



Impact of Erasmus+ and eTwinning in schools

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1. Research into the impact of Erasmus+ and eTwinning on schools

1.1 Objectives

Erasmus+¹ is the EU programme for education, training, youth and sport in Europe. The €14.7 billion budget offers more than 4 million Europeans the opportunity to study, train and/or gain experience abroad. This includes many students and teachers from schools in Flanders.

The broader goal of Erasmus+ (2014-2020) is to contribute to Europe 2020, the strategy for growth, jobs, social equity and inclusion, and towards achieving the objectives of ET2020, the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training. Erasmus+ also targets the sustainable development of its partners in higher education, and contributes to achieving the objectives of the EU Youth Strategy.

The Erasmus+ programme (2014-2020) essentially consists of three key actions:

- Key action 1 - individual learning mobility
- Key action 2 - cooperation for innovation and exchange of good practices
- Key action 3 - supporting policy reforms

EPOS, the National Agency for the Erasmus+ programme and the National Support Service for eTwinning in Flanders, appointed IDEA Consult to map the impact of the Erasmus+ programme, more specifically key actions 1 and 2, and of eTwinning on schools in Flanders.

EPOS aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of how participation in key actions 1 or 2 of the Erasmus+ programme or in eTwinning impacts on participating schools in terms of:

- the internationalisation and European dimension;
- the organisation (development);
- and the priorities put forward by the EU.

The research questions to which the research had to provide an answer are based around (1) quality of education (e.g. contribution to innovation in teaching and training practices, competence development among teachers, etc.), (2) organisational development (e.g. impact in the field of digitalisation, cooperation,

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_nl



etc.) and (3) internationalisation (e.g. strengthening vision and strategy, more positive attitude towards internationalisation, etc.). The full list of research questions is given in Annex B1.

1.2 Key actions 1 & 2 of Erasmus+ and eTwinning

This study covers the Erasmus+ projects targeting schools, found in key action 1 and key action 2. It also looks at the impact of eTwinning.

We describe each of these below. Within key action 1, two actions targeting schools are mobility projects for school employees and mobility projects for learners and staff in vocational education.

KEY ACTION 1: INDIVIDUAL LEARNING MOBILITY - MOBILITY PROJECTS FOR SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

Within key action 1, mobility projects for school staff are funded, and teacher professionalisation is a priority. These projects are open to all schools and can include:

- Teaching assignments: this activity enables teachers or other school staff to teach in a partner school abroad;
- Structured courses or training events abroad: supports the professional development of teachers, school leaders or other education staff;
- Job shadowing: offers the opportunity for teachers, school leaders or other education staff to spend a period abroad at a partner school or other relevant organisation working in the field of school education.

KEY ACTION 1: INDIVIDUAL LEARNING MOBILITY - MOBILITY PROJECTS FOR LEARNERS AND STAFF IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

In addition, key action 1 includes mobility projects for both learners and school staff from technical and vocational education. These projects offer the opportunity to learn and/or gain professional experience in another country.

Learner mobility can be both short-term (2 weeks to less than 3 months), and long-term (from 3 to 12 months, ErasmusPro). Activities for learners may include a full-fledged internship at a company or other organisation, or at a VET provider (school, institution or other VET organisation) with a combination of school-based learning and a strong work-based component (internships). For long-term mobility (ErasmusPro), the host organisation can also be a VET provider, but the activity must have a clear work-based learning component, usually in the form of an internship at a company.

Staff mobility comprises two types of activities:

- Teaching and training assignments: this activity enables staff of VET organisations to teach at a VET partner organisation abroad. Staff of enterprises will also have the opportunity to train with a VET organisation abroad through this activity.
- Staff training: this activity supports the professional development of VET staff in the form of an internship or job shadowing/ an observation period abroad in an enterprise or other VET organisation.

KEY ACTION 2: COOPERATION FOR INNOVATION AND EXCHANGE OF GOOD PRACTICES

Within key action 2, strategic partnerships that promote innovation or exchange of experience and expertise can be funded. Strategic partnerships are international cooperation projects that contribute to innovation and improvement of training and education. They can be simple small collaborations but also large-scale projects to disseminate innovative resources.

For the school sector, there is a specific form of partnership, namely school exchange partnerships, which aim, among other things, to promote student mobility.



ETWINNING

Finally, eTwinning also forms the subject of this study. eTwinning² is the (online) community for schools in Europe. Teachers from participating countries, after registering, use the tools to connect with each other, exchange ideas and practices, collaborate in groups, learn together during online learning events and carry out projects. There are no subsidies or conditions attached to the programme and no face-to-face meetings are required.

eTwinning is recommended in combination with learning mobility or partnerships from key actions 1 and 2 of the Erasmus+ programme: eTwinning allows users to communicate, maintain and delete data, maintain an overview, involve all teachers and students in the project, and the platform can serve to disseminate project results.

1.3 Method

To answer the research questions, we combined (1) a broad survey of all participating schools via an online survey with (2) a qualitative deepening via 360° analyses.

BROAD QUESTIONING THROUGH ONLINE SURVEYS

As a first step in mapping the impact of Erasmus+ and eTwinning on participating schools, we organised a brief online survey of two target groups: (1) coordinators of Erasmus+ projects and (2) active eTwinning users. A separate questionnaire was prepared for each of these target groups (included in Annexes B2 and B3). The objective of the two surveys was to take an initial broad 'snapshot' of the impact achieved among participants.

We summarise the methodology of the surveys below. The Erasmus+ survey:

- **Sample:** The survey was aimed at all coordinators of Erasmus+ projects completed in the period 2014-2019. That was a total of 550 people.
- **Response:** 209 of them answered the survey, representing a response rate of 38%.
- **Reliability:** This high response rate results in reliable survey results: with 95% reliability, there is a margin of error of 5.38%.
- **Average completion time:** The average completion time was 12 minutes.

The eTwinning survey:

- **Sample:** The survey targeted all active eTwinning users. Active users are those who, at the time of sampling, had logged on to the platform at least once during the past year. This was a total of 1340 people.
- **Response:** 176 of them answered the survey, representing a response rate of 13%.
- **Reliability:** With 95% confidence, there is a margin of error of 6.89%.
- **Average completion time:** The average completion time was 5 minutes.

QUALITATIVE DETAIL VIA 360°-ANALYSES

The focus of the assignment was on qualitative detail. We selected 15 schools in which an in-depth understanding of the impact of Erasmus+ and eTwinning was created through a 360° analysis. During a school visit, in-depth interviews were conducted with various involved (and uninvolved) actors, using open-ended questions (topic lists included in Appendix ANNEXESB.4 /). In doing so, we gathered more insight into sustainability and the underlying factors of perceived impact.

² <https://www.etwinning.be/vlaanderen/nl/home>



Based on the responses in the online survey, we selected schools that served as cases to qualitatively explore the impact of Erasmus+ and eTwinning. We selected schools that emerged from the survey as good practice: in which Erasmus+/eTwinning had created a positive impact, in terms of innovation, competence development, organisational development and/or internationalisation.

In each of these schools, we interviewed 4 types of actors:

- Management
- Project leader(s)
- Teacher(s) involved
- Other teacher(s)

From these 4 perspectives, the research questions were scrutinised and a full picture of the impact and knock-on effects of Erasmus+ and eTwinning on schools was created.

We selected both schools that participated in only one of the projects along with those that combined several projects. Attention was also paid to proper distribution by region, by educational level and type, and by the use of eTwinning.

The table below shows an overview of the selected schools that participated in this study.

Table 1: Overview of schools in which 360° analyses were conducted

School	Municipality	Province	Educational level and type	Type of Erasmus + projects	Use of eTwinning (according to coordinator E+)
Saint Ursula Institute	Lier	Antwerp	ASO, TSO	KA1 and KA2	In the framework of E+ Separate from E+ is not known
Go! De Driesprong primary school	Maldegem	East Flanders	Primary education	KA2	Both as part of and separate from E+
Saint Lambert 4	Westerlo	Antwerp	ASO, TSO	KA1 and KA2	None, as far as is known
Institute for Catholic Secondary Education	Hoeselt	Limburg	BSO	KA1	Only in the framework of E+
RHIZO 3	Kortrijk	West Flanders	ASO, TSO, BSO, BuSo	KA1 and KA2	Both as part of and separate from E+
GO! Genk Campus Technical Athenaeum De Wijzer	Genk	Limburg	TSO, BSO	KA1 and KA2	Only in the framework of E+
Virgo Sapientiae Institute (Maricoles)	Maldegem	East Flanders	ASO	KA1 and KA2	Only in the framework of E+
De Wijnpers	Leuven	Flemish Brabant	TSO, BSO, KSO	KA1 and KA2	Only in the framework of E+
Talent School Turnhout campus	Turnhout	Antwerp	TSO	KA1 and KA2	Both as part of and separate from E+



Zenit					
Evergem primary school	Evergem	East Flanders	Primary education	KA2	Both as part of and separate from E+
Catholic Education Geel-Kasterlee	Geel	Antwerp	ASO, BSO, TSO	KA1 and KA2	In the framework of E+ Separate from E+ is not known
PISO	Tienen	Flemish Brabant	TSO, BSO	KA1 and KA2	Separate from E+ In the framework of E+ is not known
Margareta-Maria Institute TSO-BSO	Kortemark	West Flanders	TSO, BSO	KA1	None
GO! School for Special Secondary Education t Vurstjen	Evergem	East Flanders	Special Secondary Education	KA2	Only in the framework of E+
GO! atheneum Russelberg	Tessenderlo	Limburg	ASO, TSO, BSO	KA1 and KA2	Only in the framework of E+

1.4 Reading guide

The remainder of this report is divided into seven chapters. The next five chapters describe the impact of Erasmus+ and eTwinning, or in other words the effects Erasmus+ and eTwinning produce according to the schools surveyed. Two observations are important to bear in mind when listing the impacts:

The impact of Erasmus+ and the impact of eTwinning are not fully aligned. All the impacts discussed apply to Erasmus+. However, not all of these effects are experienced with eTwinning. Whenever the impact also applies to eTwinning, this is indicated in the description.

These are *potential* impacts. Not every Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning project will have all of these effects. It often depends on various context factors as well as project design whether or not the effects are experienced. The extent to which these effects are experienced is interpreted as best we can based on the information from the interviews and/or survey results.

The impacts are distributed across several impact dimensions, each discussed in a separate chapter:

- **Chapter 2: Impact on organisational development.** Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning can contribute to a transition in school culture and to a renewed school functioning and school infrastructure, improve image and strengthen cooperation with partners.
- **Chapter 3: Impact on internationalisation.** This impact is shown through increased capacity for international projects, building an international network, embedding internationalisation in the school organisation and a strengthened international mindset. Furthermore, different types of Erasmus+ projects and eTwinning are mutually reinforcing.
- **Chapter 4: Impact on quality of education.** This impact shows itself in different ways: through the teachers (and the growth they are experiencing) and in the lessons (through new teaching methods,



use of practical examples, a new teacher-student relationship and thus the connection of the lesson to the students' needs).

- **Chapter 5: Impact on European priorities.** This is about the impact on equity and social inclusion, digitalisation, and sustainability in schools.
- **Chapter 6: Impact on students.** Erasmus+ offers huge growth opportunities for students. The impact on students was generally centralised by the teachers, school staff and management interviewed.

The 7th chapter discusses the success factors, or in other words the factors underlying positive changes (as a result of participation in Erasmus+/eTwinning). They contribute to the successful implementation of Erasmus+ within a school and to its sustainable and school-wide anchoring.

- **Chapter 7: Success factors** We offer insights into success factors at the level of students, teachers, the school, above-school, projects and external factors.

We end the report with a conclusion, which summarises the insights from the study in an orderly manner.

- **Chapter 8: Conclusion.** In this section, we summarise the main findings.



