



P.B.L Lesson Plan

Title

Political Europe – will pan-European democracy flourish or fade?

School

Name: Mariagerfjord Gymnasium

Country: Denmark

Web Site: <https://mf-gym.dk/>

Subjects involved/potentially involved

Subjects currently involved	Subjects potentially involved
22	300

Description of how the lesson plan was designed and implemented

The purpose of the course is to gain a deeper knowledge of the EU, including its structure, political decision-making processes and an understanding of the dynamics of EU cooperation. At the same time, the course must contribute to strengthening the understanding of European cooperation, and examine different dynamics of EU cooperation. The course examines themes such as: the structure of the EU, decision-making and legislative processes, perceptions of democracy, forms of power, the EU's internal market, the concept of citizenship, party and voter behaviour, challenges for the EU, integration theories, the role of the media, climate and sustainability, the EU's role in the conflict between Ukraine and Russia, lobbying and citizen involvement. In the course, there is methodical work with different forms of work: cooperative learning, problem-based-learning, pair work, investigation work, group work,





individual, individual, project work and finally the course concludes with a formal debate. In the selection of these working methods, learning theory from John Dewey, Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, Lev Vygotsky and Jean Piaget is included.

The central question of the course is whether European democracy will falter or flourish

The course included interdisciplinary collaboration with other European schools. This led, among other things, to a digital dialogue where the students had the opportunity to meet for a joint digital European debate. Furthermore, the course was completed by participating in the "Folkemødet" in Mariager, of which the students were responsible for various activities.

The lesson plan is a detailed step-by-step guide that outlines the teacher's objectives for what the students will accomplish during the course of the lesson and how they will learn it. This lesson plan was developed in social studies and was based theories connected to sociology, politics and economics. When designing and implementing "Political Europe – will pan-European democracy flourish or fade?" PBL lesson plan, the following overall components were considered:

- How do we strengthen democratic participation in Europe?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of European cooperation, and how can the challenges in particular be solved?
- How can different integration theories be used to support continued European cooperation?

Competencies and knowledge

Development of prerequisite competencies and/or knowledge

Prior Knowledge Assessment:

Prior to developing the PBL lesson plan, there was a minor assessment of what the students already knew about the European Union. This helped the teacher tailor the lesson plan to their existing understanding.

Background Information:





Provide relevant background information about Danish participation in the European Union

Development of competencies and/or knowledge the experience aims to create

Description of competencies or knowledge that will be developed or reinforced

In the course, the students' theoretical and empirical work is based on the following concepts:

- Value and distribution policy
- Party behaviour: Molin and Down's model
- Voter behaviour: Issue-voter, class-voter, issue-ownership, The classical sociological theory of voter behaviour, retrospective voting behaviour, pocketbook voting, egotropic vs. Sociotropic voter, the proximity and direction model, the Michigan model
- Voter types: Core voter, marginal voter
- The EU as an organization including its institutions.
- Party and voter behaviour
- The EU's purpose
- The inner market
- Economic integration
- The EU's trilemma
- Forms of democracy: Direct, representative, competition and participatory democracy as well as Roberts Dahl's ideal democracy
- Integration theories: federalism, neofunctionalism, liberal intergovernmentalism,
- Legislation from the EU: Directives and regulations
- Parliamentarism: Negative and positive
- Interest organizations and lobbying
- Forms of power: Direct power, indirect power, discursive power and institutional power.
- Mass media and social media
- Fake News and medialization, frontstage vs. backstage
- Echo chambers and digital bubbles
- The democratic conversation
- Citizenship rights (civil, social and political rights), rights and duties
- Political participation
- The EU's role in the fight against social media, climate change, equality.
- The EU's role in Ukraine: Diplomacy, sanctions and support.





- Citizen involvement in the EU
- Social science methods: Quantitative, qualitative and comparative methods

Furthermore, there were competencies related to the social studies A-level curriculum in Denmark:

Academic goals:

- apply and combine knowledge and skills from the subject's disciplines to investigate current societal issues in Denmark and other countries and discuss existing and own solutions to these
- apply knowledge, concepts and professional contexts from the core subject and various theories from the subject's disciplines to explain and discuss societal issues and development trends
- examine and document a policy area, including the importance of the EU and global conditions.
- examine concrete economic priority problems nationally, regionally and globally and discuss solutions to this
- explain events and development trends in the international system and discuss Denmark's trading opportunities in connection with this
- demonstrate knowledge of the subject's identity and methods
- formulate precise professional issues, including hypotheses, and collect and process Danish and foreign language material, including statistical material, to investigate and discuss issues and draw conclusions
- be critical of diverse materials from different types of senders and use knowledge of social science method to carry out smaller empirical studies
- demonstrate professional contexts and development trends using existing and own calculations, tables, diagrams and models with the use of digital aids
- analyze and communicate – in writing and orally – empirical and theoretical contexts in a structured and nuanced way at the subject's taxonomic levels using the subject's terminology

Academic core:

- political opinion formation and media, including behavior on social media
- political ideologies, dividing lines, party behavior and voter behavior
- perceptions of power and democracy as well as rights and duties in a democratic society, including gender equality





- political decision-making processes in Denmark in a global context, including the political systems in Denmark and the EU
- the importance of globalization and the EU for economic development in Denmark, including competitiveness and labor market conditions
- actors, power, security, conflicts and integration in Europe and internationally
- goals and opportunities in Denmark's foreign policy
- macroeconomic contexts, sustainable development, goal conflicts and governance nationally, regionally and globally
- qualitative and quantitative methods, including the organization and implementation of studies as well as systematic processing of different types of data
- comparative method and case studies

Topics involved/potentially involved

Topics actually involved

Internal market

Party- and voter behaviour

Economic integration

Integration theories

The EU's trilemma

Mass media and social media

Political participation

Forms of democracy

The EU's role in: Climate changes, Ukraine, equality, social media, diplomacy etc.

