FULL REPORT 2020

eTwinning Schools: towards a shared leadership approach

Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the eTwinning School practices

Erasmus+

eTwinning

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of figures and pictures

ABOUT ETWINNING

eTwinning is a vibrant community that has involved more than 800,000 teachers working in more than 200,000 schools, in its nearly 16 years of existence. More than 93,000[1] projects have been run, involving many students from all educational levels across the continent.

eTwinning, the community for schools in Europe and neighbouring partner countries, is an action for schools funded by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ programme. It involves teachers from 36 European countries and 8 neighbouring countries.

eTwinning is a digital platform available in 31 languages. Visitors can access a range of public information about how to become involved in eTwinning; explaining the benefits the action offers and providing information for collaborative project work. Registered teachers have access to a restricted area called eTwinning Live, which is the individual teacher's interface with the community. It enables users to find partners, interact, collaborate in projects and participate in professional development activities organised at European national, non-European national and European central levels. Finally, when teachers work together on a project, they have access to a private collaborative space, which is unique to each project, called TwinSpace.

eTwinning offers a high level of support for its users. In each of participating countries (currently 44) a National Support Service (NSS) or a Partner Support Agency (PSA) promotes the action, provides advice and guidance for end users and organises a range of activities and professional development opportunities at national level. At European level, eTwinning is coordinated by the Central Support Service (CSS) which is managed by European Schoolnet (a consortium of 34 Ministries of Education), on behalf of the European Commission. The CSS liaises with the NSS and is responsible for the development of the platform, as well as offering a range of professional development opportunities and other activities such as an annual European Conference and a Prize Event which awards teachers and students for their involvement in outstanding projects.

1   Cumulative data as of July 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. eTwinning monitoring activities

For the past five years eTwinning's monitoring activities have comprised two approaches:

1. A quantitative large-scale survey of eTwinners' teaching practices and professional development activities and needs, carried out in 2014, 2016, and 2018.
2. A complementary qualitative monitoring activity, comprising upscaling the self-assessment pilot on teachers' competence development- "Monitoring eTwinning Practice (MeTP)", carried out in 2015 and again in 2017.

This edition, through a combination of quantitative data based on a survey and a series of case studies, examines eTwinning Schools, a special group within the eTwinning community, consisting of more than 3000+ institutions[2]. These specific schools have been registered to eTwinning for more than two years, have at least three active eTwinning teachers, organise promotional activities and also participate in professional development opportunities and eTwinning projects. eTwinning Schools have been selected via a rigorous process which identifies their level of activities, their understanding of Internet Safety issues, and their potential for acting as ambassadors, promoters, and leaders who model eTwinning for other schools. eTwinning Schools are examples of how whole schools can benefit from eTwinning.

- -

2   eTwinning Schools are selected once a year and their Label has a duration of two years. The number of eTwinning Schools for the years 2019/2020 is 1019, whereas the eTwinning Schools 2020/2021 are 2141. The first 1217 eTwinning Schools were identified in 2018 for the years 2018/2019.

Within the eTwinning community, eTwinning Schools are particularly committed to the importance and values of eTwinning, the most important of which remains the involvement in European collaboration and exchanges activities. eTwinning, with its cross-border aspect, is part of the European initiatives in education, based on the claim that EU wide cooperation supports the development of quality education.

eTwinning Schools embed such values in their school's policies, practice and professional development with the support of school management.

Being an eTwinning School is a developmental journey with components that can be objectively assessed. The compass of all eTwinning Schools is the eTwinning School Mission, a commitment they make once they receive the eTwinning School Label.

According to the eTwinning School Mission (see also in the Annex), eTwinning Schools have a commitment to:

1. Follow a Shared Leadership approach.
2. Encourage collaboration, sharing and teamwork.
3. Give an active role to students as agents of change.
4. Play a role of ambassadors for other schools as models.
5. Create an inclusive and innovative learning organisation.

Each eTwinning school is different, facing diverse challenges and realities, hence a successful practice in one school might not be relevant in another school, and this will be very clear in the case studies presented in this Report.

There are various benefits to being recognised as eTwinning School. The schools' staff and Principals are encouraged to participate in dedicated professional development programmes and can be part of an eTwinning Group to share good practices, collaborate and attend specific online events. Being awarded with an eTwinning School Label should be seen as a starting point. The eTwinning School Label is recognition of good practice, effort and motivation. eTwinning Schools are role models for eTwinning and form a network of leading schools to inspire the future development of the action. They also have a high visibility at a European Level and are encouraged to show their Label in their promotional and information materials. In return, schools must guarantee a commitment to the continuous development of the eTwinning School Mission. This includes innovative digital practice, inclusion, eSafety, innovative and creative approaches to pedagogy, promotion of learning and continuous professional development of staff and engagement in collaborative learning practices with staff and students.

This publication **explores how eTwinning Schools operate in a two-fold approach,** by examining their practices through analysis of quantitative data and qualitative investigation:

- Chapter 2 presents the results of a survey administrated to eTwinning Schools in autumn 2019, examining practices in the five areas mentioned above. In this quantitative chapter we observe various patterns and progression in practices within the responding schools.
- Chapter 3 presents a qualitative result of the case studies of six different eTwinning Schools which the Central Support Service (CSS) guided. Throughout a qualitative analysis, we selected and closely examined the realities of six different eTwinning Schools which were engaged in a series of dedicated activities. These activities aimed to closely examine the practices, challenges, and success in eTwinning Schools and served as the basis of the case studies that forms the second part of this publication

The aim of this Report is to:

1. Provide eTwinning Schools a compass to orientate in their development plan, thus identifying strengths and weaknesses, obstacles and opportunities.
2. Allow stakeholders (Central Support Service, National Support Services and Partner Support Agencies) to identify the areas eTwinning Schools generally need to further develop to achieve the commitments expressed in the eTwinning School Mission.
3. Identify the elements which should be adjusted and implemented at systemic level – mainly from educational authorities – to fully leverage on eTwinning Schools' potential.

1.2. Methodology

Whilst eTwinning Schools can broadly be put under a common eTwinning umbrella, each of the 3000+ schools that hold the eTwinning School Label are vastly different with specific challenges and successes. We still know very little about eTwinning Schools as a whole and which expectations for their further development can be raised. Therefore, the eTwinning Central Support Service has developed a monitoring process to better understand the needs, success, and challenges eTwinning Schools face.

Through analysis of these two sources of data, the first quantitative survey data and the second qualitative investigation, we reached a valuable insight on the practices in eTwinning Schools. Both the eTwinning Schools survey and the eTwinning Schools'

monitoring and development plan were based on the eTwinning School Mission five areas mentioned in the previous paragraph.

The survey examined practices in the areas mentioned above, whilst the monitoring and development activities encouraged the six selected schools to engage in professional development opportunities through online and onsite workshops, peer learning discussions, dedicated group-work on a common eTwinning Group and collaboration in a joint project that resulted in three different eTwinning kits.

This two-fold approach, examining qualitative data from the monitoring and development activities and quantitative data from the survey, allows a large-scale monitoring of a convenient sample of eTwinning Schools and the possibility of exploring in more depth the needs of eTwinning Schools based on a close examination of the six selected eTwinning Schools. The current report consists of the analysis of these monitoring exercises and provides findings and conclusions that can be later developed to an eTwinning Schools strategy. Moreover, this exercise provides a long-term perspective, if adopted on a regular basis, to guarantee the possibility of monitoring progress over time, tracking trends and informing the pedagogical direction of eTwinning Schools in the coming years. Thanks to the 1000+ eTwinning Schools who voluntarily answered the eTwinning Schools Survey, the current report also provides valuable insight on which eTwinning can further develop its activities for eTwinning Schools and in general to the educational community in Europe.

2. ETWINNING SCHOOLS SURVEY

2.1. Framework and methodology

This Report presents the findings of the first edition of the eTwinning Schools survey[3], launched in Autumn 2019. The survey included 19 closed questions and took on average 10-15 minutes to complete. The survey consisted of two sections[4]:

a. Demographics – aimed to collect background information about participants and their schools.

b. eTwinning Schools practices – aimed to collect information about each school's practice in the eTwinning School Mission areas. In Section B some of the questions were based on existing survey models.

The practices section investigated various areas:

- In Section B.1 (Shared Leadership Practices) and part of Section B.5 (The school as an inclusive and innovative learning organisation), some of the questions were based on an existing survey on Shared Leadership practices, designed for the L2C project5. The questions were adapted to eTwinning context and practices.

- In Section B.2 (Collaboration), Section B.3 (Students as agents of change) and part of Section 5 (the school as an inclusive and innovative learning organisation), some of the questions were modelled on the items described

....

3   The survey can be consulted, for information, at this address.

4   Throughout the Report we refer to the various sections of the survey (B.1, B.2 etc. as a reference).

5   L2C KA1 – Learning Leadership for Change project, accessible: http://l2c.eun.org/

in "Measuring Innovation in Education 2019: What Has Changed in the Classroom?" by the OECD.

Furthermore, there are areas where certain questions were created and adapted to eTwinning Schools context to enable a deeper understanding of the results.

From a methodological point of view, it should be noted that:

- Respondents to all editions of this survey are anonymous. However, they were requested to indicate their school name and the respondent's role in the school.
- A verification process took place in order to ensure that only responses from eTwinning Schools were considered in the data set.
- Respondents were requested to reply to the survey after a consultation with their colleagues and/or school leadership teams so that the collected answers represent as much as possible the practices in the school and not the individual eTwinning teacher's views.
- The number of answers vary significantly among the different countries, meaning that they may not represent the eTwinning Schools population at country level.
- The sample is not randomised (respondents filled in the survey on a voluntary basis after a public call), and therefore cannot be assumed it is representative of the entire eTwinning Schools population. However, the large number of answers most likely gives an indicative view of the practices in all eTwinning Schools.
- The survey launched in October 2019, in English, and was available online for seven weeks.
- In terms of promotion, the Central Support Service posted a news item on eTwinning Live and in the eTwinning Schools Group, Social media, and newsletter. Promotion was also carried out at national level by National Support Services (NSS) and Partner Support Agencies (PSA). As the survey was published in eTwinning Live, we received a few responses from schools which are not eTwinning Schools. These answers were not considered.

Data set:

- The total number of respondents was 1,718. After removing duplicates and non-eligible answers the final data set consisted of 1,261 answers, which is 56% of the total number of eTwinning Schools present when the survey was administered (2,236). The removed responses consisted of:

- Respondents that are not from an eligible eTwinning School (not awarded with the eTwinning School Label or awarded in later stage): 190 responses were removed.
- School staff that replied to the survey without a consultation with colleague and/or school leadership.
- Duplicates from the same school. In those cases, each entry was examined separately: partial entries were removed and in case there were two very similar entries, one was removed. In case there were two very different entries, both were removed: in total 74 responses were removed.
- Respondents that replied only to the general background questions (section A) but not to most of the eTwinning Schools practices (Section B): 193 responses were removed.

In a survey of 19 questions it is not unusual for respondents to skip some questions and the total number of respondents is given in the graphs relating to each question. It should be kept in mind that in the chapters of this report devoted to school leaders practice, teachers practice and student learning, the results are based on teachers' discussion and consultation of how the school operates and how eTwinning is embedded in the school practices. Where relevant, links to existing external supporting research are provided.

2.2. Analysis

2.2.1. SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS

A. RESPONDENTS' ROLE AND RESPONSE METHOD

The profile of the role of respondents reflects also the active eTwinners in eTwinning Schools, with the majority (77%) being teachers as can be seen in Figure 1 below. Regarding more formal roles within eTwinning, 11% are school Principals and 7% are deputy or assistant Principals, while 5% are holding various roles in the school including librarians, ICT coordinators and Pedagogical advisors.

Teacher
Head teacher / school Principal
Deputy or assistant Principal
ICT coordinator
Librarian
Pedagogical advisor
School psychologist
Career guidance
Other
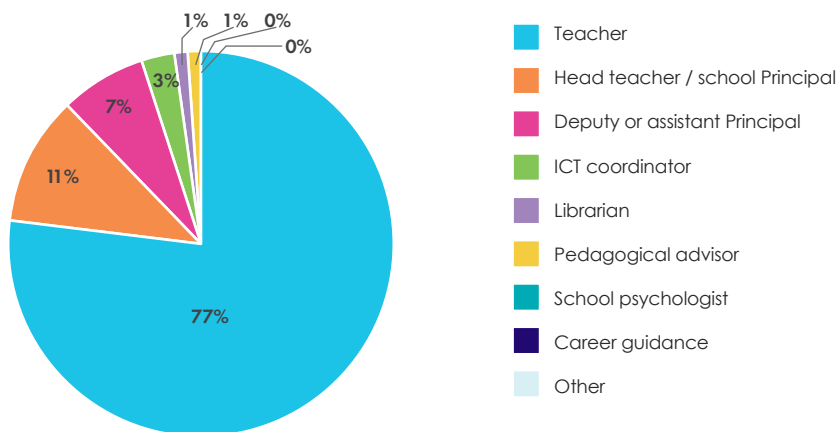
Figure 1: Role of respondents

How do respondents' answers reflect the situation in their school? According to the data we gathered, the majority of respondents replied to the survey after consulting their colleagues: 66% have replied to the survey on the behalf of their school, after a consultation involving both eTwinning teachers and school leaders, while 11% replied to the survey after consulting other eTwinners in the school. Only 5% replied to the survey after consulting the school leaders only. It must be mentioned that 18% replied to the survey without consulting anyone in their school. However, they stated that their opinion represents their colleagues as well, therefore we can interpret the collected data as most likely representing the practices in the school.

I replied to this questionnaire on behalf of my school, after a consultation involving both the eTwinning teacher/s in my school and the school formal leaders (school principle, deputy or assistant principle, ICT or other topic coordinator)

I replied to this questionnaire after a consultation with other eTwinning teacher/s in my school (the school's formal leaders were not involved)

I replied to this questionnaire after a consultation with the school's formal leaders (other teachers were not involved)

I replied to the questionnaire alone with no consultation with any of my colleagues, but I feel that I represent also their voice

Figure 2: Methods of answering the survey

eTwinning Schools that have replied to the survey belong to various education levels[6] (Figure 3). We see that primary education and lower secondary education, constitute each around a third of respondents, while 24% of respondents come from upper secondary educational institutions and 13% come from Early Childhood Education and Care. Post-secondary, non-tertiary education represents only 2% of respondents. This distribution is consistent with the overall distribution of schools in eTwinning.
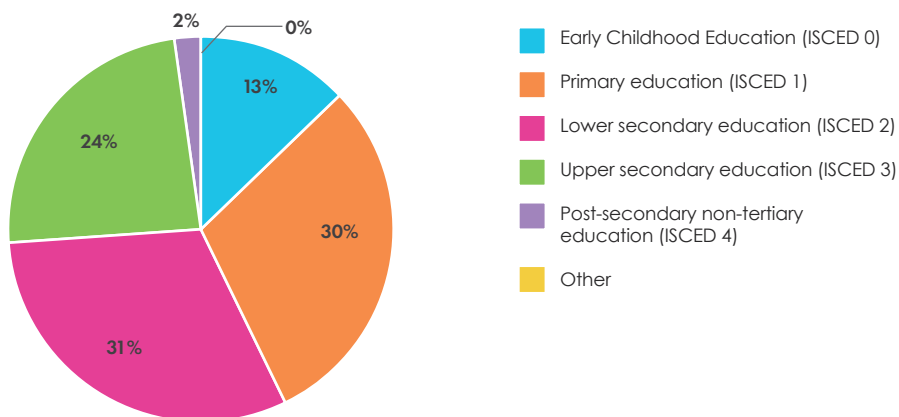
Figure 3: School education level

In terms of size of the schools, most of the eTwinning Schools who replied to the survey are average-sized: the teaching staff constitutes between 21 and 100 people, including educators, teaching assistants, teachers, heads of departments and all staff that are involved in pedagogical activities. 14% of the survey respondents work in small schools where teaching staff constitutes less than 20 people, while 18% of respondents come from big schools where teaching staff constitutes over 100 people.

