Facilitator's Manual: Conducting EU Workshops for Students

Change Makers

School Workshops

CrossingBorders

What does Crossing Borders do?

Crossing Borders is a non-profit, civil society organization established in 2004. It educates and empowers young people to become active global citizens.

Across cultures and professions, we provide platforms for young people to cross-fertilise ideas and form global associations, networks, and communities worldwide. In a learning environment where all participants are encouraged to grow and learn from one another, we enable youth to share their best ideas, best products, and best practices.

CB workshops aim to bring the world into your school and your school out into the world. It is also done by deploying wholistic and tailored approaches to the needs, levels and available time of the learners. In this way, your students/young participants can meet the world inside their classrooms and playgrounds.

You can read more about our work on www.crossingborders.dk and www.schoolworkshops.crossingborders.dk

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Introduction: Why Discuss the EU?

In 2024, Crossing Borders implemented an EU project funded by Europa-Nævnet.

The project aimed to deepen students' understanding of the European Union and inspire them to actively engage with global and local challenges.

The project included EU workshops at boarding schools to help young people grasp concepts of inclusion, cultural diversity, security, and political stability —essential values for building a peaceful and prosperous future. By empowering youth with knowledge and skills, these activities strengthen young people's insight into the EU and the importance of the European community.

The exercises in this flyer were developed for 16-17 year-olds, but can be adapted to other age-groups.

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Potential topics and themes

- The Expansion of the EU.
- Historical context of the EU and its significance today.
- Benefits and challenges of including new member states.
- The future of the EU.

- Inclusion: How the EU fosters equality and opportunity.
- Cultural Diversity: Celebrating differences and shared identities.
- Security: Collaborative efforts for peace and safety.
- Political Stability: The importance of dialogue and cooperation.

Expected outcomes among the youth:

- Gain improved knowledge of the EU's structure and purpose.
- Develop debate and public speaking skills.
- Increase awareness of global issues and international cooperation.
- Feel empowered to take action at their school and within their communities to build the Europe they dream of.

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Tips and methods to engage young students

Holistic Approach

- Provide knowledge alongside real-world applications.
- Encourage responsible actions at both local and global levels.

Skill Development

- Practice listening, speaking, debating, and writing in English.
- Use diverse methods to develop public speaking skills.
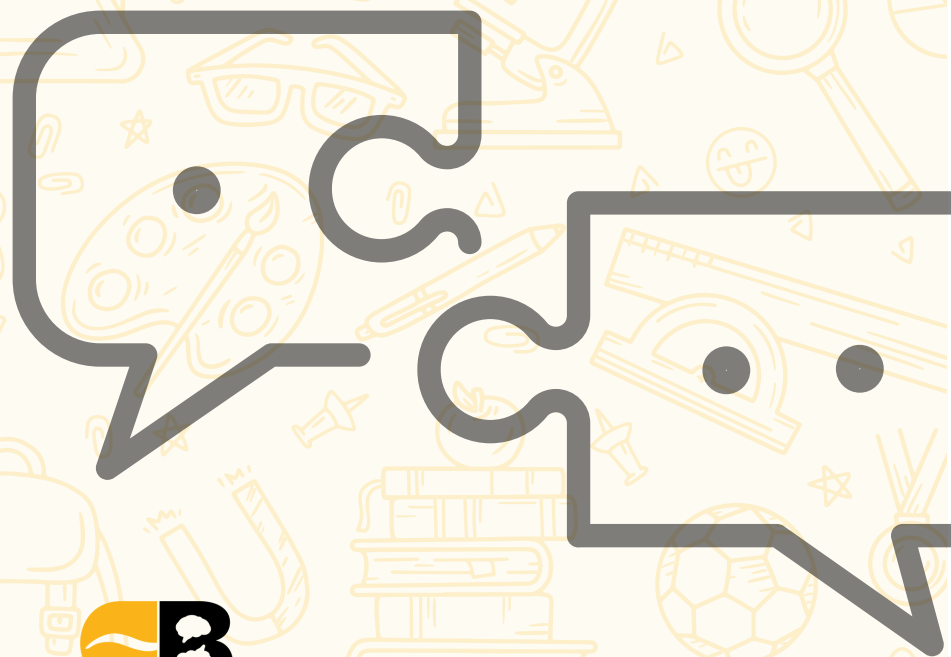
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Non-Formal Education Principles

- Dialogue-Based Learning: Foster open conversations to encourage mutual understanding.
- Empowerment: Give participants the tools to take initiative in discussions and actions.

