



Erasmus+

MOOS



Mutual Open and Online Skills

OPEN EDUCATION PAPER

MOOS PROJECT

I would like to thank all European Partners for their inspiring thoughts on how Open School Education may look like in 2030. In this Paper on Open Education we have selected the most interesting ideas that have been put into practice on our Open resource platform MOOS- Mutual Open and Online Skills . We have had many excellent contributions from each European Partner and we have created a Common European Curriculum to set and apply all the same teaching skills and objectives . Thus, we had to be extremely selective and decided, in the end, to focus clearly on the FUTURE aspect of SCHOOL Education and to critically assess what OPEN Education can mean in a European context and how it can be achieved.

We believe Knowledge is open when it is provided through tools accessible to all citizens. Therefore OERs are important for stimulating innovative learning environments where content can be adapted by users according to their needs. We have combined traditional educational resources with OERs allowing blended forms of face-to-face and online learning in order to reduce the costs of educational materials for students and their families as well as for public budgets.

Priority has been given to implementation of innovative practices at an organizational , local, regional, national and European levels by producing the following outcomes:

- innovative approaches, by providing more attractive education and training programmes in line with individuals' needs and expectations; by using ICT-based methodologies; by offering greater effectiveness of activities for the benefit of local communities; by encouraging new practices to meet the needs of disadvantaged groups and to deal with social, linguistic and cultural diversity.

- a more modern, dynamic and professional environment inside the organization: ready to integrate new methods into daily activities; open to synergies with organizations active in different fields or in other socio-economic sectors; strategic planning of professional development for staff in line with individual needs and organizational objectives;

- a better capacity and professionalism to work at EU/international level: by improving management competences and strategies; by reinforcing cooperation with partners from other countries, other fields of education, by training youth and/or other socio-economic sectors; by increasing allocation of financial resources (other than EU funds) to organize EU/international projects in the field of education, training and youth; finally by increasing quality in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and follow-up of EU/international projects.

Some of the positive impacts on those who have been directly or indirectly involved in the activities, are :

- increased competence in foreign languages
- increased level of digital competence;
- greater understanding and responsiveness to social, linguistic and cultural diversity;
- more positive attitude towards the European project and the EU values;
- better understanding and recognition of skills and qualifications in Europe and beyond;
- improved competences, linked to their professional profiles (teaching, training, youth work, etc.);
- broader understanding of practices, policies and systems in education, training or youth across countries;
- greater understanding of interconnections between formal, non-formal education, vocational training, other forms of learning;
- increased opportunities for professional development;
- increased motivation and satisfaction in their daily work.

Finally a more strategic and integrated use of ICTs and open educational resources (OER) by education, training and youth systems.

Project Coordinator Doriana Papile

Best Practices in Open Education

What is an Erasmus+ project?

Erasmus + is a EU-funded international educational project. The objectives of Erasmus + are to increase students' knowledge and skill levels, contribute to the internationalization and increased quality of teaching. The project aims to create a European education area that strengthens the international dimension, improves language teaching and learning. Our aim is to create a better social environment between all European countries participating in the project.

Schools from seven different European countries are supported by the European Union to produce courses for the MOOS-Online Platform in cooperation with each other. The schools included in project are located in Sweden, Italy, Poland, Finland, UK, Spain and Germany. Within the project, all participating partners have planned for and created a digital platform including 15 courses in various disciplines. All partners taking part in the project have created at least two courses each and have uploaded them onto the MOOS platform. There are many courses among which, history, mathematics, chemistry, physics , art, etc.. The courses aim to help students with high-school subjects and help them improve their grades, for example there is a course on how to write an argumentative essay. For more information about the platform, go to:

<http://www.moos-online.eu/>

Objectives of MOOS courses.

All 15 Courses follow a common syllabus based on a European Common Curriculum which sets out the common aims and objectives for all the MOOS courses on a European level.