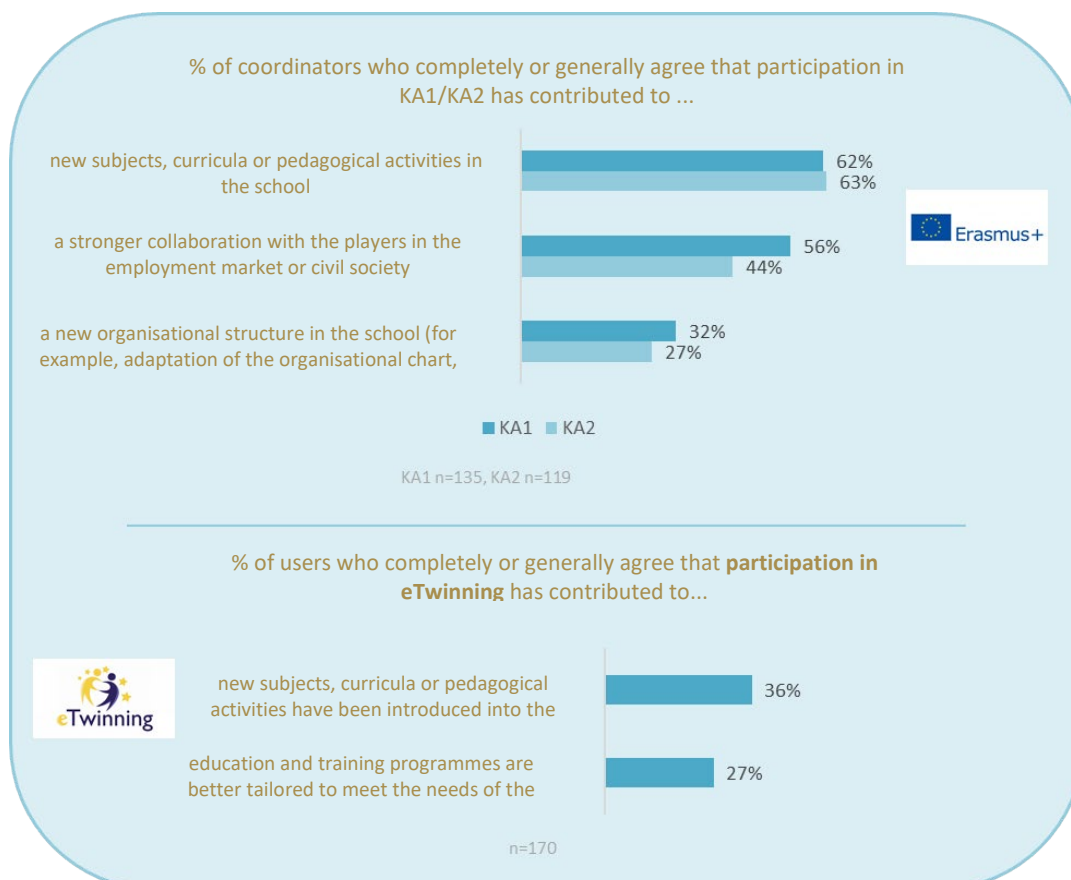


2. Impact on organisational development

In this chapter, we discuss the impact on the school's organisational development. More specifically, this includes the impact on the following aspects:

- School culture
- School functioning
- School infrastructure
- Image of the school
- Cooperation with partners

We address each of these aspects below.



2.1 School culture

In the schools surveyed, Erasmus+ contributes to a transition in school culture: a transition to an open, innovative and warm school.

A MORE OPEN AND INNOVATIVE SCHOOL CULTURE

Participation in Erasmus+ and eTwinning projects brings the world into the school and brings the school to the world. The school is open to new ideas and different methods. By focusing on internationalisation, the school demonstrates its appreciation of what is different and it carries the message that both students and teachers can learn from international experiences. This creates a culture in which continued learning, growing and being challenged is encouraged.

" Those who return pass on daring to dream and look ahead to others "

- uninvolved teacher -

This openness encourages the proactivity of school staff to develop and implement new ideas, bringing innovation to the school.

"We are open to thinking about other systems. There is out-of-the-box thinking. In the past, the starting point was: 'we have so many hours and we have so many classes'. Now, school-making is thought about in a different way".

- coordinator-



USING INTERNATIONALISATION TO STRENGTHEN THE VISION OF DIVERSITY AT THE MARGARETA-MARIA INSTITUTE (MMI) IN KORTEMARK

Diversity occupies an important role in MMI's school vision. Over the years, an open culture within the school has been created with this vision. People became more open-minded as a result and treated other cultures more respectfully.

"The teachers know that everything is mixed up. Teachers do not just teach ASO or TSO or BSO. All the buildings intertwine. That is our vision. Internationalisation contributes to this. That open culture was always there. That's the DNA. If we can start something to further strengthen that vision, we will do it".

- director -

Internationalisation actively contributed to building an open culture. The world was brought into school to better prepare students for the real world. In this regard, diversity is not simply something to be talked about or merely applied in a lesson. 'Dealing with diversity', they say, is something you should also actively practise. And this is exactly where the international internship comes in.

"People think we are conservative in rural areas. But this is how we open up the school. The school should not be an island, this is how we bring the world in. We want to be just like the real world. We want to throw it open. You have to practise 'dealing with diversity' at school".

- coordinator -

WARM SCHOOL WITH HIGHER ENGAGEMENT AND CONNECTION

Erasmus+ projects also contribute to involvement and connection in the school, leading to a warm school culture. Erasmus+ connects students with each other, teachers with each other, and students with teachers through unique experiences. Connectedness and involvement in the school are increasing.

Erasmus+ also strengthens parental involvement. Parents are often impressed by what the school manages to achieve with their children and are grateful for the opportunities provided. They entrust their children to the teachers on an exchange abroad. Confidence and admiration encourages parents to follow up more on the school's initiatives, thus depicting itself with wider parental involvement.

"Many new friendships have also developed across classes, such as the students in hair care and grooming. After that trip, they become one group".

- uninvolved teacher -



“You never used to see parents. Now we run a parents' evening at the beginning of the year to give the information and now they are suddenly very involved. And now they also come along at Christmas to know if their child can come with them, because the class council decides at this point. Parents are also already finding the confidence to send a message or call”.

- uninvolved teacher -

2.2 School functioning

In addition to the culture, operations can also be profoundly changed by participation in Erasmus+. Teachers and involved school staff are stimulated during international mobility and cooperation projects to reflect critically on their own functioning while being inspired by other approaches and visions. This can lead to innovation in their own school functioning.

“It's not that you can completely take over, it's often just a seed”.

- director -

ENCOURAGES INNOVATION IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

Several respondents testify to major school-wide innovations that have taken place, directly or indirectly as a result of Erasmus+. Seeing first-hand how schools abroad do things during exchanges encourages school staff to innovate their own operations as well. Several examples were discussed: studio collaboration, co-teachers, subject anchors, project working, broad evaluation, etc. Often, methods are not adopted integrally, but observing the other approach is the starting point for translating it to one's own school, and implement innovation.

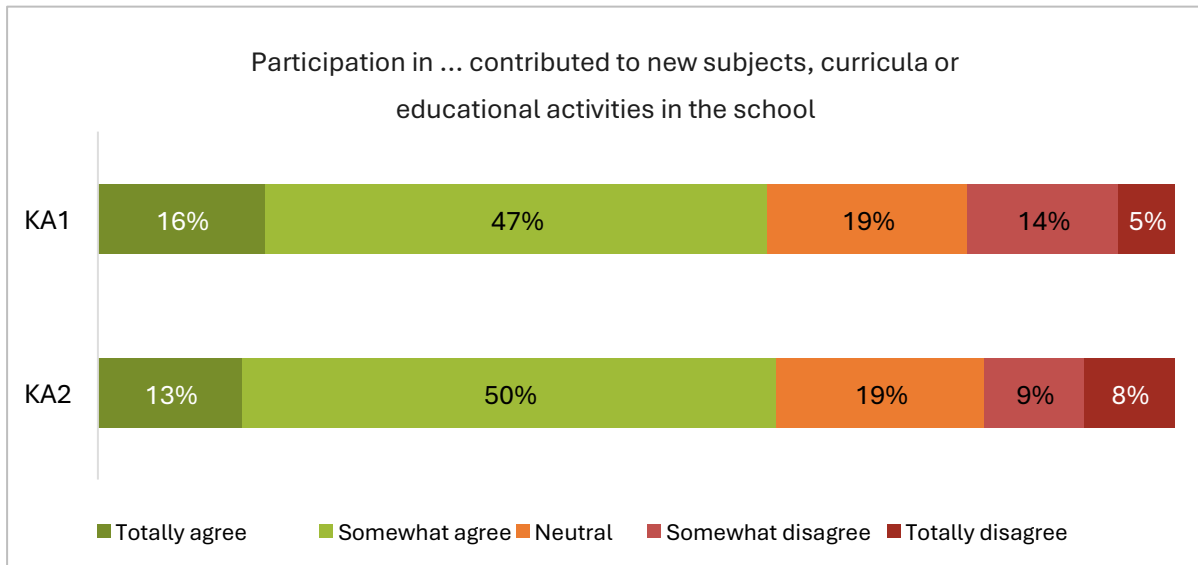
“We have completely transformed our school functioning from classical to contemporary education. We even broke out walls in the classrooms. We now have studio work, co-teachers, subject anchors. We are teaching in a very different way, and that is thanks to Erasmus, thanks to the inspiration we have gained”.

- director -



Curricula can also be renewed through participation in Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning. Figure 1 shows to what extent survey respondents perceived that new subjects, curricula or pedagogical activities were implemented in the school (partly) because of Erasmus+ projects. Almost 2 out of 3 coordinators of Erasmus+ projects participating in our survey agree.

Figure 1: Impact of Erasmus+ on new subjects, curricula or educational activities in the school



Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=135 / KA2: n=119)



INTRODUCTION OF A LEARNING CURVE ROBOTICS - CODING - PROGRAMMING IN PRIMARY SCHOOL HET MOLENSCHIP IN EVERGEM

"Everything we do around robotics at school has come through Erasmus+. That is now one of our strengths, we have a full curriculum around that".

- director -

Everything started with a seed that was planted ...

After an exchange, one teacher came back full of enthusiasm. He was completely taken with the topic of robots thanks to a project and then delved further into it.

The teacher took up what he had learned about robots and developed a learning activity for his students. In doing so, he inspired an initial colleague who also introduced an activity with robots in her classroom.

... and then grew into a learning curve

One colleague was followed by a host of other colleagues who also started working with robots. Each time, they looked up which robots were on the market for their students. Thus, the number of teachers rose organically.

During staff meetings, teachers showed their robots to each other each time. That way, they knew what was covered by which teacher. But after a while, this became too elaborate. The need for a more structured approach arose and it was decided to put the whole thing into a curriculum. To do so, people first selected the different activities with robot, coding and programming activities that they would use.

It then determined how each activity would build up through the years of study. All this was summarised in a visual diagram.

The material was purchased with residual budgets from Erasmus+ projects that had been used sparingly. They reinvested the funds to purchase robots for the students. With regular school funding, this would never have been possible, according to the headteacher.

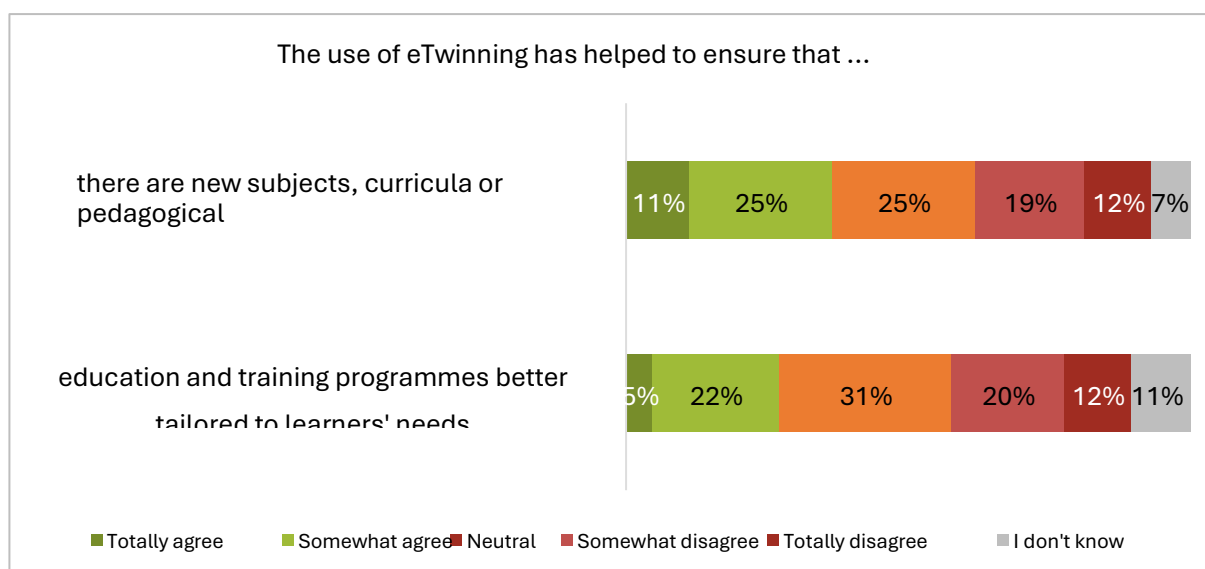
What once started with one activity around robots grew into a 'learning curve for robotics - coding - programming' with activities from 1st kindergarten class to 6th grade, thanks to Erasmus+. In addition and in the meantime, the school participated in several programming competitions and grew into a highly media-oriented school in which students learn to use computers fluently.



eTwinning can also have the effect of changing the educational project in a school, although the survey results show this impact to be lower than for Erasmus+. In the survey of active eTwinning users, 36% of respondents indicated that eTwinning had helped (11% completely and 25% previously agreed) to introduce new subjects, curricula or educational activities.

