



Young Led Civic Initiative Report EducAction - WP1

ACTIONAID

Introduction

In order to define the problems which are more relevant to the students of Oriani Mazzini School, different participatory methodologies have been used:

- Brainstorming (in classroom and online)
- Work in small groups and then presentation in plenary
- Guided discussions among students
- Action research questionnaires
- Telephone interviews

Priority Problem identified

Through a button-up approach for choosing priority problems, it emerged that the main problem for students which will be faced in the following months of the projects is: **the need of acquiring practical skills at school and the weak linkage with the labour market, especially in the context of a vocational school. Students should therefore participate more in identifying areas of interest, subjects and extracurricular activities in order to improve their educational experience and have a more student-led school.**

Why this problem and what are the most relevant issues

This problem has been chosen because it is directly linked to the vocational school objectives and its solution will allow them to improve their practical skills needed for entering to the labour market, enhance the School-Work Alternation and finally encourage the creation of a student-led school where students are more engaged in the decisions that matter to them.

As a result of this problem, many students face disappointment over their school place, thinking about their future they feel lost and doubtful and this is mainly due both to the school's weak orientation policy that does not provide enough career advice and to the drawbacks and defects of *School-Work Alternation*, which for the moment is just a big, missed opportunity and to the lack of involvement in school decisions making process about their course and future.

Even if the curriculum includes job placement effort (students often go to workplaces to get a first practical experience) several problems occur which need to be tackled:

- Few employers available to choose from
- Some employers only accept legal age students.
- Little involvement of the students in the choice of venue/job because it is strongly conditioned by the teachers and the school



- Employers are often not well prepared to host students and find *School-Work Alternation* a burden because they have to train students and don't have a clear advantage from this situation
- Post-graduate orientation days are not very appreciated. They usually consist of frontal presentations of the activities that take place in that area of work or in that field of study, without bringing in any direct experiences of the speakers.

“The Young Led Civic Initiative”: practical and feasible solutions to implement

The main goal is to define and put in place specific actions that can improve the practical and operational aspects of vocational training inside the school and in connection with the local businesses. More attention will be paid to the organisation of *School-Work Alternation* in connection with local institutions, social services and centres, employers and local businesses in order to facilitate the transition to the labour market.

As this is a vocational school, the students should alternate frontal lessons with workshops in the subjects they are studying (psychology - hygiene - operational methodology) following a teaching approach based not only on knowledge and theoretical lesson but above all on know-how, learning by doing and acquiring practical skills.

A series of "Initiatives" have been designed to address these issues:

Actions	Objectives	Timetable
Include articles, interviews, analysis, suggestions and proposals in the School's newspaper written and managed by the students directed to teachers, managers and parents.	Increase and improve communication between students and the school community in order to show student's interests, problems and priorities	February 2021
Collaborating with specific proposals to amend and improve the School-work placement agreement	Review the terms and the quality of the involvement of students and of the employers' offer so to strengthen the mutual commitment among the actors involved	March 2021
Mapping of services and employers in the community	Increase the range of choices for <i>School-Work Alternation</i> establishing more links between schools and local business in order to foster new partnerships.	April 2021
Organise an orientation day	Offer students the	



(also open to parents)	opportunity to have a clearer and more concrete orientation and job placement advices	September 2021
Start an online forum on the school website including employer's database, students' comments and advice, general information and faq on job placement	Encouraging and increasing peer-to-peer discussion on <i>school-Work Alternation</i> experiences.	October 2021

Expected results

From these initiatives, we expect to have an improvement of the educational offer including a more participative methodology, an improved motivation of the students that will beneficiate from defining their own educational path, a better connection and collaboration with labour market and local businesses, an increased awareness of students' potential and opportunities and an increased trust and confidence for students to have the power to influence policies that concern to their education and their professional future. Therefore, more practical activities and and a biggest focus on practical skills will strengthen and improve students' motivation and interest in school, complementing theoretical knowledge.

Contacts with the local community will make possible to ensure a mutual and fruitful exchange between the realities of the labour market and the school so that to increase the participation of young people in the life of the neighbourhood, maintain relationships grown in the school context and encourage a civic engagement at local level such as voluntary work in youth associations or social centres.

Actors involved

Actors involved in the design and implementation of the above actions will be:

- Sstudents from the Oriani Mazzini and from local schools
- Students' school representatives
- Teachers and Teacher's council
- Parents and parent's council
- School principal and school managers
- Organisations, employers, social services and local stakeholder from the community
- Local Institutions
- Editors of the school newspaper.

Conclusions



This process of investigating problems, choosing priorities, devising solutions and discuss with their peers and community stakeholders might be used by participants as a model to refer to in many other contexts, leading them to be active citizens and to enhance public good and civic engagement.