The curriculum focuses on the acquisition of key competences in linguistic, social-historical and scientific-mathematical areas for students aged 15-19. These key competences will be acquired through the use of OER and ICT instruments that will stimulate different and new ways of learning and produce new skills. The use of ICT tools aim to increase the effectiveness of education as it will produce a more personalized learning. MOOS courses thus aim to promote equality by increasing the availability of knowledge and foster the improvement of digital learning skills.

One of the principal objectives of MOOS is to develop multilingualism through the use of Content and Language Integrated Learning ALSO KNOWN AS (CLIL) METHODOLOGY.

Another IMPORTANT objective is to extend the accessibility of high school courses, especially for disadvantaged students as MOOCs act as a compensation instrument. MOOS courses are freely available to everyone and aim to even out social-economic factors between and within European countries that impede learning. –Finally MOOS courses aim to prevent and reduce early school leaving by enhancing students' motivation and creating NEW flexible educational pathways through e-learning .

Who are the MOOS courses for?

We have created a platform open to adolescents as well as adults, all around Europe. We have created and tested different courses so one can learn via teachers' instructions and short videos, all through the simple e-learning platform. The platform enables people in Europe that cannot attend regular classroom settings and education to get an education via the online platform. When you sign in

to the Erasmus MOOS platform you will be able to find courses and lessons based on the different subjects and do them without any pressure. One of the aims of the project is to reduce the number of students dropping out of school.

Drop Out Prevention

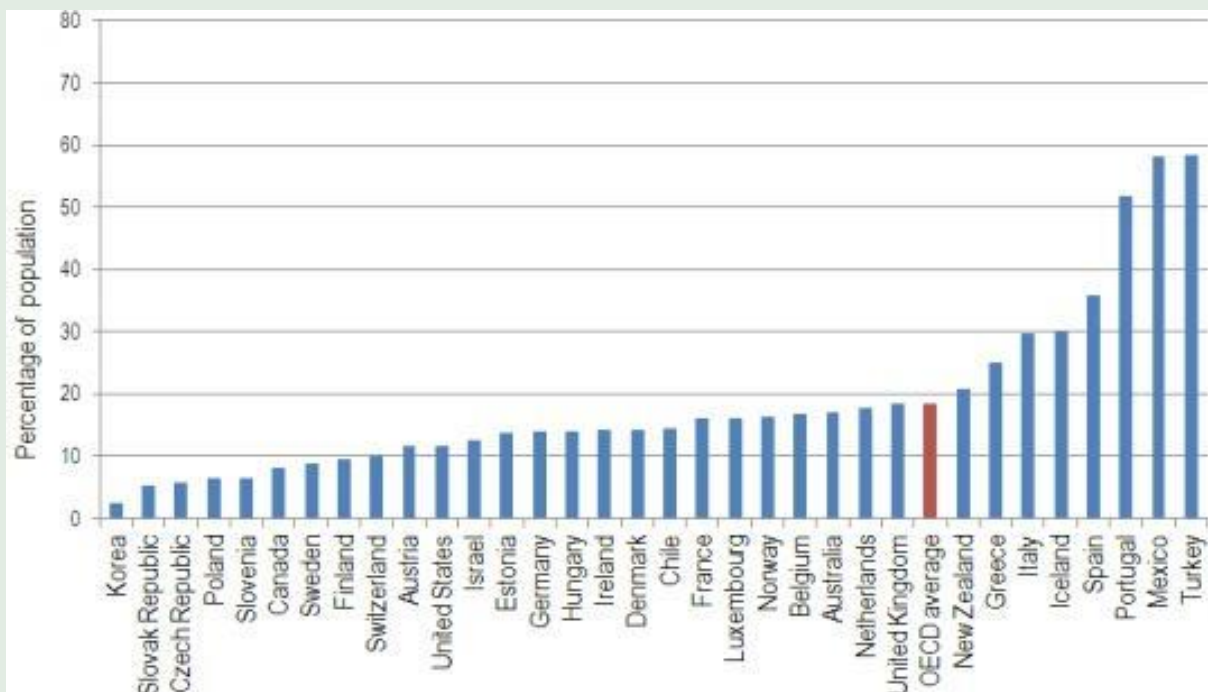
The steering group has discussed the reasons why students drop out of school and which may be the strategies to cut dropout crisis. For some students dropping out is the culmination of academic hurdles for others it is a response to conflicting life pressures. Some students just abandon school because they are bored and see no connection between academic life and 'real' life. As a consequence, without a diploma students are more likely to get a low paid job or no job at all. MOOS courses act as a compensation strategy as you are awarded a badge at the end of a course and this can be useful for your personal profile. Teachers should try to pay attention to warning signs and create stronger bonds with parents, students and social groups. Youth district serving-organizations could collaborate with parents and teachers giving them support. Boredom and disengagement were found to be the two main reasons why students stop attending classes. We then thought that if students had the opportunity to do some internship and if we designed lessons to build connections between work and life they would probably be more interested in following MOOS courses. An example are the courses on Properties of Construction materials and Making Web Pages. To conclude personalized learning is strongly part of our strategy for reducing the dropout rate in Europe.

