

POD CASTLE

**Castles for Children's Multicultural
and Digital Experiences**

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PodCastle - Advancing teaching methods in education and the value of European Cooperation

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What is Erasmus+?

Erasmus+ is the European Union's program designed to support education, training, youth, and sport activities across Europe.

When did the European programs start?

- ▶ 1987 University students' mobilities
- ▶ 1987-1995 **Socrates** for education, **Leonardo** for vocational training
- ▶ (**Grundtvig** for disadvantaged learners and older adults)
- ▶ 2007-2013 Lifelong Learning Programme (**LLP**)
- ▶ 2014-2020 **Erasmus** as brand name
- ▶ 2021-2027 **Erasmus+** (sectors like Sports and Youth are included)

Erasmus+ budget through the years

- ▶ The initial budget was **85 million** euros (only **10 millions** were allocated in the first year)
- ▶ For the first Erasmus+ cycle the budget increased to **14,7 billion**
- ▶ The current program has a total budget of **26,2 billion**
- ▶ The suggestion for 2028-2035 is **40,8 billion**

Importance for the European Union!!!

Erasmus+ Priorities (I)

1. Inclusion and Diversity

- ▶ Erasmus+ promotes equal access to learning by supporting individuals facing barriers due to disability, socioeconomic challenges, or cultural backgrounds. It promotes inclusive practices across all sectors, ensuring that education is accessible to all, fostering an equal European community

2. Digital Transformation

- ▶ Erasmus+ enhances digital competencies across education sectors. It supports the integration of digital tools and innovative teaching methods, aiming to equip learners and educators with the skills necessary for lifelong learning.

Erasmus+ Priorities (II)

3. Environment and Fight Against Climate Change

- ▶ The program integrates sustainability into education by promoting green skills and environmental awareness. It encourages projects that address climate change through curriculum development, educator training, and sustainable practices.

4. Participation in Democratic Life

- ▶ The program also fosters active citizenship by enhancing understanding of EU values and encouraging civic engagement. Through formal and non-formal education, Erasmus+ supports initiatives that develop critical thinking, media literacy, and participation in democratic life, especially for young people.

Why Erasmus+ projects in Primary schools?

- ▶ Is it wise to have Erasmus+ projects in all levels of education?
- ▶ Why did Erasmus include other education levels instead of Universities as it was initially planned?
- ▶ Is there any added value to this inclusion?
- ▶ How are the students of Primary and Kindergarten going to benefit from these projects?
- ▶ Our students are going to reply these questions later...but here are some insights from my experience...

The Value of Erasmus+ Projects as an Advanced Teaching Method

- ▶ Project-Based Learning connects to real life

(environment, digital skills, cultural heritage etc)-keeps students motivated

- ▶ Cross-Curricular Integration and subject combinations

language, geography, history, science, ICT, arts—students see how knowledge connects

- ▶ Student-Centered Learning

Erasmus+ promotes active learning where students research, create, share, and reflect—rather than passively receive information

Global Citizenship and Soft Skills

They encourage values like empathy, respect, collaboration, and open-mindedness. Students develop essential "soft skills" like communication, problem-solving, and adaptability

Which methods combine with Erasmus+ for greater impact?

- ❖ Project-Based Learning

Let students research, present, reflect

- ❖ Experiential Learning

Encourage hands-on activities> learning by doing

- ❖ Digital Storytelling

Blogs, videos, or podcasts. It builds media skills and creativity

- ❖ Collaborative Online Learning, Flipped Classroom, CLIL (to name some more methods)

My colleague Andria, who implemented our project with the students, will give you practical examples that support the theory I have just mentioned...but, before that, let's see what the students think about this experience...

Theoni (Θεώνη)

“Our experience with the Erasmus+ programme and the podcasts was fantastic! The basic reason is that we went on different excursions and for the first time, we spoke through a microphone.

The learning experience we had was so different than any other subject or lesson. And that is because we studied the castles and the people of the Medieval Age. We learnt so much!!

Joanna (Ιωάννα)

“My experience with this European programme was unique! One of the main reasons is that our teacher was very experienced and guided us with clear instructions. It was clear to us that she loves this kind of programmes.

We also visited castles and museums so that we could have visual images. We learnt a lot about castles and their use in the past and today.

I enjoyed a lot our last podcast recording because I collaborated with a group of friends and we produced an excellent result.

I would like to thank my teacher and my headteacher who gave us the chance to participate in this wonderful and unforgettable experience.”

Christopher (Χριστόφορος)

“We had a wonderful experience with this European programme. We had the chance to meet children from another European school, thing that would be impossible in Cyprus.

We could practice our English-speaking skills which will help us in the future for sure.

I think that our teachers’ decision to participate in this programme was correct! We loved it!”

Christaleni (Χρυσταλένη)

“I had the best time with the Erasmus+ programme. I was very glad that I was a part of it. It was very special that we collaborated with children from Italy and that we listened each other’s podcasts about the middle age.

Our excursions were fun and very interesting. I also liked the fact that we met in person two Italians who helped us record our podcasts and share them with students from Italy.

It was a beautiful and unforgettable experience!”

Thanks!



Ms. Stella Eliadou
Maroni-Psematismenos Primary School Headteacher



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