

Brussels, 14 March 2008

35,000 schools now involved in eTwinning virtual school partnerships

eTwinning is an EU initiative to encourage schools to network with each other over the internet. In the three years since its launch, over 35,000 schools have signed up. At an eTwinning conference held in Bucharest on 14-16 March, the European Commission will be handing out prizes to eight outstanding eTwinning school projects.

The eTwinning action was launched in January 2005, and since then, over 35,000 schools across Europe have joined in. The action is now part of the Comenius action within the Lifelong Learning Programme, the Commission's flagship funding programme in the area of education. The eTwinning action allows schools to find, free of charge, partners for collaborative school projects using the internet. In 2008, the emphasis will shift its focus from projects towards promoting online communities, where schools can share knowledge and participate in discussion platforms in addition to running projects.

This year's annual eTwinning conference is held in Bucharest from 14-16 March 2008. The event will host over 400 participants, comprising teachers from across Europe, representatives from eTwinning's central and national support services, and other important stakeholders in school education.

On the eve of the conference, Ján Figel', the European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, explained the significance of eTwinning: "*This programme elegantly combines learning about other cultures with the use of information and communication technologies. With its virtual school partnerships, involving tens of thousands of European schools, eTwinning helps children familiarize themselves with computers, while at the same time breaking down barriers of ignorance that they may have about their fellow Europeans. In this European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008, I particularly welcome this aspect of the eTwinning experience.*"

The highlight of the conference will be the award ceremony, at which awards will be handed out to eight of the best eTwinning projects from the 2006-2007 school year. There are four categories, three by age (4-10, 11-15, 16-19) and one for Science and Maths.

Over 400 project entries were assessed, based on their innovative nature, integration in the curriculum, collaboration, creativity and transferability. The top eight finalists came from 26 schools from 17 countries (Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom).

The top four winning projects win a trip to the eTwinning Camp in May.

More information:

The eTwinning Portal: <http://www.etwinning.net/>

ANNEX

WINNERS AND RUNNERS-UP, ETWINNING PRIZES 2008

Criteria for evaluation:

- **Pedagogical Innovation and Curricular Integration:** how the project and the use of ICT change the daily life of the partner schools and fit in with national policies and exam constraints
- **Collaboration Between Partner Schools:** how teachers and pupils communicate in order to work together
- **Creative Use of ICT:** how to get beyond emailing
- **Sustainability and Transferability:** how to guarantee that the project will last, involving the whole school and be able to share benefits with others
- **Results and Benefits:** what came out of the project as well as why the project

WINNERS

WINNER: Age 4-10

My town, your town. Our lives in a calendar

www.northyntesideict.org.uk/item.asp?CID=46565

Schools: Backworth Park Primary School, UNITED KINGDOM

CEIP Virxe da Luz, SPAIN

Teachers: Susie Arnott (UK) and Aurora Gay (ES)

This project set out to examine the similarities between culture in Spain and the UK, looking at such things as costumes, folklore, significant dates in the year, food habits etc.

The jury said; "... a nice neat project with simple objectives, and easily obtainable results. The pupils really seemed to enjoy it".

WINNER: Age 11-15

The new Europeans: The two wooden dolls project

<http://twinspace.etwinning.net/launcher.cfm?lang=en&cid=13353>

Schools: Hässelbygårdsskolan, SWEDEN

Siegerland-Grundschule, GERMANY

Teachers: Birgitta Flodén (SE) and Christiane Meisenburg (DE)

This project examine the life of migrant children in their new communities using mixed techniques of puppetry, mime and theatre to examine the issues surrounding settling down in a new country.

The jury said, "this project showed great flair and creativity in working on issues than can be difficult for pupils, in a fun and no threatening way".

