SMALL SCHOOL NOTEBOOKS

8
2021

Europe, a one-way road
Internationalisation
of a small school

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Stories ☐
Tools ☐
Studies ☐

The small school in the world

English version

PICCOLE SCUOLE
TRAME SOCIALI IN RETE

FONDI STRUTTURALI EUROPEI
Unione Europea
PON 2014-2020
MIUR
PER LA SCUOLA - COMPETENZE E AMBIENTI PER L'APPRENDIMENTO (FSE-FESR)

The *working library* is an innovative and unique publishing work designed and directed by Mario Lodi.
From 1971 untill 1979 the project was managed by a group of educators: Fiorenzo Alfieri, Francesca Colombo,Tullio De Mauro, Caterina Foschi Pini, Alberto Gianola, Angelica Gianola, Roberto Lanterio, Palmira Maccarini, Luciano Manzuoli, Gioacchino Maviglia and Francesco Tonucci.
The working library was created as an alternative to the schoolbook. The format, functional to teacher's activities, contains 80 should be functional to teacher's activities. They collected 80 issues of "Documents", "Letters", "Guides" and 68 sheets with ideas, activities and practical tips for teachers so that they can be used according to their classroom needs.
A good collection of practice material experienced in Italy. A catalogue that teachers, parents and students can use in every social and geographical situation. Learning activities that have a different approach to the traditional lessons and use tools for effective teaching activities.
Mario Lodi and his colleagues wished that students' families and teachers know them.
Everybody wants a better school, a warm and scientifically correct place where the students' experience comes first. The working library had this goal.

Cosetta Lodi
President of Casa delle Arti e del Gioco
http://www.casadelleartiedelgioco.it

After so many years from the *working library*, the idea of creating a better school is still alive. Todays' model of schooling is still a traditional one, which is difficult to remove from the daily practices and belongs to the image of the standard school.

Indire main goal is to give support and highlight teachers' research activity to "learning experiences, classroom organisation and learning environment that foster the students' autonomy so as they can develop permanent competences and skills" (*Indicazioni Nazionali. Nuovi scenari*, 2017).

The tools in Lodi's *working library* were effective because they used a clear and simple language, essential format, a research work that came from teachers' daily activity. The tools contributed to disseminate innovative teaching method based on the active learning and an inclusive and democratic school model.

Documentation and teaching methods offered in the *working library* allowed teachers to practice and experience innovative pedagogy.

The S*mall Schools' Notebooks*, divided into "Stories", "Tools" and "Studies", wishes to pay homage to this experience that is a good practice of research and innovation in schools.

We wish to thank to Mario Lodi's heirs to allow us to use and rethink to the *Working Library*. We also wish to thank to Grandi & Associati which collaborated to the editorial activity and publishing of this volume.

Research team - INDIRE Small Schools
http://piccolescuole.indire.it

Contents

Introduction

"Europe, a one-way road" is the Notebook that leads to an internationalisation path through a personal storytelling aimed at bringing small schools closer to a feasible path and at helping them identify with it. At the same time, it settles the process by providing a step-by-step operational guide. These aspects, by no means exhaustive, can prepare the ground for a procedure to be adapted to schools actions and to their starting conditions.

The idea at the basis of this path is for small schools to participate in an eTwinning project or an Erasmus partnership.

When opening up to other educational contexts, other political and social realities, cultures belonging to far-off countries, the school "changes" along with the new teaching methods producing modernisation, innovation and internationalisation but also creating interconnections between formal and non-formal education.

Over the years, European projects carried out by schools participating in Erasmus or eTwinning (which is integral part of the Erasmus+ Program) have highlighted very positive data concerning the achievement of several goals, such as: improvement in school staff competences and in the teaching quality, a greater motivation in students towards learning, progress in students competences (especially linguistic and intercultural), teachers satisfaction in their everyday work and, often, a different way of managing schools.

It is worth recalling that policies relating to educational and training systems fall within the competence of each Member State. However, for decades now, the European Union has been supporting policies for structural reforms. The aim is to create common and converging paths in order to develop actions affecting national orientations and priorities. As a result of these common policies, over the years, the

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European Union has developed a series of tools for the achievement of several strategic goals. In the education and training sector, the Erasmus+ Programme (as well as all the European programmes that preceded it) has been supporting policies for the interconnection of European educational systems thanks to cooperative projects and teachers, staff and students mobilities.

The new 2021-2027 Erasmus Programme is going to support activities in order to promote knowledge and awareness, citizenship and the sense of belonging to the European Union. The aim of the Programme is to cope with global challenges, maintain social equity and lead competitiveness.

Erasmus' idea is to build a European area dedicated to education: Europe becomes "a continent where it is possible to spend time studying, training and working in other Member States, and where speaking other languages besides one's own is the rule". The aim is to strengthen European identity among citizens, their cultural heritage and their differences.

The new 2021-2027 Erasmus goals meet small schools needs. Paramount will be to increase the beneficiaries number for a more and more inclusive programme, reaching suburban areas and small associations disadvantaged by geographical conditions and thus in danger of school discontinuity and unequal, low quality education.

In such areas, it is necessary to encourage pionering educational paths that look at the future such as renewable energy, climate change, the environment, engineering. At the same time, such paths have to enhance the socio-economic and cultural context small schools are located in ,and promote it through digital.

We are aware, as Erasmus+ INDIRE Agency, of the upcoming challenges and especially of the commitment required for the participation in European programmes which need to become wider, more extended and more inclusive. Therefore, we believe that it is important to disseminate – also through this important publication – the good practices of those who have opened up to a European educational vision. At the same time, we would like to give some useful suggestions on how to easily develop feasible projects - starting from one's own situation, a small area, in order to start travelling, training, growing.

"Erasmus: changing lives, opening minds!"

Sara Pagliai
Coordinator of the Erasmus+ Indire National Agency

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1. Innovation and internationalisation: how are they interconnected?

Innovation is based on several common denominators: it is associated with an individual creativity, it involves changing - which is not always and only a disruptive event - and it is intentional (Kampylis, Bocconi, & Punie, 2012)[1]. In particular, innovation (Ferrari et al., 2009)[2] goes along with an individual creative process, it goes beyond the acquisition of basic knowledge and it involves the use of thinking skills. Therefore, innovation consists in applying this process, and it requires the use of new teaching methods, new tools and contents that can promote the creative potential of students. In this sense, the human factor (the vision of school and expertise) together with learning tools and infrastructure are crucial elements for the success of a pedagogical innovation path (Law, et al., 2008).

Under the action "Opening up Education"[1], the European Commission identified digital technologies as a qualifying factor for a quality educational offer. In particular, the integration of technologies in everyday educational activities implies that the vision of school and related planned actions have to be based on three aspects: pedagogy, technology and organisation.

Four cross-cutting aspects (strategy, technology, quality and leadership) are equally strategical as they all contribute to the creation of the overall vision of the school which is commonly specified in the Guidelines and in the School Educational Plan.

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[1] Bocconi, S., Kampylis, P. G., & Punie, Y. (2012). *Innovating learning: Key elements for developing creative classrooms in Europe*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

[2] Ferrari, A., Cachia, R., & Punie, Y. (2009). *Innovation and creativity in education and training in the EU member states: Fostering creative learning and supporting innovative teaching*. JRC Technical Note, 52374, 64.

1. Opening up Education: A Support Framework for Higher Education Institutions https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/eur-scientific-and-technical-research-reports/opening-education-support-framework-higher-education-institutions

The *strategy* for an "open up" educational offer has to be integrated in the school mission in close interdependence with other aspects, such as teachers training, or the relationship with the local area.

The use of technology opens to other realities through the development of digital competences also in non-formal contexts. On the quality of the educational offer, there are different approaches. In the case of the "opening up education", five ideas of educational quality come together (effectiveness, impact, availability, accuracy and excellence). Furthermore, educational quality also enormously depends on the environment and on the conditions in which a school enhances an "open" educational culture. Lastly, leadership is a strategic element for a school that wants to develop an open-up educational offer through top-down and bottom-up actions:

Leadership in open education is the promotion of sustainable open educationactivities and initiatives via a transparent approach from both the top-down and the bottom-up. It paves the way to creating more openness by inspiring and empowering people
(Dos Santos et al., 2016)

It is a cross-cutting and strategical dimension because it promotes proactive behaviours in terms of personal motivation, objectives-based organisation, collaboration and performance management.

According to "The open book of social innovation", a research carried out some years ago (Murray et al., 2010), social innovation is a process which involves six changing steps starting from inspiration to the actual changing of the system going through experiments, their sustainability and changes that can become systemic only if they involve small innovations which can enter a larger framework of the general path vision.

[3] Murray, R., Caulier-Grice, J., & Mulga, G. (2010). The open book of social innovation. UK: NESTA and The Young Foundation https://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/The-Open-Book-of-Social-Innovationg.pdf

The social innovation process (Murray et al., 2010)

In this context, the experience of some small schools confirms that it is possible to start a process that leads to changes by breaking up the problem related to the quality of the educational offer into different micro-actions; that it is possible to implement actions through the use of different fundings, supporting a vision of school as inclusive as possible, also in isolated and marginal contexts.Besides the National Educational Plans and the funding allocated by the National Operational Programmes, innovation processes can be implemented also thanks to opportunities offered by the Erasmus+10 Programme according to what laid down in the Regulation of the European Commission which sets up Erasmus+:

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The programme should address a wider group of beneficiaries, also beyond the Union's borders, increasing the use of information and communication technologies, of blended mobility (a combination of physical and virtual mobility) and of virtual cooperation [...] It should involve to a greater extent those who have lesser opportunities, among whom people with disabilities, migrants and citizens of the Union living in isolated areas.

[4] REGOLAMENTO DEL PARLAMENTO EUROPEO E DEL CONSIGLIO che istituisce "Erasmus": https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/IT/ALL/?uri=COM%3A2018%3A367%3AFIN

[5] Rimm-Kaufman, S. E., & Hulleman, C. S. (2015). Social and emotional learning in elementary school settings: Identifying mechanisms that matter. Handbook of social and emotional learning: Research and practice, 151-166.

[6] Sprung, M., Münch, H. M., Harris, P. L., Ebesutani, C., & Hofmann, S. G. (2015). Children's emotion understanding: A meta-analysis of training studies. Developmental Review, 37, 41-65.

If an innovative pedagogical approach starts from students' greater involvement (for example: learner-centred pedagogies, collaborative learning and inquiry-based learning), in order for such an approach to be put into practice, teachers have to be equipped and competent.

In particular, the efficacy areas concern the management of the class, the creation of interdependent and positive relationships and a suitable and well-planned assessment system. The success of these aspects depends on various factors among which the combination of different pedagogical approaches, contents adherent to the context, the relationship between the expert teacher and the learning community (OECD, 2010)[4]. Among the pedagogical approaches, there is always the socio-relational aspect that in the base school becomes a crucial element, also according to the National Guidelines for the curriculum.

This approach is implemented through teaching methods based on role-playing, peer-to-peer collaboration, games and social problem-solving (Rimm- Kaufman and Hulleman, 2015)[5]. Interactive educational activities that involve dialogue and debate are the starting point for promoting socio-emotional, communication and pro-social competences (Sprung et al. 2015)[6].

In the following pages, we will try to describe the case of a small school in the province of Piacenza, which, starting from a vision of school and through the wise use of different types of funding, started an innovation process within the context of the school located in the municipality of Travo. This process went viral, gradually involving other schools located in different municipalities thus becoming systemic.

Starting from the description of a case history, the Notebook gives the chance of understanding how small Italian schools can start an internationalisation process.

The second part of the Notebook will provide a non binding step by step guide showing the actions that a small school activates in order to pass from a local educational perspective to a global one.

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2. From local to global – a small school experience

The first part of the Notebook describes the real experience of a small school in Europe. It is written in the first person, as it were a personal experience, so that the reader can feel a fellow traveller.

ISOLATION

2.1 General school context

The Bobbio Omnicomprehensive institute is located in Northern Italy, in a rather isolated area in the province of Piacenza. Its head-quarter is in Bobbio, but it has 5 other different school locations and covers 4 school levels: kindergarten, Primary School, Lower and Upper Secondary School.

It includes about 500 students from 3 to 18 years old. It is composed of 14 small schools: 5 Nursery Schools, 5 Primary Schools, 3 Lower Secondary Schools and 1 Upper Secondary School, located in a vast mountain-hillside area extending for about 70 km.

The area is organized in 7 municipalities, grouped in the Mountain Municipalities Union. The Union is composed of several small villages with a very low population density. The decrease in population is associated with the population's old age. Currently, the main employment sectors do not meet the real occupational needs; therefore, a great amount of commuting takes place for work and educational

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reasons (involving upper secondary school students) towards the chief town of the province, 45 km away from Bobbio.

In our umbrella organization, different realities coexist with regards to organization, number of students and distances: some school locations are composed of one or two medium-small sections and classes, while other micro sites are composed of one single multi-age class gathering 10 students of 5 different class levels; some schools are twenty minutes away from the city, while others are even one hour and a half away; some schools have permanent regular teachers, while others are in continuous turnover. Starting innovation processes in such conditions, with such different needs and contexts, is not a simple or short-term operation.
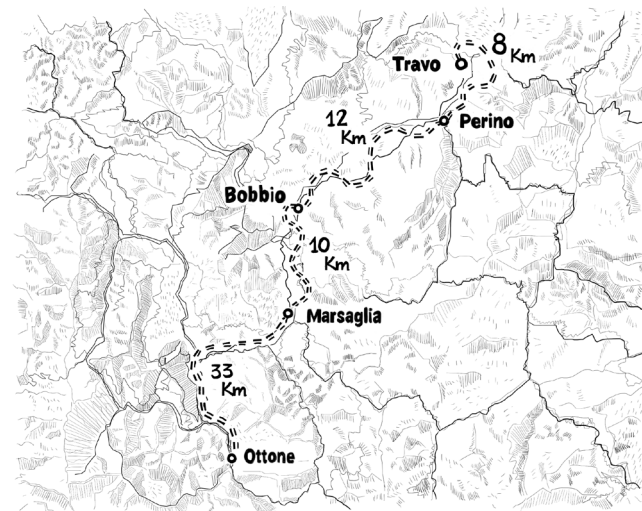
Distances between the five locations of Bobbio Omnicomprehensive School

The School started a systemic and structured Europeanisation path for the first time in 2013. Previously, single positive experiences had been unfortunately interrupted by the turnover of some teachers.