6 It is important to note that the question allowed combined answers, which is the reason why the number of responses is higher than the schools participating in the survey
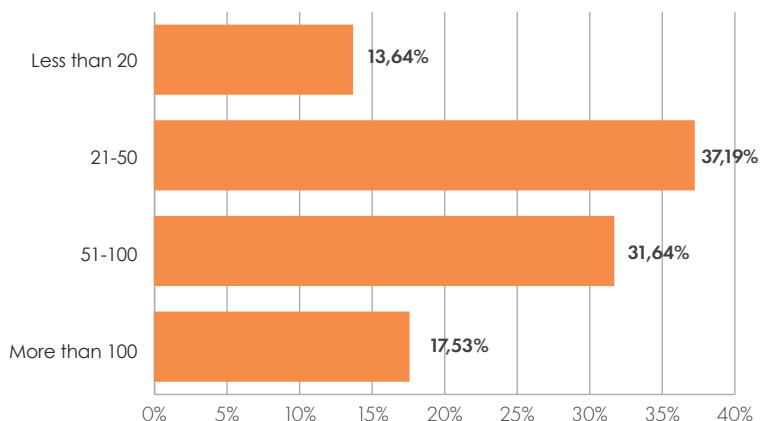
Figure 4: Number of teaching staff in the school

C. ENGAGEMENT OF TEACHERS IN ETWINNING SCHOOLS

Looking at the number of teachers engaged in eTwinning activities (projects, professional development, promotional events etc.), the survey confirms that many eTwinning Schools involve more than just the pioneers: the vast majority of respondents (40%) indicated that up to one third of the teaching staff is engaged in eTwinning activities and another 10% engage even more teachers. The other half of the respondents are still in a development phase where eTwinners are very few within the school (less than 10% of the teaching staff).
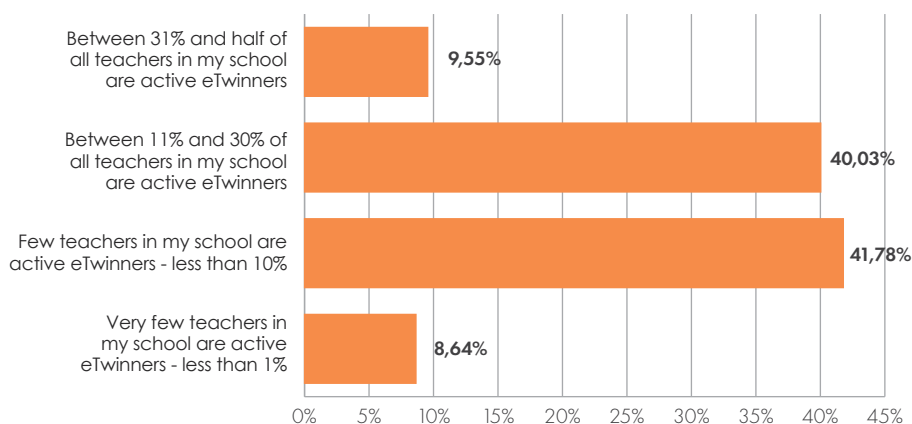
Figure 5: Teachers involved in eTwinning activities

Teachers in eTwinning Schools seem to be very dedicated to eTwinning: 40% of respondents indicate that teachers in their school are engaged in eTwinning activities between three to five hours each week. Some go even further, with 38% of respondents reporting between five to ten hours weekly. On the extremes, 5% of respondents seem to spend more than 15 hours weekly in eTwinning and 8% of respondents only one to two hours weekly.
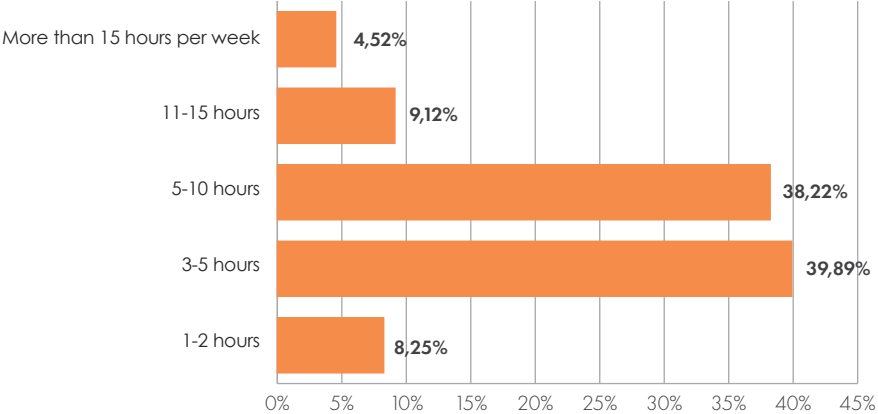
Figure 6: Weekly hours dedicated to eTwinning activities

2.2.2. SECTION B: ETWINNING SCHOOLS' PRACTICES ANALYSIS

A. METHODOLOGY

This chapter investigates the various practices implemented by eTwinning Schools, as reported via the eTwinning Schools survey. With a response rate of 56% (1,261 answers against a population of 2,236 potential respondents) the results of the survey give an idea of the whole population, although not statistically representative as the sample was not randomized and respondents answered on a volunteering basis. Examining the data collected from the 1,261 eTwinning Schools that have replied to the survey, we found that the eTwinning School Mission is followed to a large extent. Respondents were asked to indicate the level of advancement of practices in their school via a modified Likert scale. For each eTwinning School Mission area, a set of indicators was developed and each of them included descriptive statements which helped respondents assess the level of practice of their school.

In particular, for each statement, respondents selected the description that best applied to their school, as follows:

1 = this is not practiced by teachers and school leaders in our school

2 = teachers and school leaders are starting to move in this direction

3 = teachers and school leaders are making good progress here

4 = teachers and school leaders have well established this condition in our school

5 = teachers and school leaders in our school are improving an already well-established practice in this

As one can see, the scale goes from 1 (no practice) to 5 (improving a well-established practice). In the following chapter, the indicators that describe the practices in a specific mission area are explained and, for each indicator, a chart shows where eTwinning Schools claim to be by showing the weighted average scores based on the answers. The indicator is then placed on an arrow that provides a visual representation of the level of advancement of the practice among all responding eTwinning Schools, based on the scale mentioned above.

It is important to point out that the data and the charts displayed in the next paragraphs do not intend to represent the variations in the practices implemented in each school, as using a weighted average only allows us to show practices at a collective level. In addition, despite the large data set, it is worth remembering that eTwinning Schools vary in practice and what may be representative and relevant to one school may be irrelevant to another. Nevertheless, there are clear trends among the eTwinning Schools who replied to the survey, as presented below.

For each mission area, the Report presents an overview of its main elements including their theoretical background - and expectations, which are then analysed against the results of the survey.

B. MISSION AREA 1: ETWINNING SCHOOLS HAVE A COMMITMENT TO SHARED LEADERSHIP

In eTwinning Schools leadership is a shared process, both for the responsibility of organisation and the decision-making process. The school Principal and teacher leaders understand the possibilities offered by eTwinning both at a pedagogical and professional level and actively support all staff to become involved in eTwinning activities.

The Shared Leadership approach assumes that schools must rely both on the school Principal and on a small group of formal and non-formal school leaders (for instance instructional leaders, experienced teachers etc.). Schools who wish to keep their leading role, especially within eTwinning Schools, must guarantee a strong participation of various stakeholders: teachers, parents and pupils. Successful, engaging and empowering school leadership, which motivates and includes formal and non-formal leaders, is key to bringing the changes we wish see in these schools. Sharing leadership roles and responsibilities among a wider group of staff, and involving parents and pupils, has a positive impact on schools. Moreover, sharing good practices and learning about different schools' environments and practices can help to better understand one's challenges and reflect on possible solutions.

In section B.1 of the survey four elements including various aspects of Shared Leadership practice were identified in previous research (Leithwood et al, 2006; Leithwood and Riehl, 2003). These findings are further reinforced by a recent EU study, indicating that a common shared vision by the whole school staff, students and community in which all are active and accountable helps to set priorities and implement the necessary process of change. Furthermore, research shows that schools that succeed in transforming their practices have clear strategies and implementation process. They engage in a reflection and discussion process that results in a concrete action plan based on identified needs in the school (European Commission, 2018a).

Examining each element in the survey can provide an interesting insight on the component of Shared Leadership practice in eTwinning Schools.

1. Setting a direction

This component of Shared Leadership includes aspects such as providing teachers with opportunities for professional support such as coaching or peer learning. It also involves a clear and identified shared vision with a clear understanding of how to implement it in an atmosphere of trust and respect in the school. In terms of decision making and giving teachers a voice, effective group decisions are a key element as part of a timely and structured process, where teachers are centrally involved. This encompasses elements such as providing concrete opportunities and encouraging teachers to contribute and design curricula. It enables innovative teaching methods and active contribution to the school strategy. In the process of setting a direction not only are teachers and school leaders involved, but also the whole community: parents and students are provided with opportunities to concretely contribute to the decision-making process and are engaged in a whole school dialogue regarding learning and teaching.

2. Redesigning school organisation

This component includes teachers having the opportunity to learn from one another, dedicated time for professional development and encourages collaboration in order to improve school practices. This translates into clear specific actions aimed at improving students' learning, reviewed by the school on a regular basis.

3. Managing instructional programmes

This component involves teacher professionalism and cooperation as a way of generating positive change in school. This will include teachers having a greater role in preparing instructional material, setting the grading process and selecting materials and resources for their lessons.

4. Personal and professional development of staff

This area assesses a school setting that offers intellectual stimulation, individual support, and models of appropriate values and practices. Leaders who practice Shared Leadership support a school atmosphere that allows teachers to determine the content of their professional development programmes. They have an opportunity to participate in self-reflection and active discussion, developing and influencing other school staff and participating in professional group learning.

Analysis
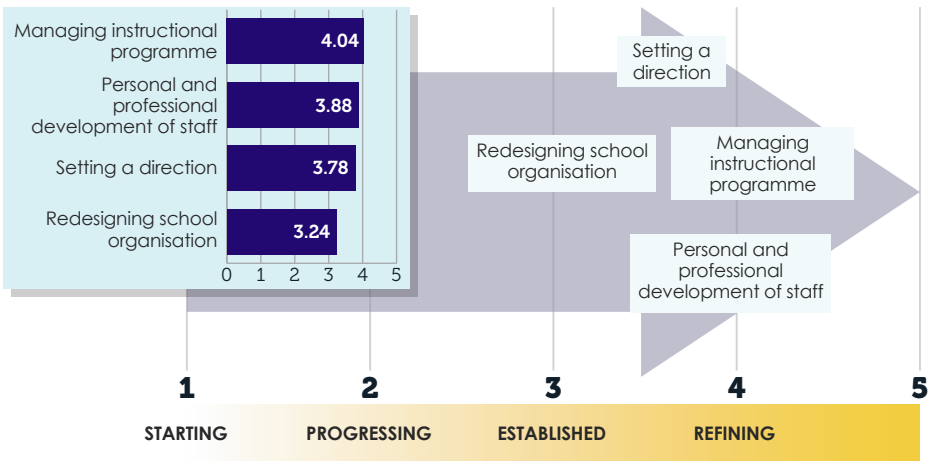
Figure 7: Shared Leadership practice

The graph in figure 7 shows the weighted averages for each of the statements composing the area 'Shared Leadership' as indicated by respondents. For instance: 4.04 is the weighted average for the indicator 'managing instructional programme'. Provided that, as already mentioned, the higher the score the more established and

refined the practice, this is visually represented by placing the specific indicator inside a bubble positioned in correspondence with its value on the X axis. This also allows to compare the level of establishment among all indicators according to respondents. As seen in the picture above the most consolidated indicator is the one related to 'managing instructional programmes', whereas the least developed, on average, is related to the 'redesigning the school organisation', and the other two falling in between.

This result may be explained by the assumption that to redesign their overall organisation, schools need to engage in structural changes, often beyond their remit, such as providing teachers with opportunities to learn from one another through peer learning, coaching, peer shadowing and dedicated learning and exchange sessions between colleagues. This takes time and needs a strong support from formal leadership and has to be compliant with the school regulation – including national and local norms - in form of dedicated time which is not part of teaching hours. Moreover, professional development of teachers and participation in courses might vary between schools: while in some schools teachers are expected to participate in such activities during school hours, as these are linked with the school direction and goals, in other schools this might not be the case.

These findings provide a reinforcement to the first eTwinning School Mission Statement, provided at the beginning of the paragraph.

Indeed, in order to be a successful eTwinning School, it is not enough to count on excellent eTwinners. The support and engagement of formal (school Principal, head of department or any leadership role that is defined as such, and non-formal leaders (experienced teachers, teachers that do not hold formal leadership position as such but have great influence on their colleagues) is paramount for the implementation of a whole-school approach[7] where discussion, peer learning and exchange take place to mainstream innovation and boost students' success.

· ·

7   A whole school approach, is defined as:

"all members of the school community (school leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff, learners, parents and families) together with external stakeholders and the local community (social, youth, health workers, psychologists, local authorities, NGOs, businesses, etc.), cooperate in a process to promote excellence, equity, improve school quality and the achievement of all learners. Additional key elements of a whole school approach include greater flexibility or autonomy of schools, distributed leadership, and whole-school improvement processes (including internal school evaluations)" (European Commission, 2018b, p11) Such whole school approach looks at the school as a multidimensional and interactive system that can learn and change and thus engage in the process of innovation and transformation.

The teachers in the school work together as a team to plan their eTwinning and other pedagogical activities and share their experiences and practices with their colleagues, both inside and outside their school. They collaborate on providing an eTwinning action plan and use it to drive innovation and change in their school and beyond.

Teachers reflected on how much the area of collaboration was established in eTwinning Schools. European collaboration is the most important element in eTwinning and this area includes aspects of students' collaboration, teacher's collaboration and collaboration between students and teachers. Collaborative teaching and learning are the basis of each eTwinning project, that encourages European collaboration and work in multinational teams of students, built upon teachers' joint activities, exchange of ideas and practices.

In eTwinning Schools, collaborative teaching and learning is expected to be mainstreamed: from the individual teacher and classroom, to the engagement of the whole school, where teachers and students from different classes work together and are involved in peer learning and feedback. Research and Practice (CO-LAB project, European Schoolnet, 2018) suggest that a positive school climate, including openness, discussion and collaboration among staff, is related to teacher efficacy and to students' achievements (TALIS 2018 conceptual framework). Moreover, research shows that students are motivated when they feel in control of their learning, when they learn something that is relevant to their own lives and learn better when connected with others. Collaborative learning approaches give an answer to the findings mentioned above and have the potential to foster 21st century skills such as independent learning, collaborative problem-solving, critical thinking and deep learning.

In section B.2 of the survey three elements of collaboration were identified. Examining each element can provide an interesting insight on the components of collaborative teaching and learning practice in schools.

1. Students' collaboration
According to Davidson and Major (2014) in collaborative learning the focus is not only on students working together in groups, but also on the group working together, creating and exploring meaning together through an enriching process. In this sense, the teacher is involved in this effort to develop knowledge, thus shifting the nature

of authority in the classroom. According to Griffin and Care (2014) collaborative problem solving among students involves a few elements: joint recognition and understanding the nature of a problem; communication, negotiation and exchange towards a plan to address the problem; coordinated action to carry out the plan, monitoring of progress; and, if necessary, adaptation of the strategy. Collaborative learning, however, is only one group-based learning approach amongst others, such as problem-based learning and cooperative learning. Even though the terms are used interchangeably at times, they refer to three distinct approaches that have developed separately. Each has characteristics it may share with one or both other approaches, but all three have their own peculiarities.

In terms of concrete actions in the class that foster and enable students' collaborative learning, examples are: students' peer learning and feedback, opportunities to discuss the learned topic and express their thoughts about it, explore concepts relationship in the subject matter and students' peer assessment.

2. Teachers' collaboration

Examining teacher collaboration, teachers' collaborative practices vary from none to more advanced, which may include peer observation and feedback, peer learning, preparation of teaching material to joint teaching, as in the case of eTwinning collaborative projects. The school's formal leadership has a key role in creating and supporting a collaborative culture, such as encouraging teacher collaboration, discussion about implementing collaborative teaching and learning, ensuring time for such discussions and creation of resources, and openness to teachers' innovative methods and to flexible classroom settings.

3. Collaboration between students and teachers

Looking at collaboration between students and teachers, we touch upon elements of student led- learning, where students are choosing, designing, and managing their own learning path, assisted by teachers. Teachers and students can collaborate in the design, delivery, and evaluation of instruction and decision-making process. Moreover, students can take up the roles of tutors and partners in learning. In eTwinning, student and teacher's collaboration can take place while working collaboratively as project partners and independently, with students designing the project goals and content themselves.

Analysis
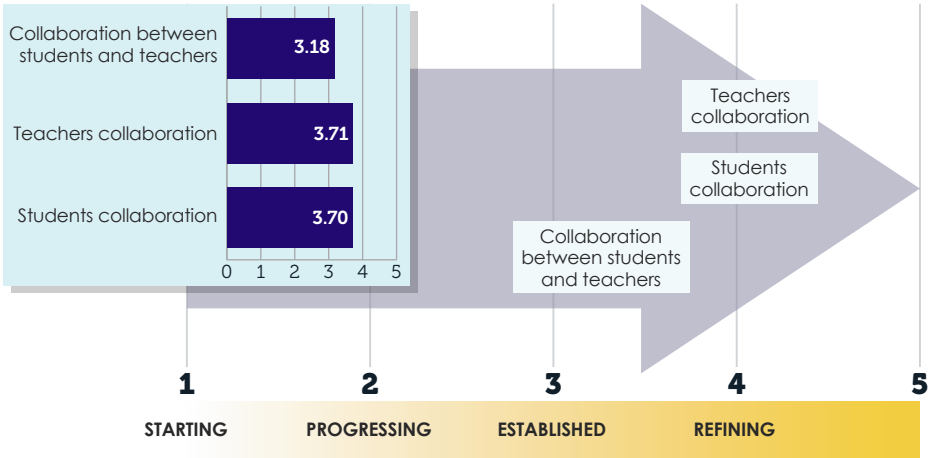
Figure 8: Collaborative teaching and learning practice

The graph in figure 8 shows the weighted averages for each of the statement composing the area of 'collaboration' as indicated by respondents. We can see that in the field of collaboration, teachers' collaboration and students' collaboration are well established practices, with an average weighted score of 3.70 and 3.71. Both elements are widely practiced among schools who replied to the survey and it seems that teachers and school leaders are improving this already well-established practice. However, collaboration between students and teachers is a less common practice compared to the other ones.

