Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

STEAME
GOES HYBRID

Policy recommendations implemented by the STEAME goes HYBRID Project

The project has identified recommendations in 5 main areas:

1. Support to teachers must be continuous and multidimensional

Life-long learning and continuous professional development should be feasible to all teachers

The importance of continuous learning has been stressed several times in many policy documents. At the same time, teachers often find it impossible to develop professionally by following new courses because they do not have the time to do so. To support the feasibility and effectiveness of those courses, teachers should be guaranteed the necessary time and resources. Otherwise, the concept of life-long learning will only remain on paper but will not have a real impact on the education system in Europe.[1]

Continuous support and feedback to teachers should be provided

Teachers, even when they have the digital skills necessary to use the digital tools made available to them, need guidance and feedback on how to apply project-based learning in a hybrid environment. Teachers should receive continuous support in implementing the hybrid STEAME approach.[2] Also, promotion of hybrid teaching and learning among teachers and students should be promoted and they should be allowed to test hybrid learning environments before adopting them. Teachers should also be supported in terms of teaching methodologies and learning design. Research needs to be conducted to establish a grounding methodology and good practices should be made available to teachers to support them in their everyday practice.

---

[1] In line with European Council, 2021. *Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030) - Strategic priority 2: Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality for all*. European Council, p.11.

[2] In line with European Commission, 2020. *DIGITAL EDUCATION ACTION PLAN 2021-2027*- 4.1 Strategic priority 1: Fostering the development of a high-performing digital education ecosystem, *Digital education content and training in digital skills – including digital teaching methods – will be essential for staff*, European Commission. p.10.

Teachers should be supported in collective educational experiences skills

Very often, in the context of hybrid education even more than in the traditional one, the focus of the intervention is targeted at the single student. The collective component of the learning experience is not given sufficient importance. The focus on individual learning / teaching does not take into account the group dynamics which instead strongly influence the students' approach, their attention span, their performance, etc. For this reason, teachers' competences should be supported in the direction of giving them the methods and tools to know, guide and make the best use of the collective dynamics of hybrid settings. In general, the hybrid learning approach should be seen as a new teaching and learning method rather than an ad hoc solution to a crisis situation.

English language basic understanding by teachers should be supported

A large part of the teachers in the EU do not speak English. At the same time, a large part of the resources available to them to hybridize their settings and their teaching methods (digital tools, methodologies, training, etc.) are in English. For this reason, training on basic English language basic should be included in the continuous professional development of teachers. This way, the exploitation of resources already available - but very often not sufficiently widespread due to language barriers - would be maximized. This may also facilitate their internationalization and networking cooperation.

---

2. Multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary collaboration and new assessment methods must be promoted, overcoming the old single-teacher and single-discipline paradigms

The hybrid context is a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary context and it must be treated as such

The adaptation of educational content to hybrid contexts requires time and, above all, technical skills that very often are not mastered by teachers. For example, the digitization of content, the preparation of online platforms, the solution of technical (IT) problems, etc. In this sense, the hybrid approach requires a multi-disciplinary contribution that sees, among others, the participation of teachers, IT technicians, experts in online education, etc. At the same time, students also need dedicated staff who know how to follow them in the transition to hybrid education. Moreover, project-based learning requires the involvement of teachers of different disciplines and areas, who know how to overcome the old single-discipline paradigm. Furthermore, the co-presence of teachers of different disciplines, potentially from different schools, requires adequate time dedicated to plan and co-create activities. For this reason, the

creation of multidisciplinary teams should be supported and become structural, in order to supplement, complementing them, the shortcomings of the individual teaching methods.

New ways of assessing the students' learning level needs to be introduced

Evaluating students based on individual exams is a paradigm that needs to change. The hybrid approach is, as mentioned, multidisciplinary, linked to motivation, often collective. Therefore, this type of assessment no longer makes sense and should instead be replaced by a more comprehensive assessment of the student's portfolio. For this reason, it is essential that teachers and the school system in general are supported in the identification of new assessment methods, more suitable for hybrid settings.

The key role of Higher Education

As responsible for the training of future teachers, higher education institutes play a key role in the digital transition of the education system. For this reason, it is essential that higher education supports problem-based learning, by placing it alongside more conventional approaches. Future teachers' training should focus above all on practice and less on theory, especially when it comes to preparation for hybrid contexts. In particular, school-university partnership should be promoted to:

- Develop community of practices among pre-service and in service teachers;
- Provide a framework for teachers in school during the practicum (with a focus on Steame Education);
- Establish a monitoring/assessment mechanism for these partnerships.

---

3. Strategic planning and accessibility should be regarded essential elements in the hybrid school

Strategic planning of schedules and settings is a key factor in hybrid schools

The need to involve a multidisciplinary team and to have a setting that positively considers and uses the collective dynamics necessarily require a change in schools' schedule. It is necessary that teachers on the one hand and students on the other have the possibility to adapt their schedules

in a flexible way, according to the needs of the specific project. At the same time, the class environment must be rethought and adapted according to the needs of the project. The physical and virtual space must be compatible; they must communicate in a way that is functional to teaching. For this reason, it is necessary to reform the monolithic and outdated approach which sets, a priori, pre-established times and spaces for teaching.