In addition, 27% of eTwinning users agree that eTwinning helps to make education and training programmes more responsive to learners' needs (5% totally agree, 22% somewhat agree).

Figure 2: Impact of eTwinning on new subjects, curricula or educational activities and on the alignment of teaching programmes with learners' needs



Source: Survey of eTwinning users in Flanders (n=170)



LOW-THRESHOLD ETWINNING PROJECT AT THE DRIESPRONG IN MALDEGEM

eTwinning as a low-threshold stepping stone to internationalisation

In the Driesprong, the 1st grade teacher was pulled over to commit to internationalisation through an eTwinning project. This project was a low-threshold stepping stone for her to still be involved in internationalisation, without having to effectively move abroad herself.

...with the help of travelling teddy bear Star:

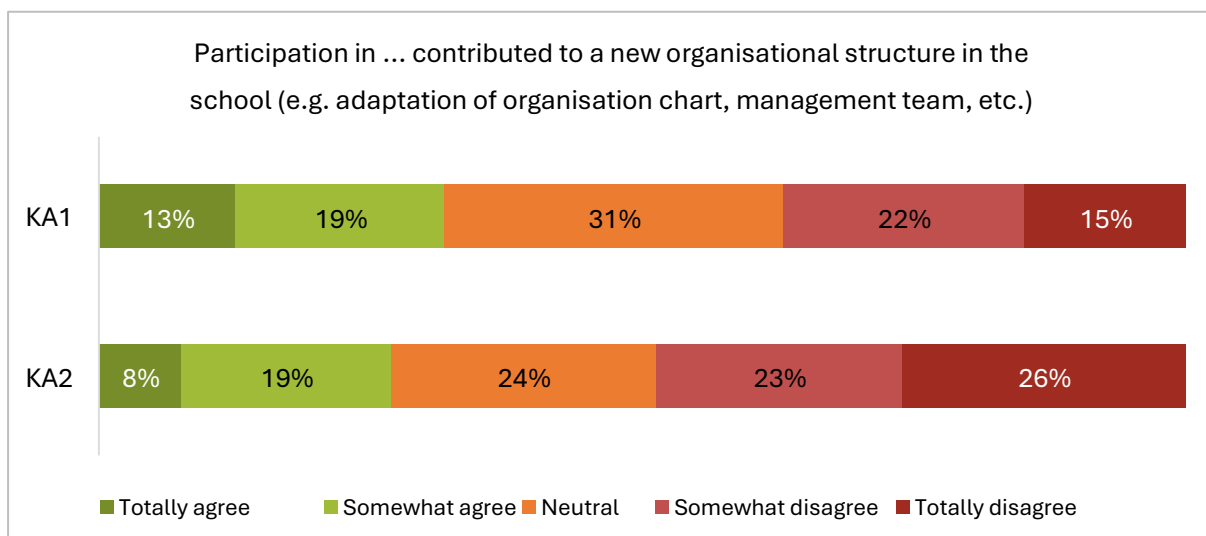
The cuddly Star travels around from Belgium, to France, Poland and Spain, making stops everywhere in the first grade. Star then becomes an 'extra student' in the classroom. The students get to know Star, do activities with her (e.g. they learn about her Belgian fries) and capture everything by photo. These photos are then shared with students from the other countries. This allows students to follow the cuddly toy's journey through different countries and learn about them. For example, they learn a farewell phrase in Spanish. Occasionally, the cuddly toy would also go home with a student and could experience the morning and evening ritual there. After the visit, the students hug Star one more time and pack her into a box and send her by post to the next country.

The Driesprong's first-grade teacher became so enthusiastic through the project that she is now trying to convince her first-grade and kindergarten colleagues to get into the project as well.

ADAPTATION OF ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

In some cases, participation in Erasmus+ also leads to a new organisational structure. In the survey, 32% indicated that participation in KA1 contributed to a new organisational structure, while for KA2 it was 27%. This often specifically involves a coordinator or internationalisation team (see 3.3 *embedding in school organisation*), but it may also involve new working groups or new positions, such as appointing a care coordinator.

Figure 3: Impact of Erasmus+ on renewed organisational structure



Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=135 / KA2: n=119)



2.3 School infrastructure

Innovation in the educational project also sometimes affects the school infrastructure.

NEW SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

The innovation in the educational project resulting from Erasmus+ leads in some cases to innovation in the school infrastructure. Great examples came up: walls between classes being broken down, classes installing a seating area and a class being equipped with places to work together.

"In this small room, students can sit separately. We set that up with the idea: if the classroom is too busy for a while, students can come here. They had that kind of space in the overseas school too".

- coordinator

TALENT SCHOOL TURNHOUT CAMPUS ZENIT DEMOLISHES WALLS BETWEEN CLASSROOMS

The enthusiasm for co-teaching, project-based work and active learning led to the literal demolition of walls between classrooms in the Turnhout Talent School.

Two classrooms were merged for both computer science and multimedia. The classic layout had vanished, giving way to more flexibly movable tables, a 'chillout corner' with armchairs, a video studio, a kitchen, and more.

Students from 5th and 6th classes take classes there together, under the guidance of 2 teachers, who mutually support each other.

Students work together on group projects, move freely through the 'studio', and can help each other across class groups.



2.4 Image of the school

Erasmus+ can strengthen the school's image and thus increase intake - both in the school and in directions where the projects are organised.

STRENGTHENS THE SCHOOL'S IMAGE

When the school builds a tradition in internationalisation, this is quickly known in the surrounding area through word of mouth. People are often impressed by what the school organises with its students and it brings a positive image.

Companies that schools already work with for internships are also often positive about the internationalisation opportunities offered by the school. They too see an overseas internship as adding value to their future employees. Moreover, internship supervisors who supervise both apprentices abroad and in Flanders can bring in the experiences of practice in the overseas company. This creates a certain dynamic in the contact with Flemish companies.

INCREASE STUDENT INTAKE INTO THE SCHOOL

Many of the schools that we attended saw participation in Erasmus+ as a recruitment tool for new apprentices, and are finding that it also works effectively. Interested students and their parents are often aware that the school offers internationalisation opportunities and see that as a great added value. For these students, internationalisation is one of the reasons for choosing the school. Thus, Erasmus+ contributes to increased intake. Erasmus+ can also boost intake for the directions in which overseas exchanges are organised.

"Our school had a bad image. Then, many Erasmus+ projects appeared. All the teachers really tried their hardest to boost the image. And now we're really noticing that this internationalisation does matter in that. We're seeing that in the student numbers: they have grown tremendously".

- coordinator -

2.5 Cooperation with partners

Participation in Erasmus+ and eTwinning strengthens cooperation with other actors around the school, such as other schools, labour market players or associations in the area.³

Participation in Erasmus+ can strengthen cooperation with other schools in the region. This came up in the interviews, especially in schools that are part of a school group. Participation in Erasmus+ creates an opportunity to work with other schools or support each other. When one school from the group is a forerunner, the lead from that school also sometimes supports the other schools in rolling out internationalisation. In addition, some projects are set up with a consortium of schools. Then several schools take part in a project together, which naturally strengthens the exchange between the participating schools. Furthermore, the innovative power that Erasmus+ and eTwinning bring with them encourages schools to exchange with other schools and inspire each other.

³ Of course, cooperation is also established with players from abroad, but this is included in section 6.2, 'International network'.



"For me, eTwinning has promoted my involvement and collaboration with national and international teacher networks to exchange experiences and teaching tools."

- e-Twinning user in survey -

Cooperation with businesses in the area can also be strengthened. This occurred mainly in schools organising work placements abroad through Erasmus+. Placements in Flanders also look with admiration at what the school organises with students. They see this as an added value in the education of the students, who are their future employees. Internship supervisors who supervise internships both abroad and in Flanders note that companies in Flanders are interested in the insights that internship supervisors bring from overseas companies.

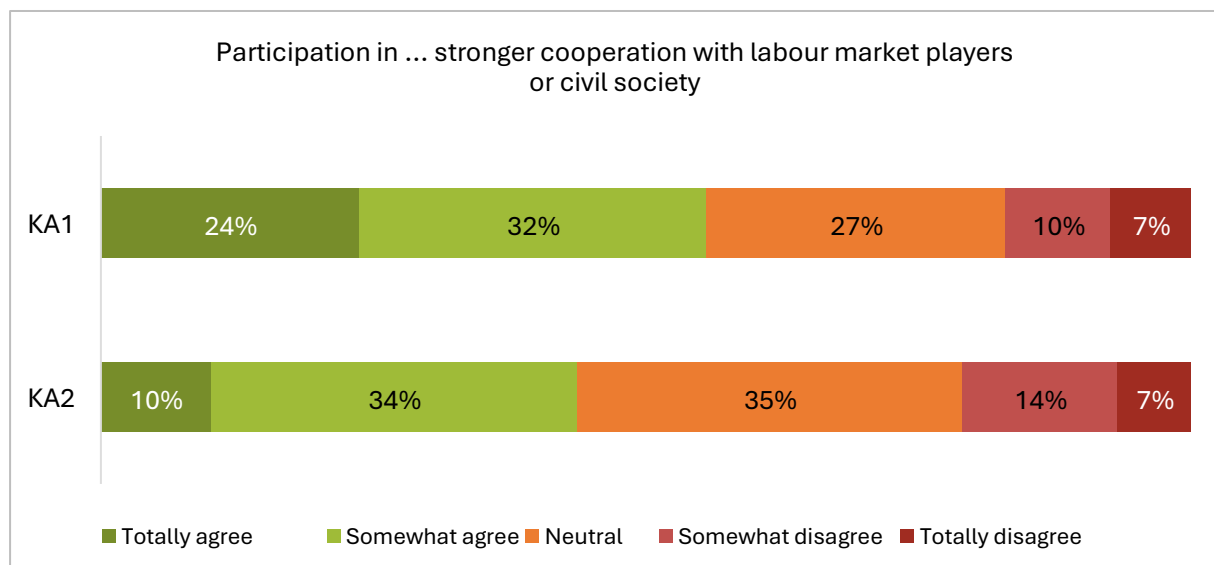
"Internships here say themselves: we would like to do that too, go and have a look abroad".

- coordinator -

Finally, depending on the interpretation of projects and which organisations are involved, cooperation with the local government and community can be strengthened. Especially when schools have the overseas teachers and students visiting, local associations can be involved in the programme provided for the visitors.

As Figure 4 shows, 56% of coordinators in the survey indicated that KA1 contributes to stronger cooperation with labour market players or civil society (24% totally agree, 32% somewhat agree). For KA2, this proportion is lower at 44% (10% totally agree, 34% somewhat agree).

Figure 4: Impact of Erasmus+ on cooperation labour market players or civil society



Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=135 / KA2: n=119)



ACADEMICALLY-BASED BASIC SKILLS TRAINING - IKSO HOESELT

IKSO Hoeselt teamed up with a Limburg college to develop academically-based basic skills training for their students.

