

The eSchola initiative

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This May, as part of the EU's broader initiative under e-learning, the Swedish Presidency, together with the Commission, the European School Net as well as other private partners, organised an eSchola week. Eschola took place during the first week of May, during the week of Europe Day, which commemorates the Schuman Declaration that gave rise to the founding principles of the European Union as we know it today. It was held during the week of the Schuman Declaration to encourage schools to work together around the themes of European culture and citizenship.

The idea behind eSchola is to give schools a chance to learn together and to learn from each other on the subject of information and communication technologies. This is done through a website that EUN has set up for the particular occasion: <http://eschola.eun.org>. Through this website, schools, teachers and students can share experiences, exhibit projects and organise joint activities, which indirectly also help the spread of good practice and innovation. eSchola should also be an occasion to encourage better public/private partnerships.

There are the five main areas of collaboration:

- Dissemination of good practice, where schools present their experiences
- Travel and learn, where ICT is used towards greater European awareness and active citizenship
- Learning online: online lessons on a number of topics and on-line training courses on introducing ICT in the classroom
- Benefiting from private/public partnerships, where companies are invited to form a partnership with schools for the particular occasion
- Awarding innovation through four main awards: awards for schools, for teachers, for school initiatives promoting European citizenship and for teacher trainers. There are more than 60,000 euros of prizes to be won in cash, travel or ICT equipment. Examples of projects submitted under these headings could include involve the creation of a school website, a set of lesson plans and notes that encourage the exploitation of particular websites, successful school activities with a European content and research results that convince even the most sceptical of teachers to start using ICT in the classroom

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Malta's participation

Malta too has participated in this event, which has been coordinated by the Maltese section of AEDE, the European Association of Teachers, and supported by the Ministry of Education and the Malta-EU Information Centre. Schools were invited to become familiar with the eSchola website and to participate in the activities being organised in collaboration with these schools through the website. Maltese schools could also submit their activities and projects under the headings described above for the four awards. Participating schools were briefed towards the end of April. Then, during the week of the 7th to the 11th May, Malta joined the rest of Europe's schools to showcase the innovation and good practice reached in the areas of ICT in Maltese schools.



For more information on the eSchola and other initiatives:

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