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As it often occurs, the process started by two colleagues having a coffee together, unaware of procedures and timing, European funds and forms, but aware of the fact that it was necessary for the students to have contacts and to share opinions with others. Indeed, students needed wider and different contacts from the daily ones, considering the microworld in which they were immersed.

Therefore, the Europeanisation path started from a single school involved in a Comenius Lifelong Learning Programme[2], a path still in place and that it has dramatically affected the School for seven years.

NEEDS

2.2 Initial needs

The needs that spurred us to start this continuous European progress in 2013 were basically two.

- ***The need to come out of isolation:*** a geographical isolation, due to which some of our locations are in an evident disadvantaged position; a cultural isolation, due to poor opportunities and infrastructures; a mental isolation, due to scarce sharing of opinions with different cultures on global problems; a professional isolation, perhaps due to the fact of sharing opinions with the same people for many years and of preserving old fashioned teaching methods and methodological procedures

- ***The need to promote a methodological renewal***: the European Competences had already been identified several years before, and starting in 2012 they constituted the framework for the Italian National Guidelines[3]. The latter were then adjusted providing the National Guidelines and new scenarios[4], where the key competences were even better incorporated and better oriented towards educa-

tional actions opening up new educational scenarios. The methods teachers had referred to up to then were no longer efficient or suitable to support students in achieving the 8 key competences.

Thanks to the Europeanisation path, the School extended its action from the key competences provided for by the Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning[5] to the 21st century skills provided for by the World Economic Forum 21st-century skills[6]. New needs then arose – as the first needs had been partially met – no longer urgent or necessary ones, but more oriented to innovation, digitalisation, language strengthening and consolidation, thus testifying the effectiveness of the path.

2. Community Action Plan within the scope of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) http://bit.ly/sitoLLP

3. Complete document of the 2012 National Guidelines http://bit.ly/IndicazioniNazionali20124

4. 2017 Adjustment http://bit.ly/IndicazioniNazionaliNuoviScenari

5. Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning http://bit.ly/keycompetencesLLL

6. 21st-century skills identified by the World Economic Forum in 2015 http://bit.ly/WEF21Skills

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NEW

2.3 First steps

In 2013, the first necessary step meant entering eTwinning, in order to find a Comenius project meeting our needs and accepting us as partners.

4° MEETING COMENIUS - Cinque giorni di visite e incontri per costruire un ponte di amicizia che superi ogni barriera

In arrivo a Travo studenti di sette nazioni

Europe arrives in the small school - first meeting with students and teachers from 6 countries

We received the approval to enter into a 6-Countries Partnership for the project *Let a smile be your umbrella! -* Summary of the project on the EST platform[7]*,* which immediately introduced the School to new issues, procedures, difficulties and opportunities.

We had to organize ourselves: therefore, we formed an informal group whose task was to support the implementation of the project. The group, composed of a few colleagues, faced new procedures, and in trying to understand them, the team members had regular contacts with partners, acquiring a totally new procedural expertise. For the first time, we had to manage mobility with students under 14: also the bureaucratic procedures had to be totally acquired.

We had to face the first difficulties: only one of our schools was willing to accompany the students abroad, because in this case, un-

7. EST European Shared Treasure Platform for sharing European experiences http://bit.ly/piattaformaEST

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like the others, there were teachers available to assist in the students' mobilities and the families had welcomed the project as a great educational opportunity, totally trusting the involved teachers. This caused a first difference in professional development.

We had to learn how to communicate and network: the funds were not sufficient to entirely cover the number of students we wanted to involve in the mobility; therefore, we turned to the related Municipality for a contribution that would enable us to be as inclusive as possible. The families were included, reassured and involved in the path.

We had to face new procedures: mainly bureaucratic and management procedures, totally unfamiliar to both the coordinating group and the secretary.

We were neophytes, out of our element, confused, but absolutely determined to do a good job.

And we did it: the project was an evident success. In two years, 39 students had the possibility to experience mobility in one of the 5 partner Countries, and many others had the opportunity to experience European everyday life for the very first time.

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Students' mobility to the Canary Islands. Heading towards the sharing of opinions

All the involved students, both directly or indirectly, started to hear about Europe, to enter in contact with very different realities, to work with other students and to exchange common products with them, to set a weekly meeting in order to discover solutions to amusing riddles, to use the digital in order to enter into relationships. The theme of the project was the smile and how it can build bridges for friendships. Indeed, the project allowed building international relationships that are still steady and operational today; it allowed laying the foundations of a Europeanisation path that is currently at the basis of the School innovative processes.

Europe is a one-way road: if you start driving through, you can't go back.

The internationalisation process was consolidated and made systemic owing to: the spreading of eTwinning in the entire Institute and the consequent increase in the number of eTwinning projects, the in-

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volvement in several Key Actions Erasmus projects, and the opening up of additional European experiences.

NEVER GIVE UP

2.4. European plannings: learning from mistakes

In 2015, once the Comenius project had ended and we had learned the basis, the new Erasmus programme was released thus making us change perspective and rhythm.

Key Action 1[8] promoted the staff's training; therefore, it was the right step to begin with, however, it required a different approach: we had to think as an Institute, not as a single school, therefore as a school in its wholeness and variety. It was time to spread the Europeanisation process in order to make it effective.

The small passionate group of teachers that developed the Comenius project turned into a European Group. Once again, we set out on an adventure, driven more by our hearts than by our mind.

The ideas were clear, but the procedural awareness was still scarce.

We wrote a first version of the project: "*Nature ict and innovation*", an essential project, focused on methodological modernisation and on the use of ICTs. The idea was there, but the draft was rather superficial. The only result possible was a sounding failure.

We immediately and easily realised that it was not simple to approach an Erasmus project without any experience in the field; but we also realised that our failure could have been extremely useful. In fact, the application assessment report explained how to improve, what to analyse more in depth, guiding us in a much deeper exploration of the Institute's needs as well as of the organisational structure that has to support the implementation of an Erasmus project.

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The actual drawing up of the form is already a first important way to learn, considering all that has to be taken into account in terms of analysis, relationship with the partners, awareness and expectations. Indeed, it leads the working group to a substantial professional growth.

Once again, a detailed and in-depth analysis of the Institute's needs enabled us to create a conscious European development plan which provided for the staff's growth based on the real needs of that moment: openness and sharing of opinions, acquisition of active methods for key competences, integration of the digital in active teaching.

2.5 The European Group

Officially founded in 2015, the European Group took better shape in 2016 after the approval of the projects, and it included the teachers of all educational levels and the School Principal. It was supported, also at a practical level, by the creation of a GSuite group and of a WhatsApp group, in order to speed up communication and reach everybody at any time.

The Institute develops the most relevant themes within commissions, i.e. working groups defined by the Teaching Staff, based on what is more crucial for its development. One of those commissions has become the **European Group**, and every year it is reconfirmed in order to support the implementation of the ongoing projects.

The group, which carries out its functions in a commision, carried out various tasks in order to foster the Europeanisation process. The work was carried out by dividing the different tasks among the group members. In particular, the tasks included programming, research of partners/courses, drawing up monitoring documents or checking for flights and accommodation for the mobilities, drawing up and analysing assessment surveys. It also widened the use of the eTwinning community, and worked on projects and eSafety, supporting colleagues

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in the shared implementation of the paths and it led the Institute to become an eTwinning school both in 2018 and in 2020. The European Group was clearly the soul of the Europeanisation path. Starting from this year, with the two new projects approved, also the Director of the General and Administrative Services will be a member of the group, in order to guarantee a further systemic widening of the process. Furthermore, the group will have to face new working methods, as the new programmes will have to be processed online.
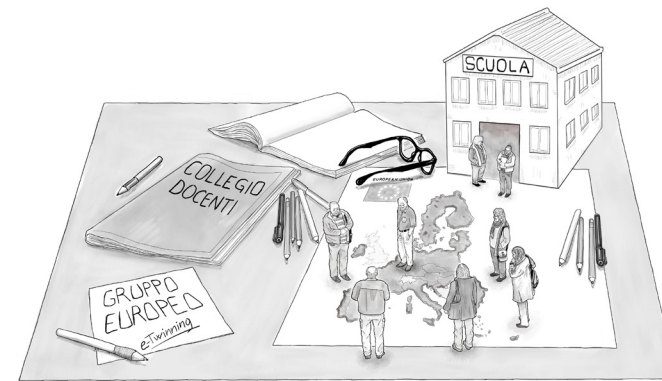
The European Group in the small school

CHANGE

2.6 The perfect storm: when everything contributes to change

Between 2016 and 2019, based on the identified needs, the following three projects were drawn up, approved and implemented in the Institute: a KA1 – Mobility for the staff's learning and two KA2 Strategic partnerships for exchanges between schools[9].

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9. Erasmus website Key Action 2 - KA229 Strategic partnerships for exchanges between schools http://bit.ly/ KA2StrategicPartnerships

The main focus of the three projects was the teachers' professional growth, based on changing the educational paradigm. Even with different paths, modalities and effects, the projects led the teachers to test themselves, acquire new methods, integrate the new methods with ICT and adopt them in their everyday teaching.

The **KA1 project "***Nature ICT and Innovation***"** - Blog of the project[10], accompanied the teaching staff and the School Director in 26 mobilities towards 7 European Countries. The participants attended structured courses and experienced the immersive reality of job shadowing, both activities aimed at providing training in Outdoor learning, at the integration of ICTs in didactics and at 21st century active learning methodologies. These 3 topics met the needs of a small school which was placed in a wonderful environment,(not much used though from the educational point of view) and which was weak both in the digital field and in the methodological field. Furthermore, for the first time, the teachers met Europe and its different realities. The project won the 2019 edition of Didacta Firenze as Erasmus+ good practice.

The **KA2 project "***We are CoopeARTive***"** The Erasmus project results platform[11] was a two-year school to school partnership for best practice sharing between 5 Countries: Spain, Italy, Poland, Estonia, Slovakia. It involved 8/12 years old students and it provided training in Cooperative Learning and Multiple Intelligence. It also led the students to produce various papers on the theme of "The Little Prince". A website[12] was developed, as well as an eTwinning TwinSpace[13], a blog, a video and a file aimed at disseminating the results of the project.

The **KA2 Project "***Traces of Europe!***"** Erasmus Plus project results platform[14] was a three-year school to school partnership for best practice exchanging between 5 Countries: Italy, Iceland, Norway, Poland, Romania. It involved students from 4 to 13, and it provided training and verifying 8 active teaching methods (PBL - Assessment for Learning- ICT Integration - Tinkering – Social Emotional Learning – Game Based Learning – Beginning Literacy – Outdoor Learning - Growth

Mindset Theory) covering the 8 Key Competences identified by Europe for 2020. The project structured and allowed experimenting many useful lessons to be applied with students through the methods acquired in the Lessons[15] developed with the webtool Learning Designer[16]; it also allowed the various involved Countries to leave a trace of their "passage" thanks to the installation of a TRACE, a sort of installation created by the students, teachers and parents and placed in a public space of the different schools. The project also produced an online educational platform[17] containing the interactive lessons developed in a cooperative manner by the teachers of the 5 Countries. Finally, an eTwinning TwinSpace[18] was carried out and it was useful for the documentation and online exchange with students. At the end of the 3 years, the students of the Partner Countries met in Norway and spent a week of European school together, attending lessons with teachers from 6 different Countries and sharing their experience in blended groups.

10. Blog for disseminating the project activities, linked to the Institute's website http://ka1comprensivobobbio.blogspot.com/

11. Erasmus Project Results Platform – Platform providing results http://bit.ly/WearecooperARTive

12. Website of the project We are CooperARTive documenting the entire project activity http://bit.ly/sitoWearecooperARTive

13. eTwinning in TwinSpace supporting interaction activities between students in the intermeeting periods http://bit.ly/TSWeareCooperARTive

14. Summary of the project Traces of Europe in the Erasmus Plus Project Results Platform http://bit.ly/TracesOfEurope

15. Page with all the lessons prepared by the partners implying the use of the active methods acquired https://www.tracesofeurope.net/lessons

16. Tool for the creation, also shared, of lessons organized on the basis of Bloom's Taxonomy https://www.ucl.ac.uk/learning-designer/

17. Educational platform with references to active methods for acquiring key competences, applicative examples, documentation and contacts https://www.tracesofeurope.net/

18. eTwinning on TwinSpace supporting the students' activities in the intermeeting periods and documentation of best moments http://bit.ly/TSTracesofEurope

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Lesson on Learning Designer

The synergic action of the three projects significantly stimulated the inclination to see small schools in a different light and to experiment new and more effective systems to promote learning and develop competences. The teachers that participated directly or indirectly in the Europeanisation path undoubtedly improved their cultural and personal knowledge.

The professional growth achieved was further strengthened by the systemic connection to other simultaneous ministerial actions: the National Plan for Digital Education - PNSD[19] and the Three-Year Plan for Teachers' Training PTFD[20].

This interweaving was facilitated by the overlapping of many members belonging to the two working groups that worked intensely to de-

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velop innovation: the European Group, responsible for internationalisation, and the PNSD Group, promoter of innovation in the digital field. Both groups had the common aim to bring innovation into the Institute, and they integrated their tasks in order to create a clear path. Each one developed complementary and often overlapping goals of action, which strengthened the various actions. This contributed to generate, support, extend the Institute's innovative line. and make it systemic.
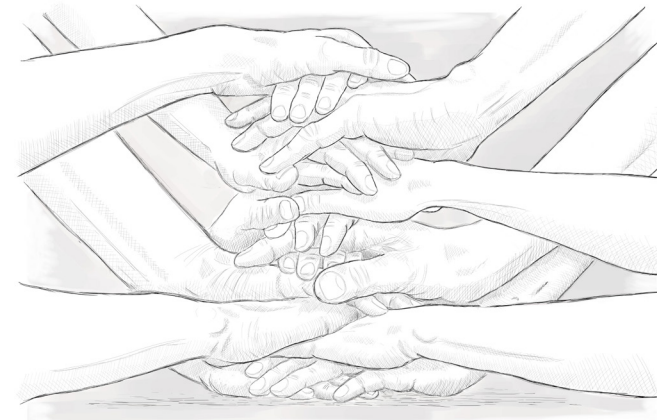
The synergy of the two groups

For two years, the moments of dissemination were connected to the Institute's Educational Units, thus putting together ERASMUS, PNSD and PTFD stimulating peer-to-peer education and the sharing of good practices. Two habits that were not very common before.

Therefore, each mobility was always followed by an internal dissemination, open to all teachers, in a workshop mode. The teachers participated, experimented, analysed in depth, and received materials. The teachers who participated in the Educational Units accepted to implement the methods, tools or techniques acquired during the dissemination and to document the experimentation in class with digital tools.