From the beginning, they knew that participating in Erasmus+ would be a big step for students and they wanted to prepare them for it. A colleague's husband worked at the college, in a research team specialising in teamwork and conflict management. He was called upon to shape the training.

The first year, someone from the research team went along to observe and give feedback, the next year it was students from the college. Today, a street worker from CAW Genk takes up this role.





3. Impact on internationalisation

In this chapter, we describe the impact of Erasmus+ and eTwinning on internationalisation and the European dimension in schools.

We successively go over the following effects:

- Capacity for international projects
- International network
- Embedding in school organisation
- International mindset



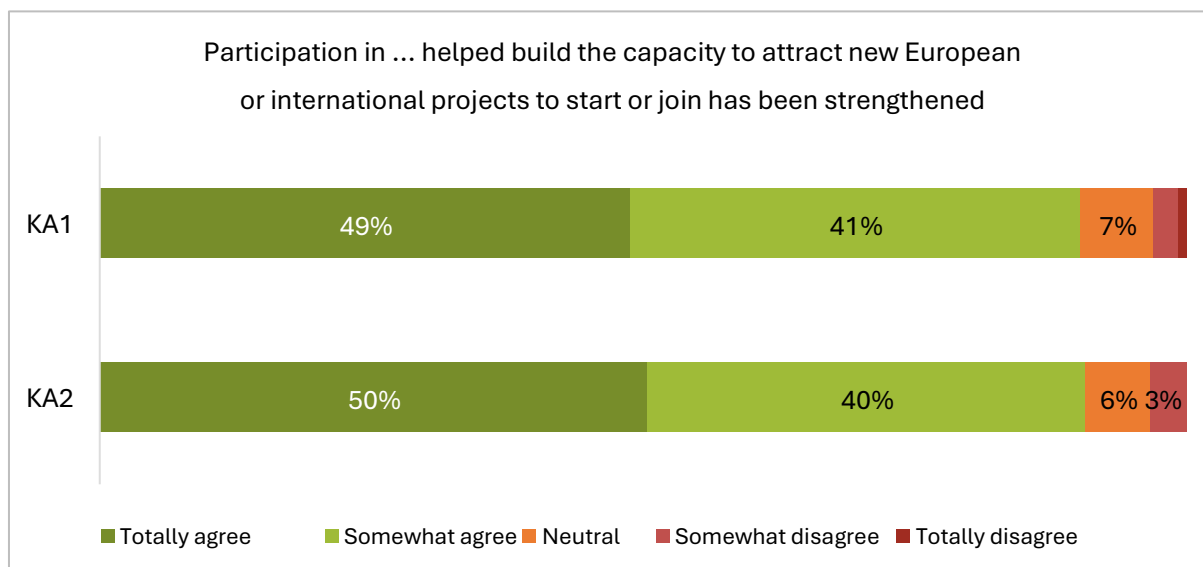


3.1 Capacity of international projects

Participation in Erasmus+ increases the capacity to set up new international projects. In the survey, 90% of coordinators indicated that participation in KA1 and KA2 projects helped to strengthen the capacity to initiate or join new European or international projects (Figure 5).



Figure 5: Extent to which participation in Erasmus+ strengthens capacity for new international projects



Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=133 / KA2: n=119)

This capacity building results from a clear learning curve visible in schools committed to Erasmus+.

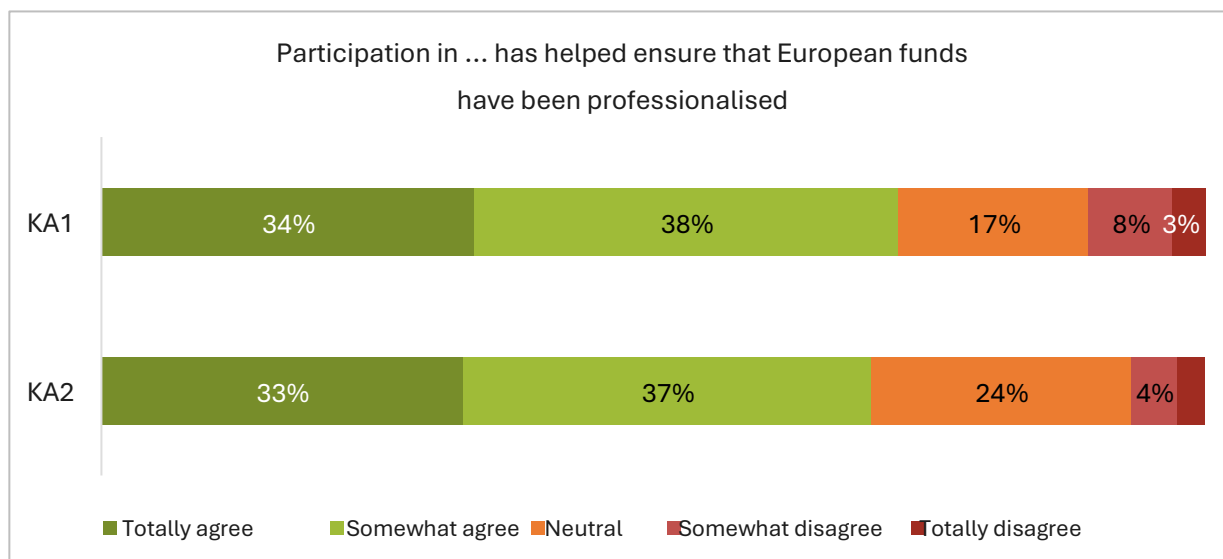
SCHOOLS' PARTICIPATION IN ERASMUS+ HAS A STEEP LEARNING CURVE

Starting an Erasmus+ project is not self-evident. This means there is a lot involved: finding your way through the documentation, finding partners and entering into partnerships, writing project dossiers, setting up and rolling out the project, managing resources, etc. In the interviews with Erasmus+ project coordinators, it regularly came up that the start-up was very challenging. But the more one gains experience with Erasmus+, the more smoothly the coordinators move through the project tasks. It remains a real investment to set up and follow up a project, but with each experience, you get to know your way around the Erasmus+ world better and build expertise in the different steps to be taken.

Therefore, the management of international projects in the school professionalises as experience increases. The management of European funds is also becoming more structured. As Figure 6 shows, +/- 70% of the coordinators somewhat agree or agree with the statement that participation in Erasmus+ contributed to the professionalisation of the management of European funds.



Figure 6: Impact on professional management of European funds.



Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=133 / KA2: n=119)

There is a clear learning curve in the organisation of Erasmus+ not only on an administrative level, but also on a practical level. Those involved do pick up some learning points from each project for the practical organisation of subsequent projects. New projects are thus adjusted based on previous experiences.

"The first time, there were seven students in one house. I stopped doing that, it was too much".

- coordinator -

3.2 International network

International projects help build an international network. The network grows as one gains more experience, and the partnerships also prove to lead to lasting collaborations when experiences are positive.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK GROWS WITH EXPERIENCE

Besides expertise in setting up Erasmus+ and eTwinning projects, the international network also grows as the school gains experience. Depending on the project(s) in which the school is participating, the network consists of other schools and overseas companies.

Education partners are found through various channels:

- Courses, contact seminars, or job shadowing through KA1
- The eTwinning platform
- Other projects involving overseas schools outside the Erasmus+ programme
- Other channels: through the school's website, informal contacts, chance encounters on the journey, and so on.
- And very importantly: through existing partners, providing the link to new partners.



"In the project in 2009, there was a seminar. There we met many of our current colleagues: the Germans, the French. Our French colleagues then knew of a Finnish and a Turkish school, so they joined".

- coordinator -

A network of overseas internships is being built up in the context of overseas internships. This can be done in several ways:

- Teachers search the internet on their own, make phone calls, send out emails, and so on. In some schools, these are the subject teachers, sometimes this is the role of a coordinator or leader. This is challenging and often requires a lot of time. If an organisation agrees, extensive reconciliation also follows to check whether all curriculum objectives can be captured by the workplace.
- Through an intermediary in the destination country, who looks for internships and checks whether the workplace meets the criteria. According to the schools applying for it, the Erasmus+ budget is sufficient to cover these costs as well, if it is taken into account when spending.

Through partner schools in the destination country. An arrangement can be made with these schools to seek placements in the home country for everyone's students.

"That's an exchange. The teachers in Finland also ask me to look for internships here".

- coordinator -

OFTEN LASTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARTNER SCHOOLS THAT LEAD TO NEW PROJECTS

When projects become a success, the coordinators note that relationships with partners tend to be sustainable as well. A lot of schools then engage in structural projects with these partners. Collaboration can then become increasingly well-oiled.

Cooperation between those involved becomes increasingly close. A personal connection is established. This may also lead to exchanges or opportunities that do not fall within the Erasmus+ framework.

"We still have the same partners from the project in 2014. That is a strong partnership with reliable partners. We know what we're dealing with. They have the same mentality. "

- coordinator -



"You are often fishing in the same pond for project partners. E.g. with Austria we did K2 projects then, but now we also do long-term student mobility with them. And we've also received students from them, who have come here to study for 3 or 4 months".

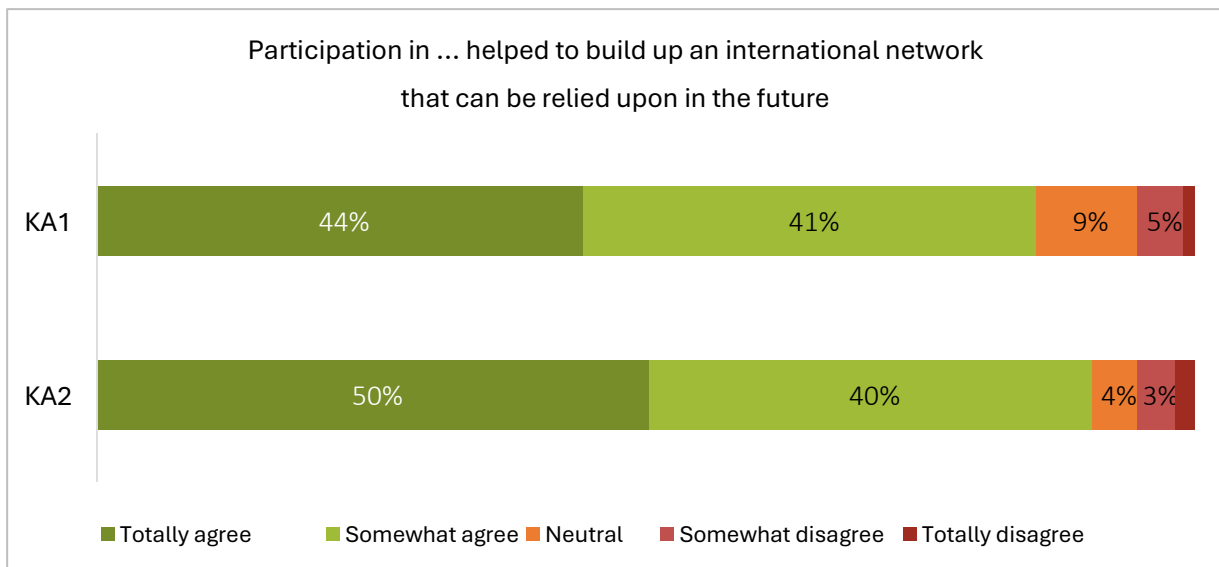
- coordinator -

This is also confirmed in the survey. For KA1 projects, 86% said they agreed (completely or somewhat) that participation in the projects contributes to a growing international network that can be relied on in the future. For KA2 projects, this share is even higher, with 91% saying they fully or somewhat agree that participation contributes to the sustainable development of the international network (Figure 7).

"It happens that there are also consultations outside the project, or we ask or share something. Sometimes that has nothing to do with the Erasmus+ project at all, because you build up such a great contact. I am in close contact with the coordinator there, and during Covid, for example, I also asked her: how do you do it?"

