

## e - Twinning Project Guidelines

Due to the COVID - 19 Pandemic and the lockdown that followed all mobility projects, Twinning Project included, were suspended, in order to protect public health by eliminating the virus transmission. Taking into consideration the period of time that cancellations were announced, it is apparent that there are some Twinning Projects that were successfully concluded, others that didn't happen at all and some others that were halfly completed.

The EIC Pillar has published [this Statement](#) regarding cancellations, providing FMOs with useful tools and consultation. It is still important for us in the EIC team to keep people connected, especially during these difficult times where we struggle to maintain a healthy mental state and find some ways for people from different backgrounds to spend time with each other, facilitating an exposure between different cultures.

The eTwinning project is an initiative taken at first by EMSA Turkey, and it was introduced to EMSA Europe as an idea that can be carried out among all FMOs, after a trial run of a few months between Turkish FMOs, so we already had some feedback and improvements on the structure before it was introduced to you here. It consists of two main branches:

- **The eTwinning** between local parties who did not necessarily have any Twinning connections from before and the
- **Online Catch - Ups** between local parties whose Twinning Projects were only half-completed and the second visit did not take place because of the pandemic intruding.

For the first branch, there is a registration form sent out for FMOs who are interested in having their members meet with medical students from other faculties online, talking about their cities, engaging in activities together or even host cooking contests between each other. This option, on top of all the other goals of this project listed below, can give way for real-life Twinning between these parties to take place later in life, when student exchanges are yet again being promoted in Europe. There will be an online meeting conducted between the representatives of the local associations involved to manage a random and an ideal matchmaking between them. We will be mainly looking out for the associations from the same country not to be matched and for pairings made to involve as much intercultural exposure as possible.

We will be collaborating with other organisations that EMSA has collaborated with before, like AMSA, EPSA and EDSA to give way for intercultural and interprofessional factors to be involved in this process as well. There will be calls made throughout the summer to ensure orderly matching and decent management of the pairings made in the process and we will be working closely with mobility project coordinators from these organisations.

The timeline of the first round of eTwinning with AMSA is given below:

28. 06. 2020	30.06.2020 - 05. 07. 2020	13.07.2020
Deadline for the Registration Form to be filled out	The Online Meeting between the exchange coordinators who have filled out to form - to match the Twinning organisations.	Deadline for the first eTwinning meeting to be conducted

The timeline of the second round of eTwinning with EPSA is given below:

20. 10. 2020	23. 10. 2020 - 30. 10. 2020	07. 11. 2020
Deadline for the Registration Form to be filled out	The Online Meeting between the exchange coordinators who have filled out to form - to match the Twinning organisations.	Deadline for the first eTwinning meeting to be conducted

The eTwinning is recommended to be managed with 5-6 participants from involved parties to assure quality time spent during the program - the Twinning Project Coordinators involved in the eTwinning are free to choose the participants that will be representing their own FMOs however they would like. Recommendations for the content of the e-Twinning Program are listed throughout this handbook, together with a model schedule that can be implemented.

### Online Catch - Ups:

When it comes to the FMOs and organisations who had to abandon their half-completed Twinning because of the pandemic, the solution is much simpler: Since the FMOs and the participants involved in the Twinning are already established, the Twinning Project Coordinators from these Twinning only have to reach out to one another to organise a schedule between the Twinning participants, so that they can stay in touch and engage in conversations with each other, further exploring their friendships, until they meet again during their reunion.

These FMOs have to fill out the eTwinning registration form as well, but they will mark the option “Online Catch-Up” before moving forward with the form.

### Goals of the eTwinning:

- To keep people connected with one another, especially during these difficult times, helping maintain the blue spirit while giving the local Twinning coordinators and the Twinning Project OCs something to work on from home,
- To make people of all kinds feel involved in group activities, providing suggestions for them on things they can work on and create online so that they may use this opportunity to conduct peer-to-peer education all the while, having fun together,

- To help maintain a healthy mental state among local members by engaging in creative activities they can do together, playing online games or competing with quizzes and puzzles, while hosting cooking competitions or Netflix parties...
- To increase the cultural competence skills of those who participate, facilitating exposure between different cultures and people, so as to further explore the similarities and differences, underlining a focus on solidarity between medical students.
- To help members engage in intercontinental and interprofessional dialogues by collaborating with other organizations like AMSA, EPSA and EDSA.