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This strengthened both the implementation of new educational methods and the digital integration with the students.

The converging of these three important actions led to a great impact on the system.

IN ACTION

2.7 Innovative educational methodologies and their connection with competences

Even if based on different modalities (Key Action 1 with structured Courses and Job Shadowing on methods and the digital; Key Action 2 with the creation and implementation in class of lessons based on active methods for key competences), both Erasmus paths - always supported by eTwinning - allowed the *teachers to see, experiment, share, learn innovative teaching methods that were students*-centred and competences-oriented.

Discovering active educational techniques in Czech Republic, experimenting Beginning Literacy in Iceland, investigating Outdoor Learning in Romania, becoming acquainted with Assessment for Learning in Norway, and Game Based Learning in Poland... seeing different school systems, settings and unusual timetables, different teaching approaches, experimenting them, readapting them and sharing them, began to radically modify the educational approach of many of the School teachers. In fact, it all affected both practically and formally the creation of a different idea of school: more dynamic, oriented towards the 21st century skills, more focused on students and on their learning than on teachers and on teaching knowledge and contents.

Note

Observation of active didactics

Poland 2017 - Game Based Learning for Foreign Languages Training

Note

A European School Week May 2019 – A week of innovative school with teachers and students from all Partner Countries - Mango Mango - Community Building activities between students of different Countries

Small group activities on Light Table: art and geometry storytelling

Station activities: explanation and experimentation of self-produced games with recycled material

Currently, especially in one of the schools- the Primary School of Travo - only active didactics are implemented, integrated with the digital. The acquired methods are used as everyday practices and put in the implementation of cross-cutting projects based on competences. In other words, didactics are of constructivist type and are based on the group, thus placing in the centre the student who becomes an actor/worker that learns through practical tasks. It is a way of teaching that rarely works on single school subjects. On the contrary it tends to put the contents of subjects in real issues and, depending on the method, it implements the project.

The digital is not something to be studied, but it is a tool used to strengthen learning and as a means to better structure and acquire educational skills. Our aim is to make it gradually transparent: a simple, very normal means, as a pen or a book.

The results, in terms of school wellbeing, acquisition of socio-emotional competences, inclusion and academic results are very positive.

In our other schools there are various projects that also include, even if not as strongly, the aware use of educational methods acquired thanks to Europeanisation.

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ICT

2.8 Technology and remote teaching for social inclusion

Digital integration was strengthened together with the acquisition and experimentation of new methods and approaches. This was one of the most important focuses of our Erasmus projects, whose extension was strengthened owing to the systemic action of the PNSD, and which found its natural place for implementation in eTwinning.

While we were learning in Europe thanks to Erasmus and with Europe thanks to eTwinning, the PNSD provided the schools with the possibility to obtain the means and tools necessary to make the digital available on a large scale. This allowed us to consolidate a vision of school that identified the digital integrated with subjects as a factor capable of strengthening learning and as a social inclusion tool.

In developing the eTwinning projects, we immediately understood that the digital enables entering into contact with the world easily and immediately, going beyond one of the greatest risks for a small school, that is social exclusion with all related implications.

In 2016, thanks to eTwinning and Erasmus, we started our first video conferences, leading the students to work together remotely on common projects and products. We used ICTs in the complete sense of the acronym, as a normal practice. Initially, there were very few classes that, even with connection difficulties, met with other classes involved in eTwinning or Erasmus projects. The aim was to play together, share opinions on habits or lifestyles, decide together on a common product. This created an everyday habit and consolidated an operational normality that allowed the involved students to be in class with other European students, although living in isolated places.

Note

Activities integrated with the digital - in connection with the partner classes via eTwinning

Therefore, technologies represented a readjustment of educational opportunities, and included students who, due to their life conditions or to where they lived, used to be naturally excluded.

We further verified this aspect during the lockdown. All of the Institute's teachers were able to put Europeanisation in their operational background, integrating active methods with technologies, facing remote schooling without difficulties, with already well experimented tools and with a working method that supported remote teaching and remote learning with effective strategies and approaches in terms of results, processes, maintenance of the school community and resilience.

The digital competences developed thanks to the Europeanisation paths allowed the students to experiment learning opportunities from which they would have been precluded in normal circumstances.

Today, thanks to the acquired digital procedures, our students, even the most distant ones, can connect, share opinions, learn and discover the world as if they lived in a big city.

Note

2.9 English for everyone

The Europeanisation paths also strengthened an area that used to be quite lacking in the Institute. In fact, the teachers' linguistic competences had never been particularly high, initially representing a barrier to the teachers' participation in mobility. The recurring sentence used to be: *"But I don't know English, I can't go anywhere!"*

In order to act at a system level again, free English courses were provided for three years, using part of the Erasmus funds of the Project Management Implementation of the different approved projects. The courses were organized on the basis of linguistic level in order to support the improvement of the teachers' communication competences as much as possible and to make them autonomous both in carrying out mobilities and in interacting and operating remotely with the partners. After this action, some of those teachers - on the wave of their post-mobility enthusiasm continued their progress autonomously, signing up on their own for other English courses in order to achieve language certifications.

However, the strengthening of the English language did not involve only the teachers.

Starting from 2018, several experiments have been tried leading to strengthening the acquisition of the English language through different actions that have become a consolidated procedure. The five-year old Nursery School students of all our schools, follow playful lessons in English for a half-an-hour a week. All the Primary School classes in Travo follow one or two subjects, suitable for scaffolding, are taught in English. At our Lower Secondary Schools, a system of language certifications has been launched. Starting from this year, lauguage certifications are also linked to CLIL music courses in English.

These actions for strengthening English fall within the idea of a school that identifies Europe and European citizenship as a common framework of reference, and that sees in the English language the most functional tool for global communication.

Note

KNOW-HOW

2.10 Classroom settings, innovative environments and organisation of school time

The general growth started with the Europeanisation path, the continuous interconnection with fundamental ministerial actions, such as the PNSD supporting a new idea of school, the actual going to other European countries and getting to know one another through our differences, led us to reason also on space and time.

Learning environments were not the focus of our projects, but educational changes require changes also in the classroom settings. In fact, by implementing innovative projects, an educational approach was developed that inevitably altered space and time.

Therefore, we created multipurpose innovative environments and specific learning spaces, all with variable settings, colourful, nice, equipped and integrated with technologies. They were funded with ministerial calls and PON funds, but reasoned in a European perspective, and created thanks to a Know-how acquired by moving away from the village micro realities, in search of alternatives. Indeed, the exchanges with other European realities allowed us to come up with ideas and solutions adjustable to our contexts.

Bibloh! Under the bridge, the innovative school library built in an institute with a European concept

Note

These environments simplify the implementation of the acquired active methods because they are thought for a group based way of teaching. At the same time, they are easy to modify and they are equipped with devices, instruments and props useful for the purpose for which they were created. Furthermore, they are supplied with technologies always ready to be used, screens instead of blackboards and Chromebooks to be connected to the Gsuites of the School. They have an inclusive setting with comfortable seating, poufs, couches, carpets and bookshelves at students' height, easily accessible and always open with available stuff.

They are nice environments because the school has to be thought of and created as something nice: students have to perceive the feeling of being immersed in a learning environment tailored on them, to be used with respect and care.

This was evident in a primary school[21] near Liverpool, where we took part in one of the most useful job-shadowing visits we ever attended. The school was located in one of the most deprived areas of Great Britain, and for this reason it received a significant amount of additional funding to enhance the students' educational opportunities. It was very nice, very different from everything that surrounded it. Every day, at the end of the lessons, two people from the maintenance staff went around the school, tidying things away, touching up wall displays and generally ensuring that the school was looking its best for the following day. As explained by School Director Jeff Taylor, "The learning environment is really important. We are a school and this is where the children learn how to take care of the world around them. A number of our pupils have chaotic home lives. It is important that the school is well looked after and highly organised, with clear routines and expectations in order to give the children the structure they need in order to learn effectively".

21. https://www.lander-road.co.uk/

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The Language Hub,(inspired by Erasmus), is a place where languages and ICTs create authentic learning opportunities thanks to continuous connections with Europe in Erasmus e in eTwinning

There are also several classrooms that have passed from the frontal classroom setting to a variable classroom setting. In some classrooms, the teachers' desks have been replaced with movable stools, and cabinets have been decreased in number, often leaving space to themed corners and reading islands.

Tech lab – creative constructions corner at the Taikatahti School - Oulu - Finland

Blackboards have become whiteboards and placed opposite the interactive screens.

Classroom settings have been modified to support active teaching methods, always more frequently part of complex and interdisciplinary projects, generally group-based.

All this opened up to new opportunities for innovation.

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At the moment, a paramount step consists in opening up the curriculum which, in order to support this new educational paradigm, has to lose its organisation in sectors. It needs to be understood more as a fluid outline where the different subjects interweave and enter into real multidimensional experiences, in order to find in them opportunities for real learning.

We are moving towards a deep review of the vertical curriculum. Such review will have to be anchored to the territory, because closely connected to the community; it will need to have a European context, because it will be the framework of the future for the new generations; it will have to promote the implementation of authentic, interdisciplinary, horizontal, vertical experiences in open classes, and it will need to be able to make the digital become transparent.

It is an extensive and complex work in progress. Since we have started implementing it, we have met daily obstacles and oppositions, because it challenges consolidated practices in favour of learning situations connected to a real world.

A first trial is being carried out in our primary schools that have adopted a timetable of 45 minutes lessons useful to implement 25% of the entire educational action of the territorial curriculum based on competences, thus interweaving school and community.
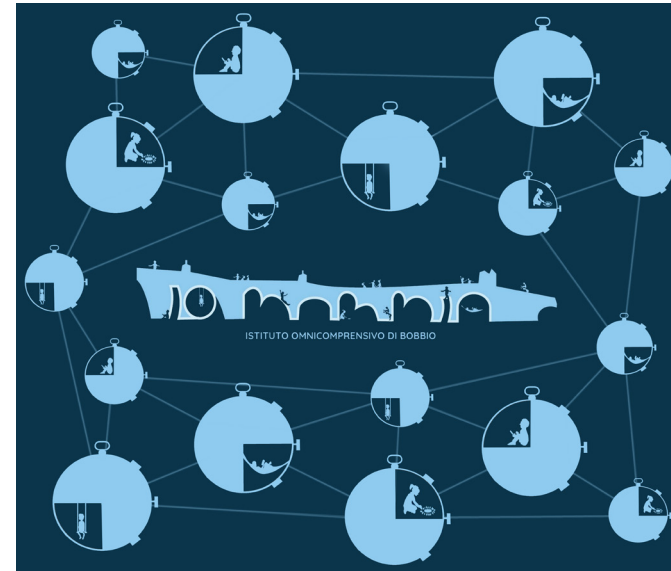
After didactics and spaces, school time also changes

HABITS

2.11 The staff's professional and personal growth: pros & cons

It is easy to imagine how these 7 years of work dedicated to Europeanisation have had a considerable impact on many teachers and their professional growth with regards to results, personal growth, perhaps less measurable, but even more determining.

The majority of the teachers who have participated in mobilities have showed an increased desire of implementing all which is inherent and consequent to said mobilities, that is:

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23. https://www.oecd.org/education/Global-competency-for-an-inclusive-world.pdf

Note

- the opening up towards others and the readiness to trust them because their different backgrounds are known and appreciated;
- the discovery of different cultural heritages that supports understanding and opens up to widening perspectives, which is necessary to reason at a global level in order to act with awareness at a local level;
- the ability to enter into relationships also aiming at sustainable actions to improve society.

Basically, a remarkable growth of what nowadays is called global competences.

Global competences are multidimensional because they include different abilities useful to promote cultural awareness and to interact in a multi-ethnic society, to examine local, global and intercultural matters, to understand and appreciate the different perspectives and visions of the world, to interact with success and with respect, to behave in a sustainable manner for a collective wellbeing. Global competency for an inclusive world - PISA[22] – In-depth analysis[23].

23. http://bit.ly/GlobalCompetencyOECDPISA

23. http://bit.ly/GCdeepening
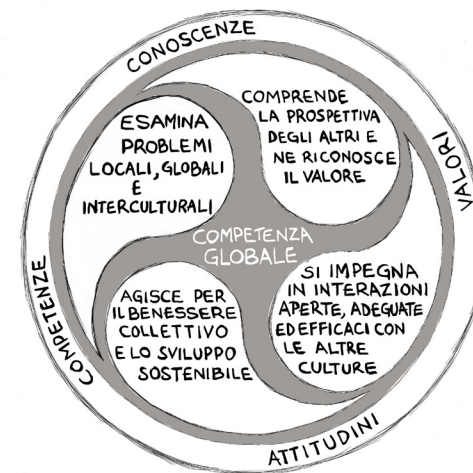
Infographics of Global Competences

The related consequences have a cascade effect on students, because globally aware teachers help increase awareness towards global themes, support the development of good citizenship and fuel the sense of belonging, making school a place where the world is understood and competences are trained.

If Europeanisation supports the opening up of small schools to the big world, it simultaneously strengthens their ability to group, communicate and build local networks.

When such involving experiences are shared, you go beyond the normal professional relationship, because an emotional, mental, physical immersion takes place within the context of relationships that go beyond the formal. This produces memories, complicity and unity of vision that have an impact on human and professional relationships. At the same time, it defines a concept of school enhanced by the sharing

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of opinions, knowledge and the reprocessing of experiences. It also enables entering into stronger relationships owing to shared experiences.

To summarise all this in a song line: "*If you know what I know, you know what I mean*".

This is also why it is important to extend mobilities to as many people as possible within your schools. Indeed, apart from developing a professional growth, they make people meet on a human level, they build a group and create a shared and innovative vision of school.

On the other hand, though, at an intermediate stage of the innovative process produced by Europeanisation, a scissor situation can take place caused by the teachers' different life experiences. This is something that needs to be kept into consideration as a rather likely internal risk.

The innovation model is promoted and accelerated by those who participate in the process; on the other hand, those who remain anchored to their educational habits, start to assume an attitude of mistrust towards the new practices to which they are asked to adhere. Therefore, a sort of controversy can arise between currents of thought: there are those who promote the new educational paradigm, motivated by having achieved the 21st-century skills and by the need to put the students in the condition to stand up for a world characterised by complex challenges and in continuous change; at the same time, there are those who consider the educational practice consolidated over the years as still effective and not requiring any changes, because it puts learning and human knowledge in the centre.

Opposite fronts that, at least in the intermediate stage, tend to keep teachers separated from one another and create high barriers, causing slackenings and misunderstandings. Therefore, the attempt is to move assets, to extend and to include, without losing the focus and the goals.