- coordinator -

Figure 7: Impact of Erasmus+ on international network building



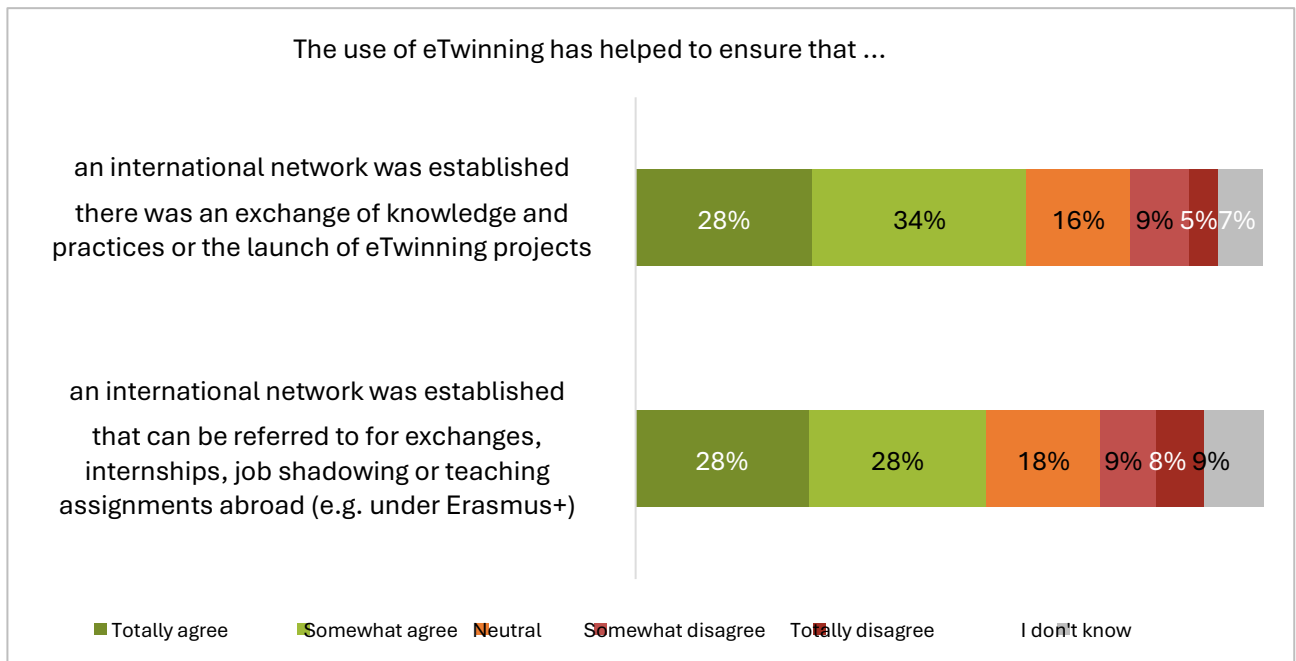
Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=133 / KA2: n=119)

In addition, eTwinning is a platform where schools from different countries can find each other, both for eTwinning and for Erasmus+ or other international projects:

- 62% of eTwinning users in the survey indicated that eTwinning had helped build an international network through which to exchange knowledge and practices or start eTwinning projects;
- 56% indicated that eTwinning helped to build an international network to rely on for exchanges, internships, job shadowing or teaching assignments abroad.



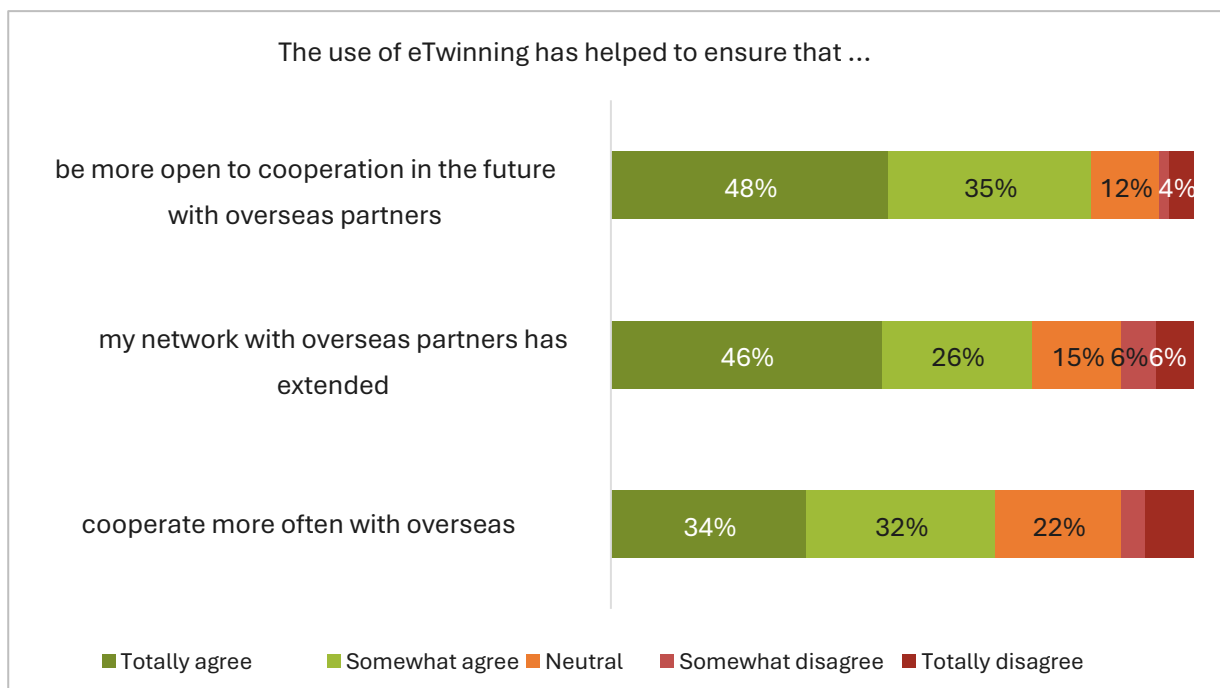
Figure 1: Impact of eTwinning on building the school's international network



Source: Survey of eTwinning users in Flanders (n=170)

Finally, using eTwinning benefits the user's international network. 82% of users indicated that they would be more open to working with overseas partners in the future, 72% that their network with overseas partners was expanded, and 66% that they would work with overseas partners more often (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Impact of eTwinning on building international teacher network



Source: Survey of eTwinning users in Flanders (n=170)



3.3 Embedding into the school organisation

Participation in Erasmus+ can lead to embedding internationalisation in the school organisation, via an elaborated vision and strategy as well as the start-up of an internationalisation team.

INTERNATIONALISATION IS SYSTEMATICALLY INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL'S VISION AND STRATEGY

As the school participates more in internationalisation projects, the extent to which internationalisation is included and elaborated in vision and strategy texts usually grows.

During interviews in schools, we heard that Erasmus+ usually started small. Sometimes the management is the instigator of participation in Erasmus+ and eTwinning, with or without embedding internationalisation in the school's vision and strategy. Accessibly, teachers are persuaded to get behind internationalisation, and gradually it starts to catch on. Sometimes internationalisation starts from a few enthusiastic teachers launching an initial project, usually without a concrete embedding of internationalisation in the school's vision or strategy.

The effects of the internationalisation projects are noticed and the added value of internationalisation for the school becomes more and more visible, upon which it is decided to include or further develop internationalisation in the vision strategy of the school and/or the school group. This, in turn, can ensure that other schools in the school group are also encouraged to engage in internationalisation.

“A pillar of our school is: school in the world. In this, we put internationalisation first. That has not always been the case, but because we had been doing that internship for a few years, and then a new parenting project had to be written, they opted to choose that as one of the five pillars”.

- coordinator -

Internationalisation, rather than being an end in itself, is usually seen as a means to achieve certain goals. For example, internationalisation is seen as a means to increase students' fluency, strengthen knowledge of modern foreign languages, improve tolerance in the school, professionalise teachers, etc.

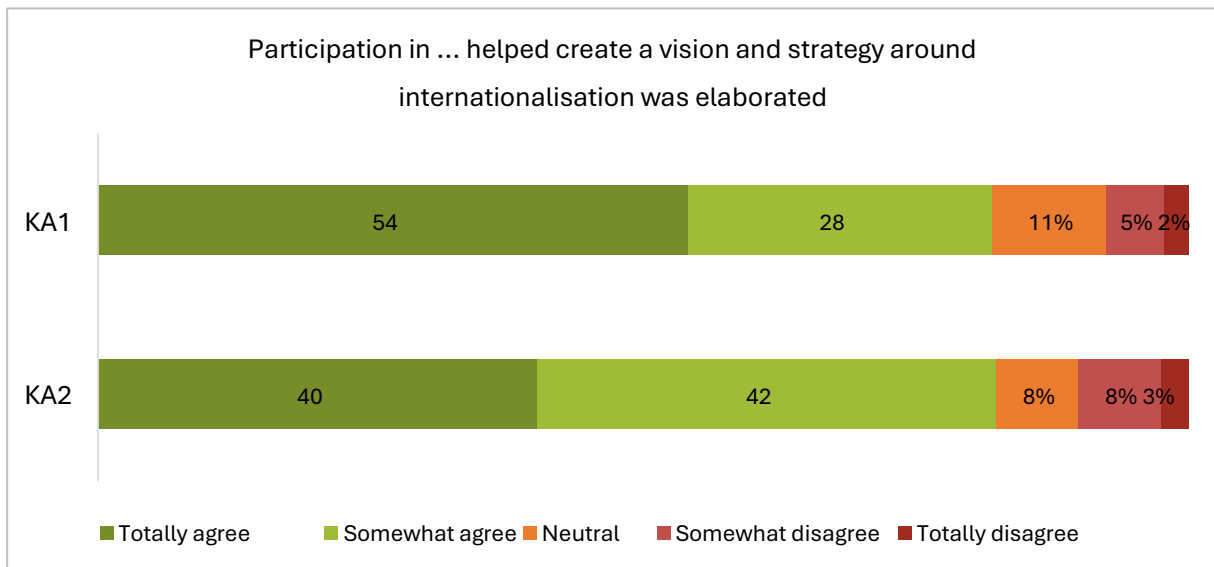
“Our vision is about: opening the gate. We try to be open to the world as much as possible, and that we also use the gate to go into the world ourselves. We want to give our students equal opportunities, bring them to the job market, bring them to society. So it makes sense that if we get the chance for Erasmus+, we do it. It's not specific to Erasmus+, it's simply the school's vision”.

- director -

The contribution of participation in Erasmus+ to the development of a vision and strategy around internationalisation is confirmed in the survey with coordinators of Erasmus+: 82% totally or somewhat agree with this statement (Figure 10).



Figure 10: Impact of Erasmus+ on elaboration of vision and strategy around internationalisation



Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=133 / KA2: n=119)



INTERNATIONALISATION FITS INTO THE SCHOOL VISION OF GO! RUSSELBERG ATHENAEUM IN TESSENDERLO

The slogan of the GO! Atheneum Russelberg is "moving together, growing together". This vision is described on the website as follows:

"At the Russelberg campus, we help you grow and find the right path as a student. Besides the fact that we think physical exercise and sport are very important, as a school we actually go out and about with you. Studying at the Russelberg campus gives you the chance to literally and figuratively push your limits. You discover the world by bringing it into the classroom, but also by going out into the wide world yourself. Because the more you know about the world, the stronger you are in it".

This vision translates into an operation in which not only Erasmus+ is an important part, but in which history lessons are taught in English according to the 'Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)' principle, in which there is a commitment to dual learning, and in which, through a 'community' operation, connectedness is created in each community with a fixed group of teachers and students.

The hashtag #movingtogether #growingtogether is added to every post on social media: whether the post is about a domestic or international placement, the new edition of the school newspaper, a first-year Christmas party or the announcement for the school party.



