

European Parliament Ambassador Schools

2023/2024 report

Strategic Support Unit for Liaison Offices

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Note: The data included in this report were supplied by the European Parliament Liaison Offices (EPLOs) via the 2023/2024 European Parliament Ambassador School (EPAS) reporting and data monitoring teams of the DG COMM.

Summary

Background

The European Parliament Ambassador School (EPAS) programme targets students from diverse educational, social and geographical backgrounds and is aimed at increasing their awareness of European parliamentary democracy, the role of the European Parliament and European values. It also encourages students to actively participate in EU democratic processes.

Launched as a pilot project during the 2015/2016 school year in six countries (Germany, Ireland, Spain, France, Italy, Poland), the EPAS programme was later extended to all EU Member States and the United Kingdom. In 2024, the Bureau made the decision to continue running the EPAS programme for an indefinite period and allocate it an additional budget with the objective of increasing the number of schools by 50 % by the 2026/2027 school year.

To be part of the network, schools must organise compulsory activities that raise awareness of European parliamentary democracy and European citizenship. This year, for the 2024 European elections (EE24), in addition to the 'regular' activities (e.g. giving classes on the EU, setting up an EU info point in the school, organising a Europe Day event), ambassador schools supported the election campaign.

During the 2023/2024 school year, a series of initiatives were taken to build up the EPAS programme and boost engagement with teachers (senior ambassadors) and students (junior ambassadors).

- Close cooperation within the Directorate-General for Communication (DG COMM) made it possible to organise EPAS gatherings (of teachers and students) in Strasbourg for the Sakharov Prize ceremony and in Brussels for the Level Up event, the educators' event and the LUX Audience Award ceremony.
- EPAS teachers were invited to annual seminars in Brussels.
- The European Parliament Liaison Offices (EPLOs) financed regional in-person EPAS events involving schools from different countries;
- The local interinstitutional dimension was reinforced through agreements made in 2022 at headquarter level to foster cooperation on educational matters with Commission representations and Europe Direct centres, and was expanded throughout the 2023/2024 school year.
- The EPAS eTwinning group, which has been up and running since April 2021, was promoted to boost cross-country collaboration and keeps on growing.
- The mandate of the EPAS programme was prolonged for an indefinite period following a decision by the Bureau in January 2024.
- Ambassador schools strongly supported the European election campaign, and their vast network provided crucial support to the campaign.

Main figures

The EPAS programme is implemented by the EPLOs in all Member States and the United Kingdom. At the end of the 2023/2024 school year¹, the network included **5 355 senior ambassadors** (teachers) and **35 906 junior ambassadors** (students) from **2 159 certified schools**. This is a significant increase on past figures: in 2016/2017, **700 schools** participated in the programme.

During the 2023/2024 school year, ambassador schools organised **14 694 EPAS events** and activities (online and/or in person), with a total of **709 776 participants**. The schools' activities included **529 visits** from Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). EPLOs organised **349 EPAS-related events** between September 2023 and June 2024.

The **various activities** organised by the EPLOs with ambassador schools are detailed in Annex I; they include exchanges with MEPs, role-playing games, discussions on human rights and sustainability, participation in media programmes, creative projects and more. It is worth noting that interactions between ambassador schools and together.eu volunteers are becoming more and more regular, with a clearer transition for high school graduates between the two projects. In addition, EPLOs financed four regional in-person EPAS transnational events with schools from 18 Member States.

Alongside their official accounts, half of the EPLOs manage public EPAS social media accounts, with more than **11 000 followers** combined. Moreover, over 900 ambassador schools have created a specific EPAS social media account, with almost **270 000 followers** combined.

Challenges and recommendations

During the 2023/2024 school year, EPLOs noted a number of challenges in implementing the programme, including the following:

- heavy workloads for teachers;
- an occasional lack of flexibility in educational institutions;
- the difficulty in keeping students and teachers motivated to complete the programme;
- the financial limitations schools face;
- the inadequate recognition of teachers' voluntary work around EPAS;
- political sensitivity in some countries, especially during election periods;
- difficulties in implementing social media strategies.

Despite these challenges, the programme's impact was evidenced by the active participation and dedication of students and teachers, proving that it is a successful initiative overall.

The EPLOs' recommendations emphasise the importance of fostering a successful and interconnected EPAS programme for the upcoming school year and beyond. Key

¹From September 2023 to June 2024.

suggestions include increasing collaboration opportunities between schools and students from different countries and targeting schools less involved in the programme; increasing the number of junior and senior ambassadors to boost engagement; providing more training and workshops; organising joint events for educators; updating the learning resources; increasing the programme's recognition, and rewarding schools with learning trips, awards, and other incentives. Finally, several EPLOs recommended organising a meeting with all EPAS national contractors to share knowledge and ideas.

These challenges will continue to be addressed in the future in order to make the programme even more effective, sustainable and visible.

1. The programme

The EPAS programme was first introduced during the 2015/2016 school year as a pilot project in six countries (Germany, Ireland, Spain, France, Italy and Poland). The pilot project was a success, and the programme was launched on an EU-wide level the following school year. The programme's initial mandate ended in 2019, when the Bureau decided to extend its mandate until 2024. In 2021, the Bureau decided to expand the programme to the United Kingdom and to introduce the possibility of financing regional transnational EPAS events, known as 'EPAS together' events. In 2024, the Bureau decided to continue the EPAS programme for an indefinite period and gave it an additional budget with the objective of increasing the number of ambassador schools by 50 % by the 2026/2027 school year.

The programme aims to raise awareness of European parliamentary democracy, European citizenship and European values among students. It has been building up a network of schools, teachers and students engaged with Parliament, its Members and the EPLOs.

To be part of the network, schools must organise activities that raise awareness of European parliamentary democracy and European citizenship, and teachers must give classes on EU matters using the educational material² provided by the European Parliament. Once they become a part of the network, the ambassador schools appoint teachers and students as senior and junior ambassadors respectively and, among other initiatives, organise activities for Europe Day and set up Parliament/EU information points in their schools.

Activities take place throughout the school year. The programme therefore provides **continuous** opportunities for young people to learn about the EU. The EPAS network was essential in the 'This time I'm voting' campaign in the run-up to the 2019 European elections and was also a crucial entry point for young people to the together.eu community³. It also played a key role in voter engagement ahead of EE24, as ambassador schools supported the election campaign during the 2023/2024 school year, their extended network providing crucial help.

During the 2023/2024 school year⁴, ambassador schools organised **14 694 EPAS events** (online and/or in person), with a total of **709 776 participants**, and **529 visits from MEPs**.

EPLOs organised **349 EPAS-related events** between September 2023 and June 2024. The wide **variety of activities** organised by the EPLOs with ambassador schools is shown in Annex I and includes exchanges with MEPs, role-playing games, discussions on EU values and the European elections, participation in media and debating programmes, creative projects and more. It is worth noting that interactions

² [Youth Hub: learning resources](#).

³ The [together.eu platform](#) hosts a pan-European community and encourages everybody to participate in democracy.

⁴ From September 2022 to July 2023.

between ambassador schools and together.eu volunteers are becoming more and more regular. In addition, EPLOs financed four regional in-person EPAS transnational events with schools from 18 Member States.

In 2023/2024, the EPAS network in the Member States and the United Kingdom went into 'EE24 mode'. The EPAS network proved to be an essential 'multiplier'⁵ for EE24, as it was in 2019. Many EPAS ambassadors became together.eu volunteers and remained active EU citizens. The Strategic Support Unit organised pan-European events in Brussels and Strasbourg, fostering the engagement of schools in the EE24 campaign, promoting together.eu and educating students about disinformation.

Over 600 participants in total attended the following events:

- Educators' event (co-organiser, 23 November 2023);
- EPAS Seminar for Teachers (29–30 November 2023);
- Sakharov Youth Seminar (13 December 2023);
- EPAS Level Up seminar (co-organised with the European Commission, 12 April 2024);
- LUX Youth Seminar (16 April 2024);
- EPAS Seminar for Teachers (15 May 2024).

In addition, the following **initiatives were implemented** to bolster the EPAS programme and boost engagement with teachers and students.

a) Enabling EPLOs to sponsor regional in-person EPAS transnational events

Following the Bureau's endorsement in 2021⁶, EPLOs can sponsor teacher and student gatherings for in-person transnational events, organised in a Member State by at least three EPLOs, as well as additional national seminars. The main objectives of the initiative are to enhance the pan-European perspective of the programme, create additional incentives to boost engagement ahead of the European elections and develop the potential of the Europa Experience spaces⁷.

When organising these events, several EPLOs work together to design a programme and establish transparent selection criteria to ensure equal access for all participants, whether they are teachers or students. Many of these gatherings also offer EPAS ambassadors the opportunity to engage with MEPs, local politicians, together.eu change-makers and content creators.

⁵ 'Multipliers' are individuals who encourage other people to vote in the European elections by raising awareness in their communities.

⁶ Note of 30 June 2021 for the attention of the members of the Bureau Working Party on Information and Communication, entitled 'Enhancements of the European Parliament Ambassador School programme: recent developments and the forthcoming introduction of EPAS transnational events' (D(2021)9849).

⁷ The Europa Experience spaces are part of a wider chain of visitors' facilities, with the Parliamentarium acting as a hub for setting up any future projects and a repository for the content, which is adapted to each Member State. Europa Experience spaces are currently operational in Berlin, Copenhagen, Helsinki, Ljubljana, Paris, Rome, Tallinn, Vienna, Stockholm and Warsaw.

Four **EPAS together events** took place during the 2023/2024 school year: in Metz, Bunnik, Galicia and Graz.

- **Metz**



A total of 125 students and teachers from 25 schools in Belgium, Germany, France and Luxembourg gathered for a three-day event that focused on facilitating interactions between junior and senior ambassadors and introducing the European Union, its institutions, and the way it works to the participants. Another major objective of this event was to inspire young people to make their voices heard in

EE24 and to do so in an informed manner.

- **Bunnik**

150 ambassadors from 29 different schools in Denmark, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden attended an EPAS together seminar. Workshops were given on a variety of topics: sustainable fashion, sustainability and human rights, EU foreign policy, artificial intelligence and the EU elections. MEP Mohammed Chahim was in attendance and gave an hour-long interview, answering students' burning questions about his personal journey into politics, his ideas to stay on track to decrease global CO2 emissions, and everything in between.





- **Galicia**

Around 100 young people came together to promote EE24 on the *Camino de Santiago*. The participants were mainly first-time voters. They hailed from seven different ambassador schools in five Member States – Germany, Portugal, Romania, Bulgaria and Spain. During a five-day hike, participants met young people from small villages to raise awareness about the upcoming EU elections. They wore raincoats with the EE24 logo and slogan (in Spanish and English) and were accompanied by a bus bearing the 'Use your vote' slogan. When they reached their destination in Santiago de Compostela, they met with two Spanish MEPs to talk about the importance of EE24.

