



*Erasmus+ SCME_C3/1_School
Mediation+Civic Engagememnt*

Why Dimitris Kouvaras' article?

Dimitrios Kouvaras is a senior high school student of the 1st High school of Agios Dimitrios, a beloved suburb and neighbor of ours! Dimitris has recently written a rewarded article which was published in

https://issuu.com/dialexicon/docs/dialexicon_journal_fall_2020_1?fbclid=IwAR18rHFbb_NmQh4iU6-vpQMA4BXLj61xMAL7hsiVNYb4AJsQRVMXjT_OGAg.

We find his work extremely relevant to the theme we are going to present following and we are about to associate his article with the active citizen and school-mediation.



In partnership with:
**1st General Lykeion of Agios
Dimitrios**

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Conquering Wisdom in a Digital Era:
Active Citizenship and Mediation

Greece- Lithuania- Latvia-Italy-Portugal

- His essay revolves around the notions of freedom and citizenship in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- What he attempts to show is that the pandemic and the radical changes it provoked can constitute a lesson in active citizenship, as well as a testament of how crucial the role of every citizen is in contemporary democracies.
- COVID-19 has forced governments to impose restrictions that have brought about changes in the way we experience our everyday lives and, apparently, limit our freedoms.
- However, in spite of those confines, what this novel situation allows us to understand is how dependent we are on one another as citizens, and how the stance assumed by each person can directly impact others. The essence of political freedom is actually derived from this relational frame of reference, since our being free requires others to be considered and treated as equally free.
- When it comes to the restrictions imposed, they are justified because the authority democratic governments have and their ability to enforce limitations stems from the right given to them by the free political decision of citizens to elect them.
- Still, there are some rights and freedoms that citizens should exercise and strive for regardless of the circumstances, such as the freedom of speech, of expression, the right to vote and actively engaging in fruitful criticism of governmental policies.
- Nowadays, we live in a deeply individualistic world, unlike the world of the Athenian democracy, where each person identified oneself only in relation to the whole, the polis. Of course, history cannot be reversed or rewritten, but what remains is the challenge to combine our individual capacity with our role as citizens; our capacity as members of something greater, be it our country, the E.U. or the world. If we take our civic role seriously, not only in words, but in deeds, not because we were forced by the circumstances, but because we understand that this is our duty as citizens, then our civic life and our democracy will flourish.

General notions about citizenship

- We are individuals with personal rights and freedoms
- Also living among others equally free individuals.
- We are members of the whole.
- We interact socially with many other people.
- Our freedoms are limited by the freedoms of others
- We have to respect and stand for the rights of all.



Now, we can call ourselves active and good citizens.



CONNECTION WITH THE SCHOOL MEDIATION (1/3)

This is the point where this article's ideas connect with our topic of active citizenship and the above ppt we prepared named:

"Civic engagement-European citizenship- School-
mediation"

CONNECTION WITH THE SCHOOL MEDIATION (2/3)

What we mean to say is that vote and participation to political issues is for sure a big and important part of the term "active citizenship", that nobody should neglect. Although, many of us have connected the active citizen exclusively with his duty to vote. We explain that an active citizen is a combination of many virtues and qualities (mentioned above) that all derive from responsibility and respect for the others as a member of whole (main points-arguments of Dimitrios Kouvaras).

CONNECTION WITH THE SCHOOL MEDIATION (3/3)

The role of school mediation in all that is now obvious and bright. School as the main institution to prepare young generations for the world is responsible for making active citizens. That can be achieved by the creative resolution of conflicts by fellow students and not a punishing authority as the principle and the educational punishment system may be seen. In that we, as students and future citizens of Greece, Europe and the globe, have the opportunity to actively practice the virtues that make an active citizen.

Do European education systems provide for students' councils?

<u>STATES-PARTICIPANTS</u>	<u>centrally institutionalized framework for class representatives</u>	<u>centrally institutionalized framework for school student councils</u>	<u>centrally institutionalized framework for student representatives in school governing bodies</u>
GREECE	✓	✓	✓
PORTUGAL	✓	✓	✓
MALTA			
POLAND	✓	✓	✓
ITALY	✓	✓	✓

Student councils as a form of mediation

In Greece specifically there are councils of 15 members, representing the whole school and councils of 5 members representing each class. The existence of those bodies in school is an obvious sign of democratic ideals and values. Most importantly, those elected councils work like mediators between hundreds of students and the governing body (teachers + headmaster). In this way conflicts and disagreements are solved with negotiations and therefore the active citizens are naturally passed born from generation-to-generation!

The malfunctions

One thing we all have to admit is that the mediation system in many educational organizations is usually underperforming. Especially in Greece, mediation is unfortunately not as effective as it was expected and supposed to be. Both student councils and mediation programs are going through a crisis.

In order to be honest –first of all to ourselves- we have to face the fact that many of the most important issues and conflicts between students may never even get to the properly educated mediators. In addition to that, student councils have concluded at having a rather "decorating" role as any actual work is rarely being done and when it comes to school elections, the vote of the majority of us is influenced by who is the most popular guy and not by who is the most eligible for such a position.

Main-possible reasons

- Students being afraid to talk.
- Students feeling uncomfortable or even embarrassed to talk to the mediators.
- School mediation not being properly promoted.
- School mediation being overshadowed by other major problems and malfunctions of the education system.

What can we do to help? (1/2)

Although, we should always look on the bright side and focus on what we can do to make a change.

In order to make mediation an official established organization we should:

- Keep on working on programs and projects that provoke mediation and active citizenship.
- Organize interactive activities (mainly for new/more students to participate).
- Persist on trying to persuade other school units to "adopt" mediation.
- Help them to do so with major collaborations.

What can we do to help? (2/2)

- Put certain students-mediators to actively observe and report any underlying problems/conflicts in the school playground that teachers cannot see and conceive.
- Lastly, enforce mediation and school in general by hiring experts, to help.



All those are small steps closer to the achievement of active citizenship

When am i an active citizen?

“School Mediation and conflict resolution in the perspective of civic engagement and European Citizenship Skills”

“When am I an active citizen?”

Theofano A. Vlagkouli

3rd Grade, 4GELA

The above title refers to an article our school has published in and is written based on the topic of the present project.

Main points:

- ***Who is an active citizen***
- ***The crisis citizenship faces nowadays in the new generation***
- ***Distinguishing an active from a good citizen***
- ***Pointing out the existence of active citizens with egocentric aspirations***
- ***Propose motivations to be an active citizen***
- ***Analysing the value of having a healthy society***
- ***Underlining the value on school mediation and how it helps with citizenship***
- ***Connection with the European citizen***



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Αλίμου
ΜΑΚΡΥΓΙΑΝΝΕΙΟ



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