WINNER: Age 16-19

Planete @dos

<http://users.skynet.be/rdw/3iemecorrespondance.htm#2006-2007:%20Plan%E8te%20@dos>

Schools: Sint-Janscollege, BELGIUM

Liceo Scientifico "F. Cecioni", ITALY

Lycée Geneviève de Gaulle Anthonioz, FRANCE

Teachers: Ria de Wilde (BE), Marina Marino (IT), Brigitte Vaudoric (FR)

The young people in this project may come from different cultures, Belgian and Italy, but they discover that their common roots are twinned through the history, the traditions and the life of people living on the coasts of the Mediterranean.

The jury said, "This is a very rich project where the young people not only learned a great deal from each other, but creatively expressed their opinions in a variety of media including cartoon, blogging and podcasts".

WINNER: Science and Maths

[Fizika - svarbi ir įdomi. Physics is interesting and important](#)

Schools: Kauno Statybininkų Rengimo Centras, LITHUANIA

Publiczne Gimnazjum im. Jana Pawła II wTyczynie, POLAND

Teachers: Kudinov Kaunas (LT) and Elżbieta Gawron (PL)

The understanding of how the laws of Physics rule our everyday lives is the theme of this project, and how these laws may be used to enrich our lives for the better.

The jury said, “this project addresses practical ways of introducing complex ideas to pupils and making them relevant to everyday life experiences”.

RUNNERS-UP

RUNNERS-UP: Age 4-10

Kids H@nd in H@nd

<http://www.sip.be/STAMand/feelings/kidshandinhand.htm>

Schools: Primary school Sint-Amandus, Belgium

Osnovna Sola Solkan, Slovenia

Pärnu Koidula Gymnasium, Estonia

ZŠ A. Stodolu, Martin, Slovakia

Kalocsai Belvárosi-Dunaszentbenedeki Általános Iskola és a,

Óvoda,

Hungary

CEIP Vidal Portela, Spain

CEIP Sestelo-Baión, Spain

Jerney János, Hungary

Teachers: Lieven Van Parys (BE), Viljenka Savli (SI), Tiiu Leibur (ET),

Alexandra Pilková (SK), Margit Horváth (HU), Mela Rodríguez

(ES), Belen Junquera (ES) and Erika Raffai (HU)

A simple and creative project for young pupils.

The jury said, “this project demonstrates how very young pupils can express themselves and their emotions in a clever visual way without language. A simple and engaging project”.

RUNNER-UP: Age 11-15

Aspects of Religion in Europe

<http://aspectsofreligion.wikispaces.com/>

Schools: 2nd High School of Kozani, Greece

Højby Skole, Denmark

Sint-Ursula-Instituut, Belgium

Teachers: Diamantoula Naka (GR), Ella Myhring (DA) and Hilde Van Ouytsel (BE)

This project explores the multiplicity and the variety of religious expression in today's multicultural European society.

The jury said, "this project is a brave one in attempting to look at a subject that is often the basis of prejudices, and in doing so provides a variety of ways to encourage students to learn about faith from different viewpoints in a non-judgemental way".

RUNNER-UP: Age 16-19

Facciamoci noi lezione!

<http://www.etwinning-noi.blogspot.com/>

Schools: IIS E.Majorana/sezione commerciale Marro, Italy

Heinrich-Heine-Gesamtschule Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf, Germany

Teachers:

Paola Ferrera (IT) and Lucia Steinhage (DE)

The Italian and German students in this project used blogs and video to share their opinions on issues such as Cyberbullying.

The jury said, "this is a good use of modern technologies which utilised the tools of social networking while at the same time exploring the issues surrounding that use".

RUNNER-UP: Science and Maths

Draw me the task

<http://twinspace.etwinning.net/launcher.cfm?lang=en&cid=8548>

Schools: Eastbourne Comprehensive School, United Kingdom

Gimnazjum 37 im. K.K. Baczyńskiego, Poland
ZŠ Karviná, Czech Republic
Holmlia School, Norway

Teachers: K Haines (UK), Ewa Piotrowska (PL), Pavel Němec (CZ), Anita Støstad (NO)

This project is a fun approach to teaching basic mathematical concepts to younger pupils.

The jury said, “this project demonstrates how effective a simple approach to a topic can be. The children obviously learned a lot while having fun”.