- **Graz**



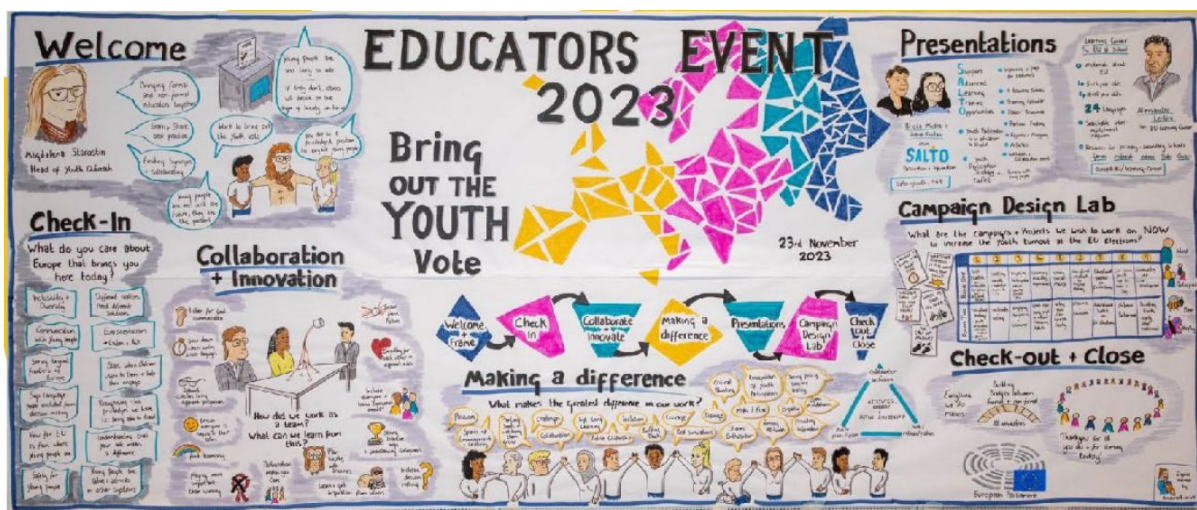
250 students and 20 teachers from 37 schools from Czechia, Croatia, Hungary, Austria, Slovenia and Slovakia met to foster international exchanges and friendship within the EU just before EE24. This was the third EPAS together event to take place in the region. This year's event took place

from 18 to 21 April in the Austrian city of Graz, with the participation of the EPLOs from Vienna, Budapest, Bratislava, Zagreb, Ljubljana and, for the first time, Prague. Junior and senior ambassadors alike took part in workshops such as 'How to make a comic about the EU', 'Slow down on fashion', 'Youth in action: enhancing political participation beyond elections', 'Community building with youth' and 'together.eu', all led by together.eu volunteers. The students were given the opportunity to exchange with four MEPs from four different countries: Ivan Štefanec from Slovakia (EPP), Markéta Gregorová from Czechia (Greens), Georg Mayer from Austria (ID) and Ernő Schaller-Baross from Hungary (NI). The EPAS junior ambassadors interviewed the MEPs and showed their keen interest in European politics.

b) Close cooperation within DG COMM

In the 2023/2024 school year, various teams in DG COMM worked closely together to organise EPAS events, which led to the creation of new synergies within the directorate-general. The Strategic Support Unit for EPLOs, together with the Financial Support Unit, organised the following events with support from other teams within the DG.

- **Educators' event**



In November 2023, 50 senior ambassadors from nearly 40 schools met with 50 non-formal educators during a participatory event entitled 'Bring out the youth vote'. They exchanged on their experience and on how to reach various audiences in the context of the EE24 campaign. This event was co-organised with the Youth Outreach Unit.

- **EPAS Seminar for Teachers**

In November 2023, over 100 teachers from all EU Member States and the United Kingdom (from nearly 80 schools) met in Brussels with the objective of building bridges between schools and rewarding the most active senior ambassadors. The event provided an enriching experience by offering workshops on youth engagement and disinformation, insights into how the European Parliament works, a visit to the hemicycle and opportunities to meet fellow senior ambassadors from other Member States. The programme included engaging seminars and workshops designed to empower and inspire teachers by broadening their knowledge of EU elections and disinformation, among other things.



- **Sakharov Youth Seminar**

In December 2023, a group of over 100 teachers and students (from 26 schools) from across the EU and the United Kingdom met in Strasbourg for this event organised around the European Parliament Sakharov Prize. The participants had been selected for their interest in human rights. They had the chance to attend a special seminar

with the Sakharov Prize laureates, European Parliament Vice-President Heidi Hautala, and human rights defenders from the Sakharov network, who shared their passion and enthusiasm for EU values. Ambassadors also had the opportunity to attend interactive workshops on EE24 and disinformation, and visited the Parliamentarium.

- **EPAS Level Up Seminar**



In April 2024, 100 junior ambassadors and 12 senior ambassadors from over 60 schools travelled to Brussels during the Youth Week, alongside over 1 200 other attendees, and participated in workshops and seminars of their choosing, with a special focus on the importance of voting. This seminar was co-organised with the European Commission.

- **LUX Youth Seminar**

In April 2024, over 100 teachers and students from 26 schools from across the EU and the United Kingdom met in Brussels for this event organised around the LUX Audience Award. The participants had been selected for their interest in European film and arts. They had the opportunity to attend a special seminar with LUX film directors and screenwriters, European Parliament Vice-President Evelyn Regner and MEP Sabine Verheyen. They participated in a workshop with specially selected artists on the importance of art and how to use art to promote democracy. Ambassadors also had the opportunity to take part in interactive workshops on EE24 and disinformation, and attended the LUX Audience Award ceremony.



- **EPAS Seminar for Teachers**

In May 2024, over 100 teachers (from nearly 80 schools) from all EU Member States and the United Kingdom met in Brussels for the last pre-EE24 EPAS event. The event was aimed at building bridges between schools and rewarding the most active senior ambassadors. It provided an enriching experience by offering workshops on youth engagement and disinformation; insights into how the European Parliament works; a visit to the hemicycle and the House of European History; and opportunities to meet fellow senior ambassadors from other EU Member States. The programme included engaging seminars and workshops designed to empower and inspire teachers by broadening their knowledge of EU elections and disinformation, among other things.



c) Increased visibility of the programme through the EPAS website

The EPAS website has been integrated into the Youth Hub website⁸; this helps promote the pan-European perspective of the programme and communicate what EPAS and Parliament offer to young people as a whole. From September 2023 to June 2024, the EPAS landing page welcomed over **10 000 visitors** and the learning resources page almost **12 700 visitors**.

d) The EPAS eTwinning group

Following an assessment of the needs raised by senior ambassadors, an EPAS eTwinning⁹ group was launched in April 2021 with the support of the Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture. More than **475** senior ambassadors have already joined the group. In addition, teachers have since involved their students in some eTwinning projects. For example, junior ambassadors have created videos and posters, discussed topics, and participated in a Quiz Night activity. According to the group's moderator, a senior ambassador, around **6 000** junior ambassadors are involved indirectly.

e) Synergies with Euroscola

The EPAS programme and the Euroscola programme work together to impart democratic values and European cohesion. The EPLs invite the best-performing junior and senior ambassadors to participate in Euroscola sessions, where they have

⁸ <https://youth.europarl.europa.eu/more-information/ambassador-school.html>.

⁹ eTwinning offers a platform for staff working in a school in any of the European countries involved to communicate, collaborate, develop projects, share and feel part of an important learning community in Europe.

the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the inner workings of the European institutions and to discuss democracy, fundamental rights and European values. In the past school year, **four** Euroscola sessions were exclusively dedicated to EPAS groups. Ambassador schools can also attend regular Euroscola sessions. In total, almost **8 700** EPAS students participated in Euroscola sessions between September 2023 and June 2024.

e) Cooperation with Europe Direct centres

The support given to the EPAS programme by Europe Direct centres (EDCs) was agreed at headquarters level within a set of guidelines related to general collaboration at the local level. EDC managers were given training on the communication campaign for the European elections, explaining what EPAS and Parliament offer to young people. Collaboration between EPLOs and EDCs takes place via workshops, projects and discussions. At the start of each school year, information about EDCs is provided to all schools, most of which proactively contact their nearest EDC to plan events or obtain promotional materials. The EDCs also actively promote the EPAS programme in their respective regions to encourage schools to participate and involve their students in their activities. Events organised include celebrations for Europe Day, workshops on sustainability and the State of the Union, and other EU-themed activities.

During this school year, ambassador schools attended many events and activities organised by EDCs and vice versa, on an EU-wide basis. In Romania, 48 schools reported attending EDC events; in Italy, 22; and in Sweden, 20. In Spain, most ambassador schools are in contact with their regional EDC, and usually start cooperation by requesting graphic materials, books and brochures for their info points. In many cases, EDCs also offer to organise talks that serve as the starting point for the EPAS project. This cooperation proves to be even more beneficial for schools located farther away from the capital cities; this was especially relevant during the EE24 campaign.

Overall, there is a strong connection between ambassador schools and EDCs in various Member States, leading to increased interaction and support. EDCs actively involve ambassador schools in their annual programmes and invite them to their events, which fosters collaboration throughout the school year.

f) New ambassador school communication toolkit

The EPAS communication toolkit has been updated and expanded to help EPLOs convey information about the programme in a way that is consistent with Parliament's new visual identity and brand book.

2. The network

At the end of the 2023/2024 school year, the network included **5 355 senior ambassadors** (teachers) and **35 906 junior ambassadors** (students) from **2 159 certified schools**. This is a significant increase on the figures for 2016/2017, when **700 schools** participated in the programme.

Alongside their official accounts, half of the EPLOs manage public EPAS social media accounts, with a total of more than **11 000 followers**. Moreover, over 900 ambassador schools have created a specific EPAS social media account, with almost 270 000 followers combined.

The table below shows how the network has evolved over the years. Note that the figures only include teachers and students nominated as senior and junior ambassadors. Owing to the difficulty of obtaining accurate data, indirect outreach (e.g. the number of other teachers and students involved in EPAS activities and the number of students and parents attending EPAS events organised by schools) is not included in this report.

It should be noted that EPLOs have managed to expand the number of schools they work with despite limited resources. After the Bureau decided in 2024 to extend the EPAS programme's mandate indefinitely, EPLOs will receive an additional budget and will be expected to increase the number of schools participating in EPAS by 50 % (3 000 schools) by the 2026/2027 school year. An additional objective is to consolidate and strengthen the current network, possibly by expanding the ambassador schools' reach (in terms of the number of teachers and students).

School year	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	Growth in the past year	% growth since 16/17
Senior ambassadors	2 676	2 691	3 431	3 682	3 897	4 671	5 044	5 355	+ 311	+ 99.4 %
Junior ambassadors	9 375	13 239	21 800	21 979	24 566	30 781	34 662	35 906	+ 1 244	+ 283 %
Certified schools	700	1 100	1 455	1 520	1 572	1 756	1 991	2 159	+ 168	+ 208.4 %

3. Programme communication

EPLOs use closed platforms to communicate and engage with educators taking part in the programme. Additionally, EPLOs promote the various programme activities through public social media accounts and a set of communication assets and by working with the mainstream media to extend the programme's reach and increase its impact.

3.1. The EPAS programme on social media

a) The EPLOs

13 EPLOs¹⁰ manage public EPAS social media accounts in addition to their primary EPLO social media accounts. Together, these accounts have more than **11 000 followers**.

b) The schools

Over **900** ambassador schools have created a specific EPAS social media account. These social media accounts have more than **396 550 followers** altogether.

c) The central Facebook page

The EPAS programme's Facebook page, which is managed by the Strategic Support Unit and is mainly aimed at educators, now has **6 933 followers** (an 8 % increase on last year). More than 60 posts were published in 2023/2024.

3.2. The EPAS programme in the media

As of 2021/2022, the Strategic Support Unit for EPLOs and the Media Intelligence Unit started tracking the number of mentions concerning EPAS, reported through the platform used by DG COMM.

During the 2023/2024 school year, 60 mentions were registered in the press. The most mentions were reported in Ireland and Slovenia (11 mentions each), in Portugal (10 mentions) and in Italy (5 mentions).

At the same time, relevant mentions of the EPAS programme on the web totalled 154, of which 61 were in Greece, 23 in Italy and 19 in Portugal.

3.3. Web communication

The EPAS programme is accessible through the [Youth Hub website](#), providing educators and students with plenty of information about EPAS and the network and a variety of learning resources. In the 'Resources' section, the European Parliament

¹⁰ Czechia, Greece, Spain, Cyprus, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Austria, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Finland and the United Kingdom.

offers different learning resources to help teachers bring Europe closer to their students in an interactive way. In this section, they can find active lessons, thematic modules, teaching toolkits and audiovisual materials to enable them to discuss relevant European topics, generate debate and work with pupils in a fun way.

