



# Global Junior Challenge

Projects to share the future

Published on *Global Junior Challenge* (<https://gjc.it>)

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## Project Location

**Country:** Italy

**City:** Colle di Val d'Elsa, Toscana

## Organization

**Organization Name:** Arnolfo di Cambio

**Organization Type:** School

**Specify:** non sono necessari finanziamenti: il progetto è svolto in orario curriculare

## Website

<http://secondagineuropa.blogspot.it/>

## Privacy Law

Consenso al trattamento dei dati personali

**Do you authorize the FMD to the treatment of your personal data?:** I do authorize the FMD to the

## Project Type

Education up to 15 years

## Project Description

**Description Frase (max. 500 characters):**

European students to the world via food and ICT: are we really what we eat?

**Project Summary (max. 2000 characters):**

Students from Italy, Greece and Hungary explore their own and each other's countries, and then the whole world, as seen through the food that is eaten in the different places. Their journey is a virtual one, but the exchange of experiences is real, with regular meetings via

Skype, and a blog <http://secondagineuropa.blogspot.it/> [1] a TwinSpace <http://twinspace.etwinning.net/1291/home> [2] and the EXPO2015 community <http://www.togetherinexpo2015.it/> [3] as meeting points. In their journey through the world, students find out that the food of a country can tell us a lot about its natural environment, history, economy and even religion. The project, which was born out of the urge to find an alternative to the traditional book in Geography teaching, soon developed into something more: Geography learned not by reading a book or watching a documentary, but by meeting and making friends with peers from abroad. Geography not as a list of data about a country but as something alive, told by those who live in those countries. The partners in the project were three, but the EXPO2015 website gave us the opportunity to meet students from all over the world. The blog SecondaGiNeuropa got more than 11.000 visits in a bunch of months, and the students published around 400 articles. We tried out some simple exercises of flipped classroom: students had to work in groups to present an aspect of a chosen country via food, choosing an ICT tool from a list given by the teacher: the tool-testing had to be performed at home, the realization of the product and the publishing in the blog or TwinSpace at school, in a given time. All of the teams (first national, then international teams) managed to complete the tasks, boosting their creativity (thus their learning) in the process. The involved classes registered a dramatic increase in basic competences in Geography (in attachment, the graphics). It was a very successful project in terms of development of students' competences via the use of ICT.

## **How long has your project been running?**

2014-08-30 22:00:00

## **Objectives and Innovative Aspects**

At first, our objective as teachers was to find an alternative to the use of the text book in the teaching of Geography. We wanted to prove that Geography can stop being felt by students as boring (having to learn by heart the names of mountains, lakes, rivers, capitals etc.) and it can be transformed in a subject perceived for what it is: a picture of real places, inhabited by real people, with their stories, culture, ideas. Later on through the project we started working on the idea of the EU as a an union of different countries, that yet have something in common and support each other (a very important topic at the moment!). Of course, we had all the objectives connected with the subject of Geography: correct use of the specific language of the subject, understanding the anthropic and natural elements in a territory, respect of natural resources, understanding European common roots, understanding the relationship between natural environment – economy – history of a country. We also had objectives linked to the use of ICT: understanding the correct use of a tool, being able to respect copyrights, understanding the opportunities and risks of the web. The means used to reach those goals are ICT tools, peer learning, team working (in national and international teams), simple experiences in flipped classroom. The use of ICT tools was kept as free as possible in order to boost creativity. This trick turned the tasks into fun and soon the blog became addictive for the students! Eventually, all of the objectives were attained, at different levels, by all the students.