Interactive Exercises

- Warm-ups and icebreakers to build comfort and rapport.
- Critical thinking games to challenge perspectives.
- Fun, engaging tasks to make learning memorable.

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Examples of exercises

All those who

Objective: To build trust within the group by sharing and recognizing diverse personal experiences

Method:
Tell participants that you are going to read some statements. If the statement/fact is true for them, they should stand up. If it is not true for them, they should stay seated.

Highlight that there is no right or wrong answer in this activity, and that they are only responsible for themselves and cannot decide whether, for example, their friend next to them should stand or stay seated.

It is important to allow a little time after each statement, so that participants have enough time to stand up, and to look around the room and see how many people stand up.

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Start each statement with "Stand up all those who…"

Examples of statements:
- Have traveled inside the EU
- Would like to work in a different country than where you live now
- Have paid for something using the Euro
- Have friends who live in another EU country
- Believe the EU is important Feel their values are represented in the EU
- Believe there is discrimination based on gender, race, religion or sexual orientation within the EU (ie. Racism, homophobia, islamophobia, sexism)
- Believe the EU continues to play an essential role in global affairs today.
- Look forward to vote in your first EU election
- Feel well-informed on what is happening in the EU

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Debriefing questions:

- How did you feel standing up or choosing to sit?
- How does it feel to see other people stand up or sit down?
- Did you notice some specific things that you have in common?
- Share any thoughts that came to mind about how we experience similar or different things?

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Crossing the Line

Objective:

To engage participants in discussing controversial aspects of democracy and Europe practicing skills of listening, discussion, and persuasion, and exploring the rights and responsibilities connected with democracy, rights and the EU.

Method:

Start by explaining the purpose of the activity and its structure. Then tell participants which side of the room now is YES and which side now is NO.

After reading a selected statement, participants will position themselves along on the floor between the opposite walls based on their opinion. They cannot place themselves right in the center, but they can agree/disagree to a lesser or greater extent.

When participants have positioned themselves, ask a few of them to share their reasoning behind their stand.

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Examples of statements:

- The voting age in all EU member states should be standardized to 16 years old
- Climate change is the most pressing global issue for the EU currently
- The EU should include more member countries
- Extremists should be prohibited from voicing their opinions within the EU
- The EU was created to maintain and promote peace and stability, and I believe it has successfully achieved it
- The EU should promote awareness campaigns to educate voters about the importance of participating in European elections
- The EU should enhance its powers to hold member states accountable for human rights violations

Note to facilitator:

Encourage respectful dialogue and active listening during the exercise, allowing participants to express their reasoning. Ask participants not to comment on each other's remarks, but only to state why they themselves stand where they stand. Listen actively and recap each participants' statement briefly, without commenting.

To add an extra components to the exercise, you can choose to allow participants to change position during the reasoning from other participants. Showing that they are allowed to change their mind/position if they hear strong arguments.

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Vision of the EU

Objective:

Creating something to share with the school and fellow students encouraging the participants to reflect on their ideal vision of the EU. Enhance their creativity through visual expression, and foster collaborative discussions on key themes such as migration, diversity, and climate change.

Method:

In groups, create a poster reflecting your thoughts on the following prompts:

In your opinion what is the most important thing that the EU should focus on?

What values do you think the EU should have?

What kind of Europe do you want to live in the future?

What position should Europe have in the world?

Participants can write, draw, and add cut-outs from magazines, but encourage them to make it as engaging and interesting and possible.

