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Promoting ACTIVE and Responsible Citizenship in Schools



Toolkit

I. Methodology for teachers



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Content

Content.....	2
Purpose and goals of the Toolkit.....	3
How to use the Toolkit	4
Content of the Toolkit	4
How to use the Toolkit	4
Large project based learning activity	6
Logic of the Activities that are presented in the Activity book for teachers.....	6
Small project based learning activity	6
Solving conflict using the Toolkit.....	7
Structure and themes covered in the Toolkit.....	7
<i>Module and Activity overview</i>	9
Before you start.....	10



Purpose and goals of the Toolkit







This Toolkit has been developed as key output of the project **Promoting ACTIVE and Responsible Citizenship In Schools (ACTIVE)** with main objective to empower pupils and students to be able to navigate themselves and make understanding of the world they live in to enable them act as active and responsible agents in democratic society. Teachers will by following the Toolkit acquire the knowledge and competences to promote and propagate active and responsible citizenship in their regular classes to pass these competences to pupils.

What do we mean by active and responsible citizenship?

Responsible action represents a conscious response to the situation where the actor is aware of and accept her/his role and is open to reflect impact of his/her action. Responsible action in this sense is opposed to unconscious reaction to situation without self-reflection. This is why we will pay attention to topics like biases, making sense of the situation and information, values and impact.

The Toolkit is intended for use by teachers as practical tool to be taken in to the classroom as a teaching material for development of **competences necessary for active and responsible decision making and action**. The approach of the Toolkit is based on step by step learning guided by the designed Activities. The Activities are designed as experience and project based learning that enable students to develop competences necessary to deal with complex issues and information to make responsible decisions.

The main topics covered by the Toolkit are:

-  understanding concept of facts, true and objectivity
-  dealing with information on the internet
-  understanding role of values, norms and biases in our decision making
-  designing own research to collect relevant information
-  setting relevant goals and designing strategy
-  evaluating impact

Benefits for students by participating in the activities described in the Toolkit is to further develop their cognitive skills, critical thinking, empathy, awareness and decision making. Students will learn how to work with information, define “problem”, and consider different opinions and points of view and explore their own values and norms. All these skills will help students not to be manipulated and to be able to make informed and responsible decisions that corresponds with their own values.

The Activities provided by the Toolkit were **successfully tested and evaluated** by teachers in schools during the ACTIVITY project realization.



How to use the Toolkit

Content of the Toolkit

The Toolkit is composed of three parts:

- I. Methodology for teachers
- II. Activity book for teachers
- III. Working materials for activities&students

I. Methodology for teachers (*this document*) consists of explanation the principles and terms and concepts to be used when implementing the Toolkit. The goal of the methodology is to provide background and set the common ground and understanding for teachers so they are ready to take the Toolkit in to the classroom.

II. Activity book for teachers is a set of working activities (step by step scenarios) that the teachers can take in to the classroom. The activities correspond with the topics of the Methodology so teachers can easily find appropriate activity for the topic covered in the methodology. There at least one activity for a topic covered in the Methodology.

III. Working materials for activities&students provide materials to be used with students during the activities. Materials consists mainly of templates that teacher can hand over to students to better structure the activity.

How to use the Toolkit

The design of the Toolkit provide several opportunities and approaches how it can be used. The Toolkit can be well connected to any (school/class/group) project based learning activity of any subject matter and scope. The Toolkit and the introduced activities can be in this sense used as a basis for designing such a project based learning activity. On the other hand the Toolkit can be used, as the name suggests, as separate Tools that are picked up as appropriate for the learning activity during class. In this way teacher can implement just selected activity from the Activity book or use selected template(s) from the Working materials. Or “just” be inspired by the principles presented in the Methodology and following them teacher can create his/her own approach how to bring these principles and concepts in to the classroom.

