



## Eco Bicycle Paths

### Partner Responsible: Platon School M.E.P.E.

Having worked in similar projects that aim to foster innovation capacity among students in the past, we knew since the beginning that this is a project that will benefit our students greatly and therefore we should plan our steps very carefully. We formed a team of teachers that will work on this project alongside the project manager of our school. We decided that the main role of the teachers in this project should be to provide guidance to students, help them conceive and clarify the meaning of innovation, trigger their interest when needed and make sure that we stay in line with the project's aims and objectives. The most important of all, however, is that the students would be the protagonist in this project.

We chose to work with students of the first class of junior high school (12 years old). Firstly, we presented them the iCAP project, explained them their mission and gave them some guidelines. Before they begin, we paid a visit to a Christmas park in Katerini, created by a volunteer team in our city that is also involved in several innovational activities from time to time. The students talked with the manager about the concept of innovation and how it can have an impact to the society. This conversation really motivated them and they were very enthusiast about working on this project. Their next task was to identify a problem or a need in the city and find an innovative way to face it. Each student had to make a research on his own, in his neighborhood, find a problem or something that they wish it was different, discuss with his parents and learn their point of view. After that we had a discussion with the whole class where every student presented their ideas about the project. Finally, they decided that the best idea was to design ecological bicycle paths that would be a part of the bicycle paths the municipality is planning to create in 2019. The next step was to find ways that would make the bike paths more ecofriendly. They searched on the internet about similar cases and good examples around the world, the benefits they offer in the environment, the cost and if it is worth it in relation to the ecological benefits and how these methods can be implemented in the bike paths that are to be created in our city. We also invited a chemical engineer in our school in order to talk to the students and present some of his ideas on this concept.

When the students completed their research, they prepared a sort presentation and we visited the mayor's office, as well as the other candidates for the town hall in the upcoming elections. The students had the chance to present their work, exchange opinions with them and receive their promises that the ideas they presented will be taken into account.

During the implementation of the iCAP project we tried to improve the innovation skills and capacity of our students first by triggering their curiosity and interest and then by engaging them to a task. They built this capacity through co-driving and co-creation by facing a real life challenge. We mainly followed a holistic approach- not



only the students and teachers were involved in this project, but their families and the community also.

In total 3 teachers and 20 students were involved in the project. The students worked for about 3 months before completing their proposal and presenting it to the mayor and the other candidates.