Actions for Sustainability

As OECD report states that "helping those in need would reduce school failure, boost economic growth and contribute to a fairer society."

This is why one of the main goals of the MOOS project is to prevent school failure, dropouts and to motivate those students who can't find their path in the school life or in the academic world.

Proportion of 25-34 years-old who have not completed upper secondary education (2009)



School failure and online learning

- OECD-statistics, reports and recommendations can be found on:
<http://www.oecd.org/edu/school/overcomingschoolfailurepolicieshatwork.htm>
- An American scientific study on "Perceptions of the Implementation of the Online Credit Recovery Dropout Prevention and Alternative Education Program Odyssey..."

<http://dc.etsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2509&context=etd>

As statistics show all countries have more or less the same problems. We have those students who fail school and in extreme case this is called dropping out. Dropping out may be different in different countries.

Perceptions of the term “dropout” and what each partner country does:

In Italy:

It is illegal to leave school before the age of 16. Dropout-levels are different in various regions.

Special courses and inclusive programs are offered to students in need of special attention to help them not to abandon schooling.

In Spain:

Students that are not attending the normal basic education can follow education in special institutions when they are 15-16 years old.

In Poland:

Students that finish high-school courses but do not take or want to do the Final exam try to start working.

In Germany

Dropping out from school in Germany can happen in any stage of their school life so a variety of professional courses are offered to help students learn how to do a job. There is a dual school system which permits students to work and study part-time.

Finland, Sweden:

A student is in a risk of drop out when he/she finishes basic education and has to choose vocational school or high school to continue his education. Those students that have problems completing the basic education or have really low grades are in danger of dropping out of the education in this point. And if one drops out it means he/she has very little chances to apply a job later. Several actions have been taken in Finland and Sweden to prevent the school failure, so far the statistics are rather

assuring in Finland and Sweden, however it is still a problem to face every school year.

Reasons to stop school or to drop out are various. In every country we have the same challenges and each country provides different methods to support students to continue in some format of education.

Issues that need to be considered when creating online courses

- Knowledge and aim of MOOCs
- Timing
- Technical knowledge and ICT skills
- Common difficulty and quality between courses
- Use of language

MOOS - First steps to prevent school failure

The MOOS platform is a tool that teachers can use to motivate students. Moos platform is free to use and it provides a large variety of courses (on several disciplines).

1) Courses are easy to follow anywhere,

2) Most of the courses don't require any previous knowledge,

3) They are international and even those students who have problems to be present in school or can't attend a class due some social challenges can follow the courses elsewhere.

The MOOS-platform facilitates the exchange of good practices and methods of learning providing a) a framework for learning, or b) just first steps to start school or courses again.

At the end of every course each student receives a certificate that proves that he/she has completed a course and this could be a motivating starting point for any student having trouble completing regular school curricula.

Grading and assessment

One of the advantages is that the grading and assessment at the end of the courses is the same for all; Equal education is guaranteed.

