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Values and Attitudes Education for Inclusive Europe

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Topic	RULE OF LAW
Image	 <p>Source: European Commission Facebook https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanCommission/photos/pcb.4560285050685606/4569076626473115/</p>
Title	HOW DO I SUPPORT THE RULE OF LAW
Details:	<p>Purpose:</p> <p>The lesson aims to familiarise students with the rule of law and connect concepts, as common values and respected principles in the European countries. By personalising</p>

the message of the lesson and putting the student at the center of the action („How do I support ...”), the aim is to cultivate the attitudes conducive to the defense and continuous support of the rule of law.

Objectives:

At the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- To understand and describe the principle of rule of law through its components, including legality, legal certainty; prohibition of the arbitrary exercise of executive power, effective judicial protection by independent and impartial courts respecting fundamental rights in full, the separation of powers, permanent subjection of all public authorities to established laws and procedures, and equality before the law;
- To discuss knowingly about justice systems, the anti-corruption framework, media pluralism and media freedom and other institutional checks and balances;
- To bring arguments in support of the rule of law;
- To show or promote attitudes of support and defense of the rule of law.

Relevant Vocabulary:

- Legality, legal certainty, arbitrary power exercise, justice independence, impartial courts, separation of powers, checks and balances, anti-corruption, media pluralism, media freedom

How to use this lesson:

Activities:

1) Preparations

Before lesson

- Preparing printed worksheets for students, containing the introduction part of the EU 2020 Rule of Law report (which includes the quotes found below) and, optionally, your Country dedicated chapter. Please find the document, which is translated in all EU official languages here: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1634551652872&uri=CELEX%3A52021DC0700>

During the lesson

- Presenting the theme and the learning objectives – mainly, to understand and describe the principle of rule of law through its components, including legality, legal certainty; prohibition of the arbitrary exercise of executive power, effective judicial protection by independent and impartial courts respecting fundamental rights in full, the separation of powers, permanent subjection of all public authorities to established laws and procedures, and equality before the law;
- Presenting the material and web resources, instruct students how to use them during the lesson;
- The teacher will organize students in working teams and handout the worksheets containing the main learning article, instructing students to highlight important ideas and write down opinions in the blank spaces;
- The teacher proposes the main learning methods: reading the article included in the worksheets and making annotations or highlights in order to support future discussions and/or argumentation, exploration of media and e-learning resources, explanation, discussions, presentations

2) Learning activities

Excerpts from the report introduction:

„The rule of law is not only an integral part of the democratic identity of the EU and of the Member States, but also essential for the functioning of the EU, and for citizens and businesses to trust public institutions. While Member States have different legal systems and traditions, the core meaning of the rule of law is the same across the EU. The key principles of the rule of law are common to all Member States – legality, legal certainty, prohibition of the arbitrary exercise of executive power, effective judicial protection by independent and impartial courts respecting fundamental rights in full, the separation of powers, permanent subjection of all public authorities to established laws and procedures, and equality before the law – are enshrined in national constitutions and translated in legislation.”

„The 2021 Rule of Law report covers the same scope as last year – justice systems, the anti-corruption framework, media pluralism and media freedom and other institutional checks and balances – consolidating the exercise started by the 2020 report while further deepening the Commission’s assessment. It also develops further on the impact and challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. The country chapters, which form an integral part of this report, analyse new developments since the first report and the follow up to the challenges and developments identified in the 2020 Report.”

- Students will be asked to watch the introductory video and discuss it, sharing their opinions regarding of the Rule of law principle;
- With the help of a projector, the teacher will use the Wikipedia articles indicated below to introduce the probably new concepts, as: legality, legal certainty, institutional checks and balances, separation of powers;
- The teacher proposes students to answer the following questions:
 - Which are the key principles of rule of law common to all EU countries?
 - Which are the pillars of rule of law, as they are covered in the report?
 - How could common citizens or groups support the application of the rule of law in practice?
 - What do or will you, personally, do in the future to defend and support the rule of law?
- The students write down the answers on the chart papers and prepare for their presentations;
- The teacher will assess the lesson and ensure the learning of new terms and concepts through a quick session of questions and answers.

3) Ensuring retention and transfer

- Encouraging students to study the reading materials and enroll in the VAEIE ecourses;
- Giving students the homework to prepare more detailed, explicative and attractive digital presentations related to the subject.

Materials: 1) Media materials (stimulus of learning)



What is RULE OF LAW? What does RULE OF LAW mean? RULE OF LAW meaning & explanation

Source: YouTube, The Audiopedia, CC-BY license,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Gtlc7tBRMA>

2) Reading materials (learning resources)

- COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS
2021 Rule of Law Report
The rule of law situation in the European Union
For translations in all EU languages:
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0700>
For English variant: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0700&from=EN>
- Legal certainty - From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legal_certainty
- Legality - From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legality>
- Separation of powers - From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Separation_of_powers
- Checks and balances - From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
- How I defend the rule of law | Kimberley Motley,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Td2hfdXQ5x8>

More readings

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VAEIE Courses, Rule of Law https://vaeie.eu/ecourses/course/view.php?id=15 • RULE OF LAW - Council of Europe, Venice Commission https://www.venice.coe.int/WebForms/pages/?p=02 Rule of law&lang=EN • Qu'est-ce que l'État de droit? Frank Baron, Conseiller de l'Assemblée nationale, Vie-publique.fr, https://www.vie-publique.fr/parole-dexpert/270286-quest-ce-que-letat-de-droit <p>3) Chart paper and markers, smartphones, projector</p>
Category	Interchangeably (classroom / online / e-learning)
Main target group	14-18 years old / secondary school students
Related school topics:	English, Ethics, Citizenship Education, European Studies, English as a Second Language, Human Sciences

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