

Europeana Learning Scenario

Title:

The Political Process and Citizens' Voice in the European Union

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Abstract:

Students assess the efficiency of the European civic initiative as a way for citizens to participate in the EU decision-making process and express argued opinions about the importance of the right to petition as a way for Europeans to participate in the EU political process.

Keywords:

citizens, petition, civic, european, initiative

Table of summary

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Subject	World History (20th and 21st centuries)
Topic	The Political Process and Citizens' Voice in the European Union
Age of students	12 - 15
Preparation time	30 mins
Teaching time	50 mins
Online teaching material	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capital punishment in Europe 2. Wand.education
Offline teaching material	A1 or A4 sheets to record the case studies at the European civic initiative, markers (as applicable).
Europeana resources used	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Girls wearing uniforms 4. School girls in pioneer neckties 5. Group portrait of teachers and students 6. The European monetary



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Integration into the curriculum

This lesson can be taught as part of History, Social Science and Civics classes in 6th, 7th and 8th grades (pupils aged between 13 and 15). At all three subjects, students discuss in working groups, they are encouraged to explain why it is important for the citizens of the Member States to participate in the EU political process.

Aim of the lesson

By the end of the lesson students will be able to understand the functioning mechanisms and the actions of the main European organizations/institutions, formulating, in oral or written presentations, opinions on the values, principles and practices that define the European Community.

Outcome of the lesson

Students study one petition of the European Parliament and prepare a speech to support the petitioner's initiative.

Trends

List the relevant trends that the lesson incorporates:

- Project-Based Learning;
- Collaborative Learning;
- Flipped Classroom;
- Peer Learning;

21st century skills

1. Critical thinking - using the information from the Europeana collections, students assess the efficiency of the European civic initiative as a way for citizens to participate in the EU decision-making process;
2. Collaboration - students will need to work as a team, decide on the best way to present the information, assume responsibilities, and contribute to achieving the best results;
3. Communication - students will communicate using written and oral language, listen to colleagues' answers and come up with pros and cons of the answer given.

Activities

Name of activity	Procedure	Time
Preparation time	<p>Before the lesson, students need to gather some information. A week or two before the main lesson, the introductory activity must therefore be carried out.</p> <p>Before the main lesson, students need to know details about the Maastricht Treaty and Lisbon Treaty from different sources of communication (on-line, books).</p>	30 minutes
Brainstorming	<p>Students are asked to reflect on the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How can the citizens of a state influence the decision-making process? - How can Europeans influence the EU policies? 	5 minutes
Analyzing historical texts – group work	<p>Before they start working on worksheet, ensure that all the students understand the vocabulary and the concepts of the questions. Students with special educational needs should receive help to engage in activities. Think about the group to which they will be best suited and the roles they can undertake, such as asking questions, recording answers, conducting online research.</p> <p>Students are organized into small groups, each member being assigned a number. The students study the text of the lesson Why... and How do European Citizens Participate in the EU's Political Process. The teacher asks questions about the text read; students discuss. From each group only the student whose number has been indicated by the teacher responds.</p> <p>Review by rotation (small groups) The teacher decides how the "rotation" of the cases will be done.</p> <p>Option 1: if there is a possibility for the groups to move through the classroom, the cases are written on A1 sheets and will be displayed in the classroom.</p> <p>Option 2: the cases are written on A4 sheets, one student is assigned to pass on the chart to the next group. The teacher prepares the charts with the case studies on the European civil initiative (one on each sheet).</p> <p>Case studies for the European civil initiative:</p> <p>Case No. 1. A group of Europeans has decided to collect one million signatures in order to request the European</p>	30 minutes

	<p>Commission to prepare a legislative proposal on the introduction of the death penalty (source 1, 2);</p> <p>Case No. 2. A group of Europeans has collected one million signatures requesting the European Commission to prepare a legislative proposal on the introduction of the school uniform in all elementary education institutions within the EU Member States (source 2, 3, 4, 5);</p> <p>Case No. 3. For one year, a group of Europeans collected 1.5 million signatures from seven Member States requesting the European Commission to introduce an amendment to the law on changing the national currency (source 2, 6);</p> <p>The teacher announces the activity rules:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Students are organized into 3 groups; b. The students from the group read the case, discuss and write down the group’s opinion on the case. At the teacher’s signal, they proceed to studying the next case. The students read the case and the opinion that was written by the previous group, discuss and then add their own comments; c. The activity is repeated until each case returns to the initial group; d. The teacher proposes the following task to the groups: Study the case proposed in the sheet. From the position of European Commissioner decide whether the case proposed above may be the subject of a European civic initiative; e. Presentation of the results. 	
<p>Assignment extension for</p>	<p>Visit the Portal for petitions of the European Parliament (https://petiport.secure.europarl.europa.eu/petitions). Study the petitions for which the deadline for expressing the support has not expired. Select one petition that addresses a topic relevant for you. From the perspective of a Member of the European Parliament, prepare a speech to support the petitioner’s/petitioners’ request/initiative</p>	<p>15 minutes</p>

Assessment

Open-ended question that gets them writing, talking: to help students grasp ideas in class, ask open-ended questions that require students that get students writing, talking. They will undoubtedly reveal more than you would’ve thought to ask directly;

Reading like a Historian: In this reading, ask students to read the body of the text. Their job is not to take the document at face value, but rather to dig deeper and use sourcing information to ask tough questions about the meaning of the document;

Ask students to reflect: during the last five minutes of class ask students them to consider how they would apply this concept or skill in a practical setting;

***** AFTER IMPLEMENTATION *****

Student feedback

Think about what you have learned in this lesson and then answer the following questions:

- *Which do you think is the most important thing you learned about? Why?*
- *Is there anything you did not like? If the answer is yes ask what and why?*
- *What do you think you could do better from now on?*
- *Whom did you collaborate best with during the activities?*
- *What other things would you like to learn about the topic discussed in today's lesson?*

Teacher's remarks

Classroom Management and Leadership:

- student discipline/behavior, and maximize student engagement in the material;
- Reinforcement of positive behavior; correction of disruptive behaviors.

Student Engagement and Real-Time Assessment:

- Students' perseverance and persistence through material;
- Students' timely completion of assignments;
- Identification and correction of common misunderstandings.

About the Europeana DSI-4 project

[Europeana](#) is Europe's digital platform for cultural heritage, providing free online access to over 53 million digitised items drawn from Europe's museums, archives, libraries and galleries. The Europeana DSI-4 project continues the work of the previous three Europeana Digital Service Infrastructures (DSIs). It is the fourth iteration with a proven record of accomplishment in creating access, interoperability, visibility and use of European cultural heritage in the five target markets outlined: European Citizens, Education, Research, Creative Industries and Cultural Heritage Institutions.

[European Schoolnet](#) (EUN) is the network of 34 European Ministries of Education, based in Brussels. As a not-for-profit organisation, EUN aims to bring innovation in teaching and learning to its key stakeholders: Ministries of Education, schools, teachers, researchers, and industry partners. European Schoolnet's task in the Europeana DSI-4 project is to continue and expand the Europeana Education Community.