



Co-funded by
the European Union



EuroCivic Lab

**Strengthening European Identity
and Citizenship through
SDGs, Social Activism and
Living Labs Methodology in
School Education**

WP4

Critical Thinking Exercises – Module 1

The EuroCivic Lab project: Strengthening European Identity and Citizenship through SDGs, Social Activism and Living Lab methodology in School Education

2024-1-HU01-KA220-SCH-000251467

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the Erasmus+ National Agency. Neither the European Union nor the administering body can be held responsible for them.

Creative Commons License



CC BY-NC 4.0

Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International

This license requires that reusers give credit to the creator. It allows reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format, for noncommercial purposes only.

Project Partners



universität
wien



Authors	Project Partner
	Salesianos

Project Partners



Case Study 1

Learning objectives:

- To identify manipulative tactics used in disinformation, such as the use of fear, fake documents or the creation of a false sense of urgency;
- To practise fact-checking, such as verifying sources and cross-referencing data with official information and documents.
- Propose respectful, civic-minded responses that promote inclusion and a democratic culture within the school environment.

What is the most appropriate and objective action to take to confirm the accuracy of this information, in line with good media literacy practices?

“A rumour is circulating that immigrant pupils are given priority in school enrolment, accompanied by a screenshot from a news channel.”

A) Confirm the news as true, since the presence of a television channel’s logo is sufficient proof of authenticity.

B) Share the post immediately to ensure that other Portuguese families are made aware of the situation as quickly as possible.

C) Consult official sources (such as the Ministry of Education or regulations) to check who sets the enrolment rules and look for the original news item on the television channel’s website to confirm that the image has not been manipulated.

D) Ask in social media groups if anyone else has heard the rumour, assuming that if many people repeat it, the information must be factual.

Project Partners



universität
wien



Correct answer: C

As indicated in Case Study 1, students should “check what is true” by identifying who sets the rules and what official sources say, rather than relying on manipulative tactics such as fear or potentially fake documents.

Project Partnersuniversität
wien

Case Study 2 – Diversity and Lifestyles in the EU

Learning objectives:

- To raise awareness of socio-economic and cultural diversity within the European Union.
- Reflect on stereotypes and perceptions regarding European citizens;
- Analyse the complexity of European identity, exploring how it is possible to construct a sense of shared values given the enormous variety of life experiences that coexist within the bloc;

Examine the following statements about the reality of European citizens' lives and indicate whether they are True (T) or False (F):

1 - The European Union is characterised by an enormous diversity of lifestyles, which means that the daily lives of its citizens (such as housing and transport) vary significantly depending on their socio-economic background

() True () False

2 - Having a common European identity implies that all citizens of the Member States must live under the same economic conditions and have identical consumption habits

() True () False

Project Partners



universität
wien



3 - Recognising the variety of life experiences that coexist in Europe is essential to challenge prejudices and stereotypes about what it means to be a European citizen

() True () False

4 - Building common values in the European Union is a complex process, as it must integrate and respect the multiplicity of cultural and economic realities of all its citizens

() True () False

Answers:

1 - T (The source highlights the ‘variety of life experiences that coexist within the bloc’ and the ‘socio-economic and cultural diversity’)

2 - F (The sources emphasise diversity and the “complexity of defining what it means to be a European citizen” in the face of such different realities)

3 - T (One of the main objectives is to reflect on “prejudices and stereotypes” through the observation of different real-life contexts)

4 - T (The activity specifically proposes discussing how to build common values in the face of such a diverse reality)

Project Partners



universität
wien



Multimedia Resource 1 – “Migrants”

Learning objectives:

- Identify the major challenges currently facing Europe, such as migration, climate change and social cohesion;
- Understand the link between global challenges and local, everyday realities, such as a new classmate joining the classroom due to environmental issues;
- Reflect on the role of young people in responding to these challenges, encouraging the practice of solidarity and the promotion of social cohesion in everyday school life;

Scenario: A new student arrives in your class, coming from a region affected by environmental disasters. They seem isolated, and some classmates are afraid to approach them because they are unfamiliar with their culture.

Reflection Question: Recalling the story of the polar bears in the film, how can you explain to your classmates the link between global challenges (such as climate change) and the need to practise solidarity and social cohesion in your everyday classroom life?

Project Partners



universität
wien



Multimedia Resource 2 – Democracy in Action at the European Parliament

Learning objectives:

- Describe the key stages of the EU decision-making process in the European Parliament
- Practise negotiation, compromise and respectful debate, understanding how these elements are essential for shaping legislation through dialogue and agreement
- Reflect on the impact of legislation, helping students to understand that the end result of this process (the laws) has a direct influence on citizens' daily lives

Match each action taken by Members of the European Parliament (column A) with its correct description or purpose in the decision-making process (column B).

Column A	Column B
Debate	() Reaching a final agreement in which the parties compromise on certain points in order to achieve a common goal.
Negotiation	() The moment of collective decision-making when it is determined whether the proposal is approved by a majority.
Compromise	() Discussion of a legislative proposal through reasoning and active listening.
Voting	() A process of dialogue and agreement between different groups to shape legislation.
Legislation	() The outcome of the process that creates rules and laws shaping citizens' lives.