It might be the case that eTwinners are more familiar with collaborative teaching practices, as this topic is well established and taught in various professional development opportunities on eTwinning. Also, collaboration between students takes place in eTwinning projects as this is part of their nature. On the other hand, collaboration between teachers and students might be more challenging as it requires the re-thinking of the teacher's role and tasks and a shift towards a more personalised form of learning. This in turn requires an institutional support, where school leadership and governance allow and support teachers in adopting student centered approach where students have more autonomy and choice in their learning.

These findings provide a reinforcement to the second eTwinning School Mission Statement provided at the beginning of the paragraph.

In eTwinning Schools, collaboration occurs at various levels: among teachers via joint teaching, exchange of ideas and peer learning as preparation and implementation of eTwinning projects; among students via exploring and engaging in meaningful learning together during their work in projects which are typically based on concrete exploration and application, or theory in the "real world". Collaboration occurs also between teachers and students, allowing a student-centered approach where students are in the pilot seat of their learning journey: assessing results, taking decision about the project activities and content. As one of the building blocks of eTwinning, collaboration is of paramount importance for successful and innovative eTwinning Schools where the practice of collaborative learning and teaching reaches beyond the single classroom but encompasses the whole school and beyond.

D. MISSION AREA 3: STUDENTS IN ETWINNING SCHOOLS ARE AGENTS OF CHANGE

Students have a role to play in the development of the eTwinning School. They promote eTwinning to teachers (both already engaged or who are not yet involved) and parents, acting both as drivers and as a sounding board for all innovations taking place in pedagogy and use of technology.

According to the OECD Learning Compass 2030 "Student agency for 2030 is rooted in the belief that students have the ability and the will to influence positively their own lives and the world around them. Student agency is defined as the capacity to set a goal, reflect and act responsibly to affect change". Moreover, student agency is all about a proactive approach - being an active learner, actively making decision about one's own learning, defining content, objectives and methods of learning. Agency is developed when students can make substantial decisions about their learning (subjects, activities and homework), and their learning is placed in the centre. Research shows that when students are agents of their learning their motivation and success rate is higher, whilst they have also "learned how to learn" which is an essential skill (OECD, 2020). Furthermore, engaging with parents, community, and peers throughout their learning provide students with a concrete opportunity to create change and influence the world around them and help students to progress towards their shared goals.

In section B.3 of the survey three elements that compose the area of student agency were identified. Examining each element can provide an interesting insight on how eTwinning Schools practice and develop agency.

1. Agency in eTwinning projects

Linked also to collaborative learning and teaching, students have a voice in eTwinning project planning, for example by suggesting topics, activities, learning tools and methodologies to be used. In addition, being active learners and engaging with the community, the whole school and the parents, students can take a lead in disseminating and promoting the achievement of their projects.

2. Involvement in decision making process in the school

As mentioned, the essence of student agency is "being active" as opposed to "being passive". In this sense, eTwinning Schools should encourage students to take part in decision-making processes at all levels, for instance via student councils or other student representative bodies.

3. Student agency in learning process

Developing and enhancing student agency includes concrete opportunities for students to express their engagement, interests and knowledge during the lesson and homework (for instance by guiding and/or supporting other students). In this sense students have opportunities to self-reflect using journals, logs, or other structured templates or tools.

Analysis
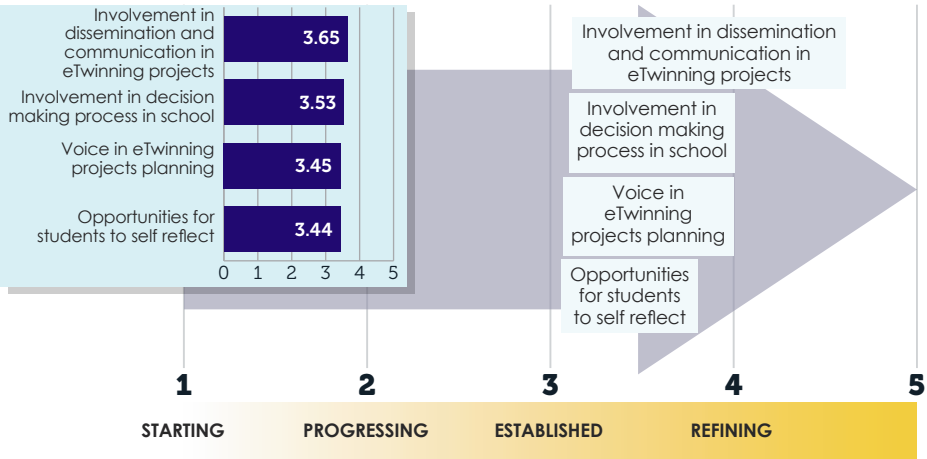
Figure 9: Student Agency

The graph in figure 9 shows the weighted averages for each of the statements composing the area 'student agency' as indicated by respondents. We notice that all statements position similarly on the scale between "established" and "refined". On

the one hand it confirms that students do have a rather affirmed role in their schools, on the other, that this practice is relatively novel and, compared to other areas described in the Report, it still has room for further progress.

The area which seems to be more refined is the one related to the involvement of students in the dissemination and communication of eTwinning projects. This seems to show that students are still seen as main actors mostly when the project has been established rather than at planning or decision-making phase. Perhaps teachers feel that they should keep the leading role in finding synergies between the project and the curricula. Or, perhaps teachers feel that involving students in decision-making is premature, especially when they deal with younger students.

Still, these findings, which place students in a consolidated and established position within the school environment, provide an interesting link to the third eTwinning School Mission Statement provided at the beginning of the paragraph.

In eTwinning Schools, students are important but should probably be even more at the centre of the learning process and should be encouraged to be the leaders of their own learning. eTwinning provides students with a concrete opportunity to engage, lead and decide upon their learning path, its content and its methods. Also, students are the link to the wider community: promoting eTwinning and disseminating results and insights of projects chosen and designed (in line with curricula) by students themselves, and on topics that interest them is of paramount importance for their engagement. This can provide students with concrete opportunities to make the change they want to see in the world.

E. MISSION AREA 4: ETWINNING SCHOOLS ARE MODELS FOR OTHER SCHOOLS

The eTwinning School is committed to playing a role of ambassadors for other schools in their area/region by actively promoting eTwinning and disseminating their achievements through as many means as possible: open days, information briefings, and mentoring schemes. They are proactive in creating professional development opportunities open to other schools in their area.

Schools' peer-learning and exchange of good practices and 'know how' is a key element in mainstreaming and disseminating innovative pedagogical approaches.

"Evidence shows that school partnerships and networks are crucial to support the effective implementation of innovations in schools. Working in connection to diverse networks of schools and professional learning communities can help to build and

sustain innovative learning environments, and benefit schools reciprocally" (European Commission 2018c)

eTwinning is a network and hub for school networking, exchange of good practice and dissemination of innovative methodologies. Moreover, the school setting is sometimes seen, especially in eTwinning Schools, as an opportunity to reach out to not only the school population but also the local community. School mentoring can take place in various forms:

- Engaging with community stakeholders such as parents, local associations, NGOs and professionals. This type of mentoring enriches the pupils and staff while at the same time provides concrete opportunities for the school population to enrich the community. Such mentoring can be delivered in the form of one-to-one shadowing, group mentoring, or team formats, allowing for flexibility in activity offerings based on the number of available mentors and the resources available at the school and community.
- Engaging with other schools to exchange knowledge and practice online and onsite- through joint activities, peer learning, shadowing and training provided by one school to another.

Mentoring programs in schools have shown a potential to boost factors that can lead to students' educational success, such as stronger connection to the school environment and peers, development of positive relationships with teachers and staff and improved feelings of academic confidence.

In section B.4 of the survey two components that compose the area of mentoring and modelling for other schools were identified. Examining each element can provide an interesting insight on how eTwinning Schools practice mentorship and peer-learning.

1. eTwinning Schools' teachers as mentors
In eTwinning Schools some teachers have unavoidably a stronger and more established role, both towards their colleagues and in relation to the local community. The community role is achieved through school visits, common activities, peer-to-peer learning, professional development sessions and subject related courses, all for the benefit of other schools.

2. Involvement in networks for collaboration
At the core of the overall eTwinning School concept there is the idea that the strongest and most engaged institutions should guide and support the other schools to achieve their level. eTwinning Schools are not special because they are the best, but because they are ready, willing and capable to support and develop other schools. When the eTwinning School is solid and mature enough, it can be engaged in networks and

collaborative activities as a whole school (and not only via its most active teachers, as in the previous area). This includes the involvement of the whole school in school-to-school networks and collaboration activities, for example by providing facilities, expertise, support, and solutions to other schools. Such actions aim to help other institutions to grow, develop innovative eTwinning methodologies and practices and possibly become eTwinning Schools.

Analysis
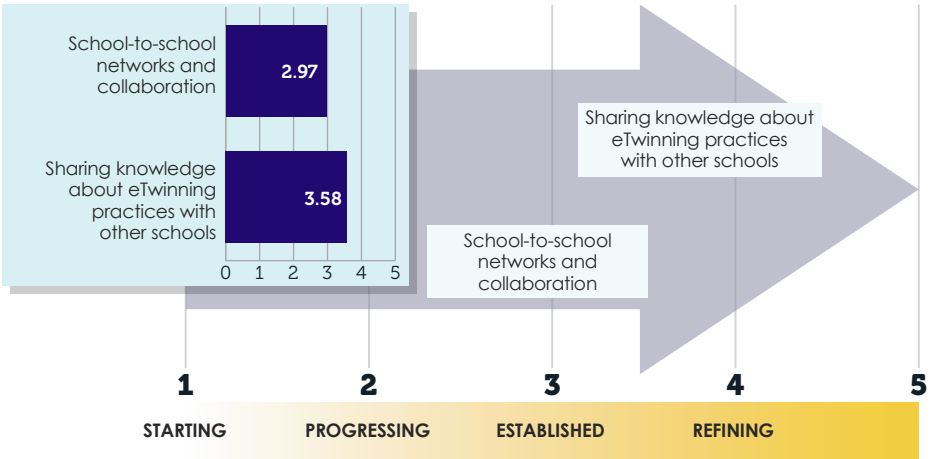
Figure 10: Mentoring and modelling for other eTwinning Schools

Figure 10 shows that this is the area which probably needs more development. Although sharing knowledge about eTwinning practice with other schools is a well-established practice among the schools that the replied to the survey, it might be the case that it is linked to the enthusiasm of the leading teachers rather than the whole school. This is indicated by the score of the other element which is related to how the school, as an institution, is ready to provide solutions and support other schools in terms of expertise and facilities, or/ and helping other school to become eTwinning Schools. The weighted average of this element is 2.97, the lowest in the survey.

The figure below details how the level of the whole-school mentoring practice is distributed among all respondents.
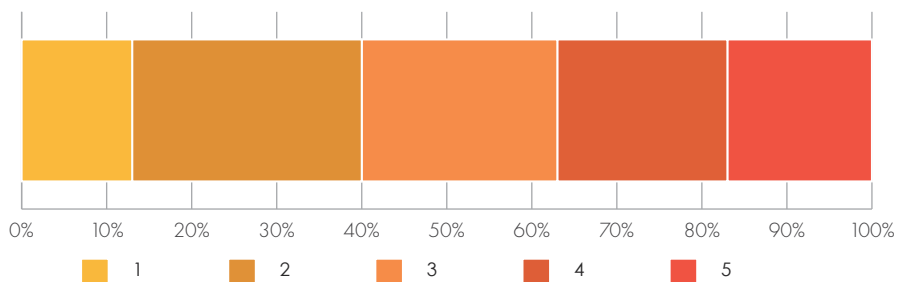
Figure 11: Distribution of eTwinning Schools for whole-school monitoring

Figure 11 clearly shows that two thirds of the respondents feel that their school is not entirely ready to be involved in school-to-school networks and collaboration (for instance by providing facilities, expertise, support and solutions to other schools).

This may be explained by the fact that eTwinning Schools are unavoidably still far from receiving recognition and support at all levels (regional, national and European) to fully engage in mentoring schemes.

Mentoring and modelling, promoting and disseminating eTwinning practices in other schools remains an essential element in the activities of an eTwinning School.

eTwinning Schools are at the front line of school innovative practices and as such, they should serve as a hub and source of knowledge to other schools. By mentoring and modelling for other schools and by reaching out to the community, eTwinning Schools are expected to implement a holistic approach that sets the school as a learning organisation which has a "supportive culture, and invest time and other resources in quality professional learning opportunities for all staff" (Schools as Learning Organisations, OECD, 2016).

F. MISSION AREA 5: ETWINNING SCHOOLS ARE INCLUSIVE AND INNOVATIVE LEARNING ORGANISATIONS

eTwinning Schools are committed to inclusivity at every level and actively seek ways to create an inclusive environment for students of every ability and culture, their parents and the wider community. Teachers in eTwinning Schools commit to developing the whole school as a learning organisation. They use eTwinning to support and deliver their curriculum using innovative pedagogical models which include, among a variety of approaches, collaborative learning, student-centred education, flexible approaches to learning times and learning spaces.

The European Commission ET 2020 working group for schools emphasized the role of central governments in supporting and enabling change in schools. Within such support, horizontal and vertical connection can be developed between schools and wider communities, other schools, regional and local authorities, and system authorities. Within such a system, schools are learning organisations where teachers are encouraged by school leaders to collaborate, improve pedagogical practices, engage in professional development and networking. As learning organisations, schools do not operate in isolation. They are developing a common school vision where discussion and learning from external stakeholders and other schools takes place in order to progress towards the school goals.

In this sense schools "communicate" not only with other schools and learning institutions, but they are in constant dialogue with decision makers "who can learn from the developments that are taking place in and around schools" (European Commission, 2018c).

The European Commission model of schools as learning organisations is a further development of a similar OECD – UNICEF model. Both models present student's learning and development in the center. According to OECD model, "a school as learning organisation has the capacity to change and adapt routinely to new environments and circumstances as its members, individually and together, learn their way to realising their vision" (OECD, Kools and Stall, 2016).

The student in the centre is supported by a seven action-oriented dimensions and their underling elements, reflecting both what the school aspires to be and the process it goes through while becoming a learning organisation

1. Development of strategic vision and leadership that is centered on the learning of all students
2. Promoting a culture of research, innovation and critical enquiry
3. Multiple stakeholders accountability for school development
4. Parental and community engagement in child's learning
5. Inclusive and inspiring learning environments inside and outside school
6. Professional collaboration, support of continuous professional development and team learning among all staff
7. Academic, personal and social support, guidance and counselling

Furthermore, embedding systems for collecting and exchanging knowledge and learning, learning with and from the external environment and larger learning system, and modelling and growing learning leadership (Schleicher, 2016) are embedded within these seven dimensions.
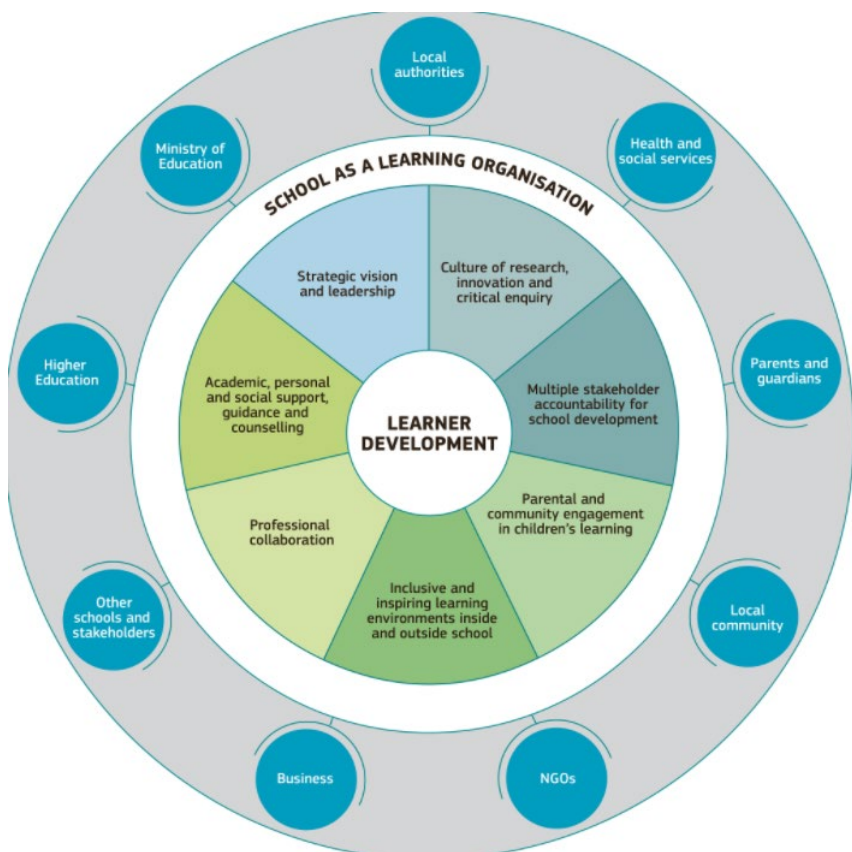
Figure 12: Schools as Learning Organisations European Commission, 2018c)

The models by OECD and the European Commission cover all the elements of the eTwinning Schools Mission, as previously presented in the chapters above. In addition to this definition, the Mission also includes the dimension of inclusivity, which we will explore in detail below.