## **Results**

**Describe the results achieved by your project based on measurable (parameters) these.**

**(max. 2000 characters):** beginning, middle term and end of the school year. The Italian involved classes improved dramatically from the starting level to the end of the school year in Geography. And the comparison between involved/not involved classes is striking: this is an evidence that a methodology based on real interaction of students with peers of different countries + creative use of ICT + use of different means of expression (to care for the different intelligences, also visual or kinesthetic, etc... not only linguistic) is successful as more motivating, and definitely beats the chalk and talk. I consider another great result the fact that the students chose to spend their free time at home interacting with their partners in the TwinSpace, posting in the blog, completing team missions in the EXPO2015 community, instead of being on facebook or other uncontrolled (i.e. unsafe) socials. This expanded their school-time with a positive rebound on their learning. The criteria used to evaluate the results, as well as those established by the Literature/History/Geography department for the standardized tests, are the comparison between classes involved in the project versus classes not involved + number of classes involved in the first year versus number of classes willing to join in the project for the second year. We have evidence that the involved classes perform significantly better even in the standardized (more traditional) tests. And while this year in Italy we had two involved classes, we have another six willing to join in for the next year (plus, around 10 European school as potential partners).

**How many users interact with your project monthly and what are the preferred forms of interaction? (max. 500 characters):**

We have teachers: in all of the schools. non-involved presumably on the homepage

## Sustainability

**What is the full duration of your project (from beginning to end)?:** From 1 to 3 years

**What is the approximate total budget for your project (in Euro)?:** Less than 10.000 Euro

**What is the source of funding for your project?:** Other

**Specify:** Scuola Secondaria di Primo Grado

**Is your project economically self sufficient now?:** Yes

**Since when?:** 2014-08-30 22:00:00

## Transferability

**Has your project been replicated/adapted elsewhere?:** No

**What lessons can others learn from your project? (max. 1500 characters):**

They can reuse our work in school for the next school year. 1900. Today, Geography is a source of knowledge in it (from Geography to Sciences to Biology). We can introduce the subject in other nationalities, learning by teams, getting first-hand

explore the countries and the ICT tools to get to know first, and then present them. We chose food as the leading image in our journey, but other themes can be chosen of course. It is the journey that matters. Other schools and teachers can see that, even if we don't use traditional means (test book, individual study, traditional essays, etc.), our students get more involved, so they perform better even in traditional tests.

**Are you available to help others to start or work on similar projects?:** Yes

## Background Information

**Barriers and Solutions (max. 1000 characters):** There are no obstacles to this kind of methodology. It is important to have to know that if their students get involved and want to give their feedback to 400 articles (not the 25 essays of a traditional teaching). Plus, the team activities should be avoiding having one student doing all the work and the others in different roles for the students to choose in the group. The dissemination with partners is time consuming as well as to keep the students motivated and entertained (a plan for everything can be easily overcome with collaboration and learning!). There are neither extra costs nor extra hours, just normal school time, inside the curriculum.

**Future plans and wish list (max. 750 characters):** We are planning to widen the project next year, opening to more countries and more classes in our school. We expect to see the results of this year's brilliant results (families are pushing for more). We will create a new blog and open a new eTwinning project, kept, as for this year, in the curriculum and in the normal school time, without funding or anything special, as it's an innovative kind of learning and some tablets, plus motivated teachers, not an expensive or futuristic technology. In the long run, we want to see a supported methodology, for the teaching of Geography in Italy and in Europe.

[teamwork](#) [4] [peerlearning](#) [5] [ICT](#) [6] [Geography](#) [7] [flipped classroom](#) [8] [EXPO2015](#) [9] [eTwinning](#) [10] [environmental sustainability](#) [11] [cooperative learning](#) [12]

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**Source URL:** <https://gjc.it/en/progetti/eat-pray-love>

### Links

[1] <http://secondagineuropa.blogspot.it/>

[2] <http://twinspace.etwinning.net/1291/home>

[3] <http://www.togetherinexpo2015.it/>

[4] <https://gjc.it/en/category/keywords-separate-with-commas/teamwork>

[5] <https://gjc.it/en/category/keywords-separate-with-commas/peerlearning>

[6] <https://gjc.it/en/category/parole-chiave-separate-da-virgole/ict>

- [7] <https://gjc.it/en/category/keywords-separate-with-commas/geography>
- [8] <https://gjc.it/en/category/keywords-separate-with-commas/flipped-classroom>
- [9] <https://gjc.it/en/category/keywords-separate-with-commas/expo2015>
- [10] <https://gjc.it/en/category/parole-chiave-separate-da-virgole/etwinning>
- [11] <https://gjc.it/en/category/keywords-separate-with-commas/environmental-sustainability>
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