**Benefits & Qualities of the eTwinning:**

- It helps us sustain the Twinning Project on a European level, keeping the local members engaged with the blue spirit,
- It facilitates a smoother transition for the FMOs involved to the next visit coming up or a real-life Twinning Project to be agreed upon between the Twinning Project Coordinators involved,
- It helps FMOs “wake up” in a local sense, since most of them have been dormant throughout the pandemic with schools closed down. The Departments of External Affairs of FMOs, the TP coordinators and the OC involved in half-completed Twinning Projects can boost their motivation by working on this and they can join in with the e-Twinning meetings as well, even if they are not registered as a participant; since it’s all online, there is no additional cost of involving more people into the mix.

**Ideas for the eTwinning**

**Online Team Building Activities:** You can use some of the apps and suggestions below to start your eTwinning adventure off! These mainly aim to serve as “icebreakers” and they have a potential of developing into further activities and even maybe ideas erupting from the group itself - once they have established a connection.

- **Playing Human Bingo** - this is a good first step to getting to know the group. You can open up a Google Form and insert common phrases there like, “Been to 4 EMSA General Assemblies” or “Been a candidate or been elected to an EEB position in EMSA”. Right here next to this text, you will be able to find an example from the internet to showcase that there are prepared Human Bingo cards online you can use as well; if you are feeling lazy and using one of these, you can send this out to a group chat for everybody to fill out on their own but it’s always smart to keep it medicine or EMSA related for the bingo to feel more personal. Of course it would be forbidden to engage with the bingo during the group video call where everybody can fill it out at the same time; they have to be given around 20 minutes to actually talk to each other after the call one by one in order to fill the bingo out.

Get To Know You BINGO				
Likes cats better than dogs	Loves to watch sports	Checks Facebook daily	Sings in the shower or bathtub	Shops online
Never swears	Likes to do gardening	Likes Coke better than Pepsi	Decorates for holidays	Loves to hike or to walk
Has freckles	Has followed directions and built/made something	FREE	Went on a blind date	Can whistle loudly
Still watches the old black and white TV shows	Hates mice or snakes	Is the youngest child	Still knows their high school song	Votes every election
Loves to travel	Has caught a fish	Hates to watch the news	Likes to dance	Hates liver and onions

It should also be forbidden to ask in the group chat “who loves to travel?” and play it easy. The person who has completed the bingo in 20 minutes or the person with the highest amount of boxes checked, should be deemed the winner.

- Here is a list of [Icebreaking Questions](#) you can use during your video calls and everybody can take turns answering them (or, a different question can be asked for everyone in order to go through as many questions as possible).

*Remember, if you are engaging in an activity like this one - basically any activity where you are just not randomly talking - it's always smart to pick out a moderator for that activity and everyone involved in the eTwinning, should be taking turns moderating, since this might be a skill they would appreciate having practised later on in their NGO lives.*

- **Playing Pub Trivia** (click [here](#) for ideas) is always a nice conversation starter. There are always some of us who thrive on learning random facts from all around the world and use it to start conversations or to even flirt. Why not do just that during an eTwinning as well? A fun list of Trivia questions can also pinpoint some topics to talk about for the group but it's important to not Google this stuff during the meeting so as to not ruin the fun. To make sure of this, while all cameras are open, participants can lift their hands up, palms open, while the question is being asked and they would keep them there for a minute to make sure whoever is answering, is answering from knowledge. If nobody knows the answer, someone randomly selected can Google the answer and explain with a little bit of background to group what the question was all about.

- **Movie Nights** (Using Google Chrome's Netflix Party tool) are always a fun idea, especially when the movie in question is something everybody would be interested in. Some movies are fun to gossip about, some are thrillers where you will just write “don't open the door!” in the chat and some can actually be medically relevant so that you can speculate about a possible diagnosis as a group before the movie actually reveals it - and even place bets on it, if you are sure!



- **Online Karaoke** is simple but it might require some extra confidence to do in a first session. The moderator would share their screen and audio with a karaoke video opened on YouTube and everybody would just scream down their microphones, trying to catch harmony as a group singing.
- **Online concerts** are pretty common these days as well. Someone in the group might just write down in the chat some live concert being broadcasted on Instagram or YouTube that day and fans of that group or musician would join in for the stream together. This would also help the group explore each other's music tastes and a common taste in music is always good to have between friends.

- For more click [this](#)

**Challenges and Quizzes:** As medical students, we have to be life-long learners and not just on medicine, but on many topics, so that we can exercise our interprofessional collaboration, cultural competence and advocacy in healthcare skills. To be able to engage in all that, we have to be pushing each other constantly with a variety of stimulations - and the eTwinning can help with just that. You can push each other to learn more about extracurricular topics by organising Journal Clubs and Book Clubs during the eTwinning attached with some quick quizzes and discussions on the assignments of the week during the online meetings. You can dig into topics like:

- History & Mythology
- Gastronomy
- Literature
- Folklore dances
- Architecture
- Music
- Art history
- Movies

**Online Educational Activities:** Most of us have some examinations or rotations coming up during the summer, since we had to stay at home for these past couple of months. Even though it would be interesting to discuss how medical curricula differs from country to country, we can all agree that the fundamentals are common for every nation and that we all have the same topics to study - just different ways of graduating. Especially for the EMSAis who study medicine in English in their faculties, it would be helpful to have study sessions during eTwinning.