Source: www.russelberg.be

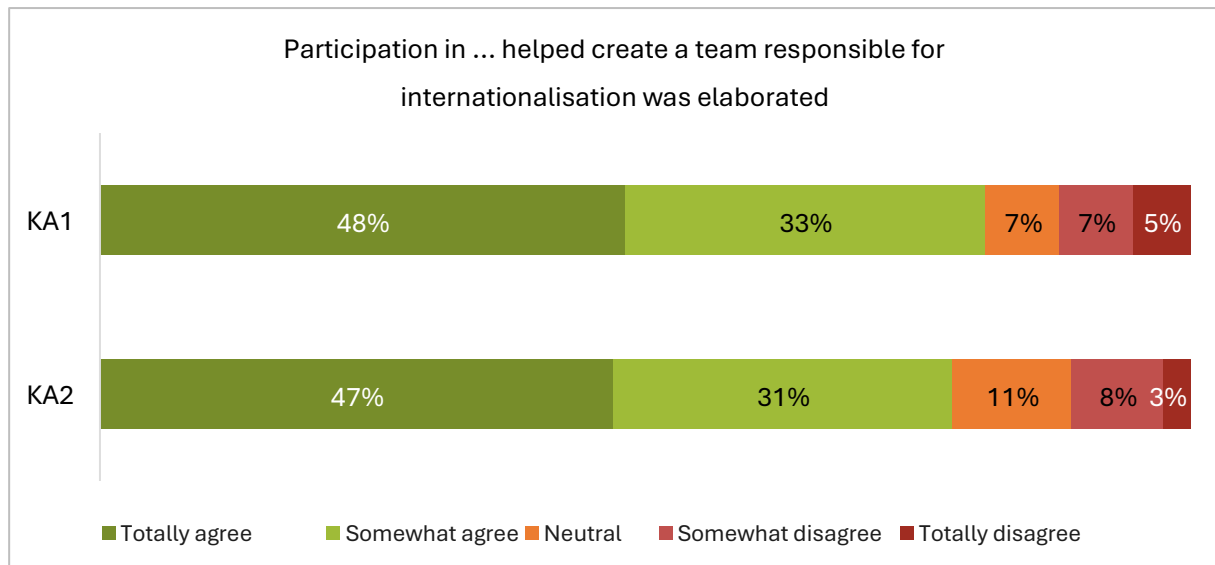


OFTEN, EMBEDDING IS ALSO ACCOMPANIED BY START-UP OF AN INTERNATIONALISATION TEAM

As the commitment to Erasmus+ projects grows, an internationalisation team is often set up in the school.

In the survey with coordinators of the Erasmus+ projects, around +/- 80% indicated that participation in KA1 or KA2 projects contributed to building a team responsible for internationalisation (Figure 11). The proportion is slightly higher for KA1 than for KA2 projects.

Figure 11: impact on expansion of internationalisation team



Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=133 / KA2: n=119)

The composition of this team varies. Sometimes there is one internationalisation coordinator, in other schools they work with a core team of leaders. These think out the projects (possibly together with the teachers involved), enter into partnerships, write out the project files (or in some cases support teachers involved in writing out a file), submit the project files and follow up on the communication, manage the resources and follow up on the projects, communicate about internationalisation in the school, and shape the internationalisation policy in the school together with the management. Sometimes a number of bps hours per week are provided for these individuals to take up these duties.

In addition to this coordinator or core team, usually the teachers directly involved, also take part in the internationalisation team or work with working groups per subject, per type of project, or per destination.

It is perceived as an added value when the role as 'lead person' is divided among several people.

"I mainly do the practical organisation, I am not as strong in writing. Everyone has their own job. It is nice that we can share the responsibility".

- coordinator -



A STRONG STRUCTURE FOR THE INTERNATIONALISATION TEAM AT THE SAINT URSULA INSTITUTE IN LIER

Over the years, the Saint Ursula Institute's internationalisation team built a strong team structure to support their operation. Besides a core team, they collaborate with a working group for each destination.

- The core team includes about four colleagues who coordinate the projects in terms of file management, administration, communication and logistics. They carry out the administration, oversee the selection procedure and accompanying interviews, handle dissemination and communicate with parents.
- The working groups prepare the selected students for their internships abroad. To this end, they organise a team building session so that the students would already know each other better. That is a course of eight to ten days after school. They are also responsible for all on-site organisation during the internships abroad. They aim for a size of four colleagues per working group. Colleagues can join a working group by applying.

The core team then look at which team the person fits best with. The coordinator sets up these teams after the task load for the projects became too great. Afterwards, they were built up step by step.

"That was a lot of work because we also had to find all those internships. Back then I thought: I need to have a team. We are often islands on our own, but that doesn't work. Then I sent an email with a slogan. And then nearly 20 colleagues came to listen to the new programme. After that, 3-4 remained who wanted to start".

- coordinator -

Working in these teams brings a significant drive. Moreover, the different teams learn a lot from each other. A success factor contributing to this, according to the management, is the freedom given to the teams to organise themselves, tackle tasks and solve problems.

3.4 International mindset

The embedding of internationalisation in the school is growing systematically not only formally, but also informally. The more the school commits to internationalisation, the stronger the international mindset in the school becomes. So it can really become part of the school's DNA: a school in which all teachers and students are global citizens.

GREATER SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONALISATION

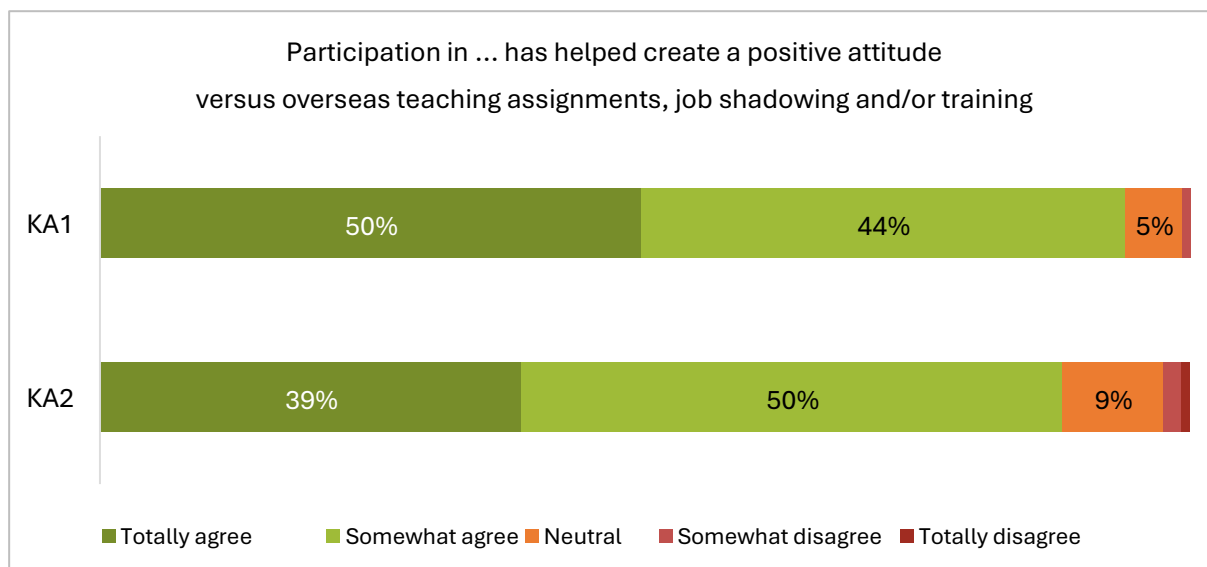
Participation in Erasmus+ leads to a greater appreciation of internationalisation opportunities for the majority of schools. This is often emphasised both in the survey and during school visits. In the survey,



about 9 in 10 respondents agreed (totally or somewhat) that participation in the projects helps to create positive attitudes towards overseas teaching assignments, job shadowing and/or training. This proportion is somewhat higher when participating in KA1.

During the school visits, it regularly came up that one international experience is enough for a teacher to become convinced of the added value of such projects. Even teachers who do not show much enthusiasm at the start often go all the way after a positive experience.

Figure 12: Impact of Erasmus+ on positive attitude towards international projects



Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=133 / KA2: n=119)

INTERNATIONALISATION IN SCHOOL DNA

As the tradition for internationalisation grows in the school, internationalisation can truly become part of the DNA of the school. It begins to resonate with students and teachers alike, and internationalism becomes a real given in time.

“If there are some things that characterise our school, internationalisation is definitely among them. When they ask, what kind of school are we? That's internationalisation”.

- uninvolved teacher -

A school in which other cultures are seen as a source of inspiration, from which everyone can learn a lot, carries a message that we are all global citizens. Support for diversity as a strength is growing. Bringing other nationalities into the school and taking the school to other cultures thus ensures a better fit with a student population that is becoming increasingly diverse in many Flemish schools.

“When the other students are here, our children do feel proud. Like: there are people from abroad here. We have also had Turkish children visit us already. Then our Turkish children are happy to be able to speak Turkish for once”.

- coordinator -



3.5 Different types of Erasmus+ projects and eTwinning reinforce each other

Finally, the capacity of schools to set up new international projects is greatly enhanced by clear mutual reinforcement between Erasmus+ projects (e.g. KA1 and KA2) and between Erasmus+ and eTwinning.

THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ERASMUS+ PROJECTS REINFORCE EACH OTHER

It starts to catch on, not only because enthusiastic teachers and students ignite each other, but also because participation in one type of Erasmus+ project sparks interest in other types of Erasmus+ projects. For instance, some schools are starting teacher learning mobility, where partnerships are emerging to start a KA2 project. Other schools build up the organisation of overseas placements for BSO and TSO subjects, and then start working on a first KA2 project with students from ASO, TSO and/or BSO. The leads for one project are often found during the rollout of another project.

"We wanted to put internationalisation on the map more. So we have started having teachers go abroad first, and then we hope they will want to commit to students. Teachers make contacts on such a learning mobility, and so there is impact. They are encouraged to then start drafting out projects with students and take the plunge."

- director -

To make internationalisation a (wider) entry point into the school, 'low-threshold' initiatives, such as taking an overseas course, are usually employed. Through such projects, teachers can get a taste of what internationalisation can mean, have conversations with teachers from overseas schools about interesting projects they have set up, make contacts, and so on. This motivates them to pursue this further.

ETWINNING AND ERASMUS+ REINFORCE EACH OTHER

The use of eTwinning can further strengthen the capacity for internationalisation. After all, it is an ideal channel for finding partners to start projects with together, or to be incentivised for internationalisation. But also vice versa, Erasmus+ participants find their way to the eTwinning platform through participation in Erasmus+.

"The whole Erasmus+ idea got a boost through eTwinning".

- eTwinning user in survey -

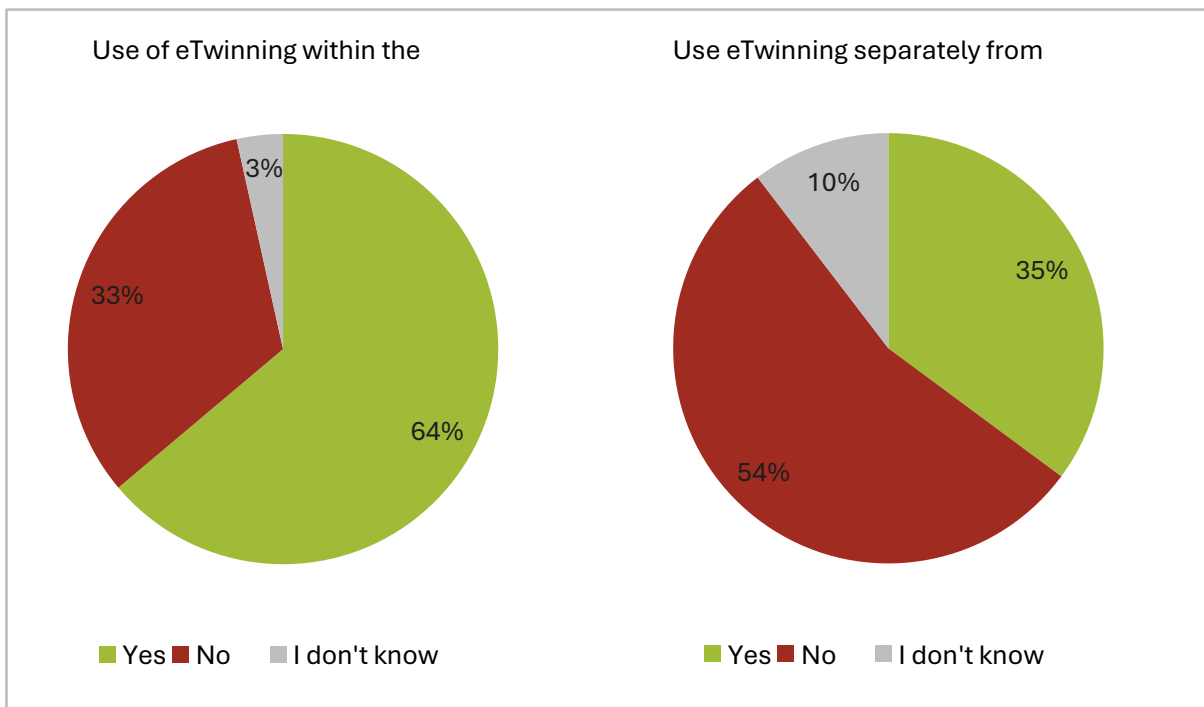
The survey results confirm the strong relationship between participation in eTwinning and Erasmus+. 72% of Erasmus+ coordinators say eTwinning is used in the school. Figure 13 shows how eTwinning is used in the school:



- At 64%, this is done (among other things) under Erasmus+.
In the interviews during the school visits, however, it regularly came up that people integrate eTwinning mainly because it adds value to the project file. Opinions about the platform are divided among these eTwinning users. The Erasmus+ trainees who used the eTwinning platform mainly for the project file were generally not entirely satisfied with the user-friendliness of the platform.
- At 35%, this is done (among other things) separately from Erasmus+.