During the 2023/2024 school year, the EPAS page received **10 229 visitors**, averaging approximately 852 visitors per month. In addition, the learning resources page received **12 674 visitors**.

4. Challenges and opportunities

During the 2023/2024 school year, EPLOs noted a number of challenges in implementing the programme. Most of them mentioned teachers' heavy workloads; an occasional lack of flexibility in educational institutions; the difficulties in keeping students and teachers motivated to complete the programme; the financial limitations schools face; the inadequate recognition of teachers' voluntary work around EPAS; political sensitivity in some countries, especially during election periods; and difficulties in implementing social media strategies.

The EPLOs are faced with limited resources in the context of an **ever-growing network**, a resource-intensive programme and the **uneven recognition** of the programme by educational institutions and governments in the various Member States. Opportunities to overcome these challenges include **collaboration** between Parliament offices, such as during EPAS together events, and with Commission representations, such as during 'multiplier' visits to the institutions in Brussels to which senior ambassadors can be invited.

Despite these challenges, the EPAS programme received consistently **positive feedback** from teachers and students. Indeed, the EPAS network offers a large number of opportunities. It not only provides schools with a structured framework to **engage students on EU topics**, thus promoting **civic awareness** and active participation, it also helps junior and senior ambassadors gain a better understanding of the EU institutions and legislative processes. Schools participating in the EPAS programme are part of a wide network of interested educational institutions, which can lead to enriching school exchanges with online and in-person activities. In addition, the programme enables schools to be involved in numerous EU engagement activities organised by the EPLOs or EDCs, among other entities, and to have direct contact with people, such as MEPs, who are otherwise difficult to meet.

In summary, while the implementation of the EPAS programme in 2023/2024 encountered several challenges, including time constraints, restricted funding and difficulties in engaging students and teachers effectively, the programme's impact is evidenced by the participation and dedication of students and teachers, proving that it is a **successful initiative overall**.

5. Recommendations

Some of the most frequent suggestions made by EPLOs for the upcoming school year and beyond are listed below.

1. Increase collaboration opportunities between schools and students from different countries and organise local/regional events for ambassador schools on a specific topic (e.g. negotiation, disinformation).
2. Target schools in areas that feel less closely related to the EU or that are less involved in the EPAS programme in general, and increase direct communication between Parliament and ambassador schools.
3. Increase the number of junior and senior ambassadors in each school to enhance engagement and involvement. Increase student engagement overall.
4. Provide more training and workshop opportunities for students and teachers and joint events for educators. Update the European Parliament's learning resources and include workbooks.
5. Increase the visibility and professional recognition of the EPAS programme by supporting schools with practical tools. Reward schools with more trips to the institutions, awards and other incentives.
6. Organise a meeting among all EPAS national contractors to share knowledge, challenges, ideas and more.

These recommendations highlight the importance of continued support, collaboration and recognition in order to ensure the success and growth of the EPAS programme in the upcoming school year.

Annex I: EPAS highlights by country

The activities below were conducted with or by ambassador schools across the EU and the United Kingdom during the past school year and showcase the great variety of opportunities offered to educational entities in the network.

Belgium

Visit of King Philippe to Parliament

King Philippe came to Parliament on 10 April to address the MEPs and asked to meet with first-time voters. A total of 15 junior ambassadors had the opportunity to meet him, which was a rewarding experience for them.



Visit of President Metsola and Minister Verlinden to GO Kompaz school in Zaventem

This multicultural ambassador school was delighted to welcome European Parliament President Roberta Metsola and Belgian Internal Affairs Minister Annelies Verlinden for a one-hour visit ahead of the EU elections.

Junior ambassadors from Athénée Royal de Philippeville attend the Spitzenkandidaten debate

A total of 13 junior ambassadors aged 16 and 17 and their teacher from Athénée Royal de Philippeville had the opportunity to attend the debate between the candidates for the Commission presidency (the *Spitzenkandidaten* debate) on 23 May in the hemicycle in Brussels. It was their first visit to Parliament, and they were impressed by the atmosphere of excitement and activity. The Belgian TV station RTL filmed them as they entered Parliament and interviewed some of the students and their teacher. With their blue EPAS t-shirts, the youngsters did not go unnoticed in the crowds of people moving towards the hemicycle: they were also spotted and interviewed by BBC Scotland and a German TV station.



Collège St Louis in Liège organised a Europe Day event with videos and interviews

Students from the ambassador school Collège Saint-Louis in Liège came to the European Parliament's open day on 4 May to film content, including interviews with Parliament staff, in order to produce an informative mini video on the elections to show their peers.

They also organised a Europe Day event on 14 May with a series of activities, including a 'Spot the 12 differences' game, a Kahoot quiz, Trivial Pursuit, EU-themed hangman ('Pend'UE') and the Imposter Game.

Bulgaria

Supporting the 'Use your vote' campaign

The Sv. Sedmochislenitsi first high school in Targovishte undertook a series of initiatives in support of the 'Use your vote' campaign in their local community: they posted several videos on their YouTube channel of young people discussing the elections with their grandparents, organised debates, and inaugurated an EU-themed classroom and invited an MEP for the occasion. The MEP then joined them for a train ride in which the students



talked to passengers about EE24 and distributed leaflets. On 9 May they organised a large-scale Europe Day event in their municipal hall (funded by private sponsors), launched a mini-campaign called 'My three reasons to vote in the European elections' with the support of the regional governor, distributed EE24 leaflets to all long-distance passengers through a local bus company, and made their own posters to promote the elections and displayed them in a building where a big exam was being held for high-school students (and first-time voters). All the activities were organised by a group of 20 students and one teacher, but their reach was significant – not just in the school community, but in the whole town and even beyond, due to the significant journalistic attention that they received, their actions having featured in 36 media publications.¹¹

A flash mob for Europe Day in Kazanluk

On Europe Day, the junior ambassadors of Ekzarh Antim high school in Kazanlak shared their belief in European values with their town. Wrapped in the EU flag, three of the students

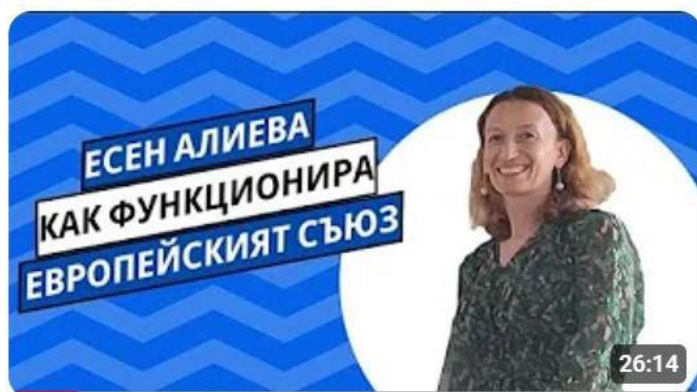


walked through the town, distributing leaflets and talking to citizens about the EU elections. They ended their tour at a big regional event for vocational studies and career guidance, where they took part in a flash mob with a live performance of the European anthem. They also talked to students from vocational schools about the elections and encouraged them to exercise their right to vote on 9 June.¹²

¹¹ A video of the Europe Day event is available at:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2109727379383322>. Videos on 'How to talk to grandparents about elections' are available at: <https://www.youtube.com/@-rw8rk>.

¹² A video of the event is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=agPkr6cZ0d8>.



Как работи ЕП? Зад кулисите на Европа... - Есен Алиева #eu #europe #facts

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A school podcast on Europe

In March, a Bulgarian school created a podcast called 'Europe Today'. They invited experts to discuss how the EU works, European culture and EU current affairs, covering topics such as the Green Deal, education in the EU, and Bulgaria's accession to the Schengen and euro areas. The guests included a professor of European studies, staff from the European Parliament, and

former students¹³. Students promoted it through the social media channels of their school, and also when interviewed by two local radio stations: Darik and Bulgarian National Radio – Burgas.

Comic book on the EU

Vladimir Antov, a junior ambassador from the Pencho Slaveykov first high school in Sofia, wrote a comic book on the history of the EU. The main character in the story is a junior ambassador who meets Kevin the pigeon, the EPAS team mascot. Thanks to this comic book, young audiences can learn about the founding Member States, the pillars of the Maastricht Treaty, the euro and Brexit. The comic book even includes an almost exact reproduction of a euro banknote, save a few fun details, which Vladimir painted himself¹⁴.



¹³ The podcast is published on their YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@EvropaDnes>.

¹⁴ The comic book is available in video format here: <https://www.facebook.com/1SUISSECONDTONE/videos/1107559050264685>.

Czechia



Student-led MEP debate in Mladá Boleslav

Junior ambassadors from the secondary medical school in Mladá Boleslav decided to organise a public debate with an MEP, inviting not only their fellow students but also other high schools in the town and the general public. Planning started in November, four months ahead of the event. They succeeded in securing an advanced multifunctional hall at the Škoda Auto Museum (complete with a hydraulic stage) for free. The students handled all aspects of the organisation, from technical equipment and guest coordination to the preparation of presentations. Their responsibilities included logistical arrangements such as seating for 500 participants, cloakroom services and the hiring of hosts for the event, as well as details such as name tags, flowers and souvenirs. Finally, on 1 March, MEP Luděk Niedermayer addressed nearly 500 participants in the multifunctional hall.

On the day, the students managed technical aspects such as directing, live streaming and recording, effectively promoting the debate across social media.

Debate with President Metsola

President Metsola visited Czechia in February as part of her go-to-vote tour. The highlight of her visit was a town hall debate hosted at the University of Economics, where she engaged with more than 400 students. The discussion covered a range of topics, including the upcoming elections, migration policies, the green transformation, disability rights, rule-of-law issues, and youth engagement in shaping the future of Europe. Of the 400 students in attendance, 50 were from ambassador schools. It is worth noting that only two of the ten participating ambassador schools were from Prague; most of the students travelled from various regions across Czechia.





Debate with MEPs in Moravské Budějovice

Junior ambassadors from the Gymnázium and SOŠ in Moravské Budějovice organised a debate with candidates for the European elections in the local cinema. They invited three MEPs: Marcel Kolaja (Greens), Tomáš Zdechovský (EPP) and Ondřej Kovařík (Renew). Moderated by two junior ambassadors, the debate touched on topics such as the euro and the lowering of the voting age to 16. The junior ambassadors managed all aspects of the event, including coordination with the candidates and collaboration with the municipal office. They also invited

participants from the Secondary School of Crafts, and the event saw around 140 attendees from both schools.

'Summarised with DF' podcast

Junior ambassadors from the School of International and Public Relations in Prague produced six special episodes for their podcast series entitled 'Summarised with DF'. These episodes focus on the EPAS programme and related topics, featuring highlights such as President Metsola's visit to Prague, insights into the communication strategy of the Commission representation and EPLO Prague, and an exclusive interview with Vice-President of the European Parliament Dita Charanzová. The podcast is available on Spotify and Apple Podcasts.



Denmark



15 EU debates

EU debates were held with more than 50 different EU election candidates. In the picture we can see three MEPs and EU election candidates at a debate on 1 May at Rejsby European Efterskole.

25 Skype sessions with MEPs

There were plenty of Skype sessions with MEPs. In this picture we can see MEP Bergur Løkke Rasmussen having a Skype session with Vejle Idrætsefterskole on 15 April with 52 pupils and two teachers.



15 lectures about the young people's EU given as part of the award-winning 'Our Europe' youth project

These lectures were given in ambassador schools and allowed students to gain insight into what young Europeans are interested in when it comes to EU. The students were able to watch video interviews on various topics and gain perspective on how travel in the EU has dramatically changed over time. The lectures also

allowed students to discuss European issues – democracy, eastward expansion, war, climate, migration – which were relevant in the context of the European Parliament elections on 9 June. 'Our Europe' was awarded the 2024 prize for best European youth project.

