ERASMUS+ GOOD PRACTICE FACTSHEET

«The jar with the lonely little cookies»

Fostering Empathy, Solidarity & Social Action through Theatre Education and Digital Tools

Organisation: Kouloura Primary School (Greece)
Sector: School Primary Education **Project code:** 2021-1-EL01-KA120-SCH-00004395
Key Themes: Empathy, Solidarity, Inclusion & Social Action, Active Citizenship,
Digital Deliverable: Theatrical production - (with English Subtitles – Open Educational Resource)
Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0SWwk7FcgY&t=2004s

1. Core Concept & Innovation

Transition to Civil Society: Transforming the school classroom into a hub for active citizenship and inclusion through cooperation with local stakeholders (e.g., MaMA Association for Autism/Neurodiversity, specialist scientists and authors).
Experiential & Theatre Pedagogy: Combining experiential workshops, literacy activities, co-scripting, and staging a theatrical performance with active participation from all students.
Digital Open Educational Resource (Digital OER): High-quality video recording of the performance with English subtitles, serving as a ready-to-use, internationally accessible digital learning tool.

2. Description & Objectives of the Action

The action was designed to transform the theoretical concept of solidarity into an experiential practice, focusing on the acceptance of neurodiversity and autism in particular.
Specific Objectives:

- For students: Cultivating empathy, accepting diversity, and developing social and expressive skills through theater.
- For the school community: Fostering an inclusive climate and dismantling stereotypes.
- For the local community: Raising awareness about autism and actively supporting individuals with disabilities or special needs.

3. 5-Phase Implementation Framework

Phase 1: Thematic Focus & Partner Mapping *(Month 1)*

- Selection of a social topic (autism, neurodiversity, disability, anti-racism).
- Identification and contact with specialized parents' associations/NGOs (e.g., MaMA Association).
- Drafting a cooperation agreement (expectations, boundaries, meeting schedules).

Phase 2: **Experiential Education & Empowerment** *(Months 2–3)*

- School visits by experts (psychologists, educators) and experiential workshops.
- Literacy activities, open dialogue with authors, and regular joint games/activities with individuals supported by the partner organization.
- Constant interaction: Joint actions of our students with the children of the collaborating institution.
- Contact and familiarization with digital tools: camera, microphones, - image, sound...

Phase 3: Artistic Composition & Preparation *(Months 4–6)*

- Script selection, theatrical adaptation of an original script incorporating the students' messages and experiences.
- Inclusive drama workshops (role assignment based on talents/interests) and student-led creation of props and promotional material.
- Professional video recording and English subtitle production (OER).

Phase 4: (Social Dissemination & Wide Impact *(Months 7–8)*

- Staging the performance in central city theaters/cultural centers for maximum accessibility (2,500+ in-person attendees).
- Open post-performance Q&A dialogue involving students, partner representatives, and the audience.
- Digital dissemination at the local level (to all schools in the region), at the national level (via broadcasts on public television, ERT), and at the European level (through screenings at partner schools).

Phase 5: Evaluation & Sustainable Legacy (Post-Completion)

- Impact evaluation measuring attitude changes through pre- and post-project empathy questionnaires.
- Signing a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the partner NGO for ongoing long-term collaboration.
- The open availability of the digitized product itself

3. Exploitation of Digital Material (OER & English Subtitles)

The video is digitally accessible with English subtitles, ready for immediate use by schools across Europe as an educational "ice-breaker" on solidarity and autism.

Digital Inclusion & Dissemination: Removing language barriers. Subtitled video allows immediate dissemination of solidarity messages to an unlimited European audience.

Ready-to-Use OER for European Schools: Schools across Europe can screen the video in their classrooms to prompt discussion on neurodiversity without starting from scratch.

Virtual Exchanges: Utilizing the video in cross-border online student encounters (KA1/KA2, eTwinning) to foster dialogue on inclusion.

A transferable 5-stage framework (Selection → Institutional networking → Contacts → Field approach → Dissemination), adaptable to any social or health issue.

4. With an eyes on the future: Alignment with Erasmus+ Pillars (2028–2035)

"The Jar of Lonely Cookies" (Kouloura Primary School) corresponds to the pillars of the post-programming period of Erasmus+ 2028–2035 and highlights how a local school initiative fully aligns with future EU strategic goals.

The post-programming period 2028–2035 emphasizes the integration of solidarity as a horizontal value, cross-sectoral cooperation, and participatory democracy from an early age.

Mapping Table: Project Actions & Erasmus+ 2028–2035 Objectives

Project Steps & Actions	Erasmus+ 2028–2035 Axis / Objective	Justification of Alignment
1. Workshops with experts & adults with autism, book presentation	Embedded Solidarity & Inclusive Mindset *(Fundamental Solidarity & Neurodiversity)*	Solidarity ceases to be theoretical teaching. Through direct contact with experts and individuals on the spectrum, a meaningful understanding of neurodiversity is cultivated.
2. Steady, recurring collaboration with the MaMA Association	Cross-sectoral Cooperation & School–Society Connection	Bridges school education with Civil Society and disability organizations. Serves as a model for a "common language of solidarity" between education and the social sector.
3. Creation & preparation of a theatrical performance	Experiential Learning through Arts *(Experiential Learning & Cultural Expression)*	Art is utilized as a tool for empathy. Students step into the shoes of the "other," transforming learning into a social experience.
4. Staging the performance at the Veria Arts Center & neighboring cities (2,500+ spectators)	Broad Social Impact & Active Citizenship	The action expands beyond the classroom and diffuses into local and regional society, activating citizens and raising awareness across the broader community.

"Solidarity in the new Erasmus+ program cannot merely be wishful thinking in policy declarations. The proposal of Kouloura Primary School demonstrates how an Erasmus+ project translates solidarity into sustainable social capital: starting from the classroom, engaging art and the local community, and reaching thousands of citizens. It stands as a living example of the 'common language' Europe is seeking for 2028–2035."