This was the case at a number of schools we visited. This often involved a limited number of teachers using eTwinning to have students carry out an assignment with overseas students via the platform, e.g. as part of English lessons, to be able to apply the language practically, or to keep their own competences up to date (e.g. language teacher keeping in touch with other language teachers to practise language). Opinions about the eTwinning platform were more divided among these users: some showed enthusiasm and saw great value, others did not pursue the use after a difficult first experience.

Figure 13: Use of eTwinning in schools participating in Erasmus+

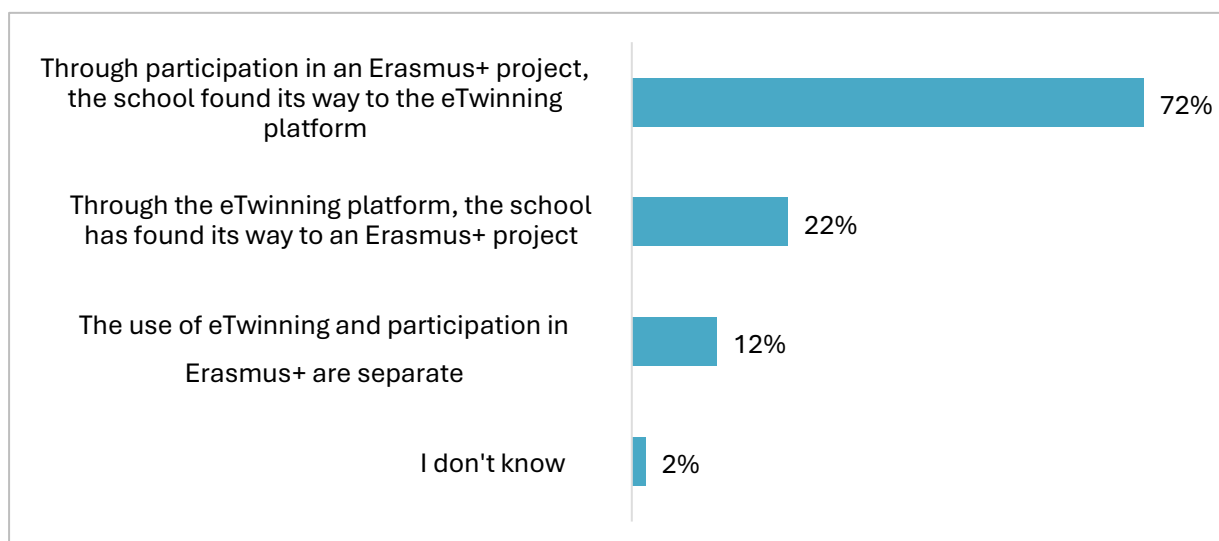


Source: IDEA Consult survey of Erasmus+ project coordinators (n=202)

So there is a clear relationship between eTwinning and Erasmus+. Figure 14 shows how the relationship between eTwinning and Erasmus+ works in schools. Among schools participating in Erasmus+ where eTwinning is also used, 72% say they found their way to the eTwinning platform through participation in Erasmus+. But conversely, there is also a flow. 22% found their way to Erasmus+ through the eTwinning platform. In 12% of these schools, there is no relationship between the two.



Figure 214: Relationship of the use of eTwinning and Erasmus+



Source: IDEA Consult survey among coordinators of Erasmus+ projects using eTwinning (n=144)



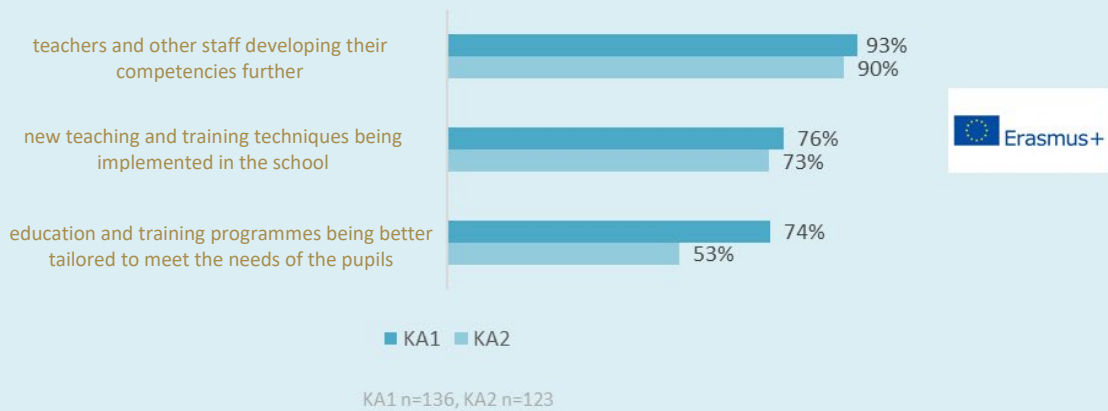


4. Impact on quality of education

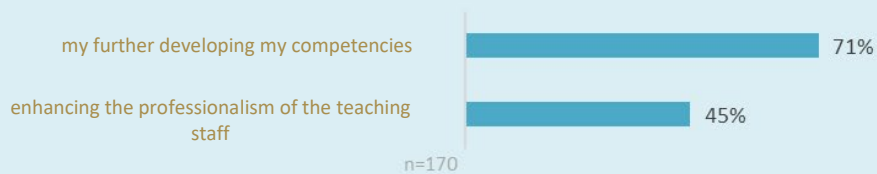
In this chapter, we describe the impact on the quality of education. This impact shows itself in different ways: through teachers (4.1) and in lessons (4.2).



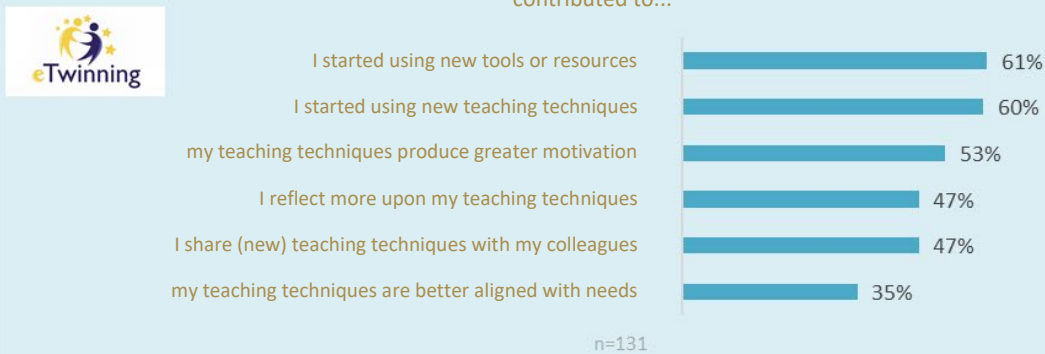
% of coordinators who completely or generally agree that participation in KA1/KA2 has contributed to ...



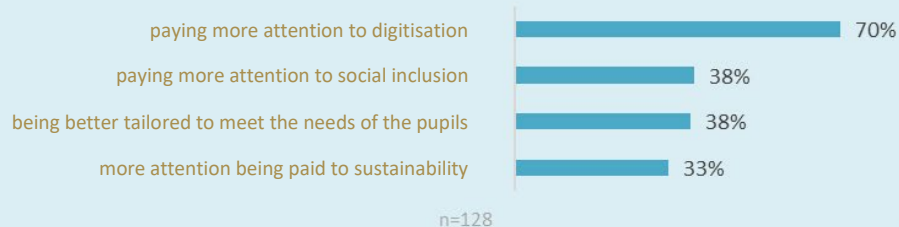
% of users who completely or generally agree that participation in eTwinning has contributed to...



% of user-teachers who completely or generally agree that participation in eTwinning has contributed to...



% of user-teachers who completely or generally agree that participation in eTwinning has helped to improve his/her teaching content...



4.1 Through the teachers

Among teachers, many positive effects occur that contribute to teaching quality. It motivates, inspires, strengthens the team atmosphere and cooperation, provides perspective for the Flemish educational reality, professionalises, creates personal growth in teachers too, and creates more understanding and respect between students and teachers.

BOOST TEACHERS' MOTIVATION STRENGTHENED IN THEIR MISSION

The impact that is often mentioned in the same breath as the impact on students is that teachers are motivated by the positive effects they observe in their students. It is very satisfying to see how students grow throughout the internationalisation experience. Teachers are thus empowered in their mission, which gives a huge motivation boost to keep on advocating for it as a teacher. It makes the still huge investment of time completely worthwhile for most.

"Why are we doing everything? We want to see the child happy. The child is central".

- involved teacher –

In addition, an Erasmus+ project breaks up the daily rhythm of teaching. It provides new stimuli, variety. It gives a momentum and an impetus to innovate and keep growing. The teaching profession usually leads to a flat career trajectory. International projects of this type provide teachers with the impression that they have more career opportunities and can really make and keep their careers exciting. The school visits and survey revealed that a lot of teachers have found the energy to be enthusiastic in front of the classroom again after an experience abroad.

"For me personally, that gives me so much enthusiasm. You see new people, get new ideas. And you want to try something different for a change. I became even more keen on my job".

- involved teacher –

Also, achieving such projects, especially those together with students, creates a certain pride among the initiators and teachers involved. They find that parents, uninvolved colleagues, friends, teachers from other schools and so on are very impressed by what they achieve with their students. They are personally sometimes surprised by what the project has brought about. This makes them proud.

"We are very proud to be able to impact the outside world and colleagues in this way".

- coordinator -



INSPIRED TEACHERS PROMPTED TO REFLECT

"The added value at school level is really that you talk to people and they say what works and what doesn't work, and after a while you start filtering: maybe I can try that too".

- coordinator -

Erasmus+ and eTwinning can inspire teachers and prompt reflection. Teachers encounter methods, approaches, themes and more that they are not used to or familiar with in international cooperation or mobility projects. This can inspire and give teachers ideas. On the other hand, it often leads teachers to think critically about their own teaching practice. In a similar context, schools/teachers who are addressing certain issues abroad might take a different approach. People start reflecting on what could potentially be improved. It can encourage them to implement new ideas in their own classroom or school.

"The idea was that perhaps we should look over the wall. Not that we should then apply everything. My intention is for them to just think, question themselves, question the system".

- coordinator -

STRONGER TEAM ATMOSPHERE AND STRENGTHENED COOPERATION AMONG SCHOOL STAFF

Teachers working together in an Erasmus+ project get to know each other well. Working on a project together and going abroad creates a bond. It is a unique experience that works as a kind of team building. This strengthens cooperation between the teachers involved, even after the exchange. There is also more collaboration between teachers who otherwise would not find each other so easily or do not work together in the normal classroom setting. Teachers know each other better, and also across grades and directions they know better who to address.

"I especially like that through these projects, you get to know other people. We are a very big school and I don't know everyone from the teaching team by name. On that front, it does provide a better connection.

- involved teacher -

PROVIDES PERSPECTIVE ON FLEMISH EDUCATIONAL REALITY

Another effect that came up very often during the school visits is that visiting an overseas school or engaging with overseas teachers allows you to put your own challenges as a teacher into perspective. Often the 'problems' abroad are the same, or there are even greater challenges. That brings a kind of reassurance to the Flemish teachers: "we are not doing so badly", or "actually, we are doing relatively well in that case".