Ambassador school election

A nationwide ambassador school election was held in Denmark in April 2024, where students voted for the parties that were running in the EU elections.



Germany

EU-Botschafterin mit 18

Bei Leonie gibt's Nachhilfe in Europa!



playing activity in the European House and visited a retirement home to inform older people about the option of postal voting. Many junior ambassadors like Leonie go on to become active citizens and take part in together.eu activities.

A visit to a TV studio

Several junior ambassadors from IGS Garbsen, Regine-Hildebrandt-Gesamtschule Birkenweder, Evangelisches Gymnasium Neuruppin and Bertolt-Brecht-Oberschule Berlin were guests on two talk shows. The talk show on EE24, entitled 'DIGGA Talk', was produced in the ALEX Berlin studio in Friedrichshain. They discussed the EU elections, voting from the age of 16 and ideas for future common EU policy, among other things¹⁶.



Leonie explains the election

Until recently, Leonie Fischbach was a junior ambassador for the Calvarienberg Gymnasium. Now, in the run up to the elections, she is in the *Bild* newspaper discussing the European elections¹⁵.

In the last few weeks before the EU elections, Leonie took part in countless campaigns for EE24 and started working as a together.eu volunteer, reaching many people, young and old, with her message. For example, she organised a digital role-

¹⁵ https://www.bild.de/politik/inland/eu-botschafterin-mit-18-bei-leonie-gibts-nachhilfe-in-europa-66309312ea3d1b6187eb961e?t_ref=https://m.bild.de/politik/inland/eu-botschafterin-mit-18-bei-leonie-gibts-nachhilfe-in-europa-66309312ea3d1b6187eb961e.

¹⁶ You can watch the programme here:

<https://www.alex-berlin.de/videos/1973950-digga-eu-talk:-wahlen-ab-16-bei-der-europawahl>.



'Use your vote' video

The EPLO was interested in why first-time voters go to the polls and, in cooperation with EPLOs from other countries, interviewed junior ambassadors from Czechia, Spain, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Hungary, the Netherlands and Austria.

The finished video was posted on their Instagram and Facebook pages and the pages of all participating EPLOs, as well as on the Central Youth webpage and the EPAS Facebook page.

The German junior ambassadors featured in the video include Ela Algan from Reinhard-und-Max-Mannesmann Gymnasium in Duisburg and Till-Tewes Becker from Europaschule Gladenbach.

President Metsola's visit to Berlin

On 8 May, at the European House, Roberta Metsola met with 12 junior ambassadors from two Berlin ambassador schools – Lette Verein Berlin and Bertolt-Brecht-Oberschule – to discuss a range of topics. All the pupils were first-time voters and had the opportunity to ask her questions about the issues that mattered most to them. At the

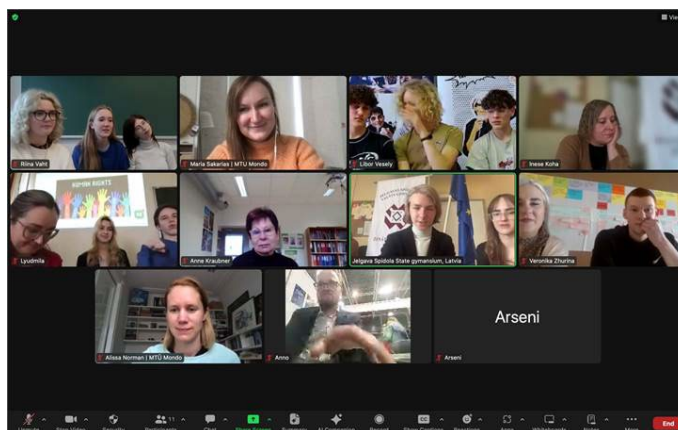


beginning, the pupils were nervous about meeting the President and engaging in a dialogue with her (in English, no less), but soon the discussion was in full swing. Topics included the role of women in politics, our digital future with artificial intelligence, the situation in Gaza, the President's daily routine and her hopes for the future. President Metsola concluded by encouraging the students to get involved in politics and to never stop fighting for issues that are close to their hearts.

Estonia

International 'Building Bridges' EPAS initiative

This school year, the local EPAS contractor organised monthly online meetings for students from ambassador schools and exchange programmes. Participants included schools from Czechia, Estonia and Latvia. The meetings, conducted in English, were open to all interested ambassadors. The topics covered included Holocaust Memorial Day (25 January, hosted by Gymnázium Bystrice nad Pernštejnem), cultural richness and diversity (20 February, hosted by Jõhvi Gymnasium) and the EU elections (19 April, hosted by Narva Gymnasium). A wrap-up session was held with the participating educators in June.



EPAS award ceremony

The EPAS award ceremony was held in the Radisson Collection Hotel on 3 May and was attended by over 50 junior and senior ambassadors.

The event included presentations from six new ambassador schools, showcasing their activities related to the EU. The University of Tartu Political Science Society then provided an overview of their European Parliament mini simulations, which they conduct in various Estonian schools, highlighting student engagement and feedback. The Estonian EPLO

followed with a quiz-based presentation on the opinions and expectations of Estonian youth towards the EU, comparing their answers with those of their European peers. The event concluded with a networking coffee break, where participants discussed plans for future collaboration.

European Parliament simulations



In the second half of the 2023/2024 school year, all schools in Estonia had the opportunity to request a free European Parliament mini simulation, courtesy of the political science students of the University of Tartu.

The practical workshops demonstrated the EU legislative process. They illustrated how the EU influences life in Estonia,

highlighting the importance of voter turnout and the role of the European Parliament. The activity comprised four stages: an introduction to the European Parliament, a demonstration of committee work, a discussion on Parliament's impact and an introduction to the University of Tartu Political Science Society and its partners. During the section on committee work, students represented different political parties, proposed amendments to bills on current and relevant topics, and took a vote. This simulation helped students understand the democratic process, develop presentation skills and appreciate the importance of considering others' opinions and finding compromises.

A larger simulation event was also carried out in Tartu Annelinna Gümnaasium on 16 February, with 64 junior and senior ambassadors registered.

Junior ambassadors' meeting with President Metsola

On 12 February, President Metsola met with junior ambassadors in Tallinn University's European Hall. During this event, students learned about how the European Parliament works and were reminded to make their voices heard at the EU level by voting.



Ireland

Decorating the school with home-made EU posters

Junior ambassadors from Coláiste Chill Mhantáin decided to get creative and make their own posters with interesting facts and stats about the EU to display around the school. With the help of their EPAS workbooks, students chose 15 facts to present to their peers. The students designed and produced the posters themselves and plan to add more to decorate the school next year.



First Europe Day at new ambassador school with peer-to-peer activities

First-time ambassador school Coláiste Muire celebrated Europe Day with a workshop about the EU, which the junior ambassadors delivered to their first-year peers. This was followed by a quiz on the EU.

Get-together between three ambassador schools at the Dublin Europe House

Students from three ambassador schools (including two new schools) got together at the Dublin Europe House in April 2024 for a pre-screening of the [‘Use your vote. Or others will decide for you.’](#) video. This was a great opportunity for the 50 students and their senior ambassadors, who come from different parts of Ireland, to network and learn more about the work of the European Parliament and its MEPs and the upcoming elections. They were also able to hear directly about a day in the life of a trainee.



Bake sale for Europe

The junior ambassadors of St Joseph's Secondary School in Rush made some delicious EU-themed cupcakes as part of a bake sale to remind their classmates that Europe Day was coming up on 9 May. In addition to this, they reminded students who were eligible to vote that they could do so on 7 June.



Greece

First General Lyceum of Nafplio, Peloponnese – Initiative on the environmental crisis and green development



The school focused on the concepts of the environmental crisis and green development. The candidate junior ambassadors used their sense of creativity in order to raise awareness in their local community and school. They participated in the Peloponnese Regional Recycling Festival, created artwork for their school, directed a short film, and produced a series of podcasts about the Green Deal.

Furthermore, the EPAS team had a meeting with European Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms Elisa Ferreira, MEP Stelios Kympouropoulos and Green Deal Ambassadors; this meeting was organised in collaboration with the Peloponnisis EDC. In order to raise awareness across all age groups, the school organised an event in a primary school and invited local organisations to present their activities and raise awareness. The impact through the local press was significant.

Evening Vocational School of Platanias, Crete – Initiative on EE24

Junior and senior ambassadors teamed up to set up three information stands: one for students, staff and parents in the school communal area; one in Platanias town hall next to the citizen information centre, where they spoke to residents and visitors; and one near Kolymbari conference centre, which was aimed at citizens and tourists. At all three information points, students campaigned for EE24 and provided guidance on the postal voting process to citizens from other Greek towns and cities and students at the Technical University of Chania. They shared what they did on social media and on the radio, inviting citizens to get informed about the EU elections. Overall, the initiative was a success, both in terms of how it was organised and how everyone worked together, but also in terms of the outreach it achieved.



General Lyceum of Archanes, Crete – Initiative on EE24

The school implemented an initiative with the aim of informing students about the EU elections and reducing abstention rates, especially among young people. They used several digital tools to do so, and worked together with Europe Direct.

Second General Lyceum of Alexandroupoli, Western Macedonia and Thrace – Initiative on the environmental crisis and green development

When wildfires broke out in their area, the students responded to the environmental crisis by implementing public awareness actions. They were very organised, working on this project in a structured manner. The local media coverage was significant.



Spain

International Women's Day

More than 60 schools took part in an activity proposed by mentor ambassador school (MEPAS) Fundación Llor to celebrate International Women's Day. The purpose of this activity was to promote gender equality, highlight and raise awareness of the fundamental values of the European Union, specifically 'promoting justice and social protection, gender equality, and the protection of children's rights', and show that the European project is for everyone. Each school was given a purple ribbon on which participants could write their wish for the future or an inspirational quote. These ribbons were then displayed in each school.



EPAS meeting at the Alicante Provincial Council

On 2 February, various ambassador schools took part in an activity to visit the Alicante Provincial Council Chamber. The participating ambassador schools (some of which are MEPASs) were Colegio Sagrada Familia de Elda, Colegio Diocesano San Juan Bautista de Alicante, IES Sixto Marco de Elche, IES

Gabriel Miró de Orihuela, Colegio Diocesano Oratorio Festivo de Orihuela and IES Bellaguarda de Altea, with Colegio Santo Domingo Savio de Petrel as a guest. The 120 attendees were welcomed by Member of the Valencian Parliament Juan de Dios Navarro. Representatives from schools gave speeches on the topic of 'Peace, justice and strong institutions' (Sustainable Development Goal 16). After this, the students visited the Europe Direct centre and Fundación Mediterráneo, where they designed an electoral campaign to encourage people to vote in the upcoming EU elections on 9 June.

Transnational EPAS meeting on the *Camino de Santiago*

More than 120 junior and senior ambassadors from five Member States (Bulgaria, Germany, Spain, Portugal and Romania) participated in a five-day hike to Santiago to promote EE24 along the way. The event ended with a meeting with MEPs Nicolás González Casares (S&D) and Francisco José Millán Món (EPP) in Santiago, focusing on EE24. The event was widely mentioned in the media and shared on social media.



European sustainability conference in Murcia

On 9 May, IES Sabina Mora and IES Luis Manzanares organised an event in which all ambassador schools in the region of Murcia could participate. Other local schools were also invited. The main theme of the meeting was sustainability,

which was tied to the EU elections through a campaign using plantable seed paper.