Topics additionally involved

Internal market

Party- and voter behaviour

Economic integration

Integration theories

The EU's trilemma

Mass media and social media

Political participation





Forms of democracy

The EU's role in: Climate changes, Ukraine, equality, social media, diplomacy etc.

Authors

Teachers who worked on the design and implementation

Name	Class	Subject
Christoffer Østergaard Carstens	2d (2023-2024)	Social studies

PBL methodology: groupwork

Description of the PBL groupwork and of the choices related to student engagement

The students worked with PBL based on the following working methods

Cooperative learning – student-student dialogue – sum exercises (Investigating/discussing communities), field work, group work, project work (case work, formal debate - end of the course)

The PBL tasks included:

- Discuss in the group or in class whether it is fair for the EU to interfere in who takes maternity leave.
- Examine the turnout (in the last three elections) in general elections, regional and municipal elections and for the EU Parliament. Also investigate whether there are groups in Danish society that participate less in political elections. You must also consider what can explain differences in turnout in the various elections and the lack of political participation.
- Can Danish democracy function within the framework of international cooperation such as EU cooperation?
- Analysis of the internal market and free movement of goods, services, capital and people + In addition:





The class is divided: The students who have prepared advantages gather on the left of the classroom, while the students with disadvantages gather on the right. The students now each find an "opponent" from the other group, and now debate the topic for 2-3 minutes. The debate is repeated 2-3 times, with the students meeting a new "opponent" each time

- Discussion of the benefits and challenges of economic integration in the EU
- What makes the EU democratic?: Identify the arguments that a democratic deficit exists and discussion about how the EU can be made more democratic
- Based on one of the integration theories, you must prepare an oral presentation of approx. 2 minute duration. The presentation must present arguments for how your integration theory wants EU cooperation to develop in the future. You must therefore e.g. enter at:
 - Discuss (based on professional knowledge) the importance of the media for Danes' political engagement and interest in the EU. Is it, for example, a case of the media strengthening or weakening the EU's legitimacy in Denmark?
 - Discuss to what extent the EU should be allowed to use citizens' data to improve welfare, conduct research and ensure innovation
 - Discuss whether the climate battle is best resolved under the auspices of the EU or whether it is instead up to the individual member states.
 - Together, possible solutions and ways to end the conflict in Ukraine and the EU's role in promoting stability and security in the region are discussed
 - What advantages and disadvantages do you see in joining the EU as a member state, and how does it affect EU citizens at different levels?"
- Formal debate - Completion of the course → "will pan-European democracy flourish or fade?"

Tools and applications

EX:

Padlet

Power point

Video maker programs

Microsoft Teams

Formal debate: PEE structure – Point, evidence, explanation

Paper





Pedagogical Impact - Feedback

Below is the observed impact of the PBL "Political Europe – will pan-European democracy flourish or fade?" lesson plan:

Student Engagement:

The students participated actively in the modules, and it was clear that they found the PBL methods of work interesting and motivating for their school work. PBL contains many potentials in relation to developing the academic potential of the individual student

Understanding:

The course's focus on core concepts and other professional knowledge made it easier for students to understand a sometimes complex course. The homework check and other compilations of the homework also helped to ensure the students' taxonomic development.

At the same time, work on the role of the EU in relation to themes such as climate change, European participation, the conflict in Ukraine and its focus on the single market seemed to have a positive effect on the students' reflections on the importance of discussing the EU's forward-looking efforts.

Student Involvement in Pathway Development

The course's use of different forms of work had the particular advantage that it gave different students the opportunity to "flourish" in the modules.

In general, the students were good at articulating professional questions and other general questions of doubt. The digital dialogue with the foreign schools during the course also helped to strengthen the students' awareness and achieve an academic benefit.

Critical elements

For many first-year students, it is a challenge to understand and work with the EU. Therefore, in the development of the course, there was a large focus on lesson summaries in each module. At the same time, the professional level in the class ranges quite widely, and this also helped to make certain parts of the course more difficult.

Produced materials





Type of produced material

x	<i>Presentations about the EU as an international organization</i>	x	<i>Development of digital dialogue</i>
x	<i>Padlet about democracy</i>	x	<i>Empirical field work</i>
	Political statements		Active citizenship
x	Take A Stand	x	Formal debate

Links to the resource(s)

*Lesson plans in pdf format + any useful material (ex: worksheets)''
Attached the e-mail*

Evaluation method and tools (grading rubrics etc)

Students were asked to reflect on their own contributions.

Students wrote about what they learned and how they contributed to the group.