- If most of the participants are in their clinical years, they can arrange private sessions among themselves to go over some case studies from a reference book, or they can divide among themselves a topic for everyone involved to study up and tell everyone else for the second session around - this way everybody would benefit from learning by teaching and everybody would be listening up to all the other topics from everyone else, to have completed a number of them in the end. The latter option can work for pre-clinical year students as well.
- Sign language is something we all must learn both for our daily communications and our clinical practices to make sure that people who have to use it are heard. It's a possibility that by chance, one of the people involved in the eTwinning already knows it and they can teach everybody else. If not, you can always invite



some trainers from EMSA or from your faculty to teach the group or, in the worst case scenario, employ some YouTube videos.

- Basic Life Support is a crucial skill to have for a med student in their clinical years - for some internship opportunities abroad, it's actually a requirement. Some faculties already have professors who were authorised to teach BLS by the American Heart Association or other authorities in the field and their trainings, if completed well, can actually help the eTwinning participants get a certificate they can use during their internship applications. Even though BLS is best taught in real life, there are ways to benefit from the training when online as well!

**Online Sightseeing:** Even though it's true that we would have wished among anything else, to be able to get on a plane and visit each other in our cities and enjoy travelling as well as each other's company and it's sad that we can't do that right now. There are alternatives though. Up till today, together with all the developments revolving around the pandemic, many national and international bodies have taken action to install virtual tours of different cities, museums and tourist attractions attaching useful information about the locations by its side.

- We can turn this into something almost like a real Twinning if we give our imaginations a chance! Each eTwinning team would take time to go through their national resources as well as some international companies' facilities like Google Maps or Apple Maps which are equipped with virtual guides as well.



- A moderator from each FMO - preferably the TP Coordinators - would share their screens to open maps of their cities and the members of the teams would start talking about some of the most popular locations in the city to visit.
- On the same shared screen, the participants would be able to join in with virtual tours accompanied by informative talks done by the students themselves who study there.
- Some national museums have also taken an initiative to introduce virtual tours as well. If available, the Twinning FMOs would open up those virtual tours of some of their national museums and start going through the tour together with their Twins to learn more about that country or city's culture.

**Webinars:** There is no reason for the eTwinning team to suddenly transform into a highly functioning OC after they have established their dynamics as a team. Reaching out to EMSA Europe or even your own FMOs, webinars and trainings can be held online with registration forms opening up and promotion being done on social media. EMSAis from Ukraine have already been doing this during isolation times and it's always applicable to other FMOs! Inviting an external partner, setting a date and time, sending out invitations... Those are things students can do online anytime and it would be a good opportunity for

the eTwinning team to learn about the skills necessary to organise a webinar - since they might have to do it later on in their NGO lives as well.

- You can organise Online Trainings based on soft skills or specific topics chosen together with the external partner. You can reach out to the TEO of EMSA Europe to get some advice on how to organise such an event or to other organisations in your faculties like the ESN to find a trainer who can work with you.
- You can organise debates on various ethical topics like euthenasia, opening calls out to both of your FMOs for a debate team and an audience. The eTwinning team can make up the debate team among themselves as well - to settle some disagreements that may have come up during some discussions held in previous sessions.
- Language classes always work for the best, especially if you have some native speakers in the eTwinning team. Since, for example, Germany is a hotspot for medical migration in Europe, if the eTwinning is between a German-speaking FMO and a non-German-speaking FMO, the native speakers can always encourage their enthusiastic twins to learn more by helping them exercise speaking skills. You can always invite a professor from one of the eTwinning universities' language department, to help you out with the methodology of these sessions.
- You can create joint awareness campaigns on COVID - 19 or other topics that come up on the [yearly calendar of awareness days](#) on both your FMOs' social media. Canva is the best way to do this and it might be a fun thing to do together as a team during an eTwinning.
- It might not sound familiar, but you can organise [Thinkathons](#) to facilitate discussions and brainstorming sessions better.
- You can create your own radio show & invite participants from both FMOs to enjoy. The topic would be talked about by the volunteering members of the eTwinning team and the rest would help with promotion and content of the show.

**Having Fun:** It doesn't always have to be on eLearning and getting to know each other. You can have some fun during an eTwinning as well!