On Europe Day, over 450 people from 10 different schools in the region of Murcia attended an event where each school presented a sustainability-related project at the Centro de Artes Escénicas in Torre-Pacheco. In addition to ambassador schools, local, regional and European authorities attended the event. Notable attendees included MEP Marcos Ros Sempere; the Director-General for European Union Affairs for the Region of Murcia, Adrián Zittelli Ferrari; the members of the Murcian regional assembly Luz Marina Lorenzo Gea and María Luisa Ramón Meroño; the mayor of Torre-Pacheco, Pedro Ángel Roca Tornel; and Torre-Pacheco's councillor for European projects, Javier Plaza Martínez.

Besides the European sustainability exhibition, more than 600 people attended a parachuting display where three parachutists descended with the flags of Europe, Torre-Pacheco and Spain.

France



European speed dating

High-school students organised a speed dating activity to present the European Union and its institutions in a fun and interactive way.

Europa Mobil

Students spent a whole day presenting the European Union and its institutions in a fun and interactive way via the [Europa Mobil](#) activity.



The Wheel

The junior ambassadors created a bilingual French and English game called 'The Wheel'. They played the game on several occasions: on Europe Day, during the visit of a European 'Green Skills' delegation, and during the integration week organised at the start of each school year, to raise awareness about the EU among new pupils.

Final speech of EE24 candidates at Maison de la Radio

Junior ambassadors had the opportunity to see 12 EU election candidates make their final speech at the Maison de la Radio in Paris and ask them questions. A total of 200 students took part in this event.



Croatia



Vote4Democracy eTwinning project

The project was coordinated by co-founders Ivana Opačak (from the Secondary School of Economics in Slavonski Brod, Croatia) and Gabriela Ciolpan (from Lazar Edeleanu Technological High School in Năvodari, Romania) and was implemented from

August 2023 to June 2024 with the Konjščina and Pakrac high schools and ambassador schools from Bulgaria, Greece, Spain and Romania taking part. The project focused on enhancing civic, particularly democratic, literacy and encouraging young people to participate in national and EU elections in the super-election year.¹⁷

Advent calendar

The project involved ambassador schools and participants of the Training Companies project from Croatia, as well as schools from Spain, Italy and Slovenia. It was sponsored by the Ministry of Science and Education and the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education.

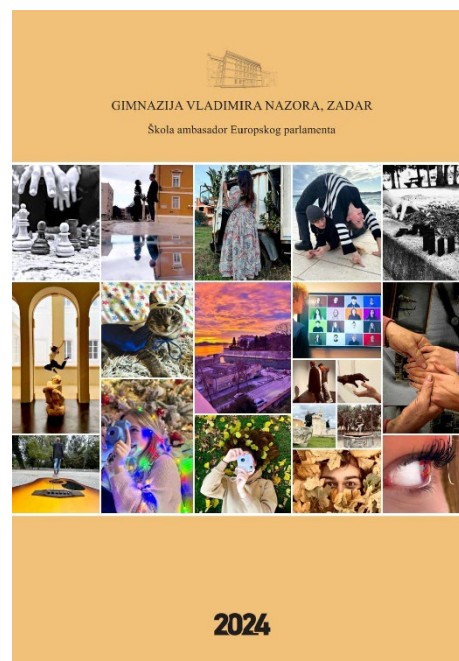
As part of the pre-Christmas magic, each day in December, a new window of the digital advent calendar was opened, revealing a video about a participating school and the Christmas traditions of its local community.¹⁸

¹⁷ <https://school-education.ec.europa.eu/en/etwinning/projects/vote4democracy-ambassadors/twinspace/pages/project-descriptionproject-plan>

¹⁸ <https://calendar.myadvent.net/?id=py566jcvtm9f7eh06296bo3eribl768s&fbclid=IwAR18uZ80DnsgduBZSChEtJqIWdQcvjhkMB7SB5f537ycr3lgQvJM8ZZGL-4>

School calendar

From September to December 2023, the Vladimir Nazor high school in Zadar worked on creating a school calendar with a suggested research topic and workshops – including workshops on photography, graphic design, product branding and marketing – for every month of the year. This year's theme is the EU elections: the topics include the goals and values of the European Union and responsibility at the individual, community and state levels. The calendar is used for promotional purposes, and all key terms are translated into all EU official languages. In the new year, the school delved into each topic with a series of workshops given by ambassadors who had previously participated in the programme and aimed at younger ambassadors participating in the programme for the first time.



Celebration of Europe Day

On the occasion of Europe Day and as part of the #MakeYourVoiceHeard campaign, students from the Vladimir Nazor high school participated in an inter-county project with students from the Natural Science School in Split. The project was carried out by junior ambassadors under the mentorship of Prof. Dijana Ledić Begonja (Natural Science School, Split) and Tihana Magaš (Vladimir Nazor high school, Zadar). The task was to research European projects and investment funds in the cities of Zadar and Split.

The workflow was as follows:

- find European projects in their city and research them;
- select six impressive projects and present them through digital postcards;
- use the 'slam poetry' technique to present the European goals and values recognised in these projects;
- send the postcards to the partner school;
- look into the research conducted by the partner school and carry out own research on these topics;
- send the research results to the partner school for evaluation.

Italy

ISIS 'Eurico Caruso' – Naples

The Eurico Caruso institute demonstrated strong commitment, an international outlook and a high degree of originality. It implemented innovative activities, achieving excellent visibility with the newspaper entitled 'Thank You Europe!', which was created by its junior ambassadors. During the school's Europe Day event, the 170 participants had access to the newspaper via a QR code, allowing each of them to easily read 'Thank You Europe!' and thus contribute to the dissemination of the work beyond the school context.



Furthermore, the event featured testimonies from students and teachers on their involvement in the Erasmus Small-Scale Partnership Project entitled 'My Future is Sustainable' and student performances, including a rendition of Hallelujah by two pupils.



Liceo Artistico 'Gaetano Chierici' – Reggio Emilia

The institute engaged in a wide range of activities. The 100 junior ambassadors managed to combine traditional activities, such as studying in class and visits to Brussels, with modern tools aimed at effective dissemination. One group of students conducted interviews with adult students and school staff, while another group created short podcasts and live shows on the functioning of the European Parliament and the elections. All the materials

were released weekly on the Instagram page created by the students. The Brussels trip was documented, and the materials were shared through the Instagram page and the school website.

IPSSEOA 'Giovanni Falcone' – Giarre

The 100 junior ambassadors showed great creativity and originality in the activities they organised. They created a community totem equipped with QR codes that allowed the institute's students to learn about the European Union, including information on the opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ programme. They also held a quiz on the EU with prizes, in which students from different classes enthusiastically participated. The Europe Day event took place on 29 May, with the students taking part in two competitions: the 'A Cake for Europe' competition (cake creation) and the 'Antonio Megalizzi: The Boy in Love with the European Union' competition (poster creation).



Istituto Superiore 'Agostino Nifo' – Sessa Aurunca

The 23 junior ambassadors of the Agostino Nifo school showed great creativity and commitment in carrying out original activities.

The junior ambassadors designed two tables depicting the island of Ventotene. They also created a ceramic artwork featuring the face of a Phoenician mythological figure. Additionally, they wrote and illustrated an imaginary dialogue between Altiero Spinelli and Ernesto Rossi, in the form of a short comic.

Cyprus

'Love - An Inalienable Right of Every Human Being'

Junior and senior ambassadors implemented a campaign for the protection of the mental health of every child and the elimination of homophobic bullying from schools. Various actions and events have taken place, with the junior ambassadors spreading love, information and gifts to participants. The campaign had around 400 participants, including the President of the Republic of Cyprus, various MEPs and other stakeholders.

During their visit to the House of Representatives, the junior ambassadors delivered a letter addressed to its President and to the members of its Educational Committee, requesting that the teachers be trained in dealing with/ fighting homophobic bullying and in fostering the acceptance of any form of sexual orientation, and that this training be made mandatory, in order to eradicate homophobic bullying from Cypriot schools.



Debating competition between schools

The topic of the debate was: 'Compulsory or optional voting in the European elections?'. The aim of this action was to inform participants about the European elections, to exchange opinions and to reflect on issues of active citizenship.

Students from the two participating ambassador

schools (Kykkos Paphos high school and Giannaki Taliotis Geroskipou high school) had the opportunity to develop critical thinking and expressed their opinions convincingly in a structured context of debate and noble competition. The debate was attended by a jury composed of two journalists and two former directors of the two schools. This event was innovative and interactive and demonstrated the importance of voting in the upcoming EU elections to the 100 participants.

Conference: United in diversity for a society without racism – Kolossi lyceum

The Kolossi lyceum organised a conference entitled 'United in diversity for a society without racism', in collaboration with the



Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth's network of schools supporting antiracist policy. The conference was attended by students and teachers from five ambassador schools in Limassol, other former ambassador schools and Limassol Europe Direct officers. The main speakers were three MEPs, who had excellent suggestions and held interesting discussions with the students and teachers. Furthermore, four NGOs – Hope for Children, Refugees We Care, Generation for Change CY and Center for Social Innovation – held workshops at the event. All students had the opportunity to talk with MEPs and other students, about this important subject. The event was attended by about 120 participants.



'United in Diversity: Human Rights, Diversity and Inclusion' – Aradippou lyceum

On 16 January, the 'Tassos Mitsopoulos' high school in Aradippou hosted an event entitled 'United in Diversity: Human Rights, Diversity and Inclusion'. Representatives from the Ministry of Education and the First Lady of the Republic of Cyprus were among the guests participating in the event.

The junior ambassadors of the 'Tassos Mitsopoulos' high school, along with a group of junior ambassadors from

Makarios III high school in Larnaca, had the opportunity to talk with the speakers and guests, exchanging opinions and concerns on issues such as racism, equality, and diversity in education and the wider society. The discussion focused on the role of the EU in our lives and how the education system can shape attitudes and perceptions. The conference contributed to strengthening the voice of the students in the school community. The conference made the Cyprus Broadcasting

Corporation's 20:30 news and was featured in the local electronic newspaper of the municipality of Aradippou (e-aradippou.cy).

Latvia



Open lectures

Open lectures are one of the most esteemed achievements of the programme. These lectures are organised by the ambassador schools in coordination with the EPLO and with the assistance of educational experts. Open lectures exemplify excellent cooperation among all parties involved. The organisational process begins with the choice of a

topic that fits into the school curriculum and covers issues that are relevant to the European Parliament. Senior ambassadors then draft the open lecture plan on the basis of the selected topic, often involving junior ambassadors in the process. In some cases, students draft the plan themselves. At a later stage, these lecture plans are archived and made available to all senior ambassadors. EPAS teams invite participants from the school and local community to the open lectures, thereby disseminating information on the EU, Parliament and EU policies.

A key component of these events is the invitation of MEPs to these open lectures. In the 2023/2024 school year, the MEPs and other invited experts covered a wide spectrum of themes, explaining the practical aspects of the election process, the relevance of EU elections as part of the democratic political system, the diversity of political ideas and ideological preferences, and the significance of participation in the elections as a manifestation of parliamentary democracy.

Research projects

Each year, junior ambassadors draft research projects on issues relevant to gaining a deeper understanding of parliamentary democracy and acquiring new practical skills. This past school year, students investigated the reasons behind the low levels of political participation among the younger generation, including voter turnout. They found that a significant factor was politicians' reluctance to engage with youth, as they do not perceive them as a relevant societal group.



In response, students designed strategies to advise politicians on how to communicate effectively with the younger generation. This task had multiple objectives: understanding the role of political communication in democratic societies, identifying the most effective communication tools, analysing communication strategies during the EE24 pre-election period, examining how political parties develop their strategies, and recognising the role of younger generations in this process.

To solve this issue, junior ambassadors devised a diverse collection of strategies, ranging from comprehensive recommendations on improving communication with youth to creative outputs such as videos, journals, posters, booklets, cartoons and infographics. The best strategies were presented at the closing ceremony to an audience made up of their peers and representatives of political parties running for seats in EE24.