Time is determining and resolutive as well as the gradual development of new habits. However, the latter require a steady guide focused on well-defined and well communicated long-term horizons, supported also by other concurrent and convergent actions.

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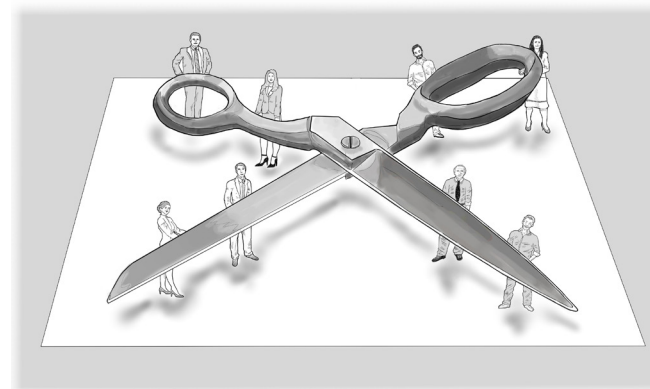
Scissors between innovators and conservatives

In our Institute, innovation has not completely become a system yet, but it is widening and standardising, involving an increasing number of teachers and students. This is taking place also thanks to an internal and external well-structured dissemination and to a formalisation of objectives, tools and processes in school documents, useful to teachers and communities in order to understand, share and disseminate a common educational vision. Initially, there were only a few teachers who embraced the action. In the three-year period 2016/19, though, at least half of the teaching staff was directly or indirectly involved in the Europeanisation path, enabling all our schools to get in touch with Europe.

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STORYTELLING

2.12 School storytelling: when dissemination teaches how to communicate and how to build networks

While implementing European paths, you also learn how to communicate because communication supports dissemination. Dissemination is a **concept** and at the same time a **key process** of internationalisation paths for many reasons.

Dissemination means to communicate in order to extend, it means to tell, to use the digital in order to increase the effectiveness of the message, it means to transfer practices to share expertise and experiences, to build networks in order to support future ideas and projects.

At first, schools meet difficulties in facing dissemination, as in our case. In fact, there was no consolidated practice in sharing expertise or experiences. We also learned how to disseminate.

Internal dissemination, supported by Educational Units, made use of what was learned in mobilities - in terms of methods and innovation - as a basis of peer-to-peer training.

It was a very useful solution because, on the one hand, it helped teachers who disseminated, overcoming the dread of the colleagues' judgment and to consolidate what was learned in order to be more effective in communicating it. On the other hand, it facilitated the participants' understanding of why it is important to approach new educational models and how to do it. After bringing **internal dissemination** in line with the format of active workshops, it supported the participants' ability to transfer the experience to the students in class.

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Internal dissemination about Outdoor Learning afterwards the Traces of Europe meeting held in Târgoviște in Romania

External dissemination, always very thorough and multidimensional, led us to face, for the first time, new forms of communication, not only towards the community and surrounding environments, but also towards the social world and the national and international community.

Each target and each channel, though, has its own specific language. To use the right words, to choose the most effective images and channels, to create events and promote them, to understand the timing and rhythms of communication, are all steps and competences that we gradually acquired in the Europeanisation path, creating and managing websites and blogs, activating and using social channels, participating in national and international events.

Owing to all this, our School, a small one amidst the mountains and the hillsides, on the Region's border, is becoming a point of reference and a reproducible model for other small and big schools. It has also brought its experience of small school beyond the border.

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External dissemination open to 80 teachers and school principals from neighbouring provinces and regions[1]

24. Erasmus experiential day held at the primary school of Travo http://bit.ly/GiornataErasmus

Blog of the KA1 Project Nature ICT and Innovation
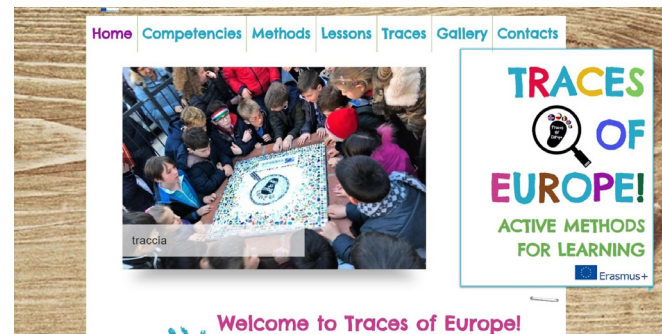
External European dissemination Website of the KA2 Project Traces of Europe created and managed by our Group

From out of the map to the center of Europe: building a culture of inclusion through eTwinning Brussels - European Commission - Berlaymont 18 September 2018

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It is important for a small school to be visible, because this supports a structure often weak due to specific circumstances. To learn how to disseminate, communicate also externally what is being realized in an effective way, helps to build supporting networks and promote the sustainability of the innovation process. Especially in small areas, if stakeholders are informed, understand and see the long-term goal, they will want to participate in the change and be active promoters of improvement.

Therefore, a stronger relationship is created between school and territory, less formal and based on collaboration in order to finalise supporting actions.

PAPER

2.13 School documents

If dissemination is a practical and useful action to spread and share the innovation process, to **put the Europeanisation path in the founding documents of a School** is its formalization consolidating and structuring the systematisation process.

The first timorous insertions in the School Educational Plan started in 2015 with a report on the Comenius we had concluded and with the insertion of a couple of eTwinning projects that mentioned the word Europeanisation, not so much used up to that point. A lot of things have changed since then. In 2016, with the approval of three Erasmus projects, a section of the School Educational Plan dedicated to Europeanisation identified in detail the various dimensions of the process, describing the active eTwinning and Erasmus projects, motivating the actions and giving links for further information.

INTERNAZIONALIZZAZIONE
PIANO DI SVILUPPO EUROPEO

L'evidente necessità di aprire gli orizzonti sociali e culturali degli alunni e di stimolare un confronto libero e agito con altre realtà, il contesto circoscritto e decentrato nel quale è inserito il nostro Istituto, ci ha imposto di avere uno sguardo aperto, che potesse indurre ad una ampia visione della realtà multi sfaccettata e multiculturale nella quale i nostri ragazzi si troveranno a vivere.

Fragment of the European Development Plan from the School Educational plan (Ptof)

In 2017, internationalisation also entered the Three-Year Plan for Digital Education of our School, promoting eTwinning projects, participation in European MOOCs, to European paths for the promotion of digital citizenship.

In 2019, the Headteacher published the **Guidelines** for the school's activities for the three-year period 2020/22, and unequivocally identified Europeanisation as one of the fundamental focuses for the school development.

27. https://bit.ly/ptofbobbio

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Fragment of Guidelines P.T.O.F. - 2019

Over the years, the space dedicated to Internationalisation in the School Educational Plan has been better defined and widened referring to the history of Europeanisation, describing the ongoing eTwinning and Erasmus projects and including the in progress projects. Moreover, the results of the Europeanisation path have also been well detailed: the linguistic enhancement has been formalised, a space dedicated to active teaching methods has been created and other platforms supporting Europeanisation have been linked. Obviously, on our school website, all the tabs dedicated to Europe and related projects have been inserted.

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The School Improvement Plan identifies fundamental improvement priorities, very clear in the Europeanisation objectives. It also defines active teaching methods, socio-emotional learning and the integration of technologies (object of eTwinning and Erasmus projects) as the most effective tools in an improvement perspective.

Fragment of Improvement Plan

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The SER (Self-Evaluation Report) identifies Erasmus and eTwinning paths as strengths for the acquisition of European Key Competences, and acknowledges their importance for professional growth which determines the necessary change of the methodological approach.

R.A.V.
Competenze chiave europee

Punti di forza	Punti di debolezza
La scuola sta lavorando alla declinazione delle competenze di cittadinanza all'interno del curricolo verticale, anche alla luce della recente costituzione dell'Istituto Omnicomprensivo. Sono segnalate nel PTOF le competenze chiave di cittadinanza condivise a livello europeo. L'Istituto ha lavorato in modo particolare sulle competenze sociali e civiche (cyberbullismo, rispetto della legalità, prevenzione delle dipendenze, sicurezza informatica, educazione stradale, armonico sviluppo socio-emotivo, integrazione...). La scuola adotta criteri comuni per la valutazione del comportamento (vedi rubrica di valutazione inserita nel PTOF). Il livello di competenze sociali e civiche è buono in tutti gli ordini di scuola e in tutti i plessi, non si registrano particolari criticità. Significativi miglioramenti si rilevano rispetto alle competenze digitali, all'imparare ad imparare e allo spirito d'iniziativa, grazie soprattutto all'introduzione di nuovi approcci metodologici.	Insufficiente implementazione dei progetti riguardanti le competenze sociali e civiche a livello verticale. Alcune proposte progettuali negli anni sono risultate piuttosto ripetitive, sia nei contenuti sia nelle metodologie e ciò talvolta ha diminuito l'interesse degli alunni. La sospensione delle attività scolastiche ha sicuramente penalizzato l'attuazione delle progettualità previste in ordine all'implementazione delle competenze in oggetto. In modo particolare, la sospensione delle attività didattiche ha impedito la realizzazione di alcuni progetti finalizzati all'implementazione delle competenze di cittadinanza caratterizzanti l'istituto e la sua vocazione all'europeizzazione: -Viaggi attraverso l'Europa, percorso di approfondimento delle tematiche legate alla cittadinanza europea (comprensivo di viaggio a Strasburgo) – Viaggio d'istruzione a Bruxelles, finalizzato alla conoscenza delle maggiori istituzioni dell'UE (classi terze sc. sec. di I°grado).

l'Istituto, grazie a numerosi progetti e iniziative (tra cui KA1 Natura ICT e Innovazione, KA2 We are CooperARTive e Traces of Europe, KA1 LIFE Language ed innovation, Erasmus e eTwinning) ha lavorato sull'implementazione di metodologie attive per lo sviluppo delle competenze chiave e per l'apprendimento della lingua inglese. Il massiccio utilizzo, durante la DAD, di piattaforme digitali ha infine sicuramente consentito un ulteriore potenziamento delle competenze preposte.

Fragment of SER

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A consistency is thus created giving birth to a vision, determining an explicit way to be followed in the long term.

To date, two additional Erasmus projects are being started. The new projects aim at maintaining the level of internationalisation, at widening it and at strengthening some strategic areas for the school.

The **KA1 project *L.I.F.E. Language and Innovation for Europe***, promotes 32 staff mobilities, between Structured Courses and Job-Shadowing, and aims at the development of 4 fundamental areas in line with the Guidelines:

- increased opening up towards Europe and greater dialogue;
- improved competences in the English language;
- acquisition and strengthening of methodological competencies specifically needed to teach English;
- acquisition and strengthening of general innovative teaching methods.

The fundamental aim of the project is to keep the Europeanisation and innovation process high and to improve the teachers' and students' linguistic competences.

The *KA 229 project W.I.B. Where is Beauty,* partnership *with 6 Countries,* was developed with the aim to support citizenship competences and is based on the acquisition of the ideas of **ethics and aesthetics. It will lead 8/14 years old students to discover beauty in 6 areas:** Themselves - Nature - Food - Sport - Art - Music, with the aim to present it to others, and to structure and implement activities based on the Project Based Learning methodology with a Service Learning approach, in order to lead the community to make ethical choices that safeguard beauty in every area.

This meets one of the improvement objectives of the Improvement Plan, that is to promote active citizenship, supporting the acquisition of awareness of the European cultural heritage, practicing educational and transversal competences, developing the sense of European belonging.

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3. Europeanisation in steps

Here we provide a summary of how to start the Europeanisation process in a small school. The toolkit style specifies the fundamental elements and steps that can be taken into consideration in order to support the starting of the European path. They are not mandatory steps, but they can be at the basis of a procedural personalisation to be adapted to school procedures and to the starting conditions.

CHANNELS

3.1 Europeanisation a multidimensional process

Europeanisation, now in every School Educational Plan, often remains a declaration of intentions or a dream for a lot of small schools for various reasons: lack of interested teachers, turn over, difficulty to understand the operational procedures, fear of being insufficiently organised from a structural viewpoint, fear to face a complex path…

Nonetheless, it needs to be organised and pursued because it is a multidimensional path that:

- develops in several areas - educational, organizational, systemic;

- affects various targets - staff, students, families, communities;

- acts at various levels - personal, professional, relational, ideological, vision;

- affects crucial areas - spaces, timing, didactics, relationships;

- builds networks – with families, communities, stakeholders, other schools;

- creates connections and relationships in Europe – between teachers, students, communities;

- builds a step by step European culture and sense of belonging

- promotes 21st century skills and Global Competence

Therefore, it plays a central role for the improvement process of a school.

It cannot be occasional, but it has to trigger a gradual and continuous extension of its effects with the aim to create a sustainable system, oriented to innovation and improvement.

It needs a long-term vision that starts from a conscious and deep analysis of the school real needs in order to develop new step by step ideas of school.

For all these reasons it is a time consuming process to start with little steps or with a big jump is a school decision, based on the previous structure, on its know-how and on the strength of the group supporting the process.

In order to support a school Europeanisation process **there are various channels,** each one with different objectives, but all extremely useful. The most connected to the schools' Europeanisation paths are as follows:

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Places of Europeanisation paths.

- Eramus+[25]- Erasmus+ INDIRE National Agency, with head office in Florence; it deals with school education, vocational education, adult education. It also includes eTwinning National Units and Epale[26] (adult education) and the Italian Unit Eurydice[27] (European educational systems);

- eTwinning[28] – It offers a platform for the school staff (teachers, School Directors, librarians, etc...) of the participating countries, so that they can communicate, collaborate, develop projects and share ideas. It is a European community of teachers that allows developing online projects and supporting the implementation of Erasmus projects;

- Europeana[29]- Media-library of the European cultural heritage;

- Teaching with Europeana[30] – An educational blog that displays hundreds of learning scenarios structured in didactics based on competences and on media-library contents;

- Learning corner[31] – The European Union portal full of educational material, digital activities, games for students;

- School Education Gateway[32] – A platform for teachers, School Directors, researchers, teachers' educators, politicians and other professionals that work in the field of school education – it is translated in 23 languages; it is useful to get information, grow professionally, find resources, be informed on funding opportunities – it provides support in looking for Erasmus courses and job shadowing;

- TeacherAcademy SEG[33] – It promotes online training through online – onsite courses;

- EuropeanSchoolNet[34] - EUN – A network of 34 European Ministries of Education, with registered office in Brussels; it is a non-profit organisation, aiming at bringing innovation in teaching and in learning through the involvement of Ministries of Education, schools, teachers, researchers and industrial partners;

25. https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_en

26. https://epale.ec.europa.eu/it

27. http://eurydice.indire.it/

28. https://www.etwinning.net

29. https://www.europeana.eu/

30. https://teachwitheuropeana.eun.org/

31. http://bit.ly/learningcornerEU

32. https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/

33. http://bit.ly/teacheracademySEG

34. http://www.eun.org/

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- Europeanschoolnet Academy[35] - The EUN's Academy aims at bringing innovation in the educational process for the 21st-century digitalised society and offers MOOCs on innovative themes;

- Future Classroom Lab[36] - Created by European Schoolnet, the Future Classroom Lab (FCL) is based in Brussels; it is a stimulating learning environment that challenges visitors to reconsider the role of pedagogy, technology and design in their classes. It offers onsite courses and workshops, as well as a series of webinars and online courses on varied topics;

- European Union[37] - The European Union's website has various fields of interest and intervention;

- European Commission[38] – The European Commission's official website, with information on its strategic priorities, its policies and its services.