- You can have the participants from partnering FMOs to create & share Spotify playlists with some of their native songs that they would love to having heard,
- You can organize group Yoga & Meditation sessions to relax and let go. This would work best if somebody in the eTwinning team already knows about yoga and they would love to teach but you can employ external guests and YouTube videos for the same goal as well,
- We have all been gaining weight during quarantine. Online Workout sessions may work well for everyone involved. You can set standards and bets on how many push-ups people have to do until the next



session around or just show each other tips & tricks from your workout routine that everybody might love to incorporate,

- Organising cooking contests may sound a bit difficult to do online, but sometimes a picture shows a lot about how tasty the food is. You can set a challenge for everybody in the eTwinning team to cook something in an hour or half an hour and everybody would send pictures into the WhatsApp group. An assigned judge would crown the winner for the day!

**Online Trainings:** First introduced for our Interprofessional eTwinning with EPSA, online trainings can be a useful way to spend time during eTwinning as well. You can contact one of your local EMSA/IFMSA trainers to host a training or you can contact us, here in the EIC team ([integration@emsa-europe.eu](mailto:integration@emsa-europe.eu)) to find a trainer for you! Soft skills trainings are always useful and they usually include topics like time management, teamwork, emotional intelligence and many others. You can enjoy them together with the twin team and utilise the training networks of EMSA and many other organisations as well.

**Charitable Activities:** This was first introduced by AMSA, during the first round of eTwinning where a suggestion was made to build websites and gather donations for chosen causes in our world, to do some charity while getting together with our peers, online! For the instance of AMSA, a fee was introduced to the participants (around a few dollars) to build a website and keep it running, so that the donations can be gathered or the activities could be managed from a single center for the team.

On the cause of doing charity, webinars can also be organised to raise awareness, social media campaigns could be employed to let others know that a donation is being collected - so that more people can contribute... The content of all this, is, as always up to the the participants and the organising committee of said eTwinning but it's always best to keep out a creative eye to maximise the efficacy of this online experience, while making sure that everybody is spending a great time.

**Platforms you can use:** The options mentioned below are all similar but Zoom has a 40 minute timeframe for meetings if you were considering that. Our suggestion as the EIC team is definitely Google Meet but if you are planning to organise webinars and trainings as a team later on, platforms like Cisco Webex and GoToMeeting are popular ones used by WHO Europe and some other prestigious NGOs.

- Zoom
- Google Meet
- Skype
- Hangouts
- Cisco Webex
- Join.me
- FreeConference
- GoToMeeting
- Facebook Group

**Tools & Interactive Methods:** Here are some suggestions on apps you can use to enrich your eTwinning experience. You can also employ some of these tools to be used in some of the projects that you may be cooking up within your eTwinning team:



- Kahoot
- Wooclap
- Mentimeter

These apps are great for creating interactive presentations and sessions that you can use both in the webinars you design and your online gatherings during eTwinning. Wooclap and Mentimeter offer features like, creating multiple choice questions, polls, rating surveys, “find on image” activities you can use during study sessions - this one is best for studying anatomy -, word clouds, open questions, “guess a number” questions and many more. You can visit their website for more information.

- Puzzel.org
- Bubbl.us
- Coggle.it
- Whiteboard

These apps are also good for creating mind maps and quizzes. The whiteboard app you can use for almost anything from study sessions to chillout meetings.

- Watch2gether.com
- Gartic.io (drawing game)

These are apps you can use while trying to have some fun watching stuff together online and playing guessing games on the things you draw. There are of course many more options and apps online that we weren't able to squeeze in here or we didn't know about but you will have full authority in designing the content of your sessions when time comes.

## Final Words

In the end, it's all about meeting new people or keeping connections already made intact so that when the blessed time comes where we can continue doing Twinning in Europe, we will know each other better and have already spent time together which will enhance our real-time experience in the cities we will meet up in. You can contact the EIC team or me, the EIC Director, anytime you would like some help with the initiative. We know it's becoming harder and harder staying at home away from each other but we have to try out anything we can to preserve our mental health in a sound state and we have to refrain from isolating ourselves in ways we don't need to. Modern technology provides us with many means to stay in touch with one another, even though we are home alone or with our families.

Even though it seems like the isolation is slowly coming to an end and we are slowly coming out of our nests, it will still take some time until organisations in Europe will be able to officially allow mobility programs to go on and assemblies to be conducted. The programs we will be making for this summer, it looks like, will have to stay as personal endeavours rather than organisational initiatives since we have to wait and make sure a second wave will not be coming in terms of this pandemic.

We, as the EIC team in EMSA Europe would like to thank the EIC team in EMSA Turkey for starting this out all the way in January and having conducted some eTwinning already, enough to be able to present to us some feedbacks to be used in improving a structure that was already well-built.

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