Accessibility to all should be promoted as a key value and basic standard

All educational contexts must also be accessible to people with disabilities and special needs. In this sense, utmost attention should be paid to this aspect even in hybrid education. For this reason, minimum accessibility criteria should be produced and promoted through specific guidelines and regulations. Dedicated support should be given to make both physical and digital spaces accessible, only in this way can hybrid education be truly accessible to all. [3]

---

4. Motivation and commitment at different levels must be promoted and supported

School managers' motivation and commitment must be supported, also by introducing HYBRYD school certifications

The transition to hybrid teaching can't do without the motivation of individual school managers and individual schools. In this sense, this aspect must be considered as important as economic resources. Without one of the two elements, the transition to the hybrid cannot take place. For this reason, it is important to create labels, standardized and internationally recognized, which certify the level reached by the individual school in the transition and / or the explicit commitment that the same has signed with respect to the persecution of specific objectives towards the transition. In this way, the school that undertakes to invest its resources in the transition would receive feedback in terms of visibility and an evident improvement in the quality of its offer. In turn, this would enhance the economic sustainability of the school itself.

---

[3] In line with European Commission, 2020. *COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on achieving the European Education Area by 2025 - 3.2 Making education and training more inclusive and gender sensitive*. European Commission, p.14.
In line with European Commission, 2020. *DIGITAL EDUCATION ACTION PLAN 2021-2027 - 4.1 Strategic priority 1: Fostering the development of a high-performing digital education ecosystem*. European Commission. p.10
In line with European Council, 2021. *Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030) - Strategic priority 1: Improving quality, equity, inclusion and success for all in education and training*. European Council, p.9.

Teachers' motivation must be supported to achieve the hybrid transition

The motivation of teachers and their adherence to the hybrid transition plans of schools is another key element. It must be taken into account that often the widespread tendency among teachers is to oppose the change in teaching plans and the introduction of new tools. Sometimes, the introduction of novelties is seen as a strong demand for time and resources in the face of poor or even irrelevant results. For this reason, teachers' commitment should be encouraged. In this sense, teachers must receive the necessary support and dedicated coaching to help them understand the purposes and objectives of the innovations introduced. "Hybrid transition coaches" could be appointed within schools to provide information and tutoring to teachers who need it, to reduce anxiety about change.[4]

Learners' motivation and participation must be supported to achieve the hybrid transition

Interdisciplinary approaches, collective teaching contexts and hybrid environments can potentially represent elements that increase the distance between the learners and their teachers, their peers, the training contents. In the same way, however, they can instead represent an unmissable opportunity to shorten these distances. It is therefore essential not to leave anyone behind. For this reason, the individualization of educational programs, the identification of training courses with adaptable objectives, the support to the co-creation and peer support among students must be stimulated and included in the educational plans themselves.[5]

Parents must be reassured and informed about the hybrid transition

Parents play a crucial role in the upbringing of their children. They need to be informed about the changes brought about by hybrid settings, reassured about the potential risks and informed about the possible benefits. Communication with parents must be maintained and they must be accompanied step by step. Parents involvement should aim at two objectives. Provide parents with information on the use of hybrid environments in school activities and allow them to play a more active role in guiding their children when they are home.

Hybrid ambassadors, trained in the use of hybrid settings and in training and supporting other stakeholders, should be involved. These ambassadors could be the focal point for supporting school leaders, teachers, students and parents.

---

[4] In line with profession European Commission, 2020. *COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on achieving the European Education Area by 2025 - 3.4 Enhancing competence and motivation in the education.* p.18.
[5] A good practice on this is represented by the STEAME STUDENTS project.

5. The transition plans to the hybrid school must be promoted, also with a view to supporting the necessary infrastructural adaptation

Standardized digital transition plans to guide school managers should be developed

The adoption of digital transformation plans that take into account the infrastructural transition should be promoted in all schools at European level. At the same time, it is important that these plans are relatively standardized and shared, in order to provide school managers with concrete guides to refer to and practical tools to put in place. This way, a concrete response to the technical requirements of schools could be more easily planned and concretely implemented.

Classes – Schools – Educational System: synergy and coordination are needed

The efforts of the single school should be aligned with a common transition framework, planned, monitored and verified at the higher level. The introduction of hybrid contexts will have / is having a strong impact on the educational system and can't be faced in a fragmented and disjointed way. Policy makers and regulations should provide strong coordination, shared protocols, discussion tables in which schools can discuss with their peers and with regional or ministerial stakeholders. Sinergy among classes and schools is often difficult to achieve because of the phenomenon of "class isolation". This has to be considered and tackled (e.g. by putting in place local communities of practice) to transferring knowledge and practices among teachers. Furthermore, the national curricula programs should allow and promote the use of hybrid learning.

Infrastructural renovation should be funded to put the basis for the transition to the hybrid environment

Hybrid education cannot ignore some fundamental basic conditions. Stable internet connections, electronic devices, fully equipped classrooms/laboratories, digitalized learning material and other minimum requirements are essential elements, without which hybrid education is not possible. Nevertheless, especially in rural contexts, these are often absent or insufficient. Also, licensed platform and tools are often inaccessible to schools with a low budget. For this reason, sufficient economic resources should be made available to guarantee the minimum infra-structural levels on which to build the hybrid school of the future.[6] Schools should be provided

---

[6] In line with European Council, 2021. *Council Resolution on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training towards the European Education Area and beyond (2021-2030) - Strategic priority 5: Supporting the green and digital transitions in and through education and training*. European Council, p.16.

with funding guidance, links/sources/funding organizations contacts both at national and EU level.

The COVID 19 emergency represented a forced boost for the digital and hybrid transition, but it can't be its horizon. The Hybrid school is the school of the future.

The COVID 19 emergency has forced many schools to accelerate the digitization and hybridization of their activities in an unexpected and abrupt way. In order not to waste the efforts made by schools, teachers, students and institutions in this period, it is necessary to ensure that this leap forward becomes structural. That is, we need to get out of the emergency perspective and enter into that of planning.