EE24 rehearsal



The 2023/2024 school year was dominated by the theme of the EU elections. The 'Election Rehearsal' simulation was widely used as a teaching material by ambassador schools. Senior and junior ambassadors alike appreciated the newly developed simulation game for various reasons. While the EPAS programme is rich in teaching materials, it needs more resources that energise the younger generation, unleash their creative potential, and motivate them for active engagement and experiential learning.

The excellent combination of topics, such as elections, EU institutions, and EU policies from different perspectives, contributed to a comprehensive understanding of EE24 and increased students' motivation to

participate in the elections. These factors are particularly important following two years of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 'Election Rehearsal' was used in the majority of ambassador schools and significantly improved students' knowledge of European elections and elections in general.

Closing event

The closing event is organised to highlight the most significant achievements of the Latvian ambassador schools, celebrate the best research projects, award plaques to new schools, and inspire senior and junior ambassadors with new ideas for the next school year. The event was held in a hybrid format, allowing all participants and their friends to follow the ceremony online, while the top ambassador school teams were invited to attend in person. This provided an opportunity to focus on the priorities of the EPAS programme.

For three years, schools have been learning about, analysing and practising parliamentary democracy. EE24 represents the culmination of the knowledge and experience gained by the teams during this period. Therefore, the main themes of the closing event were participating in the EU election on 8 June, motivating the younger generation to take a more active role in the political process, and enhancing communication with youth on parliamentary democracy matters.



Lithuania



Roberta Metsola's visit to Vilnius

The event hosted an active discussion with President Roberta Metsola, including with EPAS students travelling from remote areas for the occasion.

***Spitzenkandidaten* debate**

Junior ambassadors were invited to a live screening of the debate between lead candidates for the EU elections, which provided them with a great networking opportunity before the elections.



Ambassador school visit and debate about AI

The EPLO organised a seminar in the town of Mažeikiai on the implementation of AI. The event began with a performance of traditional and modern songs in Mazeikiai, which was followed by talks with external speakers.

Ambassador school get-together and debate on AI

This event was hosted in Alytus school and included a debate on AI.



Luxembourg



Europe Day - 9 May

On Europe Day, three students from the Lënster Lycée International School and four students from the European school ran the EPAS stand at the European Parliament with the help of the Luxembourg EPLO. Students organised a quiz about Europe and a drawing corner for children. They had also drawn a map of Europe without borders on which all visitors could write down their ideas about the EU.

His Royal Highness the Grand Duke of Luxembourg, MEPs Tilly Metz and Isabel Wiseler-Lima and Deputy Prime Minister Xavier Bettel visited the stand and spoke about the importance of political education in schools.

Europa Experience

Europa Experiences are multimedia spaces around Europe with interactive tools that offer direct and fascinating insights into how we work together at the European level to tackle today's most important challenges. Many ambassador schools have visited the Europa Experience space in Luxembourg and tried the role-playing game with their students.



Visit of President Roberta Metsola

On 24 January, the Lycée Aline Mayrisch welcomed the President of the European Parliament, Roberta Metsola, who engaged in captivating discussions with around 100 students from various high schools. The topics included the European elections, ongoing conflicts, the environment, and other topics of concern to all people living in the EU.

Model European Parliament

In April, the Lycée Aline Mayrisch hosted the national Model European Parliament conference. At least 10 ambassador schools from Luxembourg had participated in various Model European Parliament conferences throughout the school year, while two ambassador schools from Luxembourg participated in the international event in Metz.



Hungary



EPAS together regional event

The 2024 EPAS together event took place from 18 to 20 April in Graz. The event was attended by 250 participants, including students from Czechia, Croatia, Austria, Slovenia and Slovakia alongside their Hungarian peers. Stephen Clark, Director for Liaison Offices of the European

Parliament, opened the event and moderated the panel discussions. In addition to listening to the panels, students had the opportunity to engage directly with MEPs by asking questions and attending various workshops. They also participated in a social media competition and explored the city of Graz. The event concluded with students presenting their own projects.

Regional event in Pécs

On 6 March, the Hungarian EPLO and Baranya EDC organised a European Union Information Day in Pécs with a focus on the upcoming EU elections. More than 100 people attended. The event featured speeches on the elections given by members of the EPLO, a speech on the upcoming Hungarian Presidency of the Council by the Ministerial Commissioner Dr Boglárka Ballester-Bólya, and a speech by Barbara Kerner, head of the Baranya EDC.



Ambassador schools from the region actively participated in the event. The event also included an information forum and a fair in the hall, where local civic and youth organisations showcased their activities and answered questions at their booths.



EPAS Award Ceremony

The 13 new ambassador schools that joined the EPAS network in the 2023/2024 school year received their plaques and certificates on 27 May, alongside five other schools that were already members. Approximately 20 teachers and 70 students attended the award ceremony, and each school presented the activities it had carried out during the school

year. Hearing about the diverse and original ideas implemented by their peers was a great source of motivation for all present.

Europe Day event in Ajka

The Europe Day event organised by the Bródy Imre high school in Ajka had a strong focus on the upcoming EU elections. The school's ambassadors cooperated with together.eu volunteers and also created a short video for social media highlighting the importance of voting and describing what is involved in being an ambassador school. This is just one of many successful Europe Day events organised in Hungarian ambassador schools.



Malta



Final 9 May event and quizzes held in individual schools

After winning several quiz competitions, the top teams from the eight schools came together for a final event, which was held at Europe House in Valletta, to determine which of them was the overall winner through a series of games.

The games were all structured to test the full breadth of participants' knowledge of the subject, and took place in a fun

atmosphere and in a spirit of fair play and mutual growth. The final quiz consisted of several rounds of questions that included various types of questions such as multiple choice, true or false, fast answer questions. The questions were based on the teaching material provided, with the added difficulty that compound answers were required in some cases. Some of the questions were also trick questions, to test the teams' knowledge of the material to a greater degree and challenge them even further.

The day also included a humorous and inventive play, followed by a Q & A session. The event was very well received by all involved, and an overall success.



Netherlands



Transnational event on European citizenship

Junior and senior ambassadors from Denmark, Germany, Ireland, and Sweden travelled to the Netherlands and stayed in a youth hostel in Bunnik. After dinner, the students found themselves engaging in fiery discussions and negotiations on European chocolate legislation as they took part in a role-playing activity.

The following day over 150 participants from 29 different schools across five Member States (including the Netherlands) headed to a vocational school in Utrecht. There, they took part in workshops on various topics: sustainable fashion with Dutch climate ambassador Kiki Boreel; sustainability and human rights with Unicef's Aad Biesebroek and Patrick Pearson; European foreign policy with Adrianus Koetsenruijter from the European External Action Service; artificial intelligence with the European Commission's Emma Hartkamp; and the EU elections with our very own Director Steve Clark. Younger students could also play two escape room games about plastic pollution in the sea ('plastic soup') and the Copernicus programme.

Participants were fortunate enough to have Dutch MEP Mohammed Chahim join for an hour-long interview, during which he answered students' burning questions about his personal journey into politics, his ideas to reach global goals to reduce CO2

emissions, and everything in between. At the end of this long and intense day, De Kiesmannen ('The Ballot Boxers') gave an energising performance on stage.

On Saturday, the event ended with a visit to the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam.

Junior Day – 16 April 2024

The annual EPAS Junior Day took place on 16 April at De Lindenberg in Nijmegen. The event brought together 127 students from 23 different schools across the Netherlands. The various activities were all tied to three central themes: the EU elections, peace and security.

The first activity was a screening of 'When I Grow Up' by Movies That Matter. In this short documentary, three young Ukrainians talk about the impact of the Russian invasion on their daily lives while walking around the ruins of their schools.



After the screening, students were divided into groups to take part in activities. The first was a role-playing game about migration, which was organised and led by the University of Leiden. The second was an interactive presentation and Q & A session with Dutch veterans, who talked to the students about their personal experiences in conflict zones.



Student festivals: EE24

Eight different vocational schools that are part of the EPAS programme in the Netherlands organised events in order to raise awareness about the upcoming EU elections. These 'election festivals' reached thousands of Dutch students. The festivals consisted of a wide variety of workshops, information stands, EU simulation games, explanatory materials, and talks

between students and their representatives in the European Parliament.

Promotion of EE24 in different cities by secondary school students

A total of 25 secondary school pupils from one ambassador school went out on the streets with leaflets and information materials about EE24 in order to encourage passers-by to go and vote on 6 June. They had a stand near Rotterdam Central Station in the morning of 31 May and in the centre of The Hague in the afternoon. On 1 June, they had a stand in Utrecht city centre in the morning and in Amsterdam in the afternoon.



Austria



Europe Day at the SPAR Academy

Europe Day is celebrated annually at the Vienna SPAR Academy with a European event. This event took place at the school in the presence of the class representatives and deputies of all 17 classes, as well as Frank Piplat, the Head of Office of EPLO Vienna. A senior ambassador spoke about the goals that had to be met in the

current school year and what had already been implemented, and two junior ambassadors were able to share their experience with Europe and their new role as 'multipliers' of European-related topics. Teachers explained how Europe is integrated into the curriculum: the SPAR Academy is a vocational school for food retail quality labels, so European food law, typical national products, the single market and monetary union are common threads in the apprentices' training.

This event was concluded by the Federal Minister for the EU and Constitution, Karoline Edtstadler, who explained how important it is for young people to get involved in Europe.¹⁹

¹⁹ <https://medianet.at/news/retail/spar-akademie-im-zeichen-europas-60749.html>

Gaming fever at BHAK/BHAS Liezen

The second- and third-year students of the Europa-BHAK/BHAS business school in Liezen talked about the upcoming EU elections in various classes, and tried to work out how to bring young people closer to the EU.



Working in groups, the students developed various games, including an EU memory game, an EU activity game and a democracy simulation game. On 24 and 25 May, the two classes held EU game days. All students of BHAK/BHAS Liezen and BAFEP Liezen were able to play the games and familiarise themselves with different areas of democracy and the EU.

The students also had the opportunity to fill out a ballot paper in a voting booth to decide whether they would vote in the EU elections. Thanks to their games, the students of Europa-BHAK/BHAS were able to inform and encourage as many students as possible to exercise their right to vote in the EU elections on 9 June 2024.²⁰



Use your vote

As a future ambassador school of the European Parliament, Stiftsgymnasium St. Paul set an example for democracy on Europe Day (9 May). Under the motto 'Use your vote', a panel discussion on current EU topics with candidates for the EU elections and

representatives of all parties took place on 7 May, 2024. Julian Geier (ÖVP), Claudia Arpa (SPÖ), Elisabeth Dieringer-Granza (FPÖ), Sebastian Werkl (NEOS) and Karin Herkner (Grüne) took part in the debate.

Senior and junior ambassadors were responsible for organising the event, with Year-6 and Year-7 students preparing the questions in class. After a short round of introductions, the politicians answered these questions. Topics such as the Green

²⁰ <https://www.blo24.at/leute/13223-bhak-bhas-liezen-im-spielfieber>.

Deal, migration, current conflict hotspots and EU enlargement were explored. The final round of questions from the audience showed that the students were interested in politics and cared about the European Union. After the event, there was further discussion over lunch.

Faces of Europe

The 'Faces of Europe' project was presented on 7 and 8 May at the TFBS Handel und Büro vocational school in Innsbruck. The exhibit was organised in cooperation with the talented photographer Zanella Kux, who had offered to give junior ambassadors a photography workshop. The aim of the 'Faces of Europe' project was to highlight the students' diversity and varied backgrounds. At the same time, the project allowed students to explain what the EU means to them personally and what values the EU conveys to them.



The students had also reflected on the fundamental and human rights granted to us by the EU during their religion lessons. They illustrated this through pencil drawings, posters and portrayals of human rights defenders, which were showcased on the school's second floor.