In section B.5 of the survey three indicators that compose this last mission area were identified. Examining each element can provide an interesting insight on how eTwinning Schools serve as innovative and inclusive learning organisations. This element is particularly important as we will see in some of the case studies.

1. Collection and exchange of knowledge and learning
In order to respond quickly and effectively to changing realities and necessities, schools need to develop learning mechanisms to revise existing knowledge and

practice. Such knowledge is obtained through evidence gathering on students' learning, needs, wellbeing and on the school's performance on the commonly set goals. Effective use of data by teachers, school leaders and support staff are central to school-improvement processes. Evidence should be collected to measure learners' progress and identify any possible issues in their performance. Schools can obtain major improvement if they increase their ability to engage in ongoing assessment of learning and evaluate which strategies, actions and attitudes are effective. Staff must regularly discuss and evaluate whether pedagogical actions had the desired impact, evaluate, amend and update when necessary.

2. Inclusion of parents and community

Schools are an integral part of the local community and should be seen as a source of knowledge and opportunity to learn from. Parents, external organisations and other community stakeholders may be invited to contribute to the school's vision and enrich students' learning and sense of belonging. Parents can become active contributors in the schools organisational and educational process as they can contribute their skills and knowledge to the benefit of the whole school. Schools should provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for parents to get involved, appreciating diversity, and remaining open for dialogue and criticism.

In terms of engagement with the local community, inclusive schools identify and integrate resources and services to strengthen school programmes, family practices and students learning/development. Through eTwinning, parents can get involved and engaged in their children's learning process by participating and taking part in eTwinning related activities such as project presentation, uploading materials, reviewing material on the platform, assisting pupils in their projects, participating in fairs and helping children reaching a wider audience when disseminating their project's results.

3. Inclusion of all students

A school as a learning organisation has a shared vision that gives a sense of direction and motivates effort to achieve individual and school goals (OECD, 2016). A shared vision and attainment of goals involves staff, parents and students. Recognising the needs and diversity within the student population is paramount for school success. According to the OECD, inclusion of all students is a building block of the school's practice:

"Any vision to transform a school into a learning organisation should include two things: a front and centre commitment to making a difference in the learning and lives of all students, especially disadvantaged students; and a focus on learning and teaching that influences a broad range of outcomes – both cognitive and social/emotional – for today and the future. Each individual must be equipped to seize learning opportunities throughout life, to

broaden her or his knowledge, skills and attitudes, and to adapt to a changing, complex and interdependent world" (OECD, 2016)

The European Commission further elaborates on inclusion of students, adding a system level element to ensure support and guidance to all learners, when transitioning between levels and types of schools. In this sense, supporting continuity in learner development can be done to facilitate such transitions by efficiently sharing data on students learning and support student decision making, engaging parents and external stakeholders in the process.

In this sense, inclusion of all learners must be present in both school and system level: "being 'inclusive' as a system does not mean solely taking a universal approach to all learners. Taking an individualised approach to all learners is a basis for inclusiveness. It is also important to invest in targeted support to learners with additional needs, including those at particular risk." Such support and additional actions are to be taken at a school level, by teachers and educational staff.

Teachers need to recognise and support students with special needs - students who might face learning, linguistic and social challenges - through specific support and actions that are aimed to increase their learning success. Inclusion is not only about special needs but also about recognising the benefit from the linguistic and cultural richness and diversity present in the school community.

Analysis
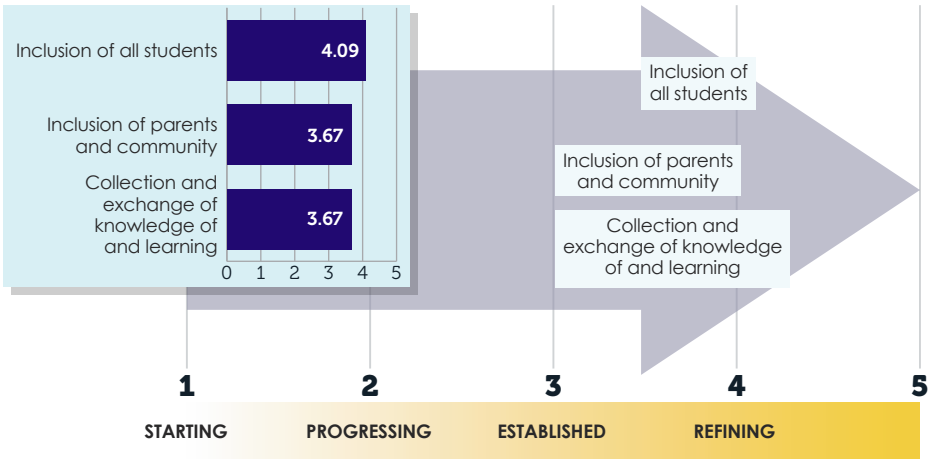
Figure 13: Schools as an inclusive and innovative learning organisation

Figure 13 shows us that in terms of inclusion of all pupils, eTwinning Schools which have replied to the survey are refining already well-established practices. This means that inclusion of pupils with special educational needs and recognising the cultural diversity of pupils are an established practice. Nevertheless, it must be noted that, although parents and community stakeholders are quite involved and engaged in eTwinning Schools, their inclusion is not yet as developed as for the previous indicator. This might be as part of eTwinning projects where parents are invited to the final project stages, with students disseminating the project result. Interestingly, looking at the collection of evidence and exchange of knowledge, we see that schools have this practice relatively well-established. Nevertheless, it might be the case that in some schools evidence collection and use of learning data for school improvement might still need more support.

The eTwinning School Mission area 5, reported at the beginning of the paragraph, encompasses indeed all the previous mission areas, providing stronger emphasis on inclusion and innovation as part of a whole-school approach.

Indeed, eTwinning Schools can use the projects' results (for instance via the TwinSpace) to learn about inclusion, innovative use of ICT and innovative application of Problem Based Learning, collaborative learning and other innovative methodologies and practices. In this sense eTwinning is a catalyst of inclusive narratives and diversity as it provides a window to innovative collaboration with schools across and beyond Europe. eTwinning Schools can further engage parents and the community in order to achieve the school's goals, through a common and shared vision and openness to change.

3. CASE STUDIES: ETWINNING SCHOOLS IN REAL LIFE

3.1. Introduction

The second part of this report is dedicated to a qualitative investigation, consisting of case studies: as part of the monitoring and development activity, six eTwinning Schools were identified to carry out a series of monitoring and development activities over a period of 18 months, according to their level of advancement and compliancy with the eTwinning School Mission (Annex).

The selection process was based on a call for interest posted in the eTwinning Schools Group; out of the 231 applicants/respondents, some 20 institutions were shortlisted; a further screening was carried out via interviews, ending in the final selection.

The identified schools guaranteed their strong engagement and the support of the formal school leadership in promoting eTwinning in the school and beyond, their proficient level of English and their commitment to commit to a learning and development process.

3.1.1. OBJECTIVES

The Central Support Service (CSS) designed an 18 months monitoring and development plan which main elements are as follows:

1. Provide selected eTwinning Schools guidance and support on the mission areas.
2. Help selected eTwinning Schools to create a network where they can work together, share ideas, collaborate in common projects, exchange practices, discuss and find solutions to the different challenges they face.
3. Help selected eTwinning Schools to create a network in their countries and serve as reference point to other schools that wish to engage in eTwinning.

4. Monitor the development and advancement of schools on the eTwinning Mission Statement 2019-2020.
5. Provide the eTwinning stakeholders examples on how eTwinning Schools operate and develop their practice.

3.1.2. PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

Picture 1: First face-to-face meeting with the representatives of the 6 eTwinning Schools in Brussels, 1st July 2019

A school leader from each school was involved in the monitoring and development activity representing his/her school and acting as multiplier towards the local community. In two cases, the active eTwinning teacher was the deputy headteacher. The six eTwinning Schools were from France, Greece, Italy, Romania, Spain and Turkey. The teachers who participated are:

France - *Principal[8]:* Marie-Laure Arnoux; *Teacher:* Muriele Dejaune
Lycée des métiers Louis Blériot, Trapes

Greece - *Principal:* Eleni Rossiou; *Deputy headteacher:* Alexandra Mauridou
Experimental School of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Italy - *Deputy headteacher:* Maria Cristina Cella; *Deputy headteacher:* Marisa Badini
Direzione Didattica Ottavo Circolo Piacenza

Romania - *Principal:* Vasile Asiminiscesei; *Teacher:* Loredana Popa
Şcoala Gimnazială Nr. 17 Botoşani

Spain - *Principal:* Montse Mollet Muntaner; *Teacher:* Josefina Vendrell Vila
Col·legi Sant Josep
In one of the face-to-face meetings Montse Mollet Muntaner was replaced by Nuria Terre Palau.

· ·

8   In this Report we generally refer to Principal when the role mostly concerns administrative, coordination and management functions, and headteacher or deputy headteacher when the functions include a teaching role.

Turkey - *Principal:* Didem Parlak; *Teacher:* Ilkay Çekirdek
İlhami Tankut Anatolian High School in Antalya

3.1.3. AREAS AND SCHEDULE

During the second semester of 2019 and in 2020, two members of each school were invited to participate in professional workshops and activities, both onsite at the CSS office in Brussels and online, that tackled each area of the eTwinning School Mission. Schools were also offered other optional activities to reinforce or develop their practice in one or more areas.

The topics covered during the activities included:

1. Shared Leadership as a leadership strategy
2. Collaborative teaching and learning
3. Engagement and empowerment of students - students' agency
4. Networking and reaching out to other schools- mentoring
5. Innovative pedagogical methods and inclusiveness

In particular, the activities developed as follows:

- Two face-to-face meetings in Brussels: July 2019, December 2019
- One school visit by the Central Support Service (only one took place, as the others were cancelled because of the Covid-19 pandemic) - peer learning activity - gathering information for the case studies: March - April 2020
- Participation in the online Thematic Conference for eTwinning School as experts: November 2020
- Four online meetings: April 2019, September 2019, January 2020, June 2020

3.1.4. SCHOOLS' DEVELOPMENT PLAN

During the first meeting in Brussels, schools were asked to draft an **action plan** (based on the NESTA theory of change[9]). The action plan provided a reference document for the schools, helping them to identify their goals and recognise in which areas they needed more support.

The action plans included **concrete goals and the steps to achieve them**, specifically addressing the leadership approach that was taken in each step. This was done to ensure a whole school engagement and the inclusion of staff who may be reluctant to a top-down decision-making process. Shared Leadership practices were used to achieve each goal, for example: creation of thematic leadership teams in various subject areas, interdisciplinary collaboration between teachers, involvement of students, parents etc.

9   Find the NESTA toolkit here: https://www.nesta.org.uk/toolkit/

The action plan was adapted throughout the lifespan of the work according to the changing needs of the schools. They also peer-reviewed the action plan of their colleagues and made comments or suggestions, an activity that helped them significantly improve their practices.

3.1.5. INTERDISCIPLINARY ETWINNING SCHOOL PROJECTS

Hand in hand with the development plan, schools were requested to collaborate and implement Shared Leadership strategies, innovative methods, and the tools they learned throughout the process. This implementation took place in the form of **joint interdisciplinary eTwinning project**, where schools in pairs decided the topic and content. The projects provided another area of professional development and peer-learning. The projects are available in the area of eTwinning kits in the portal: https://www.etwinning.net/en/pub/get-inspired.htm

3.1.6. DEDICATED ETWINNING GROUP

A dedicated eTwinning Group for the six schools was designed and created. In this virtual space the schools could interact, share resources they had developed, discuss challenges and more. Extra materials, articles and discussion questions were also shared in the Group on a regular basis with the animation and moderation of the CSS. The material of the Group has been gradually shared in the eTwinning Schools Group involving all eTwinning Schools to give them the opportunity to take advantage and improve their knowledge on the different elements of the eTwinning School Mission.

3.1.7. SCHOOL VISIT ACTIVITY AND COVID-19 RESCHEDULING

Towards the end of the monitoring activity, the CSS had planned to visit all schools to get a closer insight on the school's environment, work and activities. With schools' closure following the Covid-19 pandemic, only one visit took place, to Col·legi Sant Josep in Spain. The school visits were meant to contribute to the qualitative part of the monitoring report, therefore, an alternative plan was set up:

1. The six schools received a list of questions (based on the template to be used for the school visits) to be completed.
2. The six schools finalised their action plan and sent it to CSS.
3. Once the CSS analysed the replies and the action plan, an online meeting was organised with the two participating teachers to get more information and ask for any clarifications or additional information.
4. An online meeting was organised separately with an additional teacher from the school.
5. The CSS also asked, if possible, to receive some quotes from students participating in eTwinning.

The school visits would have provided the CSS with useful evidence by the direct observations of the school environment and by interviews with pupils and teachers at school. The alternative plan based on online activities, apart from Spain, gives a good representation of the school environment, although mediated through digital means.

Finally, the CSS had a final online meeting with the six schools in November 2020 in conjunction with the online eTwinning Schools Thematic Conference. The purpose was to discuss the next steps, gather feedback of the monitoring and development activity from schools and allow them to contribute to the Thematic eTwinning Schools Conference.

3.2. Inside the Schools

The results of the case studies below have many elements in common, but they also present some specific activities that each eTwinning School has organised. What is clearly demonstrated is that **eTwinning Schools are learning organisations which consider the eTwinning School Label as a milestone of a developmental journey** to improve their learning practices and work towards a whole-school approach, where all members of the school community participate on equal terms.

A. LYCÉE DES MÉTIERS LOUIS BLÉRIOT, FRANCE

"Lycée des métiers Louis Blériot" is an upper- secondary Vocational eTwinning School in the Yvelines department, 32 km southwest of Paris, in a town called Trappes, France. Trappes is a former railway men's town and has many working-class estates housing an under-privileged population. The school has 430 students, between 15 and 20 years old and 64 teachers. It belongs to a difficult area called "zone sensible", identified by the regulation of the city[10]. Due to its status, the school receives more funding from the region to organise pedagogical activities. The school received the title « Site d'Excellence » in the government's Espoirs Banlieue plan thanks to the school's results record.

The Lycée is a public school which receives funding from 4 different sources: the region (for the maintenance of the school and the professional equipment), the Ministry of Education via "inspection académique" which corresponds to the number of hours given to the school to set up the curriculum hours and its educational policy, private

· ·

10 The criteria used to classify an establishment in this category are: the rate of disadvantaged socio-professional categories, the rate of scholarship students, the rate of foreign students, the rate of students who are more than two years older when they enter the 6th grade, of half boarders

companies via the "Taxe d' apprentissage" to buy equipment for school's workshops and finally, donations in cash or kind from companies or associations.

Two thirds of the students live nearby and one third live in the surroundings. Thirty-five percent of the students come from underprivileged populations. These students come from a lower social background and live in a very difficult social and cultural environment. Some come from migrant background families.

Such students had poor/bad results at school in their previous years which prevents them from attending the general high school. They lack motivation for going to school and they miss classes frequently (*absenteeism*).

The school has 2 special units:

1. The first is a special needs class with 12 students and a special needs teacher. The group attends classes according to their abilities and they also attend classes with their special needs teacher to reinforce their skills.
2. The second is a language class with 16 students. This class is addressed to foreign students who arrived in France recently (less than a year) and they do not speak French.

The English language teacher has been working in eTwinning since 2008 and in 2012 the biotechnology teacher joined too. In addition to these two active eTwinners there are eight more teachers registered in the platform. Teachers participate voluntarily in eTwinning and they have the liberty to plan and propose their way of working to the management team. The hours they dedicate for eTwinning are part of the curriculum timetable. There are other teachers who are involved in eTwinning projects in a non-regular way to provide support to the activities, although they are not registered. For example, the history teacher can help with specific research, the art teacher can help with the logo creation etc.