35. https://www.europeanschool-netacademy.eu/

36. https://fcl.eun.org/

37. https://europa.eu/european-union/

38. https://ec.europa.eu/

3.2 Where to start?

The Europeanisation process can start due to **2 possible "pushes"**, a formal one and an informal one.

GUIDELINES FOR THE SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL PLAN: the School Principal understands the importance of the action and highlights it as a key for development, inviting teachers to act in order to pursue its implementation.

PERSONAL INTEREST OF SOME TEACHERS: single teachers understand the relevance of the path and autonomously start experimenting approaches and projects remotely, and then suggest the extension of the action.
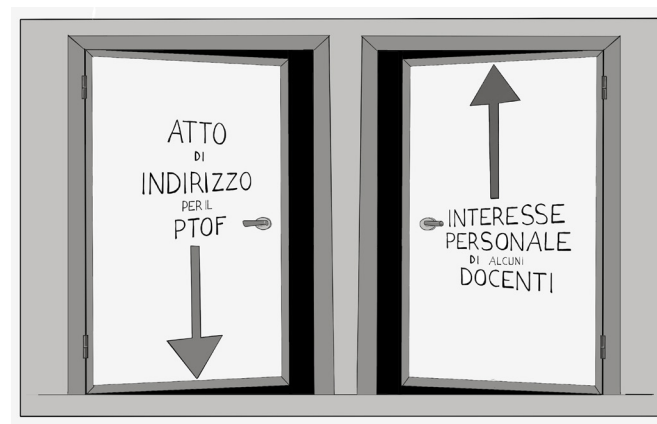
The two possible drives towards europeanisation

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In both cases, after starting the path, it is necessary to structure the Europeanisation action practically and formally as it has a multidimensional impact that needs to be integrated in the school main documents and be developed by a dedicated working group

The steps listed below represent a possible development path that schools can model according to their own needs and peculiarities. The following steps are not to be taken as a unique model, as they represent the main stages of a gradual spiral process aimed at creating a shared system of innovation.

3.3 Ten fundamental steps to start
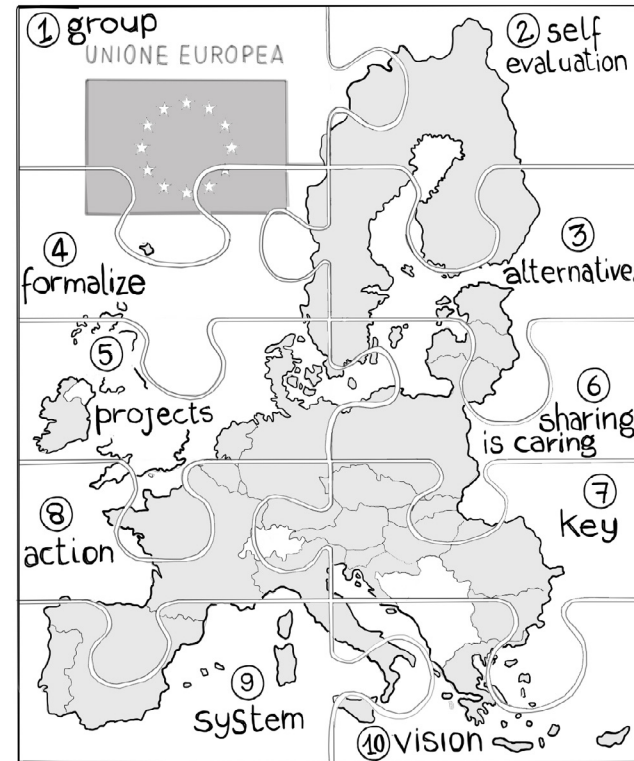
The steps of europeanisation at a glance

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Step 1

GROUP

Form the European Group

Every Europeanisation activity, in order to become systemic and affect the school, has to be shared and formalised. For this reason, it is necessary to form the group and make it visible to the entire teaching body. For example, it can become a "committee" to be presented at the beginning of the academic year in order to collect further enrolments from teachers, thus becoming visible and part of the organisational structure.

Who is in the group? It has to be an agile and coherent group. Therefore, it is advisable for it to be composed of active people, with a similar vision and very motivated in structuring effective paths in terms of impact on the school. It has to be representative of all the school levels in order to represent different needs and perspectives, but not too large, so that all the members may be active and participative.

The School Director and the General Services and Administrative Manager, as key figures of the system, must be in the group.

In fact, they have a double function: they provide the group with an overall view oriented to functioning and growth, and, from this group, they get the reasons for the projects and the implications on teaching that the process develops. Sharing between the teaching staff and the organisational staff also generates a greater mutual understanding on vocabulary and procedures. This permits the development of a positive and collaborative atmosphere, both necessary to build complex projects that need a precise and careful handling of European funds. Therefore, throughout the year, it is necessary to find several occasions during which the group can share opinions with the School Principal and the General Services and Administrative Manager on fundamental aspects for the implementation of the paths.

What does it do? The group deals with many fields and promotes various actions. In particular, the group:

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avvia — **Starts the process**: it identifies needs and it structures a European Development Plan for the School. It gets updated, it makes experiments, it acquires awareness on tools, means and procedures that are useful to support the paths.

Promuove — **Fosters** a sense of European belonging, organising dedicated moments to raise awareness: European Day of Languages - Erasmus day – Europe Day …

Facilita — **Simplifies** the way to get closer to Europe by sharing useful websites, publishing online courses and meetings selected on the Internet, promoting training on the use of European platforms, such as the eTwinning community.

Supporta — **Supports** colleagues in structuring and implementing single Europeanisation projects/activities in eTwinning/Europeana, carrying out mentoring actions.

Trova — **Finds** partners for the projects and creates relations that are useful to develop shared project plans.

Progetta — **Plans** system actions supported by Erasmus in order to meet the school needs and to foster innovation: Key Action 1 and 2

Collega — **Connects** the different project actions related to Europeanisation with other ministerial actions, in order to strengthen the related results, structure coherent paths and obtain greater impact.

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Networks with the territory, families, municipalities, communities and stakeholders in order to involve and raise awareness concerning the processes, to develop an extended and supportive European culture, to lay the foundations for the sustainability of the paths.

Disseminates all the results. Makes the undergoing processes known, it communicates the carried out steps to the teaching staff, it supports structured and operational actions (internal and external) concerning the implemented eTwinning and Erasmus projects, as well as other additional actions. It creates both on site and online events, it creates virtual and physical places for an everlasting dissemination (tabs on the school homepage for the related websites, the school Europe blog, eTwinning/Erasmus corners at school …).

Regenerates and extends the action continuously, looking into the processes, identifying new needs, analysing the results, creating new connections. To this end, it organises structured and documented periodical meetings.

Supporting action: considering the extent of the path, the variety of organisational areas involved and the impact that it can potentially produce on the system, a school aiming at Europeanisation as the key of a systemic development, can select a contact person within the European Group, who is also **coordinator for the Europeanisation and the Innovative processes.** This gives greater relevance to the action in practical and formal terms.

Step 2

SELF EVALUATION

Analyse the situation before starting: identify critical aspects, needs, potentialities, past experiences.

A detailed initial analysis giving an accurate picture of the school organisation, teaching methods and critical aspects, potentialities and real needs, is at the basis of all the Europeanisation paths having a structured framework, not episodic and aiming at gradual, but tangible changes of the system.

A reasoned beginning has to start from the SAR (Self-Assessment Report) and from the IP (Improvement Plan), which certainly provide practical indicators useful to identify possible areas of improvement. Therefore, the European Group can start from analysing these documents, to be used along with other tools needed to highlight the most innovation oriented and growth areas, which can come from the European comparison.

An in-depth and overall view of the situation before starting can be provided by an initial GForm used to collect critical aspects and needs highlighted by the school teachers, along with a following SWOT analysis that considers the different points of view.

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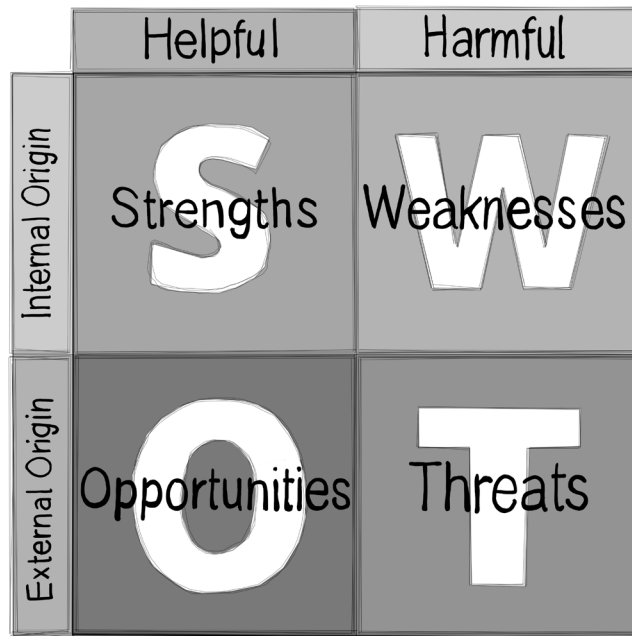
Note

SWOT ANALYSIS technique to get started

Step 3

ALTERNATIVES

Explore the various possibilities

Starting from the identified development needs, the group explores the various possibilities to start the paths, which are many and have different levels of difficulty. The group also identifies those which are closer to the school development zones, in order to start breaking the ice in a long-term and wide-ranging path. At first, it is possible to decide to promote less structured actions, single activities such as the promotion of online courses (Teacher Academy School Education Gateway/ European Schoolnet…), awareness raising days, training on how to use the platforms, or facilitate educational activities with the students using the EU's LEARNING CORNER and the blog TEACH-INGWITHEUROPEANA. This approach allows acquiring a gradual awareness that offers useful tools to understand the processes, promoting a first interest in drawing closer to Europe and spurring the sense of belonging to Europe.

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EU Learning Corner with paths, games and activities to get to know the European Union

Example of a 9/12 year old activity proposed by the Learning Corner

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Teaching With Europeana Blog with learning scenarios

Step 4

FORMALIZE

Include the European Development Plan in the Educational School Plan

Embedding the first steps, even if medium-term, in the school documents is an important action because it informs the teaching staff and the school community on the identified areas of improvement and it states the school vision, giving the perception that the process has

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been started. To this purpose, it is advisable to create a **clearly dedicated section to Europeanisation** in the Educational School Plan, thus avoid inserting these activities in wider contexts.

By annually updating the created section, the implementation of the action is documented year after year, strengthening its importance. To consider the opportunities offered by Europeanisation also in the Self-Assessment Report and in the Improvement Plan is an act of awareness, orienting choices and vision in the view of an improvement that moves towards innovative contexts.

Step 5

PROJECTS

Start the eTwinning experience

To enter eTwinning is undoubtedly a fundamental step not to be ignored because it starts, accompanies and regenerates the innovative action of the Europeanisation path. The eTwinning community offers the possibility to receive training, participate in theme-based groups, get in contact with European teachers in order to share experiences and especially in order to structure projects together at a distance.

Every year, the National Unit organises several courses, also for beginners. On the eTwinning YouTube Channel it is also easy to find very useful supporting material. Furthermore, in every region, a group of eTwinning Ambassadors supports and promotes training in presence and online.

eTwinning is a community with multiple potentialities, and thus requires a bit of practice. For this reason, when starting the eTwinning experience, it is advisable for the European Group to support the less expert teachers activating peer tutoring and mentoring actions.

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After an initial approach to the platform, eTwinning is experienced in full by participating remotely in projects. The eTwinning projects for 2 or more classes/schools are supported by TwinSpace, an exclusive and protected online space dedicated to the project.
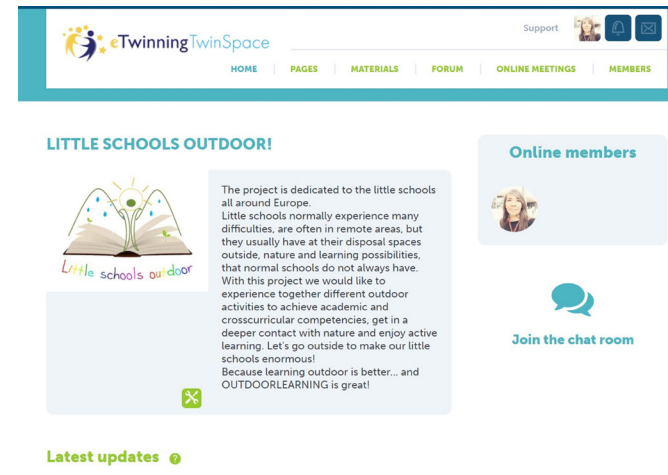
TwinSpace eTwinning: digital place for communication, exchange and cooperation at a distance

An eTwinning project is an excellent Europeanisation step because it remotely connects teachers and students in collaboration activities on a shared theme connected to the curriculum, in a European framework. The foreign language becomes functional in achieving the objectives of the project through an active multidisciplinary teaching method integrated with the digital. All school levels can activate or participate in eTwinning projects and this makes a systemic change to take place.

If at the beginning you are not ready to structure your own project, it is enough to enter eTwinning and go to the Partners' Forum. This is where many project proposals can be found and where it is possible to

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receive support for the implementation of the project, also from more expert European colleagues.