Project Partners



universität
wien



Solutions:

Debate: Discussion of a legislative proposal through reasoning and active listening.

Negotiation: A process of dialogue and agreement between different groups to shape legislation.

Compromise: Reaching a final agreement in which the parties give ground on certain points in order to achieve a common goal.

Voting: The moment of collective decision-making when it is determined whether the proposal is approved by a majority.

Legislation: The outcome of the process that creates rules and laws shaping citizens' lives.

Project Partners



universität
wien



Multimedia resource 3 – Manipulation tactics

Learning objectives:

- To assess knowledge of common strategies used to manipulate online opinions and to understand how disinformation works in practice.

Read each Manipulation Tactic (A) carefully. Look at the list of Examples or Descriptions (B).

Match each tactic with the description that best illustrates it. Write down the corresponding pair (e.g. A1 → B3).

Manipulation Tactic	Examples or Descriptions
A1. Polarisation	B1. Attacking the reputation of an official source or a journalist so that the public loses trust in accurate information.
A2. Conspiracy theories	B2. Using alarmist headlines or shocking images to provoke an instinctive reaction and increase shares.
A3. Discrediting	B3. Creating an extreme divide between groups (e.g. “us versus them”) to generate conflict and arguments on social media.
A4. False urgency	B4. Insinuating that complex events are secretly controlled by powerful groups, without presenting any real evidence.
A5. Emotional triggers (fear/anger)	B5. Using phrases such as “Urgent” or “Share before they delete it” to pressure the user into acting without time to check the facts.

Project Partners



universität
wien



Solutions

- **A1 → B3** (Polarisation aims to divide society into opposing camps).
- **A2 → B4** (Conspiracy theories are based on unproven secret plots).
- **A3 → B1** (Discrediting serves to undermine trust in reliable sources).
- **A4 → B5** (False urgency prevents reflection and verification of sources).
- **A5 → B2** (Emotional triggers exploit feelings to manipulate attention).

Project Partners



**universität
wien**



Collaboration Project 1 – Quiz: Democracy in Schools with OPEscolas

Learning objectives:

- Develop a viable project, which involves identifying the school's actual needs, drawing up a budget and analysing the benefits for the community;
- Participate responsibly in a project that requires decision-making, involving stages such as campaigning, voting and accountability;
- Work together to bring about real improvement in the school community, promoting active citizenship and experiential learning;

Question 1: What is the main objective of the OPEscolas participatory budgeting initiative?

- A) To create a league table of grades among different Portuguese schools.
- B) To enable pupils to take part in a genuine democratic process to identify needs and implement improvements in their own school.
- C) To provide a platform for teachers to decide the school budget on their own.
- D) To organise sports competitions between pupils from different year groups.

Question 2: According to the programme's stages, what should pupils do after developing their project proposals?

- A) Wait for the school management to choose the winner without public consultation.
- B) Run campaigns to present their ideas and take part in a vote to decide the winning project.

Project Partners



universität
wien



C) Send the proposal directly to the Ministry of Education for final approval. D) Implement the idea immediately, without the need for a vote or a budget.

Question 3: Which citizenship skills are developed by actively participating in the OPEscolas process?

A) Only digital skills for navigating web platforms.

B) The ability to work individually without considering the needs of peers.

C) Responsible decision-making, collaboration for the common good, and an understanding of how to manage budgets effectively.

D) Passive obedience to the rules established by the school's management bodies.

Solutions:

1. **B**
2. **B**
3. **C**

Project Partners



universität
wien



Collaboration Project 2 – ‘Your Voice in the City’ (MyPolis)

Learning objectives:

- Identify local issues and map stakeholders;
- Practise responsible digital participation and civic dialogue;
- Design solutions and communicate proposals effectively to local institutions.

Scenario: You’ve noticed that the park near your school, where lots of young people gather in the late afternoon, is poorly lit and the sports facilities are in a state of disrepair.

You want to use the MyPolis platform to try to solve this problem, but you know that simply complaining isn’t enough; you need to put forward a solid proposal that will convince the local authorities (the City Council or the Municipal Youth Council).

Points for Reflection:

1. Identifying Stakeholders: Apart from the young people who use the park, which other community groups (neighbours, local businesses, associations) might be interested in this improvement? How could support from these groups strengthen your proposal on MyPolis?
2. Solution Design and Feasibility: When designing the solution on the platform, what details should you include so that local decision-makers understand that your project is feasible? (Consider aspects such as: what needs to be done first, safety benefits and potential costs).

Project Partners



universität
wien



3. Responsible Digital Dialogue and Participation: Imagine that someone comments on your proposal on the platform in a negative or aggressive way. How can you respond in a way that maintains a responsible civic dialogue focused on solving the problem, rather than fuelling a digital conflict?
4. Communication with Decision-Makers: If you had the opportunity to present the feedback gathered on MyPolis at a Youth Council meeting, what would be your main argument to show that this improvement to the park is a priority for local residents?

Project Partners



**universität
wien**