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Vision of Europe

We want to feel safe

together we're better

CLIMATE CHANGE

EU — Epic Universe

SUS!

Brex;t

Perfection

NO ...

we are open

Group 4

Vision of EU

Values:
- Sustainability
- Human rights
- End poverty
- Equal rights
- Respect diversity

Possible legislative proposals
- Making it illegal to buy clothes from industries with bad human rights.

Problems that needs to be solved:
- Strict guidelines for the use of social media.
- Illegal abortion
- Expensive healthcare

CHANGE

MIGRATION

CLIMATE

EQUALITY

Equal pay!

Love to All ♡

Child labor

PEACE AND PROSPERITY

EUROPE WITHOUT RACISM

EU ♥!

Equality

"The european union is the world's most successful invention for advancing PEACE."

"Europe, where every street corner has a story to tell."

The construction of Europe is the art of the possible.

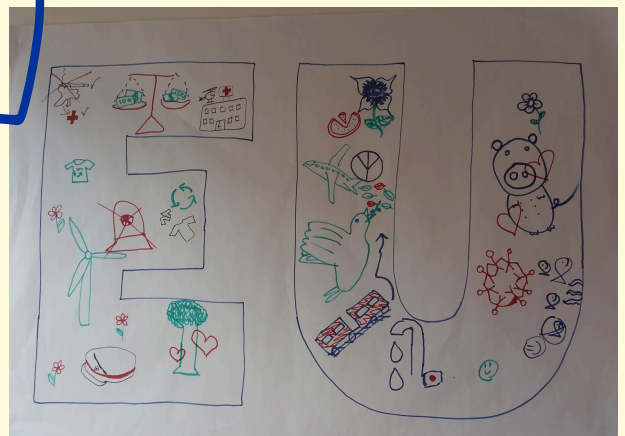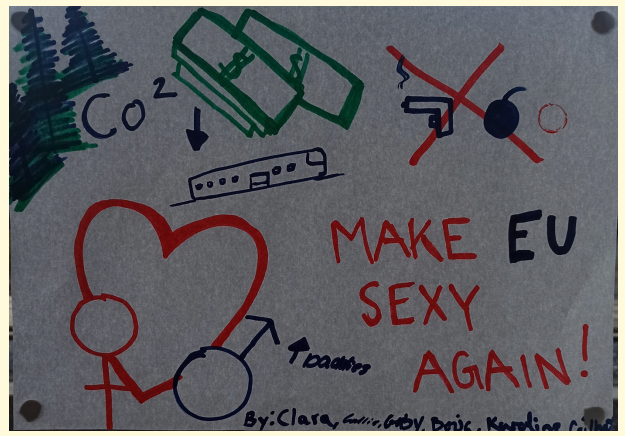**Future EU**

? More countries

Stronger Justice System

CO² Neutral

Solving the housing crisis

No War

Less Poverty

By Lilje, Karolinen, Karl and Karla ♥

Pace

VREDE

PAIX

POKÓJ

Мир

RAUHA

rahu

FRED

Eιρήνη

FRIEDEN

MIR

PAZ

BÉKE

CO_2

MAKE EU SEXY AGAIN!

By:Clara, Emilie, GabV, Brūs, Karolina, Cecilia

EU

Needs to be better

EUROPE

Already good

Free education Shorter school days

better nature

better work environment

better economy

Team work

Safe Peace

Passport

Easy travel Safe travel

PEACE

Diversity

Equality

less pollution

No poverty

Good climate

War

Peace Love Harmony

No INFLATION

Clean water

Sari, Skyia, Frederin, Maja, Joe, Zack, Adrián

Tips for Teachers

- Be flexible: Adapt methods to suit your participants' needs and engagement levels.
- Use humor and positivity to create a welcoming environment.
- Encourage participation: Highlight the value of every contribution.
- Debrief after activities: Reflect on what participants learned and how it relates to their own lives.

By using these methods, teachers can create meaningful and engaging workshops that not only inform, but also inspire students to act as responsible and active global citizens.

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