The Partners' Forum also offers proposals for Erasmus+ partnerships, under another category.
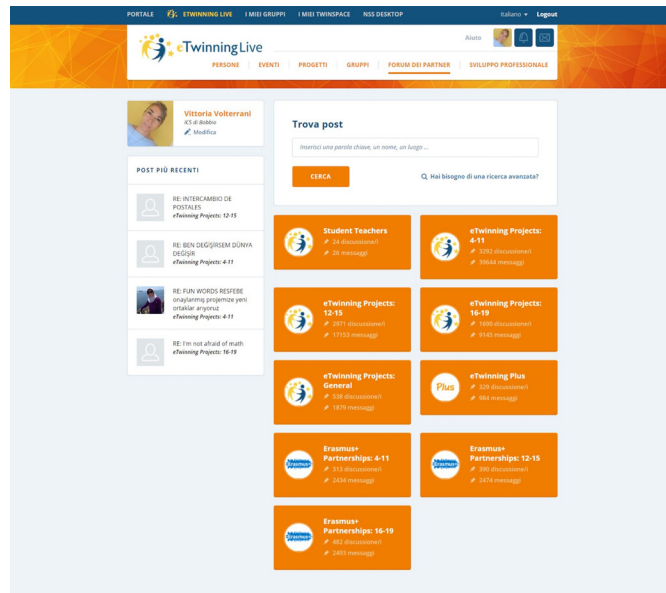
The eTwinning Partners' Forum, to find partner schools to start projects with

eTwinning projects do not provide for mobilities in presence and they do not require drawing up in-depth application forms because funds are not allocated. Therefore, the eTwinning experience does not affect the secretariat's work.

Registration is open to all and work is carried out in the utmost autonomy.

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Step 6

SHARING IS CARING

Disseminate and regenerate the first eTwinning experiences

Sharing eTwinning best practices helps to understand that the action is feasible, that it is not necessary to master perfect English or to be digital wizards to contribute effectively to a project.

Reporting the eTwinning implemented projects, explaining the achievements and the difficulties is a fundamental step because it leads teachers to share best practices as a normal activity. It also allows extending the range of action and the sharing of examples that can be reproduced, laying the foundations for the actual regeneration of the process.

Dissemination has to go beyond teaching practice to meet families and communities in order to create the European attitude, especially from the constant interaction with students belonging to other nations.

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School blog for eTwinning projects dissemination

Step 7

KEY

Start the Erasmus experience

Starting an Erasmus project is a fundamental step in a Europeanisation path, particularly for a small school, because, if well structured, implemented and disseminated, it determines a clear and continuous growth.

For this reason, the Erasmus projects involve schools, not single teachers or classes.

The Erasmus experience implies the participation in a ***selection call*** because, since it involves mobilities in presence, the benefit necessary to support said mobilities and the entire project is allocated.

- **Priorities and Actions**

  Within the school, the programme has the following **priorities:**
  - reduce early drop-out;
  - improve the achievement of basic competences;
  - strengthen quality in education and in the care of childhood;
  - improve teachers' professionalism.

These priorities were fundamentally pursued through several **Key Actions:**

KA101 – training of the school's staff for professional growth and the development of new competences.

KA 229 - school to school cooperation partnerships, centred on short-term and long-term mobility of students and school staff.

KA 201 – partnerships for the development of innovative practices, cooperation with the public sector, the labour world and society; sharing of experiences and good practices.

The new **Erasmus+ 2021 – 2027** programme has partly modified this organisation providing for a **Accreditation** procedure in order to access **Key Action 1**.

Furthermore, Key Action 1 will no longer concern only the **staff's mobility, but it will also include the students' mobility.**

The schools that apply for Erasmus Accreditation have to draw up an Erasmus Plan - a relevant part of the application - useful to define a long-term strategy that meets quality standards.

Schools can apply for **Accreditation as single schools or School Consortiums or in consortium with other institutions.**

Once obtained the Erasmus Accreditation as a single Institute or as consortium coordinator, a simplified path is provided to apply for the funding of Key Action 1.

However, accreditation is not the only way to carry out mobility projects.

All detailed and exhaustive information is provided on the website of the Erasmus plus National Agency[39].

Generally speaking but especially if you choose the accreditation way, it is fundamental to start from an accurate analysis of the starting point.

The **Erasmus Development Plan**, formerly the European Development Plan of Key Action 1, leads the school to carefully analyse its starting point with the aim to identify 2 or 3 areas that are crucial for its development. The Erasmus Development Plan is the strategic vision of the objectives that each school organisation has to give itself for its own improvement in terms of innovation and modernisation and for the development of the European dimension. It involves the entire school population: students, teachers, staff, Administrative-Technical-Auxiliary (ATA) staff.

Approaching Erasmus with awareness of goals and procedures, helps to support the action and to better exploit the results and processes that the action implies, also in terms of sustainability.

It is important to reason thoroughly in order to define a detailed and practical Erasmus Development Plan. The latter, in fact, highlights the real needs of the school and of the staff and leads to establish real objectives for systemic and long-term improvement.

39. General EU page with the accreditation details - Check related pages of National Agencies https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/calls/2020-erasmus-accreditation

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What type of goals? Practical, realistic, realisable, motivated and absolutely consistent to needs. The objectives should originate from or find confirmation in the Improvement Plan, be in line with the Guidelines of the School Educational plan and be oriented towards innovation which can be implemented in Europe.

How many goals? To establish an exact number would mean not taking into consideration the starting point, however, for a school beginning the Europeanisation path, 3 or 4 goals would be an achievable long-term target.

Who writes the Erasmus Development Plan? it should be written by a very small team because by working together it is possible to face more aspects from different perspectives in an objective and clear-minded manner. A small part of the European Group, after facing an in-depth analysis of the needs with the full team, can spend time drawing up the Plan, then share it with the other members that will carry out the role of reviewing friends.

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Webgate.ec.europa.eu. Erasmus Application - Erasmus accreditation in the field of School Education. Erasmus Development Plan

A good Erasmus Development Plan is only part of the accreditation form, but it determines its qualitative level, because everything starts from the Plan to continue in a sequential and coherent way.

Coherence is the keyword: the Erasmus Development Plan, in fact, establishes the entire line of the accreditation procedure. Each following frame, every detail of the project, has to be coherent with the European Development Plan.

While writing for accreditation, it is advisable to consider the **European criteria for quality assessment**[40] and the **Application rules**[41].

The minimum score to be taken into consideration is 70 points out of 100, but each of the 4 categories of the selection criteria has to obtain at least half of the maximum points.

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Step 8

ACTION

Act on the basis of the results

Waiting for the results is part of the procedure. Several months pass between the submission of the webform and the publication of the results, because the forms are analysed both from the content and from the economic point of view.

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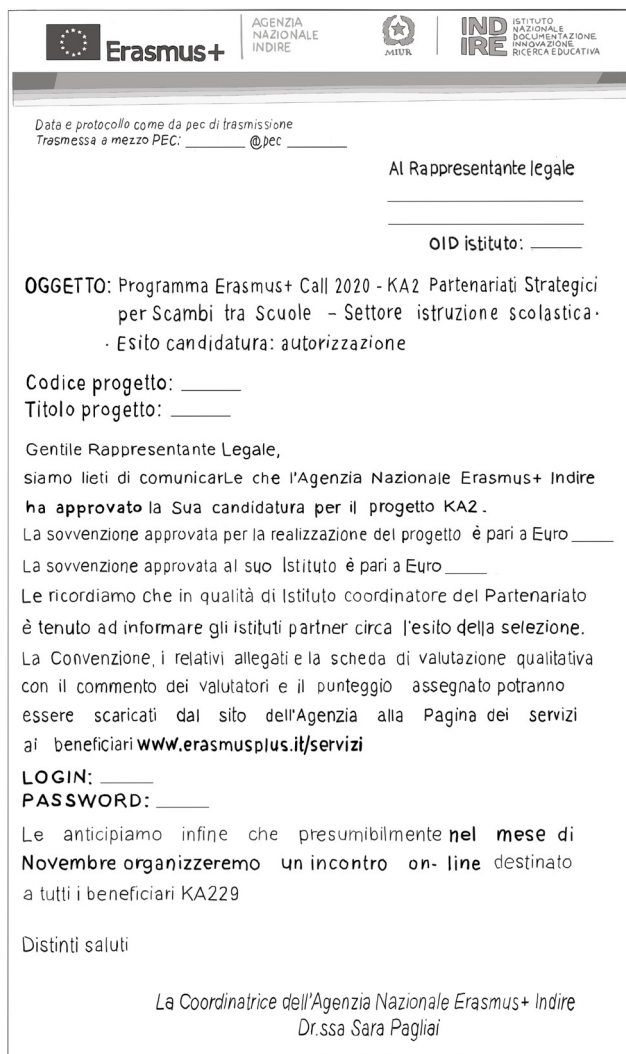
Extract of an Erasmus+ approval letter

A **negative result** certainly causes deep disappointment which, as soon as processed, has to be transformed into a resilience factor. The assessment of the project, in fact, offers precious and precise indications for improvement that, if analysed and responded to, allows rethinking of the action and implementing its weaknesses.

What to do? Never give up. Review the project with a critical eye, consider the assessment indications as a road map for improvement, sharpen and provide details of the missing parts or of the parts that were not well defined.

A **positive result** does not easily arrive after the first attempt, because the European project is an act of conceptual and organisational awareness that often finds schools which are not completely ready.

When it arrives, though, it certainly gives great satisfaction, because it pays back for the effort of a difficult, elaborate and shared construction.

What to do? After a first moment of rightful satisfaction, it is immediately necessary to act. The European Group, from promoter of projects and ideas, now also becomes an organiser of procedures and activities. Therefore, it must meet with the General Services and Administrative Manager and the School Director in order to:

- deal with the first bureaucratic practices (read the assessment report; communicate via certified e-mail any possible modifications; download, fill in, sign and send the agreement) in accordance with the procedures and within the deadline indicated by the National Agency;

- consider the various annexes present on the **Platform of the Services for Beneficiaries**[42];

- review the project together in order to make everybody aware of the organisational steps and strategies useful to implement the a.m. steps. In this phase, it can also be useful to share opinions with the school Auditor, in order to be sure of how to move in the financial management of the project.

42. Platform of the Erasmus beneficiaries for which credentials are required

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Usually, a school that approaches Europeanisation does so through Key Action 1 and/or Key Action 229. In case of approval, the starting steps partially differ.

KA1

The school organises autonomously its own development path based on the Erasmus Development Plan and in accordance with the defined schedule. The first actions that start the activity can be summarised as follows:

1. inform the teaching staff of the benefit and newly share the purpose, objectives and idea of the project;

2. break the news to the community through a newspaper article and a piece of news on the website (dissemination starts when the project starts);

3. open or reopen mobility applications trying to be as inclusive as possible and, on the basis of the declared criteria, draw new teachers closer to Erasmus, especially if permanent teachers (this operation can be repeated at the beginning of every academic year to make sure that none is excluded, if within the given parameters);

4. select the teachers and enter into an internal agreement with them, making them aware of the need to disseminate and experiment what is learned during mobilities;

5. inform families in collective moments (parent-teacher class/interclass committee...), lead them to understand the aim of the project, the long-term vision determining it and the development objectives to be achieved. Explain why some teachers will not be present during the academic year and the benefits that the students will be able to obtain;

6. insert on the school home page both the Erasmus logo and a project TAB that connects to a summary of the activities or, even better, to a possible blog/website/TwinSpace, to be always updated;

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7. review and possibly redefine the schedule that may have undergone small changes. Based on the schedule, the procedure starts as follows;

   - recontact the schools that will be hosting the job shadowing to confirm that the project has started, ask to confirm availability and agree upon dates and contents of the mobilities. If schools were not previously identified, establish the first contacts thanks to the **Partner Finding Forum** in **eTwinning**[43], or to the section **Erasmus Opportunities** in the **School Education Gateway**[43];

   - contact the home offices of the courses and define time schedules and participants (this action has to be managed, from the economic viewpoint, exclusively by the school);

   - select well in advance flights and accommodation (this action can be managed by the school, also with the European Group's support, or entrusted directly to the participants);

   - review and, if necessary, strengthen insurance aspects related to the mobilities;

8. prepare the monitoring and support tools that will accompany the teachers in mobility: travel logs – mobility guide – pre and post mobility monitoring grids – post-mobility satisfaction G-Form...

9. start linguistic support actions at school, using part of the project's management funds, if necessary;

10. create a strong and systemic procedural practice;

11. monitor and disseminate the results from the start continuously throughout the whole project.

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43. Platform of the European Community https://www.etwinning.net/ where it is possible to meet teachers, receive training, create projects, start partnerships, exchange, share.

44. European platform for school education https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu where it is possible to receive training and find information, courses and possible partners
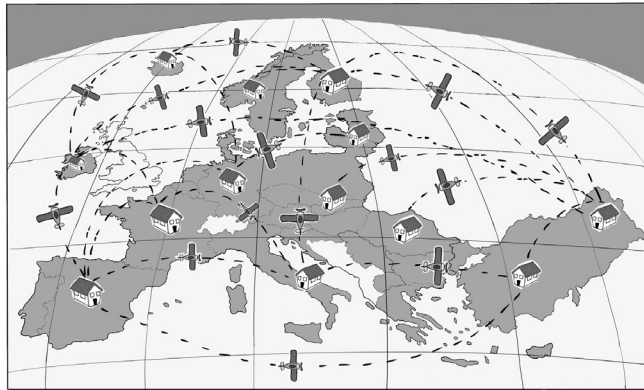
From isolation to European interaction. The small school grows

KA 229

The partnership begins the first actions, with the main impulse of the coordinating school. Generally speaking, in the initial phase, the partnership members:

1. inform their teaching staff of the obtained benefit and newly share the project purpose, objectives and idea, also in order to decide which and how many classes to include in the implementation. It is always advisable to extend the project activities to as many students as possible, beyond the classes identified for the mobilities in order to make the action inclusive and systemic, and thus to increase its impact;

2. break the news to the communities through, for example, a newspaper article and a piece of news on the website (dissemination starts when the project starts);

3. share the project idea with families in a specific and dedicated moment, producing a documented trace easy to find;

4. meet in an online event to check that the starting conditions are still present and decide together which activities to start with;

5. activate support actions, explaining and defining in detail:

   - the tasks assigned to each partner, making sure that they all know how to start their own tasks;

   - training on the use of eTwinning and web tools that are useful for the implementation;

   - the eTwinning project on TwinSpace in order make the intermeeting periods interactive, acted and participated by the students;

   - doubts and uncertainties of the newcomer partners;

6. put on the school home page both the linkable Erasmus logo and a project TAB that connects to a summary of the activities or, even better, to a possible blog/website/TwinSpace, always updated;

7. start the first online meetings between students, and thus stimulate a meeting practice that has to go way beyond the presence in mobility;

8. start the selection of students for the mobilities, making public the parameters agreed upon between partners and defined in the project form;

9. start the propaedeutic educational activities;

10. organise the first mobility.