Picture 2: Students presenting their eTwinning projects at school

A wall in the main hall of the school is dedicated to display all European projects the school is running, and a great part is reserved to eTwinning, showing all the different plaques, prizes and labels the school has been awarded with. The school also organises exhibitions and students present their work in the main assembly hall of the school. Such events include Erasmus+ Days,

European Week, Open day, parents' meetings or the Erasmus+ Charter. When they work on eTwinning, students use one of the computer rooms within the school.

eTwinning benefits and challenges

According to the Principal and the teachers CSS interviewed, one of the main tangible asset of eTwinning in a VET school is its contribution to reduce early school leavers: students feel more motivated when they engage in projects and they feel valued and recognised when awarded with National, European Quality Labels and prizes. They also have the opportunity to present their work to the other students of the school, and this gives them a visible role which they would not be able to achieve otherwise. Students can also work in mixed classes from different years and all students have an equal role in an eTwinning project. As one student mentioned: *"eTwinning helps shy people, we are less afraid to speak up. eTwinning must continue as long as possible at Lycée Blériot"* and another student adds: *"eTwinning helps students with difficulties to work and motivates them"*.

As the teachers in other eTwinning Schools have already mentioned, eTwinning enriches the language skills as teachers and students practice in real situations, not to mention the positive impact on ICT skills. The work carried out in eTwinning improves the school's image and climate by facilitating the relationships between teachers and students.

Picture 3: Students present their project to the school community

The biggest challenge – which is common to all schools - is to motivate teachers who are reluctant to work with eTwinning, claiming that they have a curriculum to finish and eTwinning requires extra work. Co-working is a possible solution as, since September 2019, working in collaboration is part of the curriculum in the vocational schools in France. For instance, professional subject's teachers must work with mathematic and/or French colleagues and there are specific hours dedicated to co-working. Also, there is another hour called "chef d'oeuvre", where professional teachers work with another teacher to help their students create a product related to their professional training. This co-working approach is already a reality for eTwinning projects at school, as the English teacher works together with the biotechnology teacher on an eTwinning project that is part of the biotechnology class. The two teachers share the activities in the classroom, and this has benefits for both the teachers and the students, who are not used to, and seem to enjoy, working with two teachers at the same time.

Technical infrastructure (good internet connection and updated computers) is also an important element which facilitates the success of eTwinning activities, and the Lycée is very well positioned. During an eTwinning project, teachers must always schedule the activities according to students' schedule. In the VET schools, students take part in a vocational work placement in industry for eight weeks in total during the school year; teachers need to plan the activities ensuring that the students are available to work on them.

The Principal mentioned that she would like all teachers to participate in eTwinning, contributing to projects one way or another and having the opportunity to learn about other school systems and test innovative pedagogical concepts. This is happening in the class of the English teacher where eTwinning became part of the curriculum and ideally this example should be replicated by organizing workshops to present eTwinning projects, creating short projects where teachers can have small tasks etc.. Students use online resources, work on the content given by their partners and in general, consider eTwinning as a methodological tool to improving speaking, writing and critical skills.

eTwinning School Mission

After some reflection and consultation with her colleagues, the Principal has realised that she needs to share the tasks of piloting and managing the school if she wants to create dynamic and constructive projects for the whole school community. The Principal does encourage the development of the various projects and works strenuously to coordinate them, but in order to ensure their success and the students' motivation, she also needs to lean on the "teacher-contacts" appointed for each action plan. The figure of "teacher-contacts" offers an added expertise as they have the technical skills and are a source of ideas. They are assets that the Principal trusts and ensure that the action plans work as planned and evolve synergistically (for example in the context of the eTwinning School Mission). Experience in the school has shown that a plan of action without a teacher-contact in charge of supporting, streamlining and often driving the various activities is destined to failure. The Principal's approach is one of a joint effort based on trust, respect for their expertise and voluntary participation of the teacher-contacts.

At the same time, the school's organisation and management include other bodies such as committees and boards that allow the teaching staff to take part in the running and decision-making of the school, and who establish the general policies that the school is to follow. The teachers are involved in management choices as they have a say through their representatives on the board. If a decision is made without consultation, the teaching staff have the right to refuse to vote at the board meeting. The running of the school is a joint effort and management is being shared between the Principal and the staff in a collaborative effort to pursue the school's programme.

However, whether the management is shared totally or only partly, the Principal is still responsible for the actions and decisions carried out in the school.

The school is an innovative learning organisation: different teaching methods such as co-animation are encouraged, and the curriculum mixes professional studies with academic subjects. In the school, all students and their parents sign a chart of good manners for the use of ICT infrastructure. Students can borrow laptops at home and they also receive training at school. Parents can also receive training if they ask for it.

Picture 4: Student work on the TwinSpace of her project

As the English teacher is also an eTwinning Ambassador, she organises training for other teachers in the region. Also, the Principal promotes eTwinning activities with her counterparts when she visits other surrounding schools to present her school and their course trainings.

eTwinning action plan

In their action plan, teachers wanted to involve students more, enabling them to be part of long-term change. The teachers managed to create an eTwinning club for their students who participate in eTwinning projects. On one occasion teachers suggested the idea to create eTwinning ambassadors to help them promote eTwinning inside but also outside their school. The Principal also took part in this meeting thus sending a strong message about the importance of this activity. The teachers presented the eTwinning School Mission and they organised different activities for the students.

Some of their students volunteered to act as ambassadors and every pupil voted for their ambassadors. Ten eTwinning ambassador students have been appointed in their school. In the second stage, students were given their roles, learnt more about their mission, expressed their views about eTwinning and what it offers to them, and discussed how they could disseminate it further. They also proposed topics for future projects, and they planned to invite students from other schools.

Four of them have already started working on their tasks: they were present during an event organised by the nearby town, where their schools presented their trainings and activities for potential future students. Due to the pandemic crisis, the activities stopped, and the action plan was not re-adjusted. Next year, the elections will take place again and this will trigger the same process.

Also, there was no time to share the action plan with the other teachers. They could share it online, but they decided to keep it on hold at the moment as the management team would like to dedicate more time on explaining the process and ask for feedback. One of its goals was also to involve more teachers in eTwinning by showing them what eTwinning is about and train them at school on how to use the platform during their working time.

Finally, from the school year 2020-2021, the school management has decided to formally offer all teachers one eTwinning hour in each class of level 1 and level 2. This is already informally happening but as from next school year it will be more visible to teachers and parents that there is an eTwinning activity. It is an effort to encourage more teachers to participate and give eTwinning more visibility in their schools.

eTwinning in a VET school

The Lycée Louis Blériot is a Vocational school which tries to encourage the students to work, to develop different skills, think creativity and keep being motivated to continue in their studies. The school Principal stimulates, supports, and encourages the teams of teachers to work in cooperation and innovation. The school has undertaken European mobility through Leonardo and Erasmus+ KA1 and KA2 and participated in eTwinning projects for more than 10 years. A training period abroad (Cyprus, England, Germany) is offered to 10 volunteer students from the three-final year baccalauréat classes every year. Working and living abroad reinforces their linguistic abilities and enriches their European cultural activities with the aim of positioning themselves on the European job market and gives them more autonomy. For 6 years, a group of teachers have been volunteering to experience job shadowing in different eTwinning partners' school during their autumn holidays.

The support of the Principal plays an important role and small steps are taken towards the implementation of eTwinning projects. Teachers need to understand that by changing the way they work; they can actually embed eTwinning in their teaching and motivate their students to participate more in class. As one of the non-registered teachers mentioned she would need more support in the use of ICT and how to adapt her lessons to this format. Online or in-school professional development can be a solution as long as she sees the concrete results.

According to a new regulation, students need to complete a project in their field (restoration, security, electricity etc) and come up with a virtual or physical outcome. eTwinning and Erasmus+ can be part of their project and in that way add the European dimension to their project, making them more motivated and offer them the opportunity to develop skills they will need in the future.

B. EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI, GREECE

The Experimental School of the University of Thessaloniki is a special public school which shares close ties with the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and provides pre-primary, primary and secondary education. It was founded by Alexandros Delmouzos, professor of Pedagogy in 1929. In 1934 he implemented his ideas on "School of work[11]" introduced by John Dewey. Nowadays, the school provides students of the Faculty of Philosophy and Pedagogy Department and other teacher training faculties with practical training in teaching methodology and in other educational subjects. It is a school where the educational, research and training programmes of the Aristotle University are carried out.

In the Secondary school, there are 300 students, 150 in Lower Secondary and 150 in Upper Secondary and there are 34 teachers teaching in both. Every level consists of two classes. The students enter the pre-primary education through a draw process, and they can continue until the end of their studies. There is a new law that will permit students to continue in the secondary school once they pass the exams.

The first teacher registered in eTwinning in 2010, and since then 26 out of the 36 teachers are now members of the eTwinning community and have organised projects to implement within their curriculum. eTwinning is visible at school with posters in the classrooms, in the staff room and in the Principal's office. There is also an eTwinning corner where teachers and pupils showcase the projects run every school year and their Quality Labels.

In 2018, as part of the promotion and support provided by the Greek National Support Service to some Greek eTwinning Schools[12], the school received an "open eTwinning hacker lab" that includes: Arduino, Raspberry, one interactive whiteboard, one 3D printer, ten tablets and a central PC.

· ·

11 https://brocku.ca/MeadProject/Dewey/Dewey_1907/Dewey_1907b.html

12 The four schools that received the equipment had to commit to some conditions:
- for the following four years 80% of the staff will participate in eTwinning projects,
- all involved teachers will apply for the National Quality Label at the end of each year,
- not more than 3 teachers will be involved in the same project,
- promotion of eTwinning at least in one other school at the region for the next 4 years must be arranged,
- collaboration with neighboring schools, school advisors, experts in pedagogical innovation and technology for the organisation of professional development activities in the hacker lab of the school must be organised,
- yearly report for the results of their activities should be sent to the Greek NSS.

The school also has 2 ICT labs with 12 laptops in each and one interactive whiteboard in each class of the lower secondary school. Most of the eTwinning lessons take place in one of the ICT labs.

eTwinning benefits and challenges

According to the Principal and the deputy-headteacher who were interviewed, eTwinning offers a range of online and onsite professional development opportunities that help teachers make progress and develop their competences. In their school one-third of the registered teachers participate in such activities and their next step will be to share them with the rest of the staff.

Collaboration among teachers and students is also an added value as they work closely and co-create outcomes for their different projects. Students are eager to participate in eTwinning and they ask their teachers to get involved in a project.

One of the challenges is that some teachers come to the school only for 4 hours teaching and this makes it difficult to get involved in a project. These teachers usually work in more schools and they don't have the time and energy to get involved in an eTwinning project.

Although all teachers express a desire to implement eTwinning projects, some are reluctant due to their lack of competences in using and managing digital resources. Efforts are being made to overcome these obstacles with the help of students who are more familiar with new technologies, but also with continuous and systematic in-school and wider training. Class observation

Picture 5: Students offer training to their parents

is a useful tool for teachers to learn, but sometimes is faced with suspicion by teachers who feel exposed and that the learning process is being disrupted.

Some teachers, especially those who are unfamiliar with the eTwinning culture or have not implemented similar activities, can be reluctant to incorporate eTwinning projects into their teaching process and learning. In other words, they do not realise that these projects are part of the lesson, but they believe that they should be implemented outside school hours. They often object to the incorporation of eTwinning projects into their lesson, believing that it deprives them of valuable time and hinders the progress of the curriculum. Similarly, there are parents who often express their concern about possible delays or deviations from the curriculum when eTwinning projects

are integrated into the lesson. Sometimes, it is really difficult to share the message that participating in eTwinning projects is a powerful learning process that benefits students.

Talking with a non-eTwinner in the school, he told us that although the Principal persuaded him to participate in some activities of an eTwinning project, he teaches biology in the last grade of upper secondary, preparing students for the final exams, and it's difficult to get engaged in a project. The goals are different, and there is lack of time. If eTwinning was part of the curriculum, then it would facilitate his work. He also told us that he considers himself too old to learn now how to use ICT tools. He believes however that eTwinning helps to interact with teachers abroad, to learn how things are done in different countries and get ideas. It also helps teachers come closer to their students and know their colleagues better. The students in their school are very eager to participate and ready to help their teachers with technology. Lastly, he pointed out that the role of the Principal is important as they offer constant inspiration and can push for things to happen.

eTwinning School Mission
The mission of the school mostly coincides with the principles of the eTwinning School Mission. The school mission was conceived by the founder, Delmouzos, many years ago as a petition of principles which only needed to find a concrete application. This happened when the school management adopted the eTwinning School Mission as a deployment of the original school mission.

According to the Principal, the success of initiatives like eTwinning is heavily dependent on how the school is managed and led from the top. The Principal has first to be convinced about the added value of eTwinning and then they will be the one who will push the teachers towards that direction. The key actors are the Principal and the ICT teacher that can slowly make eTwinning part of the school culture. For the 26 teachers, eTwinning has become part of the educational activities of the school.

Regular staff meetings are organised at school where everyone has the opportunity to comment on the practices of colleagues, discuss different issues of the school, voice their concerns and make decisions. Each eTwinning project being run at the school has more than one teacher who is involved in the project.
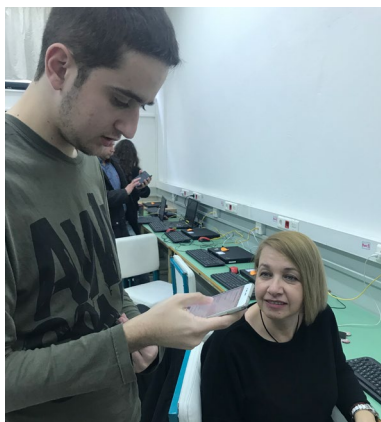
Picture 6: Student explains to a parent how to use online tools

A teacher starts a project, presents their ideas to their colleagues and the ones interested can join. Teachers also have the opportunity to attend an eTwinning class and see how their colleague works on their subject through eTwinning to get ideas and inspiration. Teachers, according to their expertise, also offer training sessions on different topics for their colleagues (for instance on how to use the equipment they received in their hacker lab).

Students are also involved in the decision-making process of the school. One of the most interesting initiatives was the online training they organised for their parents. Students prepared and ran a series of online courses (8 lessons) in Moodle about the use of ICT, GDPR and e-safety with the aim to combat the digital exclusion of adults.

Students also have the opportunity to collaborate on extra-curricular topics by participating in school clubs like orchestra, arts, mathematics, statistics, theatre, physics, cinema, Model United Nations, rhetoric and argumentation.

The school presents its work at the end of the school year in the "School's Activities Presentation Day" and showcases their involvement in many initiatives through their website and their annual magazine "Chronicles".

eTwinning action plan

The eTwinning Action Plan was an important element for the strategic planning of the school year 2019-20. The action plan helped address the following questions:

1. Where are we now?
2. Where do we want to go?
3. How do we get there?
4. How do we measure our progress?

The teachers of the school were divided into five groups corresponding to the five elements of the eTwinning School Mission and each group was asked to evaluate their success or failure: (a) during the implementation of eTwinning initiatives undertaken during the school year 2018-2019, and (b) in the school's Management team and corresponding leadership style.

Following the presentation of each group and the provision of the necessary feedback, teachers were split once again into new groups by choosing the specific characteristic of the eTwinning School Mission that they believe that they can better achieve and/ or are relevant to their interests. The teams, after brainstorming and consultation, put forward new proposals aiming to (a) reinforce the positive elements that emerged during Phase 1 of the workshop, and (b) address the problems identified.

After the presentation of each group's proposals, a roundtable discussion took place which eventually helped in the compilation of an action plan for the 2019-20 school year.

In order to put forward the action plan, the school implemented a series of workshops called "eTwinning Routes":

- The first workshop in June 2019 introduced: 1. eTwinning and benefits 2. eTwinning personal development opportunities 3. eTwinning projects 4. eTwinning platform as learning management system 5. STEM and eTwinning, and 6. Hacker lab.

- The second workshop in September 2019 introduced the eTwinning School Mission in detail. Teachers show in-depth the five elements of the eTwinning School Mission and came up with the action plan for the school. It was the time for collaboration between teachers in order to co-sign the "collaboration contract" for achieving goals and activities of the action plan. It was necessary to have an intermediate evaluation to see which activities are done or will be done and how new teachers were going to be involved.

Picture 7: The poster for the intra-school training on eTwinning

- The third workshop in January 2020 gave the opportunity for new teachers to join one of the five teams. As we mentioned earlier, each team was responsible for the one of the five elements of the eTwinning School Mission. During this workshop, each team was invited to evaluate what had been achieved so far and added or deleted activities supporting this element.

- The fourth workshop was planned for April 2020, but it was cancelled because of the Covid-19 pandemic. During this workshop teachers were planning to measure the progress they had made in order to conduct the evaluation in May 2020.

As the Principal mentioned, they decided to work on all elements of the eTwinning School Mission in order to involve all teachers and meet their diverse interests. The parallel development of the goals offered a further development of their school and a shared ownership of the process involved.