Staff

Teachers working in different parts of Europe can identify innovative and successful practices to teach and use the platform within their teaching.

How much does it cost to attend the courses?

Education can be difficult to access, or to reach due to personal reasons or may demand a high fee. The MOOS-online platform enables people to learn in a flexible way, without any costs. The only thing you need is access to the Internet.

Timing

Creating the Erasmus + courses meant taking into consideration a number of different issues. We all agreed on some crucial areas. Timing seemed to be one of the important ones. We had to take into consideration a number of perspectives . First of all we decided to make it in 30 minutes lessons. As teachers we consider it to be the perfect time for students to focus on the material. While creating our lessons we had to prepare them in a clear and logical way. Every lesson starts with a short video introduction. It is followed by either a short text on the topic or a video. Every lesson is concluded by a short test. We chose the videos and texts according to the timing . They had to be long enough to convey the information and at the same time we tried to avoid unnecessary repetitions. The tests at the end of every course may vary from filling the gap, dropdown answers and multiple choice so students can

focus on learning not on typing the long answers. The main advantage of following MOOS courses is that students may follow them according to their own free time and own pace of learning this is important because students do not have the pressure of a school system with deadlines.

Technical knowledge and ICT skills

New forms of learning through ICT tools can help making lifelong learning a reality for all students independently from where they come from. The use of ICT tools for learning in Europe is developing widely and new forms of learning and providing education and training have made teaching more flexible. Notably strategic use of open and flexible learning, virtual mobility, open educational resources and better exploitation of the ICT have brought to a European Network of Secondary Schools.

The aim is to establish a permanent network in each partner country bringing different teachers and services together to create an effective support mechanism for young people.

How did learners help actively in the construction of the courses?

International groups of Students have tested the courses and given feedback. Teachers then adjusted the courses during the workshops planned out in the schedule. Monitoring has been carried out on each mobility by the partner country; while Italy, the Coordinating country has collected questionnaires on the learning abilities and skills acquired and has collected reports at the beginning, mid and end of project. The aim was to adapt and correct the teaching and learning strategies while creating the courses..

What do students gain at the end of the course?

Students learned to use English language in different contexts through CLIL (content, learning, and integrated language) methodology. They have gained a greater understanding and view of different subjects and have appreciated that different European countries can cover the same areas of learning.

Which is the new teacher's profile?

The teacher is the new mediator , the problem setter and the Tutor in a virtual class in the cloud.

Process and development of project through students' participation

Students involved in the project worked as a reference group for the courses created. The project intends to help students improve their learning skills and meet new friends from all over Europe as Life Long Learning.

Common difficulties in quality and level of the courses

Differences in content and level of the courses compared to the national syllabuses in correspondent subjects has been encountered within the project. The type as well as the level of assessment has also varied between participating partners. Students' pre knowledge and language skills differed depending on various variables such as educational system, syllabus, age and background. The same differences in language skills, content and level of courses have also been encountered in the staff involved in the project. To meet and overcome the obstacles a **European Common Curriculum** has been created and used in the process of building a shared educational platform. Teachers involved in the project have also shared hinders and used students from different countries as a reference group for feedback and input on the courses.

DIFFICULTIES TEACHERS FOUND USING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Teachers have had to face the challenge of avoiding literal translations while they were writing the course in English .

Some of our native languages have got a really different structures and grammar rules, this has originated a certain disorder in the elements of the sentences, making them sound a bit unnatural or even miss some of their real meaning.

Furthermore ,in some countries, teachers who designed the courses were not the same of those who translated them, so the “teacher translator” had to readapt the contents before translating them, in a certain way, the course was sometimes altered.

Probably, the language level of students taking the courses has been very different, this has obliged teachers to simplify and if this hadn't been done , some information could have been misunderstood.

In order to make students understand the difficult words or new terminology, it has been necessary to add glossaries to the courses.

Conclusion

Many thanks goes to Erasmus Plus and to all participants in the European Project that have contributed in the realization of the MOOS platform.

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