program will be implemented by the three schools that have joined the project: Daugavpils 16th Vidusskola in Latvia, Borsa Istanbul Etimesgut Suvari Ortaokulu in Turkey, and Istituto Comprensivo Corrado Melone in Italy. The target audience of the program is teachers engaged in promoting environmental and climate education and students aged 6 to 17. The implementation of the program also aims to indirectly reach the families of students, all school staff, and the local community.

Statement of Commitment to Sustainability and Climate Action

We recognize the need to address climate change and its profound implications for present and future generations. As educational institutions dedicated to promoting critical thinking, innovation, and global citizenship, we are committed to taking proactive actions towards sustainability and climate resilience. We firmly believe that education plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes, behaviors, and actions towards a more sustainable future. Therefore, we are committed to integrating climate change education into all aspects of our school institutions, enabling students, staff, and community members to become informed advocates and agents of change.

Program Objectives

1. Teacher Training

- Provide training sessions and workshops for educators to enhance their understanding of climate change and sustainability.
- Equip teachers with resources, tools, and strategies to effectively teach concepts of climate change and promote environmental protection in the classroom.

2. Student Engagement

- Raise awareness among students on climate change and sustainability through lessons, educational campaigns, workshops, seminars, and public events.
- Organize experiential learning activities, school trips, and projects focused on environmental conservation and climate resilience.
- Engage parents, families, and the entire local community in climate action efforts to create a culture of environmental responsibility.

3. Conduct Energy Audit and Improve Energy Efficiency

- Understand the energy consumption of our school and identify areas where energy savings are possible. For example, increase energy efficiency by turning off lights when not needed (identifying one responsible student for this in each class); turn off and unplug electronic devices used in class when lessons end, and reduce the use of heaters when possible.

4. Be Plastic Free

Eliminate the use of plastic bottles, using glass or steel water bottles instead.

5. Plastic Clean-Up Blitz

- Organize two clean-up blitzes per year to teach young people that they need to act to have a positive impact on our environment.

6. Waste Reduction

- Reduce the waste we produce by encouraging students not to buy disposable products or products with packaging; reuse snack containers and bags and implement an efficient recycling program.
- Motivate students to recycle and reuse their old clothes by organizing fairs where they can exchange old clothes, games, and toys.
- Discourage the purchase of low-cost items online through reflection on the social, environmental, and economic impact of such purchases and the importance of supporting ethical and sustainable companies.

7. Teach Food Education

- Study the link between food choices and climate change, encouraging the consumption of local fruits and vegetables, organic foods, and seasonal foods.
- Learn to read food labels to understand what we are eating.

8. Support Local Agriculture

- Encourage the use of local food to reduce the carbon footprint associated with food transportation and processing.

9. Promote the Use of Sustainable Transportation

- Encourage students to walk or cycle.
- Organize a day where students come to school by bike or a bike tour, at least once a year.

10. Create Green Spaces at School

- Regularly plant trees and flowers to reduce the carbon footprint of the school and make the environment more pleasant, promoting connection with nature and physical, mental, and social well-being.
- Create a green classroom to allow students to spend more time outdoors and take advantage of "green" educational opportunities such as outdoor educational labs, gardening activities, and creation of educational gardens.

11. Measure and Monitor Progress

- Measure and monitor the progress made in the activities described, celebrate successes, and identify areas where improvements can be made.
- Regularly assess student learning outcomes, behavioral changes, and environmental impact to identify the level of ongoing improvement.

Conclusion

Through the 'Program to Combat Climate Change', we aim to promote and integrate climate education within the mission and values of the school in order to prepare students to be conscious, responsible, and active citizens capable of addressing the challenges of climate change and contributing to the creation of a sustainable future for all.

The Team of Teachers of the Erasmus+ Project "Road To a Green Future"