Suggested ways how to use the tools provided in the Toolkit (summary):

- A. **“Large project activity based on the Toolkit”**
Use the Toolkit as a basis for designing a long term project based learning activity. Implement the whole scope of the Toolkit and its Activities step by step during a long lasting project based learning activity (we will call this as “Large project”)
- B. **“Small project activity”**
Use the Toolkit for small project activity that can be done during one or two class hours.
- C. **“Toolkit implemented during any project activity”**
Use the Toolkit during any project based learning activity designed by other principles or methodology. Apply the principles and concepts presented in the Methodology and choose appropriate activities presented in the Toolkit relevant for your project activities.



D. **“Use the Toolkit to deal with disinformation”**

You can Use selected Activities very well to deal with just one “interacting/important” disinformation. It can be disinformation you find on the internet (like social media post, YouTube video, article, web site etc.) that would be examined with students (fact-checking, biases, making sense of information).

E. **“Toolkit implemented during regular class”**

Use selected Activities and/or Working materials during regular class. Choose relevant concepts, activity or template to help students explore and learn about topic/subject matter covered in the classroom.

F. **“Solving conflict”**

Use the Toolkit and the activities to solve a conflict that arises in the class as the Toolkit is designed to help overcome different viewpoints, beliefs and opinions.

G. **“Get inspired by the Toolkit”**

Use the Methodology and suggested activities as an inspiration and find your own approach how to bring presented principles and concepts in to the classroom.

NOTICE: However you decide to use the Toolkit we suggest you to primarily get familiar with the principles and concepts presented in this Methodology and implement them accordingly and in relevance for the topic (subject matter) or activity concerned.



Large project based learning activity

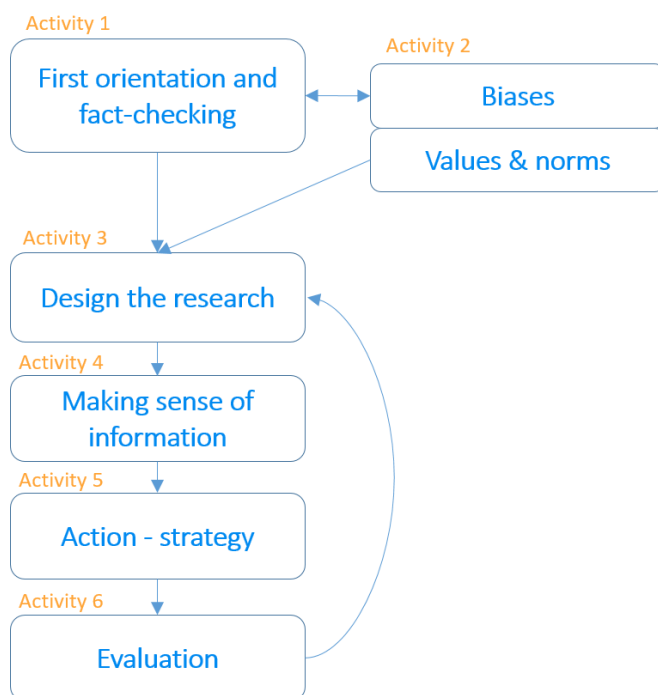
The design of the Toolkit

Recommended use of the Toolkit is to go step by step so you enable students to gradually develop all necessary competences for active and responsible decision making.

This would require to go through all 6 activities designed and presented in the Toolkit. In this case we would recommend to do the activities as lasting project based activity. The topic of the project can vary and the Toolkit is flexible to be suitable for any topic (issue) you choose to explore with students. It can be something closely related to the subject of the standard class lessons (from geography, biology, history, social sciences etc.) OR it can be any actual or historical issue OR a topic/project concerning some civic or school initiative (any social/community action or action in school as building new playground or green house).

The Activities are generally designed to be done in one class lesson (45 min). But depending on the complexity of the topic and time capacity for the activities it is well possible to combine some of the Activities into one lesson (for detail and suggestions in this regard see the Activity book and the individual Activities).

Logic of the Activities that are presented in the Activity book for teachers



Small project based learning activity

The idea of Small project activity is to condense most of the Activities into one or two lessons. This would mean to explore available sources and collect relevant information and formulate conclusions in one or two lessons.



