

Pride of place

Pride of Place (PoP) is the sense of positive pride one feels for the place one lives in and/or comes from and it is a product of other elements (such as place identity, social identity and place attachment) that make up part of the emotional bond people have with their place. Teaching about place using local cultural heritage is an essential part of increasing Pride of Place and will increase social cohesion, social inclusion (of newcomers), social engagement and improve individuals wellbeing in rural areas.

The need for our project

As a result of a continuing urbanising trend all over Europe, rural areas are having difficulties maintaining livelihood in their towns (figures of EuroStat show that in 2050 around 75% of all people on this planet will live in urban areas). One of the reasons for this trend is that in general, urbanised areas offer better economic opportunities and entertainment to young families. Another important reason for this urbanising trend is the decline or absence of emotional attachment to the places people inhabit in rural areas. Where in the past people knew the histories of the place, danced folklore dances with folklore music, ate the typical gastronomic specialities, played typical local sports, spoke a local dialect, lived with the seasons and all that local nature offered during those seasons, now this so called place attachment seems to get lost among young people. As a result of this absence of emotional attachment to the places people live in, rural populations don't feel connected to their area and lose their sense of 'place identity' and pride of their unique local culture. Scientific research has shown that this loss of place attachment and place identity results in lower degrees of active citizenship on a local level, that well established place identity fosters better mental health and that strong place identity results in more ecologically sound behaviour. (for an overview see: Oxford Handbook of Environmental and Conservation Psychology, 2012, Ch. 9 by Korpela).

From the experiences of all involved partners we know that local authorities and schools have difficulties in finding a solution to these observed trends of urbanisation, lack of place attachment and active citizenship on a local level. Taking into consideration that this trend seems to continue (Eurostat figures) there is a need among the involved partners and more broadly amongst schools, societies and authorities in Europe's rural areas.

2018 is the year of cultural heritage in the European Union and with this project we have taken this as an opportunity to co-create an innovative curriculum for secondary schools and local communities in rural areas to promote place attachment and foster pride of place. Cultural education at schools is nowadays mainly taught on a national and European level and with our project we will rekindle the importance of education of local cultural heritage which fosters place attachment, social & place identity and eventually a pride of place. Cultural heritage starts at a local level and that's where we find pride of who we are and who we belong to from a local to international level.

The project

The EU-funded project 'Pride of Place' aims at developing an up-to-date and sustainable educational program for secondary education in rural areas across Europe. The project is unique in the purpose of raising awareness on the importance of development of Pride of Place and offering a ready-to-use and tested curriculum. Moreover the project aims at developing a parallel curriculum for teachers which will support and increase pupils' 21st century competences while promoting and enhancing PoP.

Our 26 month during project has **four objectives**:

- Development of an innovative and tested curriculum for secondary schools in rural areas about cultural / place identity to enhance place attachment and foster pride of place.
- Set up a network of partners that have similar interest in promotion of Pride of Place in rural areas.
- Improve teaching competences of school teachers (21st century competences)
- Raise awareness and improve involvement of schools in European rural areas in Erasmus+ activities.

To reach our objectives our project will create **three outputs**:

1. An advocacy document with background reading on the relevance of the Pride of Place for rural development and for the empowerment of young people and consequently for the empowerment of rural communities.

2. An educational program of 10-14 weeks (2/3 hours weekly) for secondary education (pupils aged 12-16y) supporting the development of PoP in rural youth, enhancing the pupils 21st century skills, and;
3. A training course for educators in secondary education who will use the educational program in rural areas with a focus on improving teachers' 21st century teaching competences.

Expected impact

We believe that when young people and indirectly their relatives get reconnected to their local cultural heritage the emotional attachment to their place is being promoted. A stronger emotional attachment to place will encourage a pride of place (being proud of where you live and/or come from) and hence promote more social engagement and active citizenship in rural areas. We believe that both more pride of place and an active citizenship will prevent people from moving out of rural areas as a result of lack of place attachment and need for entertainment. Scientific results have also shown that increased place attachment is a good prevention against risk factors of mental health. We also expect that by using our curriculum schools and societies can foster the social integration of newcomers to societies.

Furthermore promoting Pride of Place will result in job creation and increased local economic welfare on the long term on a local and regional level. If people remain to live in rural areas, local economic development will stay up. An increased interest in rural areas will support local development, local small scale entrepreneurship and tourism. Rural life and its nature are a core product of touristic activities and are new trends of tourism sector. Rural areas will get more income from this sector as a result of increased PoP in its society.

Involved partners

The partnership consists of a collaboration between two universities, two NGO's and two school institutions. The Anatta Foundation (NL) is the lead partner in the 26 months project, with the five project partners: Sapienza University (Italy), Akdeniz University (Turkey), Oidhreacht Chorca Dhuibhne Teo (Ireland), Agrupamento de Escolas n.º 1 de Gondomar (Portugal) and Istituto Comprensivo Cortemilia -Saliceto (Italy)

Academic partners:

1. The **Sapienza University** (Italy), department of social and educational psychology, and its daughter organisation CIRPA (Interuniversitarian centre for research on environmental psychology) is a worldwide reknown research organisation with a special focus on the interplay of people with their environment.
2. **Akdeniz University** (Turkey), will bring in scientific understanding in the field of tourism education, gastronomy, cultural monuments, cultural history and culture studies. This partner will also bring in the necessary curriculum development competences needed for all outputs.

NGO's:

3. The **Anatta Foundation** (Netherlands) has several years of experience working on nature-education and nature-connection programs for young people. The foundation has developed programs and events that enhance the relationship of humans with the natural world for the promotion of mental health and the flourishing of ecosystems on the planet. The foundation is based in a rural area in the Netherlands (Achterhoek).
4. **Oidhreacht Chorca Dhuibhne** (Ireland) has almost 40 years of experience promoting the physical, natural and human/linguistic cultural heritage of the Irish Corca Dhuibhne peninsula through educational programs offered in schools in their region. Over the years they have developed several educational programs that promote Pride of Place in their area as they say that the native Irish culture and its language is at threat of being lost.

School institution:

5. **Istituto Comprensivo Cortemilia-Saliceto** (Italy) is an educational institute including secondary education based in a rural area in Northern-Italy. The school faces the negative effects of urbanisation and decline in population in its area and in the schools. They will bring in to the project their experience in teaching on cultural, historical and environmental heritage of its territory, with an original and innovative teaching approach.
6. **Agrupamento de Escolas nº1 de Gondomar** (Portugal) is located in a rural area in Portugal with natural

scenery, unique and well-reputed craftworks (goldsmith and carpentry) and gastronomy. These will be areas to explore within the project together with the city council, which has been trying to promote the community attachment to the local territory.

The project results will be accessible through the School Education Gateway, eTwinning, the project website www.prideofplace.eu (online feb 2019) and through the media channels of the partner organizations.

This project is co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union, under project number 2018-1-NL01-KA201-03902