Principal as an asset for the development of an eTwinning School

In the Experimental School of the University of Thessaloniki, formal management plays a central role. As soon as the Principal was convinced of the benefits that eTwinning could offer to the school, she started supporting, and sometimes strongly encouraging, the implementation of eTwinning projects at school. The Principal is convinced that there are teachers who will never take the initiative to try something new and therefore need a push to go beyond their comfort zone. She is convinced that once they start working on it, they will realise all the benefits they gain. This strategy paid off: now all permanent teachers in the Experimental School are engaged in an eTwinning project, alone or within various teams, and share responsibilities and tasks. The school has also set up a coordinating team comprised of experienced teachers, who have an overview of the eTwinning projects implemented at school, offering support when it is needed.

The management team also assigns different tasks to members of the teaching staff in rotation, pairing teachers who may be more resistant to work with one another, as a way to build bonds of trust and collaboration in the school community. Although it's up to the management team to propose initiatives and ideas, these are implemented by the staff. Therefore, they are wisely involved in the decision-making process by agreeing on the activities to be undertaken and the allocation of responsibilities.

The school is active in many European initiatives apart eTwinning: Erasmus+ mobilities, e-Safety label, JA Europe, CRISS H2020, SELFIE, Scientix. This indicates an effort to provide continuous professional development to the staff and different learning methods to the students as an innovative learning organisation.

C. DIREZIONE DIDATICA OTTAVO CIRCOLO, PIACENZA, ITALY

Direzione Didatica Ottavo Circolo is an eTwinning School in Piacenza, in the Emilia-Romagna region of Northern Italy. The school is a cluster that includes two Primary Schools with 71 teachers and 627 students and five Pre-Primary Schools with 46 teachers and 391 students. The school is public and receives funding from the Ministry of Education and the municipality. As is the case with every school in Italy, at the beginning of the school year the school management is expected to design a pedagogical plan where they set their priorities that get support, both in terms of human resources and possibly funding. The Principal, with the help of the staff, investigates what the best practices are and what is needed to deliver them. Together they decide the most effective activities they should include in terms of funding and outcomes. In Ottavo Circolo, the priorities focus on the development of eTwinning activities and on the professional development of the staff.

In the school, 5% of the students have special needs and many of them need a personal teacher to support them. Almost 22% come from East Europe, South America and

China, a number that is increasing in recent years. The first teachers joined eTwinning in 2014 and since then 34% of teaching staff are now registered in eTwinning (40 out of 117) with the majority joining in 2017, the year the school run 3 Erasmus KA2 projects and won an eTwinning Prize.

eTwinning is visible in the whole school, with the eTwinning School Mission displayed in all classes and in the Principal's office. The website of the school proudly features all the eTwinning activities and recognition (National and European Quality Labels, Prizes). The two primary schools have two ICT labs and two English labs with laptops connected to the interactive whiteboard. Both primary and pre-primary schools provide to the students Lego toys, robotic and tinkering classes. Also, each primary school classroom is equipped with an interactive whiteboard and the school is gradually increasing the number of tablets with the help of the "Piano Nazionale Scuola Digitale" (National Planning for School Digitalization) which supports the use of innovative devices and the related training of teachers.

eTwinning benefits and challenges

eTwinning is one of the priorities in Ottavo Circolo and plays an effective role in the school's innovation process. As teachers pointed out during the various discussions we had with them, eTwinning offered the opportunity to the two primary schools to collaborate efficiently with the two pre-primary through eTwinning projects and professional development activities. Also, many teachers in the school experienced the opportunities offered by eTwinning for distance learning and teaching using ICT, especially during the difficult period of the Covid-19 pandemic which forced the school to close for a few months. Teachers realised how useful the eTwinning platform can be to work, share, communicate and collaborate.

The interview with the teachers of Ottavo Circolo highlighted a number of opportunities offered by their involvement in eTwinning. For instance, teachers believe that eTwinning projects help with the development of digital skills for both students and teachers, as they need to experiment with different tools to find the ones that support their collaborative activities. Also, integrating eTwinning projects in the curriculum fosters active learning, creativity and problem solving for their students and

Picture 8: Students working together on projects

is part of the professional development of the teachers. "*Going to school is more exciting with eTwinning projects: eTwinning intrigues us, motivates us, involves us ... so*

we learn while having fun and above all we learn from each other" (the student David 3C, as reported by one of the teachers). Also, teachers have many possibilities for professional development at an international, national and local level participating in webinars, seminars, Learning Events, forums and groups on a range of topics and for every professional need.

Students are also more motivated as they take active roles, make decisions, and share responsibility. "*The beauty of eTwinning projects is being able to choose and decide together with your companions what to do, in short, making us feel important*" (the student Matilde 3C, as reported by one of the teachers).

In 2019, the two deputy headteachers from the primary and the pre-primary schools organised tailored professional development training to enhance the expertise and the participation of their colleagues. A learning-by-doing training was organised at school based on two eTwinning projects that they had developed. The teachers shared the tools they used, the steps in implementing the projects and what teachers learnt from this process. The colleagues had the opportunity to learn by looking at concrete examples and by exploring how it has already been done in an eTwinning project.

One of the challenges which emerged was the lack of time. Even though teachers are responsive, it is still difficult to engage them. As mentioned in the interview, teachers in Italy, apart from teaching, spend many hours in project work and meetings among other teachers for planning and monitoring their work. More time would be needed to organise peer-to-peer learning and training.

During an interview, a teacher who was not registered in eTwinning told us that she was afraid to get engaged because of the language barrier: she felt her level of English was not good enough. She is aware of the added value of eTwinning and in 2019 she started private classes in English to improve and be able to participate in international projects. She is convinced by looking at her colleagues that eTwinning would offer her various skills such as ICT and language, cultural richness, organisational skills etc. And most importantly, her students would have the opportunity to develop their competences and benefit from the collaboration with peers from other countries.

eTwinning School Mission

Ottavo Circolo was granted the eTwinning School Label in 2018 and they immediately adapted their school goals to the eTwinning School Mission, with special attention on inclusion together with collaboration and professional development. They aim to help students reach the 21st Century skills by organising a dedicated learning process.

At the beginning of the school year 2019-2020 they had the support and trust of the new Principal, who shared their vision and goals as an eTwinning School. She validated

their application process, shared the school mission and improvement plan with the staff and the decision was adopted by the school council. She also registered to eTwinning and agreed in planning eTwinning professional development training and workshops.

The CSS has worked closely with the deputy headteachers for the primary and pre-primary school. They developed, together with their colleagues and the Principal, a shared leadership approach through monitoring school and staff needs. They shared a common vision and mission and supported their colleagues with their specific expertise in coordination.

The two teachers involved in the monitoring plan gave emphasis to collaboration, as they believe it is the best way for the school to grow as an effective learning organisation. They succeeded via dedicated activities:

Picture 9: Teachers' training session organised by the deputy headteachers

- Weekly meetings including the Principal and staff to coordinate and integrate the specific actions.
- Teachers' meetings: grade teams (the teachers of each grade), subject teams, project teams, commissions (groups of teachers working for goals that are connected to the monitored needs of the school).
- Group work, in different groups, as many teachers are part of different teams.
- Training courses on ICT, new methodologies, and eTwinning development.
- School special events like a solidarity market, school concert, special fairs etc.
- Establishing a transparent and fair decision-making process.
- Organising informal meetings to meet each other after work hours (sports, visits, trips, theatre, exhibitions etc). This gave the opportunity for sceptical teachers to feel included and part of a group. The informal meeting helped break the ice and made all teachers feel more engaged.
- Involvement of primary and pre-primary school in a common eTwinning project.
- Tailored meetings with parents to make them an active part of their project work.

Recognition also played an important role. Activities in this area included the deputy headteachers' appreciation of the work and of the outcomes by giving positive

feedback, praising and highlighting the importance and value of each small contribution.

The two deputy headteachers are part of formal networks including various schools and this gives the opportunity to promote professional development to interested teachers. For example, in 2020 a course was organised and 2-3 representatives from other schools were invited to attend.

The school has also established a "Continuity Committee", a dedicated group of teachers who are responsible to ensure the connection between the pre-primary and the primary school in all aspects: administrative, pedagogical, organisational. This team is responsible to connect the two different levels of education though their curricula and projects and they also analyse the difficulties which may arise in passing from one level to the other. Students on the 4th grade are also participating by offering help and support to the students of the pre-primary.

eTwinning action plan
The action plan is very useful for their school as it highlights their strengths and weaknesses. The document was shared in the committees and teams and each group discussed the action plan and adapted it to their needs, also with the contribution and validation of the Principal. The action plan helped to identify problems and possible solutions. The goal was to develop *inclusion activities*, via the engagement of as many teachers as possible.

Taking into account the increasing number of students from other countries, the school created an inclusion commission coordinated by a member of the school staff and comprised of teachers and parents representing pre-primary and primary schools. This commission organised monthly meetings to:

- Plan their actions
- Obtain support from local institutions (language mediators, social services etc.) both for students and parents
- Plan support of expert language teachers for students at the beginning of their integration
- Collaborate with teachers of the different grades in designing students' personalised learning paths and monitoring/readjusting them in progress: eTwinning and Erasmus+ projects were an opportunity for these students to exhibit their special talents.

eTwinning as a normal practice, open to all, fostering inclusion
Direzione Didattica Ottavo Circolo is a complex of schools where eTwinning permeates all classes: this is clearly a sign of successful promotional activities organized by the

school management. It is not a mandatory activity but open to all. The idea is that everyone can do it, and everyone can also ask for help and support. The Principal and the two deputy headteachers have created a climate of trust, where all teachers work in different teams, take up roles and responsibilities and have regular meetings to discuss activities that are happening at school.

In this school, professional development plays an important role, as all learning opportunities are shared in formal and informal means and teachers are always eager to share their good practices. Collaboration between pre-primary and primary schools is something unique thanks to the older students who act as mentors for the younger ones. Such spirit of collaboration is also taking place among their teachers. In that way, pre-primary and primary education are separate from each other. Inclusion, as conceived in the eTwinning School Mission, is developed and deployed vertically (teachers to students, older students to young students) and horizontally (via teams composed of difference actors).

D. SCOALA GIMNAZIALA NR.17, BOTOSANI, ROMANIA

Scoala Gimnaziala n.17 is a public primary and secondary school in Botosani, a city in northeast Romania and quite close to the border with Moldova. It has 43 teachers and 720 students ranging from 6 to 14 years old. The school receives public funding but a parents' association also contributes financially to the activities organised at school like school trips, competitions, office supplies etc. 10% of the students are officially disadvantaged (special needs, parents working abroad, living with relatives or foster families) and the support of the school psychologist and support teachers is widely used.

16 teachers are registered in eTwinning and 6 more collaborate informally in eTwinning and Erasmus+/eTwinning projects. Some of them registered in eTwinning in 2010, others in 2013 and the rest in 2018. Teachers usually incorporate eTwinning into the curriculum and adjust their planning to include it, a process facilitated by the inclusion of eTwinning in the school's internal management planning.

In 2017, the school created an optional eTwinning class for all 5th graders, answering the request from the Ministry of Education, common to all Romanian schools, to create an interdisciplinary optional class. Although this class is no longer a Ministry's request, the

Picture 10: The eTwinning corners at school

school kept it as parents and students are very enthusiastic about it. Once a week, 2-3 classes of 5th graders meet to work on their eTwinning projects.

In the primary school, eTwinning is embedded within STEM and language classes. Students choose as a class what projects to work on and, together with the teacher, ensure they support the topics are studying. In secondary school the subject areas including; Languages (Romanian, English and French), Mathematics, Arts, Biology, Physics incorporate eTwinning into their curricula in varying degrees.

eTwinning is visible in the school: a flag stands out in the Principal's office, the eTwinning School plaque is prominently displayed at the school's entrance and panels with eTwinning activities - "did you know" QR codes made by students and parents- are present in every floor of the school. The school has a very small ICT lab with rather old computers and several newer laptops but can only accommodate 10-12 students and not the classes of 30 students. The school has a major issue with the internet connection and teachers often use their own internet connection and create a hotspot with their mobile phones to allow some of the students to go online. There are some classes with a desktop computer, bought by the parents' association and 3-4 laptops that the teachers can use with their students during the eTwinning lesson. Some students also bring their own laptops to class.

eTwinning benefits and challenges

eTwinning creates equal opportunities for all students in the school; those who want to work are welcome without an entry selection. The entire class takes part in a project because they all decide what projects to embark on together. Students are particularly enthusiastic and willing to communicate, collaborate, and create content. As the teacher mentioned in our interview, she has noticed that students are very adaptable and willing to experiment and learn on their own. For example, since schools have closed because of Covid-19, the eTwinning students and teachers have found it a lot easier to work online as they were already used to it and they had established their learning and meeting environments.

Teachers at school are very eager to take part in professional development opportunities, to learn languages and develop their ICT skills. They developed an interest in taking part in a KA1 project for professional development, which they submitted in February 2020, choosing courses on flipped learning, ICT, project-based learning, inquiry-based learning and new pedagogical methodologies in general.

The school has the chance to share good practices with other eTwinning partners (via projects) and with schools. On this score, the school invites and hosts inspectors and teachers from other countries invited by the School Inspectorate and holds eTwinning classes where students take the reins and present eTwinning.

The main challenge for the school is related to the available equipment: both the internet connection and the availability of computers are poor and teachers often bring their own laptops, making the connection with the video projectors unstable and thus hindering the organisation of videoconferences with partners. These issues will be gradually addressed and so far did not constitute a blocking factor, also due to the creativity and commitment of the teachers involved.

The other challenge is that some teachers are not available to get involved in eTwinning. For some, according to a respondent, it is understandable. For example, several are soon retiring; others work in more than one school, so they literally have to run from one school to another, they get involved as much as they can and are willing to take part, but their time is limited. But it also happens that some teachers are just not interested in European projects, despite the efforts of their students to present the benefits or show them what they did. In some cases, teachers would be willing to adapt the curriculum and include eTwinning activities, but at the same time they are reluctant because this would mean that students would have less time to dedicate to traditional subjects (for Math's and Literature - where the curriculum is very heavy), which, they believe, might lead to a disadvantage at the exams. eTwinning can be incorporated into any school subject in Romania, but for some teachers it seems more difficult to plan. Almost all are happy to take part in projects and do some activities, but some struggle with planning and finding ways to incorporate it.

Despite the challenges, more than 75% of the total number of teachers in the school take part in eTwinning activities to various degrees. As an eTwinning School, the Principal points out that they have to start with their own backyard to reach every teacher.

The French teacher, who is not registered, mentioned in the online interview that she is interested in the programme but she does not have the time to visit the platform in-depth and she does not have enough time to actually teach French to her students. Also, the exams (based on summative assessment) are based on notionism and this constitutes a methodological issue when working in collaborative projects.

Finally, some parents are not eager to let their children participate in eTwinning projects as they believe that students would not acquire the knowledge and skills they need. In cases like this, the teacher has invited parents in her class during an eTwinning lesson and parents had the opportunity to see how their children work in practice, how they interact with their peers abroad in English and work on concrete outcomes.

eTwinning School Mission

Teachers meetings are semi-formal ways for teachers, over a coffee or a tea, to share ideas, devise a plan, share the responsibilities, and ask questions. The school is organised with department heads for each subject and also various committees support each

curriculum area and wider issues (for instance for quality, safety, ethics). Teachers are part of several of these bodies, according to their skills and where this would better benefit the school. The department heads rotate, for example various language teachers have been, in turn, the head of department. Since this involves a lot of paperwork, sharing the burden facilitates their work. They consult with the other departments as they have built a very friendly atmosphere in their teachers' room. The school management is eager to support, also financially, all teachers in need of continuous professional development and regularly asks each one of them what they need to carry out and enrich their teaching. This opportunity is very much used by most teachers.

To a greater or lesser extent, the amount of collaboration which takes place in school depends on the individual teacher. The school is trying to establish informal collaboration through a WhatsApp group and a teachers' choir. The management team encourages everyone to step out of their comfort zone; this is seen as the first step in learning. Creating a school choir for teachers was a great achievement. The way it transformed the school environment showed them that informal meetings and sharing their hobbies make it easier for them to start working on European projects too.

Picture 11: Students working collaboratively on an eTwinning project

Students are involved in all the aspects of projects. Teachers encourage them to get creatively involved in the learning process by being teachers for their peers, for other students and even for teachers from other schools. Students are encouraged to disseminate their work in whatever way makes them comfortable. Some students don't know where to begin when they have the freedom to lead their learning and get stuck, so teachers act as facilitators and tutors, sharing with them tips and techniques.

The school serves as a model for other schools as they organise informal and formal trainings under the auspices of the School Inspectorate. Teachers share their practices, answer questions, take calls to help other colleagues in different schools, organise 1:1 sessions and provide examples from their own experience. They organise online events in eTwinning as well, to showcase their work and share challenges and solutions. The school has created a local dissemination group on Facebook where everybody can post news, useful information, links to professional development opportunities, good practices. An eTwinning Group for Romanian eTwinning Schools and Romanian eTwinners are also available and used by them.