Poland



European Day of Languages

Most Polish ambassador schools organised events to celebrate the European Day of Languages. EPLO Wrocław also organised an event for the occasion, with a few ambassador schools from the region taking part in the festivities. All the events were aimed at promoting the linguistic and cultural diversity of the EU and encouraging people to learn a new language.

RTV Slovenija interviewing youngsters

Slovenian TV channel RTV interviewed students from an ambassador school in Warsaw about how they view the EU, what they are concerned about and what they cherish the most about it, among other things. The interview was part of a report on the 20th anniversary of the 2004 enlargement²¹.



Silesia Day

Silesia Day was celebrated at an ambassador school in Katowice, with students, parents and school staff in attendance. Representatives of city authorities, NGOs, companies and other schools were also present.

This special day is meant to promote Silesian folklore and encourage people to speak in the regional dialect. The Silesian

dialect is an ethnolect, considered one of the most important elements giving Silesians a sense of belonging to the region. It is related to the literary Polish language, as well as German and Czech. Pupils performed cabaret sketches and songs in the Silesian dialect for the occasion. They were dressed in traditional Silesian costumes and miners' uniforms.

EE24 initiatives

Most ambassador schools in Poland organised simulations of the EU elections, in which students voted for actual candidates running in the elections. The schools also conducted voter turnout initiatives both within and outside the schools, often in collaboration with local Europe Direct centres.



²¹ <https://www.rtv.slo.si/rtv365/arhiv/175042683?s=tv&t=2696> (44 min).
<https://www.rtv.slo.si/rtv365/arhiv/175041754?s=mmc&t=369> (5.30 min).

Portugal



Debate in the Portuguese Parliament

On 27 October, the junior and senior ambassadors from Leal da Câmara secondary school, together with the national coordinator, Isabel Baltazar, organised a debate in one of the main rooms of the Portuguese Parliament. The debate was held on the following topic: 'Young people's voice in Europe – democracy, sustainability and human rights: what kind of Europe do they expect to see after the 2024 European elections?'

There were 260 students from all over the country in attendance, giving their opinions, sharing their concerns about Europe's future and asking the invited participants about their own opinions. The Vice-President of the Portuguese Parliament, the Minister of Education, an MEP, a Portuguese Member of Parliament, and staff from the Lisbon

EPLO were also present. The students had the opportunity to make their voices heard and to hear from people with responsibilities on the national and European political scene. This allowed them to form their own opinion about Europe and the future. Hosting this event in the Portuguese house of democracy gave it even more dignity and importance.

EU election simulation

On 5 February, the junior and senior ambassadors of Leal da Câmara secondary school organised a simulation of EU elections. The main goal was to reduce abstention rates in Portugal, mainly among young electors. This activity had the material support of Sintra municipality and Rio de Mouro parish.

The ambassadors arranged four voting areas where they placed the equipment: voting booths, ballot boxes and ballots. They had prepared all the documents as if it were a real election (electoral roll, notice on how to vote and official record of the election), and all the students were able to vote no matter their background or age. They also created a ballot in Braille, as the school is a reference school for blind and visually impaired students.



Democracy and EU elections: young people in action

Three ambassador schools from Vila Nova de Gaia (Escola Secundária Gaia Nascente, Colégio de Gaia and Escola Profissional de Gaia) organised an EPAS meeting on 19 and 20 April, with the collaboration of Gaia city council. The event was attended by 13

ambassador schools and 150 participants. The junior ambassadors had the opportunity to ask questions. This was undoubtedly a chance for reflection, sharing, building bridges and growth. After the discussions, they watched videos sent by MEPs Carlos Zorrinho, Margarida Marques and Pedro Marques.

Together: the European Union in a magazine

Together Magazine is a European project with 100 contributors, created as part of the EPAS programme. It gives an account, twice a year, of the activities of ambassador schools in several countries – Spain, France, Portugal and Slovenia. The magazine is available in digital format.



The team that brings *Together* to life is made up of students and teachers from the following schools: Escola Europeia de Ensino Profissional (Portugal); Lycée Pierre Méchain (France); I.Gymnazija V (Slovenia); and IES Francisco García Pavón, Colegio Miraflores and Colegio Vivas (Spain). This is an innovative project for Portugal, especially, as it is the first time Portuguese ambassador schools have taken part in publishing a magazine.

The first issue of the magazine was published in May; the second will be out in November²².



Romania

Social media campaign

Lucian Blaga high school conducted an intensive online campaign on Facebook and Instagram with daily updates on the EU, Parliament and its MEPs, and European affairs and culture. Thanks to their efforts (575 posts on both Facebook and Instagram), they helped the EPAS programme gain visibility. They have 238 likes and almost 1 000 followers.



Collaboration between ambassador schools

In January 2024, the A.I. Cuza Focsani national college met with two ambassador schools – one from Madrid (Colegio Sagrada Familia) and one from Athens (third General Lykeion of Chaidari) – in a conference entitled 'Building the EU. Building our future', which is part of an ongoing

²² <https://online.fliphtml5.com/kbcog/xdts/>.

collaboration between the schools. The aim was to launch an information campaign on the importance of voting in the EU elections and encourage students to explore European values, gain knowledge about the EU and fight against disinformation. This activity helped young people understand the benefits of being part of the EU and underlined the vital role of European citizens for the future of the EU.

Information campaign and awareness - raising among citizens

The Doamna Stanca Satu Mare national college organised a major information campaign for Europe Day, with 720 students, 46 teachers and more than 800 citizens taking part. Junior ambassadors went to all 26 classes of their school to present the significance of 9 May. Stands were placed in the courtyard, giving students information on the role of the European Parliament and on European values, and inviting students to answer two questions: 'What is your role in Europe?' and 'What is your message for Europe?'. Students also distributed flyers on the European Parliament throughout the city and interacted with citizens.



'Use your vote' campaign

The Petru Rares Beclean national college involved over 140 students in an information campaign on the EU elections. The 'Use your vote' video was disseminated across the school and discussed by its 12th grade students.

After viewing the video entitled 'Use your vote, or others will decide for you', students at the Spiru Haret Buzau national college wrote messages for their grandparents expressing their gratitude and joy that they are living in a democratic and free country.

Slovenia

Seminar for senior ambassadors in Brussels

Last year, it was proposed that a seminar be organised for Slovenian teachers (senior ambassadors) in Brussels, with the aim of familiarising them with European content and EU teaching materials and providing them with insights and ideas for the content of possible educational trips to Brussels with their students. An additional benefit of such an activity is that it allows mentors to connect with each other and exchange ideas, promoting collaboration and joint planning for future activities.



Two seminars were organised in October and March, in collaboration with the Representation of the European Commission in Slovenia (covering travel and accommodation) and the Slovenia EPLO (covering dinner).

A total of 50 senior ambassadors from different Slovenian schools participated in the seminars. They had the opportunity to learn more about the functioning of the European Commission and Parliament and deepen their knowledge of various European topics. During the seminars, participants were informed about numerous educational opportunities and other benefits that the EU offers to them and their students. The programme included visits to the European Commission and Parliament, lectures on current European issues such as media literacy, the fight against disinformation, and the Erasmus+ programme, a visit to the Parliamentarium and a guided tour of the House of European History. Overall, it was a great opportunity for mentors to gain better understanding of the EU and its institutions and the educational and other opportunities the EU provides.



Sharing knowledge with primary school students – peer-to-peer activities

II. Gymnasium Maribor organised several activities to share knowledge of the EU with primary school students and their teachers. During these activities, junior ambassadors deepened their knowledge of the EU and gained confidence, especially in terms of public speaking. These activities were also great

opportunities to promote the EPAS programme.

For the third year in a row, the school organised an EU knowledge competition for primary school students, inviting primary schools from the region. A total of 19 primary schools participated, each with a team of three students accompanied by a mentor/teacher.

Junior ambassadors from Il. Gymnasium Maribor also visited 11 primary schools and gave workshops about the EU there. They prepared and gave presentations themselves. This, they enabled them to reach over 300 additional primary school children.

Activities of the Ljubljana secondary school for design and photography

A secondary school for design and photography in Ljubljana included EU topics in various activities, with the aim of motivating students by doing what they love the most. One of the junior ambassadors created a comic book on different EU opportunities, which was published on the together.eu page.



They created an info point that included posters that had been illustrated and designed by the students themselves – on the history of the EU, the opportunities it provides to citizens, and EU languages. One even had caricatures of Slovenian MEPs. The info point also included a hand-made crocheted EU flag and two installations. The installation on sustainable mobility in Slovenia featured a train travelling around a steep hill. At the base, there were signs displaying the distances between various towns in Slovenia and their nearest railway station. Through this, the students highlighted that while sustainable mobility and nature conservation is important, public transportation in Slovenia is quite poor, and the connections between cities are unfortunately not the best. The second installation portrayed the consequences of pollution. Students had crocheted jellyfish and fish out of wire; their insides were filled with microplastics, a result of pollution (represented by glitter).

They also painted and designed posters on how they perceive European values. The designs were presented on Europe Day, and the presentation was followed by a discussion with a Slovenian MEP.



'Co-decide for a Better Future!' simulation

Young ambassadors from Gymnasium Nova Gorica, together with peers from Slovenian and Italian schools in Gorizia on the Italian side of the border, discussed four sustainable development goals: health and well-being, affordable and clean energy, gender equality, and sustainable

cities and communities. The simulation was conducted in both Slovenian and Italian. It was an excellent opportunity for young people to express their opinions, listen to others, test their collaboration and teamwork skills, and become aware of the importance of actively seeking solutions for a greener, safer and more democratic Europe. It was conducted on Europe Day. Besides the simulation, the school organised various other activities – creating an info point in the city centre, promoting the EU elections, playing didactic games on the EU, and more.

Slovakia

EU election simulation

Several schools organised mock student elections ahead of EE24 this school year. This was a practical lesson on the functioning of elections, and also strengthened civic awareness and responsibility among students.



Video on how teachers view communism

The EPLO asked schools to draw inspiration from their EE24 video and create their own. In this video, the students asked the teachers how they perceived political systems in the past and how they perceive them today. This allowed students to understand previous forms of ideologies in the country.

Escape game in Brussels

The game was prepared by the EPAS team for students. When creating the escape game, they used a number of available resources in print and electronic form, including manuals, websites, applications and quizzes. The students had 90 minutes to complete tasks on history and geography, the European institutions, and interesting facts and personalities of the EU. In addition to their own knowledge, students could use printed materials about the EU and the European Parliament that were available to them. The winning teams were rewarded with prizes.



Workshops on EE24 and disinformation

EPLO staff offered ambassador schools the possibility to attend workshops given by the youth NGO ZMUDRI (Get clever) on EE24, the importance of the European Parliament in their lives, and what role disinformation plays in the EU elections. A total of 10 schools participated.

Finland

EU info desk at Sotungin upper secondary school



Sotungin upper secondary school set up an info desk on the EU, the European Parliament and EE24.

EE24 panel with candidates at Oulu lyseo upper secondary school

The school invited politicians and organised EE24 debates.



MEP Henna Virkkunen visited Schildt upper secondary school in Jyväskylä

Finnish schools regularly met with MEPs from their homeland, whether in person or remotely. Pictured here is one such occasion, where the students of Schildt upper secondary school met with Henna Virkkunen (EPP).

EE24 debate with Helsinki university researchers, organised by Kulosaari upper secondary school

The secondary school worked with university researchers to organise EE24 debates.



Sweden



Q & A session with President Metsola and political debate with MEPs and political parties ahead of EE24

The Young Business Creatives (YBC) ambassador school, an upper secondary school in Nacka/Stockholm, organised two events to inform students of the importance of voting ahead of EE24.

The first event was a Q & A session with President Roberta Metsola, with 250 students in attendance and 2 000 students from 85 schools from all over Sweden taking part online. The video of the Q & A session has over 800 views on YouTube.