Solving conflict using the Toolkit

As the Activity 2 is dealing with different point of views, values and explore (and exposes) biases it can be also used to solve conflicting situation over specific issue in the class/school. If needed for solving the issue further research can be designed to collect relevant evidence (Activity 3) for formulating relevant decision (Activity 5).

Structure and themes covered in the Toolkit






The Toolkit is proposing an approach relevant to any sense making or problem solving concerning specific issue with additional formulation of goals and strategies to deal with the issue/problem. Therefore the Toolkit is designed as consequent steps to cover the whole process of setting an issue/problem concerned trough exploring this issue/problem further by finding relevant information, confronting opposing opinions and assumptions, exploring values of the parties concerned up to formulating goals and strategy for solving the issue/problem and reflecting and evaluating the steps taken and measures taken.

Concrete activities that are designed to bring the themes explored in the Methodology into the class are available in the 2nd part of the Toolkit: II. Activity book for teachers.

The Toolkit covers following themes:










MODULE 0: General understanding – information, facts, truth and objectivity

Topics covered:

-  General understanding the concept of truth
-  Data, facts and objectivity
-  Fake news, disinformation and misinformation
-  Information and data as evidence
-  Problem definition and selecting the topic

MODULE 1: Reliable source of information – quality of data and how to approach information on the internet





Topics covered:

-  Sources of secondary data and information
-  Information as evidence
 -  Criteria for data and information quality
 -  Reliability of data and information
-  Manipulation techniques to spread disinformation
-  Fact-checking and lateral reading
 -  Facts vs fake news and disinformation
 -  Credibility of the source of information
 -  Relevant criteria to judge credibility of the source of information












MODULE 2: Values, norms and biases

Topics covered:

-  Assumptions and biases
-  Different points of view
-  Actors' attitudes, values and norms
-  Self-reflection – my values and norms




MODULE 3: Making sense of Information

Topics covered:

-  Principles for collecting data as evidence
 -  Indicative and deductive approach
 -  Triangulation
 -  Healthy skepticism
-  Methods for collecting evidence
 -  Desk research
 -  Field research
-  Designing own research
 -  Research questions




MODULE 4: Making sense of Information

Topics covered:

-  Making sense of information
 -  Knowledge and wisdom
 -  Conspiracy theories and disinformation



MODULE 5: Designing action – decision, goals and strategy

Topics covered:

-  Responsible action
-  Setting up goals
-  Formulating strategy

MODULE 6: Evaluating impact

Topics covered:

-  Relevance, effectiveness usefulness and Impact
-  Target groups



Module and Activity overview

Modules & Activities





Before you start

Before you as a teacher start using the Toolkit we need to emphasize following arrangements and warnings:

1. **Teacher should be in a role of a guide**

Teacher should provide guidance and reflection to students during the exploration of the topic. The goal is to provide students the means to explore and assess the issue by themselves not by telling them what “how things are”.

2. **Teacher should be ready to learn themselves – we will be exploring**

What we are going to do will be challenging for all the participants, teachers not excluding. Be ready to explore with the students the subject matter selected and yourself as well.

3. **Stay open to other opinions, approaches, and assumptions will be the key for success**

First is the need to understand (others and yourself) and then evaluate and formulate opinion and goals.

4. **There should be no predefined norms and values (besides openness and respect to others)**

There is no right and wrong in the absolute sense. It is about the society we want to live and thrive in. But do not worry we will get to fundamental values but not imposed from some authority.

How to pick a theme

As the themes covered in the Toolkit are quite broad we recommend to take a theme by theme in gradual way. The themes are in essence interlinked but there is no problem to pick just one of the themes of interest and dive deep in it.

Disclaimer

We need to point out that the concepts presented in this Toolkit are not given facts and there could be different approaches to them. The goal of the Toolkit is to provide reliable and practical guidance that would suit purposes for teachers. The teachers are in this sense invited to apply the presented approaches and concepts with open mind.