These starting steps, listed in both actions, aim at giving possible hints and not at being prescriptive. They can be the basis of a procedural personalisation that will be defined in accordance with the school practices and pre-existing conditions.

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Step 9

SYSTEM

Disseminate, extend and launch the system

After starting the project, in order to create a considerable impact, it is necessary to model it. Therefore, it is necessary to create a system that can be reproduced by all participants. This pattern has to follow the project lines, but it has also to consider and activate the following 3 actions.

Dissemination: this is an instrumental and multidimensional process.

Dissemination has to be carried out first of all **inside the school** to make the teachers aware of what is happening and help them acquire the new knowledge, techniques and methods acquired during the project. If the dissemination is carried out through operational workshops open to all colleagues, on one hand it facilitates exchanges, relationships and active experimentation; on the other hand, it promotes a practice of exchanges between peers that is not often obvious. The fact of disseminating internally at the end of each mobility allows creating a routine in sharing best practices that prevents the accumulation of contents and allows putting into practice with regularity what was learned.

Dissemination **has to be carried out also externally**, according to a concentric circles pattern that extends from the school community to the European Community.

There are various external dissemination practices. In particular, they have to be relevant, targeted, continuative and reach different targets. Therefore, it is advisable to make different types, in presence and online. External in presence disseminations can include meetings with the community, eTwinning/Erasmus open days, moments in other schools, publication in local newspapers, regional themed events hosted in the school, participation in international conferences and events...

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External disseminations carried out online can include the classic tabs on the school website, newspaper articles and online magazines, online events in eTwinning, documenting websites and blogs, social pages on the project and posts on the Institute's socials, thanks to which it is possible to provide a quick and continuous dissemination of activities and project outcomes.

Systematization means to create new *models that can be reproduced and thus become a routine*, developing different operational habits, formalised in school documents and extended to the school. To create a new system based on Europeanisation is a long and complex process. Therefore, it is advisable to proceed step by step and start from single areas or single realities, always having in mind, though, the general model of reference.

Depending on the purpose of the projects, there are various areas in the Europeanisation path that can start systemic models including space, time, teaching methods and school organisation.

At the beginning of its path, a school can start by creating a system in one of these areas, experimenting, forming habits and formalising in documents; or, it can start by providing a global model in a single reality and gradually widen the modelling, extending it to other areas or to other schools/school levels in a spiral model that starts from the single to extend to the whole.

Extension is therefore the key for systematising.

To extend means to make a higher number of teachers acquire a new operational practice. This takes place through dissemination, experimentation and the continuous application of a newly acquired procedure.

To extend also means to make the new practice affect the organisational system.

If, for example, active methodologies are systematised, consequences on spaces will be inevitable, as they will be modified to meet the new needs triggered by different operational habits.

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Likewise, altered teaching methods and spaces will affect the curriculum, which will lose its rigid division in subjects and become more interdisciplinary. The triggered innovative process will have to include the digital, which will gradually become a transparent tool to strengthen learning. This will continue in an action/consequence process that triggers an extension of the system in concentric circles.

The set off innovative process has to be formalised step by step in school documents and in the operational tools in order to programm the activities, gradually forming a different idea of school in the whole school staff and in the community of reference.

Step 10

VISION

Connect to other ministerial actions

Europeanisation is a crucial innovation process for the growth of a school, but it creates a greater impact if it is included in an overall vision that connects also to other ministerial actions in a wide range perspective.

To have a clear school vision is not to be taken for granted, and it permits the School Director and his/her staff to share opinions and give birth to a common idea that identifies the line of action, highlights the long-term educational objectives, the key actions useful to pursue them and the founding principles on which to move.

Vision - Mission and Values: the identity of a school.

If the identity is clear, shared and known to the entire school staff, it will be simpler to coordinate the action both at an organisational-managerial level and at an educational level.

The natural consequence is to connect and coordinate the different actions so that they can come together to feed the vision itself and the global development that it implies.

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Natural connections to Europeanisation are those relating to the digital, the teachers' training, educational experimentations, an alternative use of timing and spaces, inclusion... To interweave the Europeanisation paths with the National Plan for Digital Education, the Teachers' Training Plan, the Annual Inclusion Plan, National Actions for Small Schools... concurs to the strengthening of the school vision, the creation of a common path where operational actions need to converge, without wasting the staff's energies and externally giving the impression of a uniform educational system.

Some connection examples can include the organisation of:

- training units that should be based on the Erasmus dissemination and that include the participants' evidence of what was learned during the mobility;

- training Units based on the dissemination of the digital tools used in eTwinning projects or during the structuring and implementation of an eTwinning project, given the related training on the use of the platform;

- innovative and inclusive environments with the National Plan for Digital Education funds, but with a concept originated from the gathering and reprocessing of European contaminations;

- eTwinning/Erasmus projects based on ideas triggered by specific national trainings for small schools, which can include schools in the same situations and with similar needs;

- extensive use of the digital within subjects in order to make it transparent.

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<u>RESULTS</u>

4. Impact

It is not easy to determine the impact produced by a Europeanisation path, because it always depends on the type of project implementation. It is generally in progress, mainly affecting the staff's and the teachers' training and the staff and students' experiences. Lastly, it involves the entire school community in a complementary manner. Therefore, there are many variables involved.

Hypothetically, it is the end of the process, but in actual fact it totally determines it. To know, right from the planning step, what type of impact is to be produced on the different targets, to investigate in depth the effects of an impact produced by strong innovation, to consider the various dimensions of the effects, to identify detection tools and to think of possible supporting and strengthening networks, means to raise awareness up to handle the entire implementation of the path.

In fact, the impact can be tangible and measurable through the detection of visible results and of evident changes in the system. Furthermore, it can simultaneously trigger long-term changes intangible in the short term, but absolutely consistent in the long-term, contributing to the sustainability of the Europeanisation path.

In fact, Europeanisation triggers a spiral or a concentric circles process difficult to stop, as it produces a positive ***domino effect*** on various areas.
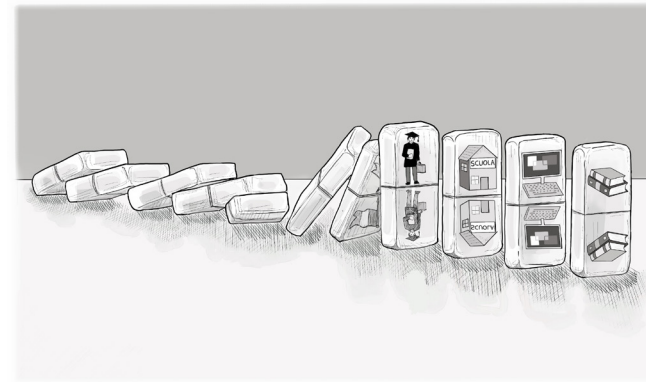
Domino effect of europeanisation

In order for this to take place, Europeanisation has nonetheless to be well structured, connected to other system actions, belonging to a wider school vision and to an important area the Instschool needs to develop.

For a small school, it becomes a fundamental focus because, if managed in a functional way, the fact of acting in a small environment, surrounded by a closer and more supportive community, with fewer spurs and opportunities, can really have a relevant impact and radically change the school system in a few years. Indeed, students and the entire school community can be introduced to possibilities often precluded, but now absolutely achievable also thanks to the integration of the digital and the easiness of mobility.

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NETWORKING

5.   Sustainability

Project sustainability means the ability of a project to keep its action ongoing, active and **effective over time**. As can be imagined, when acting on the improvement of the school staff's competences, the generated action is already partly sustainable, because a group of teachers with increased professional and personal competences is in itself a changing item.

However, as explained, the Europeanisation action deriving from a single project or several actions, needs to be extended in order to be maintained over time, continued even in case of lack of funds and therefore systematised.

The end of a project cannot be the end of the Europeanisation path. On the contrary, it needs to be the moment when new ideas are generated and connected to new needs and often to previous European connections.

Supporting networks are useful in helping a school maintain its Europeanisation path at a constant level:

- **INTERNAL NETWORK: EUROPEAN GROUP AND SYMPATHISING TEACHERS** – The European Group promotes various actions supporting the Europeanisation process involving the School different dimensions, and can include the community with the aim to:
  - launch educational actions in presence supporting what was learned in Europe (languages, eTwinning, digital, active methods...);
  - spread MOOC for the professional development proposed by European platforms, such as the Teacher Academy of the

School Education Gateway, eTwinning, European Schoolnet...
  - promote exchanges of best practices between peers through internal Job Shadowing;
  - stimulate mentoring activities between more expert teachers and less expert teachers;
  - create events aimed at the development of the sense of European belonging for teachers, students and communities;
  - facilitate remote twinning via eTwinning;
  - spread the European platform to acquire knowledge concerning the European cultural heritage;
  - maintain the level of innovation high by interweaving actions with the National Plan for Digital Education, the Annual Inclusion Plan, Training…
- **EXTERNAL COMMUNITY NETWORK: STAKEHOLDERS** – Stakeholders, or interest bearers, are always ready to support the school if included in a shared educational project. In order for this to happen, the school has to pay attention to **how it reports** its teaching methods, and it has to spread clear and effective storytelling on the different achieved targets. To use the right words and images, to create a video trailer with a clear narration, not only communicates the vision to the various stakeholders and to a wide public, but it also permits a valid exercise of metacognitive review for students and teachers. To communicate in a simple and immediate manner, to create " discussion tables" for an exchange of opinions with stakeholders, to talk together and join strengths is a practical basis for sustainability that involves the community in supporting its future. Thanks to fund collection or to the support given by practical services, it is possible to keep the projects active and lay the foundations for settings, actions, events that are useful to maintain the level of innovation high.

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- **EXTERNAL EUROPEAN NETWORK: ETWINNING** – It follows the Europeanisation process step by step. It is the place that shares various European and community paths carried out by European schools. Therefore, it is also a very effective tool for sustainability, because it offers teachers the possibility to receive training, to share in themed groups, to create projects, to find new partners and to think of a future in Europe.
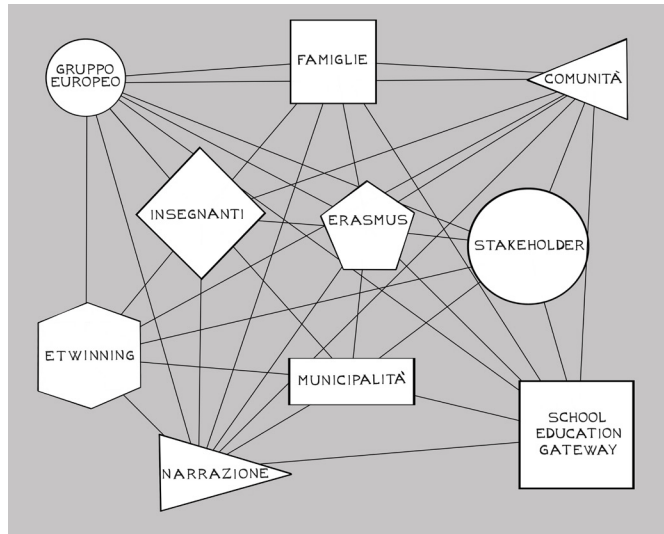
Networks: elements of project sustainability

6. Examples of italian and european internationalisation

- **Omnicomprehensive Institute of Bobbio** – Small School in the Region of Emilia Romagna - Italy

  The school has been regularly involved in Europeanisation paths since 2013. It has essentially concentrated on active methodologies for the development of the 21st-century skills. This has entailed a progressive methodological change oriented to active didactics, improvement of linguistic competences, increased integration of the digital and a modified use of spaces and of the indoor and outdoor environments.

  KA1 - Nature ICT and Innovation - http://ka1comprensivobobbio.blogspot.com/

  KA229 - Website Traces of Europe – about active methodologies based on key competences https://www.tracesofeurope.net/ - http://bit.ly/TwinSpaceTOE

  KA229 - We are cooperARTive - about Cooperative Learning and Multiple Intelligences http://bit.ly/wearecooperartive - http://bit.ly/TwinSpaceWAC

  KA229 - Where is Beauty - http://bit.ly/TwinSpaceWIB (just launched)

  KA1 - L.I.F.E. Language & Innovation for Europe - https://erasmusbobbioka1.blogspot.com/ (suspended due to the pandemic)

  Presentation of Environments - http://bit.ly/ambientibobbio

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- **COMPREHENSIVE INSTITUTE VILLAPUTZU – SMALL SCHOOL IN THE REGION OF SARDINIA - ITALY**

  The school has been involved for various years in the LLP Programme and Erasmus. The greater impact has concerned the transformation of the learning environment. In fact, spaces and classrooms have been completely renewed allowing for more innovative teaching methods, abandoning the frontal lesson. Another considerable impact concerns the development of the students' and teachers' linguistic competences. The two projects currently underway, instead, have led to the adoption of a plan for the school's environmental sustainability, involving all the classes, and the use of an innovative approach to investigate cultural heritage.

  KA1 - Creative Learning Environments - http://villaputzuka1.blogspot.com/p/blog-page.html

  KA229 - Growing up in 21st-century's Europe - https://erasmus-growingup.blogspot.com/

  KA229 Challenges for rural schools - https://twinspace.etwinning.net/72748/home

- **CEIP SAN BARTOLOMÉ ORIHUELA ALICANTE - SPAIN**

  The school has been developing Erasmus projects for more than 10 years. This has affected the school which has changed several educational aspects. Books have been eliminated and currently the school is working on using cooperative strategies. English has been strengthened and CLIL sessions have been introduced.

  The KA2 partnerships have taught the importance of reading, an important aspect considering that, being located in a rural zone, the students do not have easy access to the local library. Another fundamental area is environmental sustainability, thanks to activities that allow the students to be more responsible, aware and active.

  Furthermore, teachers keep their training level high thanks to KA1 programmes in which they have been participating regularly for several years.

Some developed projects are:

KA229 - Ars Longa - http://arslonga.mysch.gr/

KA229 - Rainbow - https://rainbowerasmus.eu/

- **EBI FRANCISCO FERREIRA DRUMMOND, TERCEIRA ISLAND, THE AZORES, PORTUGAL**

  It is a small school in the Azores, in a rural community, having about 500 students from 3 to 15 years old.

  The Europeanisation path started in 2015, and it is clearly aimed at transforming the place of the school, moving it from the margins of Europe to the centre of a European network of knowledge and innovation in the educational field.

