

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY · MARCH 2023 · N.º 9



ECI from
A to Z

EUROPEAN CITIZENS' INITIATIVE:  ERASMUS+
A TOOL FOR ENGAGEMENT AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

After more than two years of dedicated work, the “European Citizens’ Initiative: a tool for engagement and active citizenship – ECI: From A to Z” Project, sponsored by the Erasmus+ Program, has come to an end. In the present number of the Newsletter of the Project, you will get to know more about the “ECI: From A to Z” Final Event, which was held on the 27th and 28th of March, at the University of Coimbra, in Portugal.

“ECI: FROM A TO Z” PRE-EVENT

On March 27, part of the research team of the “ECI: From A to Z” Project met in the beautiful city of Coimbra, in Portugal, to share with the academic community the main outputs of the Project. An enriching debate on their strong and weak points, as well as their opportunities and threats, was opportunity held.

Silvia Nolan presented feedback on the ECI Online Course, success rates and the evaluation of the Course made by the students which took part on it.



Eduardo Figueiredo commented on the different ECI peer-learning activities that were dynamized by the research team and, especially, by the Tutors, as well as on the intensive courses that were held online (in 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic) and in Iasi (Romania, 2022).

Several students that took part of the “ECI: From A to Z” Project (Ana Catarina Dias, Ana Vilhena, Carolina Condeço Marques, Frederico Sobrinho, Hugo Abrantes, Washington Vitorino and Sofia Oliveira) were invited to share their thoughts on the two Model ECIs which took place in Vigo (Spain) and Göttingen (Germany). The former participants highlighted the importance of these activities in order to put into practice their ideas and proposals on a topic of their concern.



Alexandra Aragão presented the Virtual Escape Room “Raiders of the Lost European Citizens’ Initiative”, an interactive online game that was developed by the research team of the Project, highlighting the importance of using games to increase student participation, foster social and emotional learning, and motivate students to take risks. Who said that learning can’t be fun?

“ECI: FROM A TO Z” DISSEMINATION EVENT

On March 28, the much-awaited ‘ECI: From A to Z’ Dissemination Event took place at the chapel of Colégio da Trindade.

During the morning, apart from the welcoming words delivered by João Nuno Calvão da Silva (Vice-Rector of the University of Coimbra), José Manuel Aroso Linhares (President of the UCILeR) and Dulce Lopes (Coordinator of the “ECI: From A to Z” Project), the participants were able to hear an eloquent key-note speech by Elena Danesco (Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History) on “European Idea and Democracy in Forging Civil Society Participation: Insight and Oversight”, as well as the enriching reflections of several experts that integrated the round table on “Views on the European Citizens’ Initiative”.



Right after lunch, a second roundtable on “Views on European Citizens’ Initiative projects and platforms” took place, followed by a much dynamic practical session on “Education for participation: European Citizens’ Initiative in educational establishments”. During this session, more than 180 students from three different Portuguese educational institutions were invited to participate in four activities: (1) “Escape Room: The Case of the Lost EU Statements” or “Virtual Escape Room: Raiders of the Lost European Citizens’ Initiative”; (2) Exhibition “Direito à minha Cidade”; (3) Card Game: “Magic Island”; and (4) Interactive Quiz on European Citizenship.



THE “ECI: FROM A TO Z” WORKBOOK

Last but not least, at the closing of the Dissemination Event, the Workbook “ECI: From A to Z” was presented to the wider public. This publication is a compilation of theoretical and practical contributions of researchers of the project, ECI organizers and invited experts, among others, regarding the ECI as a participatory tool and, in particular, the “ECI: From A to Z” Project as an important source of participation of higher education students in the European project.

Yilly Vanessa Pacheco, Dulce Lopes
(Eds.)

European Citizens’
Initiative: A Tool for
Engagement and Active
Citizenship

Workbook ECI from A to Z

As stated by Dulce Lopes, Coordinator of the ‘ECI: From A to Z’ Project, “it has been a collaborative, youthful and fruitful journey”. At the end, the objectives of the Project were successfully achieved, proving that it is possible to gather forces in order to make the EU a common place where every person and every voice count!