The second event was a panel discussion with MEPs and/or political representatives on themes such as global affairs and security, the environment and climate, and the rule of law. Junior ambassadors were instrumental in creating and implementing the activity, which reached a wide audience, including students, teachers, parents and other target groups.

Both events disseminated knowledge and information beyond the school, engaging local media and the community. They received exceptional media coverage, with approximately 25 articles published in printed national and regional media and local radio and TV stations covering the story²³.

Mock elections ahead of EE24

During the school year, 61 ambassador schools – that is, 80 % of Sweden's ambassador schools – reported organising a mock election ahead of



²³ One such article can be found here:

<https://www.svt.se/nyheter/lokalt/stockholm/gymnasieelever-mote-eu-politiker-nu-vet-jag-vilka-jag-inte-ska-rosta-pa>.



EE24. These schools successfully held mock elections to engage students in democratic processes and enhance their knowledge of the EU. The junior ambassadors were responsible for collecting and counting the votes cast by their fellow students.

Various other activities were organised that significantly contributed to the students' understanding of and enthusiasm for EU-related topics. Several schools combined the school elections with a special Europe Day event, inviting politicians and local officials to interact with the students. These events included workshops, lectures and interactive sessions, creating a festive atmosphere that heightened awareness about the EU elections. Junior ambassadors played a crucial role by leading class-by-class information sessions about the EU and its institutions and organising discussion groups where students could ask questions and debate current political issues. This not only increased students' knowledge but also

boosted their interest in the EU. Additionally, many schools held debates where students engaged with representatives from various political parties. These debates, often moderated by junior ambassadors, featured questions formulated by the students, making the discussions highly relevant and engaging.

Schools reported that one of the biggest challenges was engaging all students and making them feel included in the mock election. Despite this, the mock elections were a resounding success. They led to a greater understanding of the EU and its democratic processes among students. Many students have become more interested in learning about the EU and participating in democratic processes, demonstrating the significant positive impact of the EPAS programme on students' education and their awareness of the EU²⁴.

²⁴ Read more about the Swedish mock school elections ahead of general elections here: <https://www.mucf.se/om-skolval> (In Swedish).

Cooperation with the Riksdag – tour of ambassador schools ahead of EE24

The Swedish EPLO and the Riksdag joined forces and went on a regional tour of ambassador schools to discuss democracy, highlight the importance of voting and raise awareness of EE24. The Speaker of the Riksdag, Andreas Norlén, met with 800 students ahead of EE24. The tour showcased how important all general elections, with a focus on the European Parliament, and increased inter-governmental cooperation between Parliament and the Swedish Riksdag.



United Kingdom



EU Lingo Bingo for Europe Day

One ambassador school designed a bingo card with phrases from 28 European languages on it. A total of 28 staff then volunteered to have the phrase on the back of their lanyard for the day and children raced around the school to complete their card before the end of the day.

'Pildoras europeas' collaborative website and podcast

Students from Europa School UK and Instituto Español Vicente Cañada Blanch have jointly created a website where they publish their collaborative projects on the European Union. Their goal is to collaborate on work related to the European Union, its values, and its rich heritage, history and society. The name of the project, 'Pildoras europeas' ('European Pills') comes from the idea of encouraging students to do research in small doses,



with the objective of getting brief and concise results, in order to bring Europe closer to the educational community, both in UK ambassador schools and in schools all over Europe.

The two schools started this project recently, with pupils from Vicente Cañada Blanch creating the website and pupils from Europa School UK producing a podcast on the EU, which will include episodes made by pupils from both schools. Their goal is to make more episodes each year and for students from both schools to enjoy and learn from this collaborative work.

So far, Europa School pupils have been able to deepen their knowledge of the European Union: from the about the EU to the Member States, when they became a part of the EU and their particular characteristics with interesting historical facts. Some pupils focused their research on the common currency, the euro, and others even interviewed EU citizens living in the United Kingdom.



Mock election debate

On Monday 17 June, five students from Carmel College's Debating Society, who are also junior ambassadors, took part in a debate ahead of the mock general election.

The mock election took place in Carmel on the same day as the UK general election, Thursday 4 July. All Carmel College students were asked to cast a vote for one of their five candidates.

The five candidates represented parties across the political spectrum – Leon represented the Liberal Democrats; Luis, Labour; Vyara, Reform UK; Wiktor, the Green Party and Ollie, the Conservatives. The debate was expertly moderated and hosted by Isabella. All candidates did an excellent job debating issues regarding the European Union, immigration, the economy and the National Health Service (NHS).

Voter registration

Junior ambassadors at the Palmer campus at USP College in Essex created tutorials for their fellow students, including on how to register to vote ahead of the EU and local elections. They also organised a Eurovision quiz and conducted a survey exploring national identity²⁵.



²⁵ https://twitter.com/epas_at_usp/status/1787809393309843858.

Annex II: Achievements of European Parliament Liaison Offices in 2023/2024

The table below shows a selection of achievements mentioned by the EPLOs that have not been included in the activities of the 2023/2024 school year.

Country	Highlighted achievements
Belgium	The EPLO noted the great involvement of ambassador schools in preparing their students and first-time voters for EE24.
Bulgaria	The EPLO took note of the following achievements: the organisation of two national competitions for EPAS, seven regional events for ambassador schools, the first-time-voters event at the National Assembly; the increased presence of teachers in eTwinning; and the preparation of sketches by the EPAS contractor, which were later performed by the schools for larger audiences.
Czechia	The number of ambassador schools that took part in international EPAS projects (e.g. cross-border event) has increased, meaning that the EPLO managed to successfully connect schools across national borders. Many students shared what they had learned in the workshops and activities with their classmates upon returning to school. Additionally, the EPLO collaborated with various non-profit organisations to provide schools with access to opportunities beyond those offered by the European Parliament.
Denmark	The EPLO supported ambassador schools that arranged European Parliament-style debates in April and May, with many EU candidates visiting the schools. In addition, almost all ambassador schools participated in the EU election for schools, which the contractor organised in April.
Germany	Ambassador conferences were held, with participants exchanging ideas, getting to know each other, talking to MEPs and preparing projects together in relation to the European elections. The EU Academy event also took place, with various workshops (including on social media training and event organisation) and meetings with MEPs, allowing to maintain links with the together.eu network.
Estonia	A key development was the introduction of regular 'Building Bridges' online meetings, which allowed junior ambassadors from various schools and countries to connect and share their experiences with each other, fostering a greater sense of community among the students. Another major addition was the collaboration with Tartu University students, who played a crucial role in conducting European Parliament simulations. These simulations provided practical insights into the legislative processes of the EU, allowing students to engage deeply with the material and gain hands-on experience in democratic procedures.
Ireland	The EPLO underlined the excellent cooperation with the contractor, the planning of training sessions for senior

	ambassadors, and the positive press coverage of award ceremonies.
Greece	The EPLO supported 57 ambassador schools in effectively collaborating with regional Europe Direct centres.
Spain	Ambassador schools increased the number of cooperative activities with other national schools, such as debates (the European elections being a recurrent topic). It is worth noting that this year, ambassador schools got a lot of media attention. In fact, a total of 92 ambassador schools have had their news published in local, regional or national media outlets, thanks in part to regional ambassador schools taking the initiative to contact the media. The EPLO also identifies the schools that need most support through mid-term evaluations.
France	A total of 25 innovative activities were organised over the course of the school year, including: producing an 'inclusion and diversity' video; creating a radio project on the EU elections; setting up environmental stands on the topic 'Plastique à la loupe' ('Plastic under the microscope'); training junior ambassadors in photography and journalistic writing; taking part in sustainable development challenges; creating a bilingual 'green skills' game; and producing and broadcasting podcasts on the European elections.
Croatia	Schools got more involved in 2023/2024; the EPLO achieved better outreach beyond the EPAS programme and noted good cooperation between the EPLO and ambassador schools and a positive feeling in general with regard to the EPAS programme.
Italy	Most ambassador schools completed the programme and were highly enthusiastic; many were invited to participate in other activities and projects related to European Parliament initiatives, such as visits to the Europa Experience in Rome, visits to Strasbourg, and the Open Cohesion and Erasmus+ projects. A close connection was established between the schools and the Europa Experience space in Rome.
Cyprus	EPAS supported the work of all ambassador schools, which organised a high number of additional activities (sometimes working together) to learn about the structure of the EU, its institutions and values and conduct research. All schools involved many stakeholders in their activities, including MEPs and the general public.
Latvia	The EPAS team introduced innovative initiatives, such as designing a set of creative posters for the schools, producing podcasts, and organising pre-election debates with national politicians and MEPs. In addition, they combined EE24 themes with Latvia's integration into the EU.
Lithuania	The EPLO noted closer cooperation with schools, including more direct contact with junior and more specifically senior ambassadors.

Luxembourg	A new role-playing game on the foundation of the European Union and the rebuilding of countries after the war was rolled out by the EPLO. The EPLO also coordinated the creation of new optional courses on the EU in two ambassador schools and created a podcast/radio channel on the EU with an ambassador school.
Hungary	The EPLO recorded the biggest increase in the number of ambassador schools, affecting all regions in Hungary. This increase was particularly relevant in the 'Use your vote' campaign.
Malta	The EPLO noted very active participation by the schools in its network and increased interest from other schools in joining EPAS. Moreover, the EPAS team ran the yearly quiz effectively and received very positive feedback from participants.
Netherlands	The main highlight was the international event organised with Denmark, Germany, Ireland and Sweden. Two introduction days were organised, as well as one accreditation/senior day and one junior day in Nijmegen about the elections, the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine and migration. Other achievements included the creation of a teaching module on artificial intelligence and a teaching module in English and Dutch on EE24, and an update to the 'Accession to the EU' teaching module.
Austria	Awareness was raised about the European Union via informative events, networking was organised between schools from Austria and other EU Member States, and events were organised independently by the junior ambassadors. The EPAS together event in Graz was also a highlight.
Poland	Several ambassador schools visited the Europa Experience space, which opened in 2023, and the EPLO coordinator visited several ambassador schools to meet students and discuss current European affairs with them. The EPLO also organised a wide variety of successful events with ambassador schools.
Portugal	One of the main achievements was the simulation on the European elections organised at ambassador schools, as well as election debates and street campaigns about the importance of voting.
Romania	The EPLO noted that they had great teams of junior ambassadors, that the ambassadors developed their skills and competences (especially when meeting with the MEPs) and that they received lots of positive feedback. Key topics included the voting process and European elections.
Slovenia	More than half of the schools in Slovenia take part in the EPAS programme. The EPLO noted that they managed to foster a trust-based relationship with senior ambassadors, which helped develop interesting activities inside schools, such as activities on the European elections, activities with MEPs, informative programmes and debates.
Slovakia	The EPLO was creative in proposing opportunities for ambassador schools, this time focusing mostly on the European elections. For instance, the EPLO prepared - in cooperation with youth NGO called ZMUDRI (Get clever) - a workshop focused on the elections,

	the importance of Parliament and the role of disinformation in the election process. Other events included state-wide simulated European elections for secondary schools, with all ambassador schools invited to take part.
Finland	The EPLO contributed to raising awareness about EE24 among youth and student networks. As well as cooperating with Europe Direct centres, a number of schools attended European Parliament simulations organised by the Finnish European Youth Parliament.
Sweden	One of the main achievements was the mock school election activity, which was carried out by 61 ambassador schools. The purpose of school elections is to increase students' opportunities to participate in the political process and to practise voting, by increasing young people's knowledge of democracy and the democratic election process, which was key ahead of the European elections. Another achievement was that Swedish schools took part for the first time in an international event in the Netherlands, with three Swedish ambassador school present.
United Kingdom	The EPAS team in London has greatly increased the number of schools involved, with most of them being certified at the end of the school year and others ready to give it another try in the upcoming school year.