The teachers of Scoala Gimnaziala n.17 have regular meetings with parent representatives from all the classes where the eTwinning School Mission as well as other eTwinning activities are presented. They also have an online portfolio that all parents can consult. Parents are sometimes also invited as visitors to the projects' TwinSpace at the beginning of the school year. This has a great impact as all parents give their consent for their children to participate in eTwinning projects and they support their children by helping them in the different activities of the project. There are also parents who ask their children to participate in projects when they see that in their child's class, no eTwinning project is taking place. There are only a few parents who do not consider eTwinning projects as part of a learning process and they do not participate in any activities. To address this issue, the school is planning to send to parents reports regarding the skills and competences students acquire by participating in an eTwinning activity and how this activity is connected to the curriculum. The parents' association is very supportive when it comes to activities in the projects because the school has a 20-year history of being involved in European projects, teachers, students and the parents' association.

eTwinning action plan

Taking into account the relatively small number of teachers fully engaged in eTwinning, and in collaborative learning generally, the action plan concentrates on outreach and dissemination activities to inform and engage reluctant teachers. This is done by the organisation of activities presented by experienced teachers and students.

In the first teachers' meeting, in September 2019, the Principal and one teacher presented what they did in the first face-to-face meeting with the CSS in Brussels and the action plan they had drafted. Their colleagues were asked to make a list of activities that would best benefit them with respect to the main idea of their action plan – increasing the number of teachers involved in eTwinning. Then, they all gave their feedback and ideas and they came up with the final action plan.

The following activities then took place:

- Training sessions in small groups or individually that engaged more teachers in online events in eTwinning Live.
- Tutorials for different web tools that are essential for projects. The list will be expanded with new tools they used in their online classes during the lockdown.
- Correlate the eTwinning activities developed during projects with the list of skills and competencies acquired both by teachers and students. This will be presented to the parents also with the involvement of the students as a way for parents to become aware of the learning process that occurs during an eTwinning project.

- Presentation on the first steps of using the platform, its benefits and how to integrate eTwinning into the curriculum depending on the school subject.
- New colleagues in eTwinning were invited to take part in various eTwinning activities in class, as part of sharing good practices in their Erasmus+ project.

Picture 12: eTwinning students and teachers working in collaboration

The feedback from teachers was positive and asked for further training and language classes. However, the English teacher already has a heavy schedule and the school is looking for alternatives.

Teachers encouraged their students to teach them some web tools that were used during the online lessons organised when the school was closed because of Covid-19.

More than half of the teachers also showed interest in participating in Erasmus+ courses and have applied for funding. This triggered a lot of interest and further activities in the summer months of 2020 have been scheduled.

The school already had a European development plan, but the action plan developed as part of the eTwinning School monitoring process was much more detailed, goal-oriented, specific and focussed on small constant steps. The teachers involved will draft a new one for next year based on what they have achieved so far, including what they have learnt from each other during the state of emergency due to the school's closure.

An eTwinning School needs passionate teachers and not the best technical infrastructure

Although the school has major technical issues, teachers and students find creative solutions to overcome them. Many teachers complain that they do not have the infrastructure or the ICT knowledge to get involved in eTwinning, but this school shows that this is not a blocking issue. Teachers focusing more on learning processes and innovative pedagogies such as project-based learning, inquiry-based learning and flipped classroom do not need the most advanced technology to succeed. Teachers have started showing interest with their professional development as they had an eTwinning course to learn how to create an account, navigate in the platform and join an event and there is a planning for continuation over the summer, during their summer holidays.

Students play an important role, as they actually help teachers to use different tools and become the best agents of eTwinning. One of their clubs is dedicated to eTwinning; in a fixed day and time every week, students can join to finish their activities that they didn't manage to complete during the class such as recordings, videos, presentations etc. In this case both students and teachers remain after school hours.

All these cannot happen without the approval of the management team, who clearly appreciates the benefits of eTwinning and offers to the eTwinning teachers the tools and flexibility to organise trainings and 1:1 meetings to gradually involve all the staff.

One very active eTwinning student, who is now studying in upper secondary school and still comes back to participate as volunteer in eTwinning, said once, at the end of an eTwinning project, that it had made him a better person. This is what eTwinning is for this school, "unity in diversity, sharing, growth and the strength to overcome their differences by working together", as the English teachers mentioned at the end of the interview.

E. COL·LEGI SANT JOSEP, NAVÀS, SPAIN

Col·legi Sant Josep is an eTwinning School in Navàs, a small town of 6.000 residents in the region of Catalonia in Spain. The school welcomes 250 pupils from nursery to primary school (4 months- 12 years old). It is a semi-private school, as it receives public funds but also a small fee per month from the parents to cover the extra one-hour lessons offered per day. 15% of students have special needs and 12% come from non-EU countries, mainly from Morocco.

The first teacher joined eTwinning in 2009 and since 2020, all 17 pre-primary and primary school teachers are registered in the eTwinning community. eTwinning is embedded in the English language curriculum and it has been slowly integrated in other school subjects as well. In 2019- 2020 school year, almost all classes were involved in an interdisciplinary eTwinning project, where each class participated in short activities throughout the year.

Students work on their projects mainly in the ICT room, where they have 17 desktop computers and 15 laptops. They also work in their classroom which is also equipped with a laptop and a projector.

Three years ago, the school joined the "Escola Nova 21", an alliance of schools and civil society institutions for an advanced education system, and adopted a school vision which has common elements with the eTwinning School Mission.

Picture 13: Students working in pairs for an eTwinning activity

eTwinning benefits and challenges

During a meeting CSS had with teachers and students in their school, they share that when working on an eTwinning project students feel highly motivated, while also developing their ICT skills by using a variety of ICT tools. Students work autonomously in the TwinSpace and they are confident to work with different ICT tools. During eTwinning projects students work in groups of three to four and collaborate efficiently whilst the teacher acts in the role of facilitator. In a discussion with the 5th graders, who participated in their first eTwinning project with a class from Ukraine, Student M said, "*We learn English, have fun, make new friends and learn about other cultures.*" Student P added, "*It's our first project and we do things in a different way, we learn how to work with other people and we learn to be responsible as we have to follow the deadlines in our common tasks*". Another 10-year-old student explained one of their eTwinning activities and said enthusiastically: "*We have many things in common with our partners. For example, me and my friend from Ukraine, we both love sushi*".

Parents are embracing eTwinning work, as they see concrete outcomes for their children; students improve their level of English, develop ICT skills, become more autonomous, creative and improve their communication and critical thinking skills. During our school visit, parents participated in an activity organised by the school and it was clear that they play an active role in the decision-making and collaborate with the teachers and their children to create a better school environment.

Teachers have the opportunity to learn new pedagogical theories through their eTwinning projects and improve their digital skills. Collaboration is another important element, as teachers collaborate with other teachers, with their students and the families. Parents, according to their expertise, are invited to the schools and help students in the accomplishment of different activities. As one of the teachers pointed out: "*eTwinning is a fantastic tool to enhance the collaboration, the language learning skills, and to promote the feeling of being part of a European community*".

However, many of the teachers feel uncomfortable due to their level of English, although they know that it is possible to run an eTwinning project in Spanish or other languages. They claim that English is the dominant language in eTwinning. Also, many teachers claim that participating in eTwinning is a demanding task that requires a lot of effort and extra work, it requires extra time whilst there is always the pressure to follow

the curriculum. It is their own perspective as the curriculum is open and teachers have the freedom to embed eTwinning projects in it. This is a major challenge for further embedding eTwinning in the curriculum and not see it as an additional practice. Moreover, some teachers mentioned during the meeting we had with them at school, that they do not have the digital skills to work on the eTwinning platform.

eTwinning action plan

Taking into consideration the challenges that many teachers face at their school, such as lack of ICT and language skills, in 2019 they worked together on an action plan that also supports their school development process. The action plan had a simple, achievable goal: to involve 50% of the school staff in eTwinning. The objective was to familiarise teachers with the eTwinning platform by participating in small tasks and by organising short activities. The Principal believes that if the action plan is not too ambitious, it is easier for the school to reach the goal and all teachers will be more empowered to continue taking small steps towards the achievement of the school vision. At the end of the school year 2019-20, 76% of the teaching staff were involved in eTwinning.

To achieve that, an experienced eTwinner and eTwinning Ambassador organised a 15-hour teacher training course "eTwinning and Erasmus+ projects, from the school to Europe" split into six sessions. The sessions covered topics such as eTwinning Live, TwinSpace and the use of different ICT tools. The participants found the training useful as they could apply the acquired knowledge in projects, school subjects and other

Picture 14: Teachers, parents and students brainstorm together for the new ICT and music lab

areas of the school life and they gained an insight in how they can collaborate with other schools in English or in Spanish.

They also set up an interdisciplinary project where each class contributed to one or two activities. The main purposes of this project were to:

- Slowly involve new eTwinners in project work
- Guide new eTwinners and help them practice what they have learnt in the training sessions
- Create common goals which are in line with the school vision
- Enhance the teamwork among teachers and among their classes

Due to the workshops and the close collaboration/tutoring/accompanying of new eTwinners, thirteen out of the seventeen teachers enrolled in the school were involved actively in the interdisciplinary project and two of them decided to start their own separate projects with their classes. Mentoring is playing a significant role in an eTwinning School and helps to the progressive involvement of more teachers in European collaboration. In Col·legi Sant Josep, the mentor was the eTwinning Ambassador, an active eTwinner with many National and European Quality Labels and prizes registered in eTwinning. She created and led many projects and slowly involved more teachers by also participating in Erasmus+ eTwinning projects, where the participation of more staff is necessary to plan and organise the different meetings. By leading and supporting colleagues closely, she managed to involve more in eTwinning activities, having of course the support from the Principal of the school, who approved and supported all her ideas.

eTwinning School Mission

Col·legi Sant Josep makes small steps towards the Shared Leadership approach by trying to involve the staff in the decision-making process of the school. There are several teams working on topics such as environment, library, international projects, values. In each team different teachers take the lead and propose ideas and activities that then are discussed and agreed by all. All actors are taking an active part in the decision-making process. A recent example is the organisation of a world café with two representative students and one parent from each class and teachers, where they discussed the new ICT and music class of their school and came up with different proposals working collaboratively.

Collaboration is the main priority for the school. Teachers are collaborating with each other and they realise that skills they learn through participating in eTwinning can also be useful in their subjects and in the development of their level of competences such as digital, cultural awareness and expression. The school started with the interdisciplinary project and now they plan to establish a system where students of different ages and teachers from different classrooms will be mixed and work together according to the goals of the project. Also, every year the school asks through a survey to teachers, students and parents what aspects of the school can be improved.

Students also have the opportunity to become protagonists of their own learning. The students of Grade 5 and 6 are acting as agents by being members of the "Consell Municipal d'infants", the local community formed by teachers, parents and students from all the schools of the town. All students participate actively in the project work by presenting their work to the whole community as well as in regional teacher training sessions.

Support and trust by the Principal

The Principal of the school encourages and supports the staff who want to implement international projects like eTwinning and Erasmus+ and try new pedagogical methods. She trusts the experienced and enthusiastic eTwinners and offers them the freedom and support to integrate their new ideas in the curriculum. An enthusiastic eTwinner is a great element for an eTwinning School but this teacher will achieve more when the Principal is convinced of the added value eTwinning can offer to the school.

We have seen many cases that when a very active eTwinner leaves the school, the remaining staff are not continuing the eTwinning activities, and as a consequence, they lose the eTwinning School Label. An active eTwinner is an added value for the school but he/she needs to find fertile ground for the seeds of collaboration, innovation, and change. The positive attitude of the Principal who supports and tries to engage the staff is the ground. The seeds may take some time to blossom, but with the right techniques such as constant support, regular training, open discussions, climate of trust, the change comes and more teachers are convinced to try all the opportunities that eTwinning offers. As it is the case elsewhere, there are always some teachers who will not engage with a fully active role, but their even small contribution can also be considered as a success.

This is what it is happening in Col·legi Sant Josep. eTwinning has definitely brought innovation and European collaboration to the school, which changed the way of working, giving special emphasis on project-based learning and active collaboration in and outside of the school. Collaboration is built on the mutual trust of all members (teachers, students, parents) who dare to propose even crazy ideas like building a pool in the yard of the school. A whole-school approach that gradually involves all the members of the school community of Col·legi St Josep.

F. DR. İLHAMİ TANKUT ANADOLU LİSESİ, TURKEY

The school Dr. İlhami Tankut Anadolu Lisesi is located in Konyaaltı, Antalya, on the south coast of Turkey. The school has approximately 700 students between 14 and 18 years old and 50 teachers. It is a public school which is chosen as a "qualified high school" and has an active parent-teacher association that supports the school's additional needs. The school was chosen as a qualified school called "project school" by the Ministry of Education. In Antalya it is one of three qualified schools. The criteria are participation in European projects, scientific national and international projects, organisation of sports, music, art activities, good building infrastructure. A small percentage of students come from Russia, Iran and Iraq.

The first teacher joined eTwinning in 2010 and since then 13 out of the 50 teachers have joined the eTwinning community. eTwinning and Erasmus+ projects take place

Picture 15: Students present their eTwinning work to other teachers and schools

mainly in English classes on topics related to the lessons. eTwinning is visible at the school with a dedicated corner and the eTwinning School Mission is present in the teachers' room, the directors' room and in all classes. Parents receive information through the website of the school.

The school is equipped with a computer/robotic/coding lab, where students can use the computers, the laptops, the 3D printers and coding programmes. Each classroom is also equipped with an interactive whiteboard.

eTwinning benefits and challenges

For the school, eTwinning is a window to the culture of Europe. The school vision has a strong push for internationalisation and the education policies of different European countries are taken as reference. Teachers and students fully exploit this opportunity by interacting with foreign partners; they communicate, collaborate, develop new projects, make new friends and at the same time improve their digital and linguistic skills. Students work on real-life projects where they learn by doing and teachers find ways to use technology more in their classes.

The biggest challenge for the school is that many teachers do not speak a second language and they find it hard to work on eTwinning projects where the main language of communication is English. In order to support them, teachers of English help their colleagues with translations. They also arrange project teams where more teachers work on the same project and students take a leading role to support their teachers.

Some teachers are not very self-confident: they believe that they do not have the skills and competences to take part in an international project. In the school year 2019-2020, some teachers engaged in national projects to understand how the platform and the different tools work, with the aim to feel more confident about their abilities. Also, by participating in professional development activities, they gain more confidence to participate in projects.

Another constraint which reduces the flexibility of the schools' activities is the need to prepare students for the university exams, which leaves teachers little time to work on extra-curricular ventures like international projects.

eTwinning School Mission

The school's mission follows Ataturk's principles; schools must educate individuals so that they are aware of modern, universal and national culture, have advanced thinking and problem-solving skills, and sustain an educational environment which is worth living in. The school's motto is "always better, always the best". The school wants to be recognised by the educational authorities and the other schools for the work they do, with a strong connection with European educational standards.

The Principal supports the staff in organising projects and also in setting an example by participating herself in project work. Teachers feel more relaxed and supported by the management team of the school and take such activities more seriously as they see the active involvement of the Principal.

In the school, there are teams of teachers and students that work together and share ideas. A student council has been established and one of the roles of the Principal is to listen to students' requests and try to put them into practice.

The school is using different pedagogical practices to address different learning styles and emphasises the use of ICT and project-based learning. Teachers trained on coding provide their students with robotics and coding classes and they use interactive whiteboards in their everyday teaching.

The school offers their students opportunities to practice democracy by being part of the decision-making process. This is how they came up with the idea of creating a students' council that we will describe in more details later.

Picture 16: Staff meeting to discuss about the eTwinning School Mission

The school also tries to further disseminate their work and achievements by organising sessions for other schools on eTwinning: how teachers can use it in their class, how they can become innovative schools and how to create digital content.

eTwinning action plan

The school Dr. İlhami Tankut Anadolu Lisesi is one of three schools in Turkey that accepts students following a pre-selection based on high grades achieved in national exams. This means that the students study hard and take their academic studies seriously. However, teachers observed that students need extra time to participate in social

activities, to be part of the decision-making, to collaborate and have the opportunity to solve group or individual issues at school.

The eTwinning action plan is strongly based on students' agency. A School Student Council was established with the title " Digital Democratic Participation Platform". Its aims are the following:

- To improve students' social skills and active participation
- To make students feel part of the school's management
- To make students more responsible to take up actions inside and outside the school
- To improve the collaboration among students and teachers

The development of the Council followed a rigorous process where the Principal, in collaboration with 10 teachers, drafted the action plan for the school elections. Teachers then explained in each class the aims of the council and its remit. Each class organised elections and voted one male and one female student as representatives of their class in the council, in total 48 students from 24 classes.