  At the moment, the Institute has partnerships with more than 20 Countries all over Europe. Thanks to Europeanisation, it has become a leader in the Azores, to the point of acting as a mentor in the Europeanisation process for other schools one the island.

  The Erasmus+ projects are currently involving students of all ages and have led to a constant progress in digital technologies, in the management and organisation of classes, in school programmes, in the students' assessment, in learning strategies between peers and in the collaborative work between teachers.

  School Erasmus+ page - https://erasmusebiffd.wixsite.com/erasmus

  eTwinning project from an Erasmus+ project - https://twinspace.etwinning.net/44534/home

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7. Some operational tools for managing european projects and mobilities

Some possible examples of operational tools are provided below, useful for handling Europeanisation projects. They are meant only as hints from which to start, as ideas that can be taken into consideration, modified, personalised.

ETWINNING

Project format of the eTwinning project on TwinSpace[45] – For those who have never structured an eTwinning project, it could be useful to follow an outline that helps to think also in terms of TwinSpace structuring, that is the space provided by eTwinning to manage the project remotely. This format should be completed with partners in an online meeting, before starting the project activities.

ERASMUS

Teachers' recruitment format KA1[46] – It is to be sent to all the school teachers. It is useful for including as many teachers as possible, rationalising applications based on the school needs and the teachers' educational preferences. Every year, the applications are to be resubmitted to avoid excluding someone and to check that the conditions have remained the same.

Travel log KA1[47] – It is to be drawn up during mobility. The teacher attends the Job Shadowing or the course with the Travel Log always handy, in paper or digital format, to be able to write down

details and procedures that, over time and given all the information received, rmay to be forgotten.

Mobility Guide KA1[48] – It is drawn up by the European Group and sent to those participating in the mobility in order to provide them with useful information – It can be provided with a digital Map of the zone viewable also from the phone with the APP MY MAPS.

Internal mobility assessment KA1[49] – It is carried out after returning from mobility and it is necessary to monitor the entire progress of the project.

Adhesion to the KA229 project[50] - The form, sent to all teachers that have students in the age suitable for the project, allows everybody to adhere at various levels, from minimum engagement to total involvement. This allows widening the project as much as possible and having a definite mailing list of the involved teachers. The form is to be sent at the beginning of every academic year.

Letter for the students' application[51] - The application letter that you can see in the example is addressed to Primary School students. The document highlights that, apart from performance, teachers will also assess other aspects to promote inclusiveness. Parents have to be informed about this. It is advisable to explain the letter in a moment in presence to clarify all aspects and clear any doubts.

Example of the letter addressed to parents 1[52] – Communicating with students before mobility is fundamental, especially if primary school students are involved. The letter that you see linked is the first of 2 letters that are sent after a meeting in presence, explaining purposes and details and answering any doubts and questions. It can be adapted and simplified in case of older students.

Example of letter addressed to parents 2[53]– The pre-mobility letter contains the final practical details and reassures parents.

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45. Format for supporting those who have no experience in structuring the eTwinning project space http://bit.ly/etwprojectsheme

46. Example of the format for the Staff's mobility application Erasmus KA1 - http://bit.ly/KA1staffapplication

47. Example of the Travel Log to be used in order to take notes during observations/courses in mobility KA1 http://bit.ly/travellogmodel

48. Example of a Mobility Guide with all the information that may be useful for those who are leaving http://bit.ly/examplemobilityguide

49. Example of a Mobility Assessment GForm KA1 to use throughout the entire Project in order to monitor the general progress http://bit.ly/KA1mobilityassessment

50. Example of a GForm for the adhesion at various levels to the Partnership activities KA229 http://bit.ly/KA2adhesion

51. Example of the Students' Mobility Application letter useful for a first detection of availabilities http://bit.ly/pupilapplication

52. Example of the first letter to be sent to parents before the mobility http://bit.ly/familiesletter1

53. Example of the second letter to be sent to parents right before the mobility and with the final details http://bit.ly/familiesletter2

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Drugs administration to students[54]– All aspects are to be considered, therefore it is useful to be ready also for small problems.

Example of meeting participation certificate[55] – It is issued individually to all participants, specifying their individual names. The dates to be indicated are those of the participation in the activities, excluding the travelling dates

Please note: other tools for KA229 or KA201 partnerships are created collaboratively by all partners.

54. Example of the form for drug administration http://bit.ly/pupilsdrugadministration

55. Example of the meeting certificate of Erasmus KA229 http://bit.ly/EsempioAttestatoErasmusKA2

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EXAMPLE OF A MOBILITY GUIDE

MOBILITY COURSE /JOB SHADOWING

Title:
Agency Name/School Name:
Date:
Teachers involved:

FLIGHT..........................
OUTWARD (date)
Departure from .... at
Any stopovers
Arrival time

FLIGHT..........................
RETURN (date)
Departure from .... at
Any stopovers
Arrival time

BAGGAGE: (details - e.g. everyone has hand luggage + hold luggage)

DOCUMENTS: travel with valid IDENTITY CARD and HEALTH CARD in European format. Make a photocopy of both documents and keep them in different places.
In addition, travel with the ERASMUS DOCUMENTS to be stamped and signed by the host school.

TRANSFER:

ACCOMMODATION: name and address

SCHOOL: address - email - phone

REFERENCE PERSONS: name - email - phone

PROGRAMME OF THE WEEK: attached

TRAVEL LOG: fill in the TRAVEL LOG every day, if possible during the lessons or returning from school at the latest, in order to keep track of the experience on a daily basis and highlight positive and negative aspects, of educational, logistical and cultural nature. The logbook is a valuable document of the experience and it will be very useful when preparing the dissemination presentation, which will presumably take place within a month after your return.

PHOTOS: keep track of what you see and experience, try to document what the experience was like with images too. In the case of job-shadowing, if you take photos of children at school, always ask for permission first from the reference and host teachers. Follow the instructions received from the host teachers.

DURING THE LESSONS: take note of what you learn step by step in the travel log (better if you always have a device available with you)

THEMATICS: you are on mobility for the Course/Job Shadowing ...., but also to experience different European realities. Being attentive, adaptable and open to comparison with other participating teachers is useful to live the experience to the fullest.

CULTURE: an Erasmus mobility is also a cultural exchange. Try to visit the area and its main cultural attractions.

MEDICINES: bring a minimum of emergency medicines, considering that space in your luggage is not so wide. Take only blister packs and divide up the products if you are travelling in 2/3. Remember that the rule of thumb also applies to medicines: liquids up to 100 ml and in a closed transparent bag.

USEFUL INFO: here is a generic site with some info...

CURRENCY: the currency in .... is .... - normal ATM or credit cards are generally accepted even for minimal expenses

....……. PAPERS ……..…….

ERASMUS DOCUMENTS: during the mobility period, remember to make the hosting school sign and stamp the ERASMUS documents given to you before you leave.

CERTIFICATES: before leaving for Italy, remember to have the school prepare the **CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE,** bearing the dates from ..... to..... (only dates of attendance, excluding travel) - Give a reminder to the host school at least 3 days in advance.

ERASMUS QUESTIONNAIRE: on the last day of the mobility, the evaluation questionnaire concerning the mobility carried out, will be sent by email from Erasmus plus. It is in English and is quite detailed. It can be filled in immediately or in case of difficulties it can be filled in at the return, within a month.

SCHOOL ERAMUS QUESTIONNAIRE: the school also monitors the overall progress. When you return, also fill in the GForm that you will receive by email from the project coordinator.

Have a nice trip, enjoy the working experience!

The European Group

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TRAVEL LOG MODEL

………….. Country – Country………

SCHOOL………..
Erasmus KA1 …….(year)
…………………….(Project title)…………………….
TRAVEL LOG

Teacher:

Mobility:

PRIMA DI PARTIRE

Expectations:

Worries:

DURING THE COURSE/JOB SHADOWING

DAY 1

Date:

Today's activities:

We observed:

Questions to be asked after the observation, during the briefing:

What I learned:

The best aspect:

Difficulties I faced:

Notes:_____

………….. Country – Country………

DAY 2

Date:

Today's activities:

We observed:

Questions to be asked after the observation, during the briefing:

What I learned:

The best aspect:

Difficulties I faced:

Notes: _____

DAY 3

Date:

Today's activities:

We observed:

Questions to be asked after the observation, during the briefing:

What I learned:

The best aspect:

Difficulties I faced:

Notes: _____

DAY 4

Date:

Today's activities:

Note

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……………. Country – Country………

We observed:

Questions to be asked after the observation, during the briefing:

What I learned:

The best aspect:

Difficulties I faced:

Notes: _____

DAY 5

Date:

Today's activities:

We observed:

Questions to be asked after the observation, during the briefing:

What I learned:

The best aspect:

Difficulties I faced:

Notes: _____

AFTER THE COURSE/JOB SHADOWING

ACTIVITIES/SYSTEMS/ORGANISATIONS/TIMES/LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST FOR DISSEMINATION

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APPLICATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN ERASMUS+ KA1 TRAINING ACTIVITIES ABROAD

To the School Principal
··

Application for participation in ERASMUS + KA1 training activities abroad
··

I undersigned _____
in service at _____
as_____

requests to participate in one of the training activities planned under the Erasmus + KA1 project "...".

I declare to be interested in the following mobilities abroad (tick 3 options indicating them in preferential order, assigning 1 2 3):

JOB SHADOWING - Shadowing of teachers in partner schools, duration of activity 1 week
Related to:
- ....
- ....
- ....

TRAINING COURSES - At accredited organisations, duration 1 week
Related to:
- ....
- ....
- ....

To this end, I declare that I will undertake to (tick ALL that apply):
- Complete all the formalities relating to the programme (preliminary contacts with the host establishment, online reports during and at the end of the training, etc.), signing the relevant agreements and getting ready for the training by arranging the course with the persons responsible for the sector
- Improve my language and/or teaching skills before my departure
- Disseminate with all the staff, according to the times agreed in the planning phase
- Put into practice what I have learned during my mobility
- Open my own classroom for internal job shadowing

If possible, start or join eTwinning projects after returning from training.
☐ _____ .
In addition to the above, please answer the following questions to clarify your motivation for taking part in Erasmus + training and the benefits you intend to gain, your background, skills and intentions

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- In what way do you think that Europeanisation can support the Institute?

- Professionally and personally, how do you think you can grow thanks to these mobilities?

- What are the most significant training moments of your career in the last 3 years?

- What innovative and experimental practices do you implement in your teaching routine?

- Which European experiences have you already undertaken? (eTwinning projects, Comenius projects, Erasmus, contacts with European teachers, Correspondences...)

- How many years do you plan to stay at the school in terms of continuity?

- What is your language competency possibly related to the CEFR?

- What experience do you have of using the .... methodology?

- How do you define your level of competence in the use of ICT?

Please attach a CV in European format

Place, date

Signature

_____

EXAMPLE LETTER FOR FAMILIES

Hello everyone,

In about 15 days our ERASMUS mobility will begin in practice.
We are absolutely thrilled and looking forward to the experience we are about to have together with the students.
Here are some organisational details which we hope will be useful to you.

DEPARTURE date
Flight time - Airport Flight duration Any stopovers

At the arrival airport, departure by...(bus, train) ...... for ....where is located the hotel/hostel/houses where we will stay.

ACCOMPANYING PERSONS:....

HOST SCHOOL: name and site

HOTEL ACCOMODATION (if not with a host family): name and website

WHAT TO PACK
Due to the variable weather conditions, we prefer to give you details in the last email. To date, the temperature has recorded a minimum temperature of .... and a maximum of ....

TECHNOLOGICAL GADGETS
Travel is about discovery as well as sharing, and your children are all open, expansive and willing to do this.
For primary school pupils, we therefore discourage them from bringing smartphones, portable video games, mp3s....
If you want, let them bring their cameras. On your return, however, if you think it would be useful, we will copy all the photos and videos taken by us teachers onto a flash pen.
Any valuables are under the responsibility of the pupils.

BAGGAGE RULES
We will be flying with ....(company) and we have the following baggage allowances (... depending on the flight/company...)
Each student can bring........

OBVIOUSLY EVERYONE SHOULD CARRY THEIR OWN BAGGAGE, SO AVOID EXCESS IN WEIGHT AND SIZE

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POWER OUTPUTS
At .... we use a current:
Voltage: V
Frequency: .... Hz

SOCKETS SAMPLES (if needed)

Sockets type C

Sockets type F

MONEY
In ....(Country of destination)..... is in force the .... which corresponds to............................Euro
As already specified in the meeting, if you wish, you can proceed to exchange money at a bank (one for all).
Identify a common amount sufficient for:
- souvenirs or small bar expenses
- any unforeseen extra expenses

If you have difficulty in making this exchange rate, we will change the currency directly in ..... (Country of destination)
visitsFood and accommodation during the mobility are fully covered, as well as the main cultural visits

REFERENCE PHONES
Teacher n°............................ Teacher n°............................ Teacher n°............................
On the departure day, please add us to the .....WA....... telephone group you have set up.
During the mobility the group will be used to share information directly with everyone.
We will send you a text message on arrival and then every morning and evening.
Please confirm to have received the message after the first sending.
If for some reason, you do not receive news at the beginning of the stay, please contact us immediately.

RETURN date
- Flight time - Airport Flight duration Any stopovers

Please let us know if you have opted for a minibus or self-drive transport.

We are looking forward to your feedback. If you have any doubts, please do not hesitate to contact us by email or telephone.

Thank you
Accompanying teachers

IN THE NEXT MAIL (one week before departure):
- **WHAT TO PUT IN THE SUITCASE**
- **MEETING PROGRAMME**
- **MEDICINES**

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8. Conclusions

The aim of this Notebook Tools was to create a listing providing small schools with feedback concerning the outcomes of internationalisation practices. Given the complexity of the educational practice, the knowledge of those who have implemented internationalisation could have been shared using procedural guidelines, as transferability is a product of dialogue and narration.

The direct record of those who, over the years, have promoted the development of a new vision of the European curriculum accompanied by the attempt to formalise – by identifying common and recurring elements - a linear and feasible path based on steps, allows us to handle a greater knowledge in comparison with a specific case even if by way of example, capable of guaranteeing replicability in many other small schools, thus triggering cascade innovation processes and emulation within the Small Schools Movement.

Europe, a one-way road, is "an operation on theorisation from the inside" (Colicchi, 2010) "socially developed by teachers in a learning context" (Parigi et al. 2020 p.50) and documented in this product, in order to place internationalisation among the levers capable of making the small school a fair and quality educational context.

Europe, a one-way road

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