



CIVICO: Fostering Civic Competence Amongst Students

Giulia Rigoli

(Italy)

g.rigoli@asev.it

Civic competence can be defined as 'the ability and willingness to engage in active participation, based on an attitude of trust in other people, in all the contexts of social life: school, local community, working place, recreational activities'. From an individual point of view, civic competence is a tool for empowering the individual and giving them the motivation, autonomy and responsibility to control their own lives beyond the social circumstances in which they find themselves. From a social point of view civic competence, by helping to create social capital, underpins democracy and social and economic development. For its importance, the European Commission has listed civic competence as one of the key competences to be developed under EU Lifelong Learning strategy. In specific, each Member State should ensure initial education and training that offers all young people the means to develop it. Following the Recommendation, many Member states have started to incorporate civic competence development in their schools' curricula.

The Project CIVICO wants to foster this trend by producing a **Guide on developing civic competence in students**. The project started in January 2011 and will continue till the end of 2012. **The consortium** is formed by five main partners (the Faculty of Education of three universities and two organizations whose mission is to support schools in raising the quality of education) plus 10 schools, who will pilot the Guide.

CIVICO will allow partners to share their different expertise on civic competence and to gain advantage on what is currently being implemented in their countries on this topic. As each of the five main partners will produce 10 lesson plans, and the first version of the Guide will be piloted with schools, teachers and students of five different EU countries, the Guide will take in consideration cultural differences between partner countries. To allow exploitation in 2012 at European level, once validated the Guide will be translated in other 5 European languages and directly promoted, thanks also to an **Helpdesk**, with over 1500 teachers and stakeholders and used by other 35 schools in Europe. **A virtual resource centre** on civic competence will be also developed and maintained after the end of the Project.

The Guide on developing civic competence is addressed to **European teachers** and based on **active didactics**. The 50 lesson plans will be used with **students aged 14 and above**. Dissemination and exploitation plans will make the Guide known and used by European teachers and other interested stakeholders (schools, head teachers, organizations training teachers, teachers' associations, researchers, politicians, volunteers, third sector associations). More than 1500 teachers and other stakeholders will be informed of the Guide and about 3000 students and 100 teachers will use the Guide. The partners expect a significant impact by this project.