Then, all members of the council met for the first time with the Principal and teachers and discussed the purpose and the frequency of the meetings, the topics that would be discussed and the actions that would take place. They also created the standing orders of the council establishing the purpose, scope, etiquette and duties of the members. Members of the council declared after the election:

"I swear that I will participate in the work of the Assembly effectively and efficiently, to fulfil the duties given by the Assembly in the best way, the culture of democracy in the school and society to live, national and spiritual values and human rights and freedoms respect, to work with determination to achieve Atatürk's contemporary and democratic goals"

The action plan team, comprising of the Principal, the deputy director, the guidance teacher, the project coordinator and other teachers from different branches, organised monthly meetings with the Council to monitor its development and support its functioning.

According to the interviewed teachers, students became more self-confident and they appreciated their freedom to express their concern and share their ideas. Students organised training for their peers in sports, did all the planning for a music concert and organised a science exhibition related to the Covid-19 pandemic to raise awareness among students and other school's staff. Unfortunately, much of their planning was cancelled due to the schools' closure from March 2020.

As part of the Council, students also created the "Peer Mediatorship" team where teachers and students had training led by lawyers from the Antalya City Bar Association. The team tried to solve problems among students by creating a mediator room, where students could go during the day to discuss and solve their conflicts in a "democratic way" (quoting the teacher). Having an action plan, stated the Principal, helps people know what needs to be done to complete a task or a project. Action plans are an important part of strategic planning.

eTwinning Schools: a starting point for school's further development

Dr. İlhami Tankut Anadolu Lisesi is a school that values European collaboration by participating in eTwinning and Erasmus+ projects and also projects organised by UNESCO, European Council etc. Students are used to working in projects and sometimes they even take the initiative and propose topics to their teachers. The management team supports the international projects as they improve the school's mission and increase the school's recognition.

The Student Council is an example of how the school tries to involve the students in the every day life and decision-making of the school and help them develop the skills and competences they will need once they graduate. At the same time, it offers more opportunities for collaboration among students and teachers and exchange of ideas and practices. The upper-secondary

Picture 17: The first meeting of the Students Council

school in Turkey has still a big journey ahead to involve more teachers, but the start has been made. After all, as already mentioned, becoming an eTwinning School is a milestone in a school's developmental journey.

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this Report is to provide eTwinning Schools a compass to orientate in their development plan, to allow stakeholders (Central Support Service and National Support Services) to identify the areas eTwinning Schools generally need to further develop and, finally, to identify the elements which should be implemented at systemic level to fully leverage on eTwinning Schools' potential.

The eTwinning School Label is relatively new. It was conceived to play a role for the further outreach of eTwinning across schools in Europe and their development towards a whole-school approach, grounded on the experience and lessons learnt through the implementation of international projects. The pillars of the concept, as exemplified in the Mission, reward and award schools where Shared Leadership is adopted, collaboration is happening at all levels, new pedagogies are implemented, students play an active role and inclusion, at all levels, is considered an asset.

This Report gives account on the current big picture of eTwinning Schools by identifying trends, success stories, challenges and opportunities. At the same time, the case studies aim at analysing the reality of schools in six geographically, socio-economically and culturally different contexts, where the only common denominator seem to be their belonging to the eTwinning Schools network.

The analysis of both the survey and the case studies confirm the presence, in eTwinning Schools of a combination of elements including:

- Committed teachers and Principals
- A strong integration of the school within the local community
- The availability to go beyond traditional methods and pedagogies
- A strong predisposition to the usage of ICT in education
- A firm commitment to include students from minority backgrounds

- A tendency to consider students as stakeholders rather than recipients of teaching practices
- A strong participation in different professional development activities.

For the sake of readability, this chapter is structured by following the areas of the eTwinning School Mission as follows.

Shared Leadership

According to the results of the survey, among the various areas which are part of the Mission, **the notion and the practice of Shared Leadership is the one which seems to be more established**: this confirms that **eTwinning Schools are, at least structurally, ready to develop further.** They have done the most important and preliminary step, which is to challenge and overcome a more traditional, top-down approach where decisions are taken by the Principal and all the staff must follow.

This highlights the importance of support from formal leadership for a successful whole-school approach that uses eTwinning as a vehicle of change and innovation. We appreciate that Shared Leadership is a complex process, where certain practices that work in one school might not fit in another. In this sense, **eTwinning Schools can serve as examples for other schools which must then adapt according to their needs and practice**.

Although in a few cases schools still maintain some elements of the traditional top-down approach where "the Principal decides", much more often the approach relies on collaboration between school staff and the school management, with eTwinners in the front-line. In some cases, like in the Greek school or the Turkish school examined in the case studies, this approach was already embedded in the school's vision, but it could only be fully deployed when other conditions were met, and the awarding of the eTwinning School Label was one of them.

Collaboration

eTwinning Schools are obviously engaged in collaborative activities: **collaboration among teachers and among students is strong and effective** and both the responses to the survey and the case studies show that this is among the most advanced practice areas. From the survey, we learn that eTwinning Schools have overall well established the practice of collaborative teaching and learning among teachers and among students. Typical examples come from the practice of the Italian and the Romanian schools we investigated, with a continuous exchange among teachers via various bodies and the strong involvement and support of the Principal. These findings are not surprising, as the Shared Leadership approach goes hand in hand with collaborative teaching and learning, in which the school promotes collaboration among teachers, creating and supporting continuous learning opportunities for all staff. Certainly,

the involvement in multiple eTwinning projects over the years have determined a structural change in the schools' processes and pedagogy. Comparatively, and this is again confirmed by both the survey and the case studies, **more work is required in the development of collaboration between students and teachers**, especially outside of eTwinning projects.

Student agency

Collaboration and especially student- teacher collaboration is closely linked to **Student agency**. As we learn from the responses to the survey and especially from one of the case studies, **eTwinning Schools' students count and are encouraged to make their voice heard**. This is true when planning, running, promoting and communicating eTwinning projects. It is also visible to a lesser extent, in schools' policies and decision-making processes. The presence of a Students Council, like in the case of the Turkish school, represents a typical example of practicing democracy by nurturing students' engagement and sense of responsibility. Students' decisions are taken into account by the school management, thus strengthening student agency. This increases students' motivation and helps reduce dropping-out and early school leaving, as in the case of the French *Lycée Blériot*. However, Student agency ranks below the other components of the Mission, which gives room for improvement. While being an essential element for projects' development, **students in most cases still have a marginal role when it comes to learning practices, which are still mainly led by teachers**.

Models for other schools

Serving as a **Learning hub**, eTwinning Schools engage in **mentoring of other schools** and can serve as source of inspiration of eTwinning practice in their region or state. Embedding systems for collecting and exchanging knowledge and learning among schools and within the school, where learning and knowledge exchange extends with and from the external environment and community. According to the survey, respondents feel that **their school is not entirely ready to be involved in school-to-school networks and collaboration** (for instance by providing facilities, expertise, support and solutions to other schools). This may be due to educational policies which do not encourage schools networking or simply by lack of time of school's management and leaders, very busy within the walls of their own institution. It is not a surprising result: before being ready to help and support other institutions, eTwinning Schools probably need to establish and reinforce their own foundations. Among the six eTwinning Schools, the Romanian one has initiated professional development activities for teachers and head teachers in the area but the training is organised mainly by the experienced eTwinner of the school, having the support of the management team. It is a first step to involve slowly more members and create the learning environment where teachers of the region can benefit and join eTwinning.

Learning organisations

eTwinning **Schools as innovative and inclusive learning organisations** establish a culture of inquiry, innovation and exploration, in which students' learning is placed at the center. **Diversity is valued** and students, with their community, are encouraged to engage in shaping and contributing to the school's success. Also encompassing the other mission areas, we learn that this area of the eTwinning School Mission is a well-established practice. This is confirmed both in the results of the survey and the case studies. The involvement of all students is seen as one of the most important – and highest ranking – areas among the ones investigated in this Report. Examples like the French and the Italian cases studies, where inclusion is part of the school's vision and practice, confirm this result. **Synergies between the school and the local community, including parents, local associations, local authority, would deserve a stronger establishment** and a consolidated school development plan, thus formalising the schools' role within the local context. This would also address parents' concerns that eTwinning projects are 'distractions,' like in the case of the Greek school or the Romanian school we investigated.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The results of the survey and the case studies suggest a scenario whose development can be influenced at school level, with the support of the school management, and at systemic level, with the input of educational authorities. In particular:

At school Level

Active eTwinners are an essential asset for the schools and act as mentors. They involve other colleagues, liaise with the formal school management, promote Shared Leadership practices among formal and non-formal leaders and try hard to make sure that their experience is shared at school and beyond. However, schools sometimes rely solely on these actors, with little shared ownership among school staff. The risk is that if such active eTwinners leave all the progress made in the implementation of the eTwinning School Mission will be lost. To avoid this **eTwinning Schools should find ways to systematically involve the whole school community** and give each actor (teachers, pupils, Principals, parents) responsibilities and opportunities which can be leveraged via eTwinning activities, as for instance we can see in the Spanish Col·legi Sant Josep case study.

The development and monitoring activity with the six eTwinning Schools shows that **once teachers receive, from the school management, recognition and appraisal for their work, they feel more motivated to go one step further**, to work even harder – see for instance the case of the Romanian school where teachers counter-balance the lack of technology with their own personal resources. Also, the twelve eTwinning teachers in the monitoring activity transmitted this motivation and enthusiasm to their colleagues at school and altogether they worked to improve their school towards the statements of the eTwinning School Mission. This means that peer-motivation, if grounded on solid recognition, can also have a domino effect of the school environment.

eTwinning Schools have the potential to serve as Learning Organisations. Where the Shared Leadership approach is used to mainstream innovation and adapt to changes in the school - with the support of formal leaders and the engagement of teachers - the **development of a shared vision for the school that reflects the eTwinning School Mission can help schools to further obtain their goals and adapt to new challenges**.

Whilst the eTwinning School concept is relatively new, the idea of a whole-school approach towards innovation is well established in both research and practice. In this sense**, the eTwinning School Label can serve as a tool, helping schools to follow a step-by-step process to achieve their school's development goals**. In this report we learn that the eTwinning School Mission areas, and school innovation in general, are not stand alone practices but should be addressed through a whole-school strategy, facilitating the engagement of an ongoing dialogue between school leaders, teachers, students, parents and community.

In this sense the achievement of the eTwinning School Mission, translated by schools to attainable concrete measurable indicators, is still – unavoidably – a 'work in progress'. This is not surprising though: the Label should be considered a starting point of a journey. Although many practices are well established among schools, there is still work to be done to mainstream innovation in general and eTwinning in particular within the school. Ideally, **the eTwinning School Mission should be integrated as part of each school's mission** and eTwinning activities, supported and promoted by formal leadership, can help school staff to better understand how to improve and further develop their schools' strategies.

At systemic Level

eTwinning Schools, seen as institutions and not as a collection of dedicated and committed teachers, still struggle to mentor other schools. The practice area 'school—to-school networking and collaboration' is perceived as 'work in progress' rather than an established practice, and this is confirmed in all case-studies. The organisation of online and especially onsite promotional and professional development activities is a good practice to engage other teachers, parents and the local community, but this cannot happen in teachers' spare time (the 'lack of time' is one of the main obstacles mentioned by teachers). **eTwinning Schools need to receive more recognition and support at all levels**, national or regional education level with specific regulations and opportunities, to fully engage in sound mentoring schemes, for instance by allowing teachers to dedicate more time in specific support activities and offering concrete opportunities to engage in peer- learning within and outside the school.

The activities and workshops developed by the CSS for the six schools helped them understand better the different statements of the eTwinning School Mission and the actions needed to improve their practices. Relevant resources facilitated their

planning and guidance kept them motivated. This seems to confirm that **eTwinning Schools, and schools in general, do need consistent and constant guidance and professional development activities** to keep them motivated on one side, and to monitor their progression, on the other. As it was referred earlier, the acquisition of the eTwinning School Label is the beginning of an educational journey. **Such guidance however cannot rely solely on eTwinning (via the CSS, NSS, the platform itself) but should become part of the common practice of national educational policies.**

If eTwinning Schools need guidance and constant support, with an action plan including concrete, achievable goals and time to reflect and evaluate their work, **at the same time, they need recognition of their work by the European, national and regional authorities**, as mainstreaming eTwinning practices cannot rely solely on the individual school's practice but should be recognised and promoted at structural level. The Label should not be seen as a mere 'certificate of quality' but rather as a formalisation of the potential of eTwinning Schools. Their assets and energy only need to be unleashed with a wise use of encouragement, recognition, flexibility; all key elements of shared-leadership approach. In this way, the **eTwinning Schools can act as a guiding north star for the other schools in their area and eTwinning can become a common practice for all**.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ainley, J. and R. Carstens (2018), "Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2018 Conceptual Framework", OECD Education Working Papers, No. 187, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/799337c2-en.

Davidson, N., & Major, C. H. (2014). "Boundary crossings: Cooperative learning, collaborative learning, and problem-based learning", Journal on excellence in college teaching, 25.

European Commission (2018a), "Study on Supporting School innovation across Europe, executive summary", DOI: 10.2766/466312, European Commission publishing 2018. https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/downloads/innovation/Innovation%20Study.pdf European Commission (2018b), "Study on Supporting School innovation across Europe, Final Report to DG Education and Culture of the European Commission". DOI: 10.2766/466312 European Commission publishing 2018. https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/downloads/innovation/Innovation%20Study.pdf

European Commission (2018c), "European ideas for better learning: Produced by the ET 2020 Working Group Schools The governance of school education systems", European Commission publishing 2018. https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/downloads/Governance/2018-wgs1-governance-school_en.pdf

European Schoolnet (2018), "Integrating Collaborative Learning in Policy and Practice: CO-LAB's Conclusions and Recommendations, CO-LAB project", http://colab.eun.org/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=387a2113-e87e-4f2f-bd90-b3b1b7d9404a&groupId=5897016

Griffin, P., & Care, E. (Eds.). (2014), "Assessment and teaching of 21st century skills: Methods and approach", Springer.

Kools, M., & Stoll, L. (2016), "What Makes a School a Learning Organisation?", OECD Education Working Papers, No. 137. OECD Publishing. http://www.oecd.org/education/school/school-learning-organisation.pdf accesses July 1st 2020

Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2006), ''Transformational school leadership for large-scale reform: Effects on students, teachers, and their classroom practices'' , School effectiveness and school improvement, 17(2), 201-227.

Leithwood, K. A., & Riehl, C. (2003), ''What we know about successful school leadership'' Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

OECD, O. (2019)," Future of education and skills 2030: OECD learning compass 2030",. Accessed 10 July 2020 http://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/teaching-and-learning/learning/student-agency/

Schleicher, A. (2016), "How to transform schools into learning organisations?" Online article, accessed on 08 July 2020 https://oecdedutoday.com/how-to-transform-schools-into-learning-organisations/

Stéphan, V. L., Joaquin, U., Soumyajit, K., & Gwénaël, J. (2019), ''Educational Research and Innovation Measuring Innovation in Education 2019 What Has Changed in the Classroom?''. OECD Publishing.

eTwinning
SCHOOL
MISSION

eTwinning Schools are leaders in the eTwinning world. Their **school management** and teacher leaders recognising the importance and values of eTwinning, embed it in the **school's policies**, **practice and professional development**.

In eTwinning Schools, the teachers **work together to share** their strengths and provide a wider and richer educational experience for all.

eTwinning Schools are **models**: they inspire and guide other schools to attain the levels they themselves have achieved. In doing this they ensure that the promise of change in education is maintained, so that the young people in their care are nurtured to become **better people**, **better learners**, **better and more active citizens**.

eTwinning Schools have a commitment to Shared Leadership

In eTwinning Schools leadership is a shared process, both for the responsibility of organisation and the decision-making process. The school Principal and teacher leaders understand the possibilities offered by eTwinning both at a pedagogical and professional level and actively support all staff to become involved in eTwinning activities.

eTwinning Schools display a strong commitment to collaboration, sharing and team work

The teachers in the school work together as a team to plan their eTwinning and other pedagogical activities and share their experiences and practices with their colleagues, both inside and outside their school. They collaborate on providing an eTwinning action plan and use it to drive innovation and change in their school and beyond.

Students in eTwinning Schools are agents of change

Students have a role to play in the development of the eTwinning School. They promote eTwinning to teachers (both already engaged or who are not yet involved) and parents, acting both as drivers and as a sounding board for all innovations taking place in pedagogy and use of technology.

eTwinning Schools are models for other schools

The eTwinning School is committed to playing a role of ambassadors for other schools in their area/region by actively promoting eTwinning and disseminating their achievements through as many means as possible: open days, information briefings, and mentoring schemes. They are proactive in creating professional development opportunities open to other schools in their area.

eTwinning Schools are inclusive and innovative learning organisations

eTwinning Schools are committed to inclusivity at every level and actively seek ways to create an inclusive environment for students of every ability and culture, their parents and the wider community. Teachers in eTwinning Schools commit to developing the whole school as a learning organisation. They use eTwinning to support and deliver their curriculum using innovative pedagogical models which include, among a variety of approaches, collaborative learning, student-centred education, flexible approaches to learning times and learning spaces.

eTwinning

Erasmus+

Publications Office
of the European Union