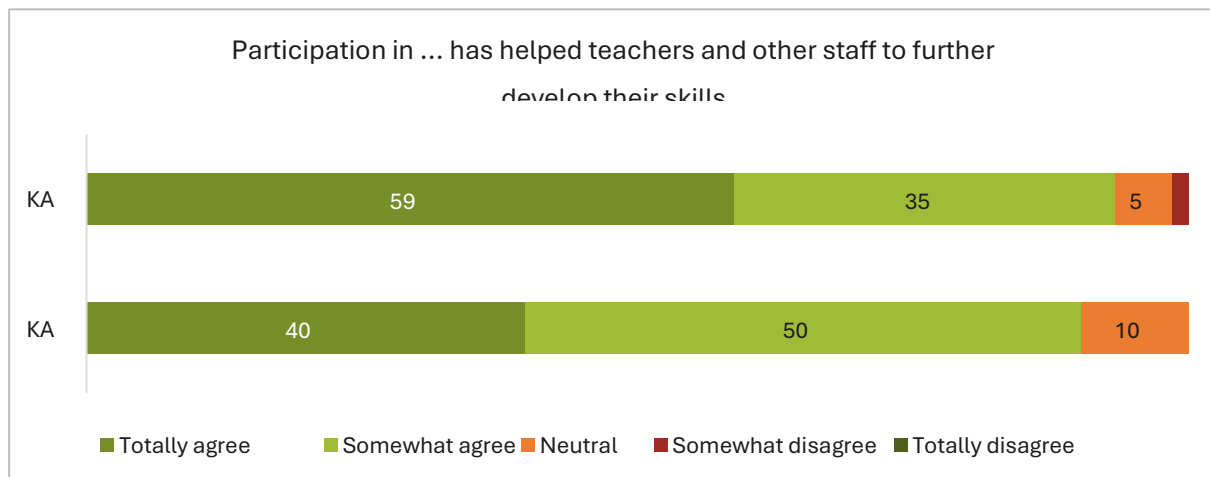
“To see that just like here, a classroom in Spain is also filled with children and a teacher. Everyone provides their education and wants children to progress. That is really amazing to see because every country struggles with the same things. There are children everywhere who are not so strong communicatively, or parents who won't get to your school. Then, when you see a Spanish and a Dutch-speaking teacher talking about it, our teachers feel 'we are doing things properly too'. This also gives self-confidence to teachers to continue doing and trying out new things”.

- director -

PROFESSIONALISATION OF SCHOOL STAFF

For the teachers involved, Erasmus+ strengthens competences. This was cited as an important added value by the management, leaders and teachers involved in the school visits and is confirmed in the survey results. More than 90% of the coordinators completely or somewhat agree with the statement that participation in Erasmus+ has further developed teachers' competences (Figure 15). Some schools therefore formally see participation in Erasmus+ as part of the professionalisation policy.

Figure 315: Impact of Erasmus+ on school staff competence development

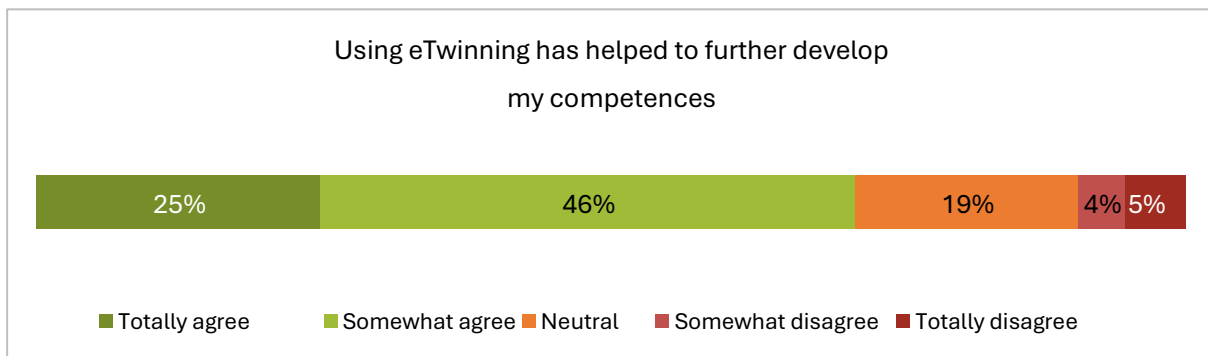


Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=136 / KA2: n=123)

eTwinning also has an effect on teachers' competences, although the effect is smaller. Figure 16 shows the extent to which eTwinning users agree that the platform has enhanced their competences. 25% agree completely and 46% somewhat agree. When we ask the same group to what extent eTwinning has contributed to the professionalisation of the entire teaching profession, the proportion is even lower, 45% agree (completely or rather). This is probably because eTwinning is not widely distributed in many schools, but only used by a minority of teachers.

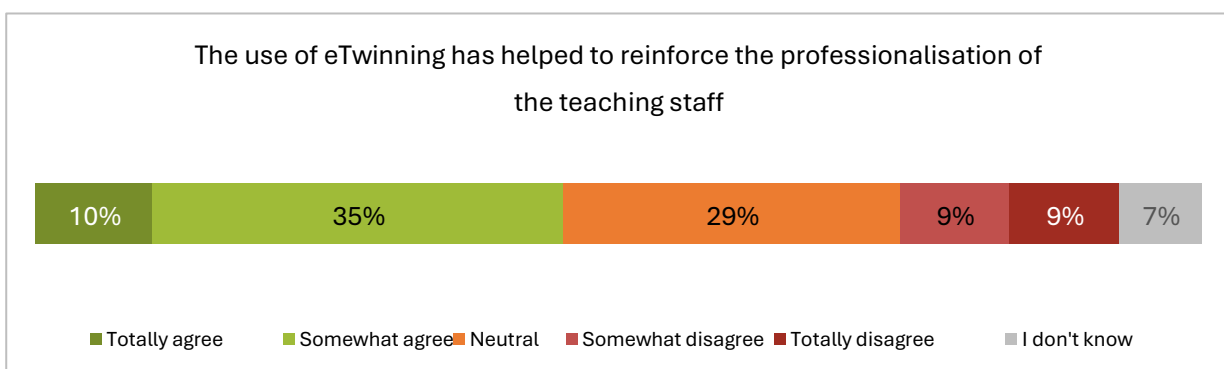


Figure 16: Impact of eTwinning on users' competence development



Source: IDEA Consult based on survey of eTwinning users (n=170)

Figure 17: Impact of eTwinning on teacher professionalisation



Source: IDEA Consult based on survey of eTwinning users (n=170)

Professionalisation manifests itself in several ways. Subject teachers broaden their expertise. In projects with internships abroad, it is often the subject teachers who take up the internship supervision abroad, and who undertake the internship visits. The involved teachers indicate that they learn a lot by seeing how the trade is handled on overseas work floors. In partnership projects, activities are often organised around a particular theme which also involves observing a lot of professional expertise.

"A subject teacher also always goes along. We are then located in the work field. There, we also learn the techniques of other countries",

- coordinator -

When teachers from different countries can then work together on that theme, valuable exchange and mutual reinforcement takes place. In job-shadowing projects, teachers see how their subject matter is taught in other countries. This, too, obviously provides unique opportunities to strengthen professional expertise.



“There is also a construction teacher who did an internship in a company in the Netherlands, because they had a lot of expertise in hydraulic engineering. We don't have that here in Flanders”.

- director -

The teachers involved are also learning pedagogically. This is especially the case when exchange projects give them the opportunity to observe teachers' approaches abroad, e.g. in overseas teaching assignments or job shadowing. This can inspire teachers and provide them with new methods they can apply in their own classrooms. But teachers can also strengthen their educational competences through courses abroad.

“I find it very instructive to see how they treat their trainees in other countries”

- involved teacher -

The enhanced language skills are also evident. Communication with international Erasmus+ and eTwinning partners or overseas colleagues is in a different language (English, French, or even another language). The school staff involved implement a project, take some training, teaches, ... in another language and thus practises their language skills in a practical way. In this regard, several actors interviewed indicated that for a lot of teachers, it strengthens their confidence in speaking another language, as it confirms for them that their language level is definitely sufficient.

Through the project work Erasmus+ entails, coordinators and stakeholders are stimulated in their project management and organisational skills.

“It is a very instructive experience, expanding my vocabulary. When online meetings are held with the overseas colleague, it increases my confidence in speaking”.

- eTwinning user survey –

Finding partners to set up a project together, collaborating on the project together writing out the project dossier, managing the financial resources, organising and rolling out the activities, taking into account timings, objectives and so on...it's all very involved. The coordinators gain a huge practical experience in project management. Finally, it strengthens digital skills. International collaboration is inseparable from digital collaboration. Under Erasmus+, various platforms are used for this purpose, including the eTwinning platform, often complemented with other platforms such as Teams, for example. The eTwinning platform is also used independently of Erasmus+. Using eTwinning boosts digital skills in several areas, as illustrated by the quote below.

“Our teachers are coordinators around eTwinning, but that is a quest in the digital world: starting up forums, organising video conferences with a class in Denmark. So our own teachers are also pushing their own boundaries in this way”.

- coordinator –



PERSONAL GROWTH OF TEACHERS

Teachers are also growing on a personal level. As with students, completing an international project can contribute to self-confidence, an open mind, a proactive attitude and innovative thinking.

"I found it very interesting because I am also from a different generation. Now you do feel that young people are much more open about the LGBTQ+ issue. For many of them, this is not an issue. Whereas we still sometimes make an issue of it. I do find that enriching to see how young people deal with that. I do think this whole gender equality and social inclusion thing is a very interesting theme".

- involved teacher –

GREATER UNDERSTANDING AND RESPECT BETWEEN TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Participation in Erasmus+ projects with student mobility strengthens the bond between students and teachers. Students and teachers get to know each other in a different, more meaningful way. The experience of teachers involved shows that during an exchange, an atmosphere is created in which more sharing takes place.

"You have a much more intense connection with students who went along than with other students. They accept you better too, even if you are angry at times".

- involved teacher-

Teachers thus learn the context in which students work better and understand the needs of the students. Conversely, the student's respect for the teacher also grows. This also works into the lessons after the exchange. Involved parties indicate that it is easier to get students to 'go along'.

"There are also harrowing stories. Many of the guys live in institutions. They were brave enough to share that with the class".

- involved teacher –

The interviews also revealed that involved teachers look at students with more admiration. Teachers are sometimes amazed at what their students can do and are better able to discover where their students' talents lie through the new context. This can strengthen students' belief in them, which also feeds through into their own self-esteem.

"I believe more in my students. I saw how hard they worked. If a student now says, 'I can't do it', I can give more examples or motivate. I can also give those examples to students who have not been with me. This has really changed. I see them in a broader context now. I used to think: they can't do that much".

- involved teacher –



4.2 In classes

The impact of Erasmus+ and eTwinning also works through in the classroom and during lessons. Participation in Erasmus+ or eTwinning projects provides inspiration for applying new teaching methods and brings interesting practical examples to illustrate theoretical learning objectives in a spoken way. Erasmus+ can also lead to a new teacher-student relationship in the classroom. All this contributes to making lessons more responsive to the needs of students.

INSPIRATION FOR NEW TEACHING METHODS

"You do get ideas from each other anyway. For example, we went to visit a school in the Netherlands with the students and care colleagues. That school really worked integrally. Those teachers always taught together, which was really co-teaching. Peer assistant learning was used very intensively there. We introduced that pretty quickly here as well".

- involved teacher -

During Erasmus+ projects, teachers can find inspiration for new teaching methods and this can also lead to the implementation of these innovative approaches in the school. Several examples came up during the school visits. So schools implemented methods such as co-teaching, subject anchors, project working, studio working, peer assisted learning, team games, etc. after the inspiration for this was gained during an international exchange, training, or job shadowing project⁴. Not only completely new ideas are picked up through Erasmus+, people can also deepen their knowledge about certain methods they want to work with. This can be done, for example, by job shadowing in a school that uses it.

"In November, two teachers will go to Florence around project-based learning. For them, this makes their knowledge more in-depth because they already work around projects. They already work that way because one of them picked that up in a contact seminar in Portugal".

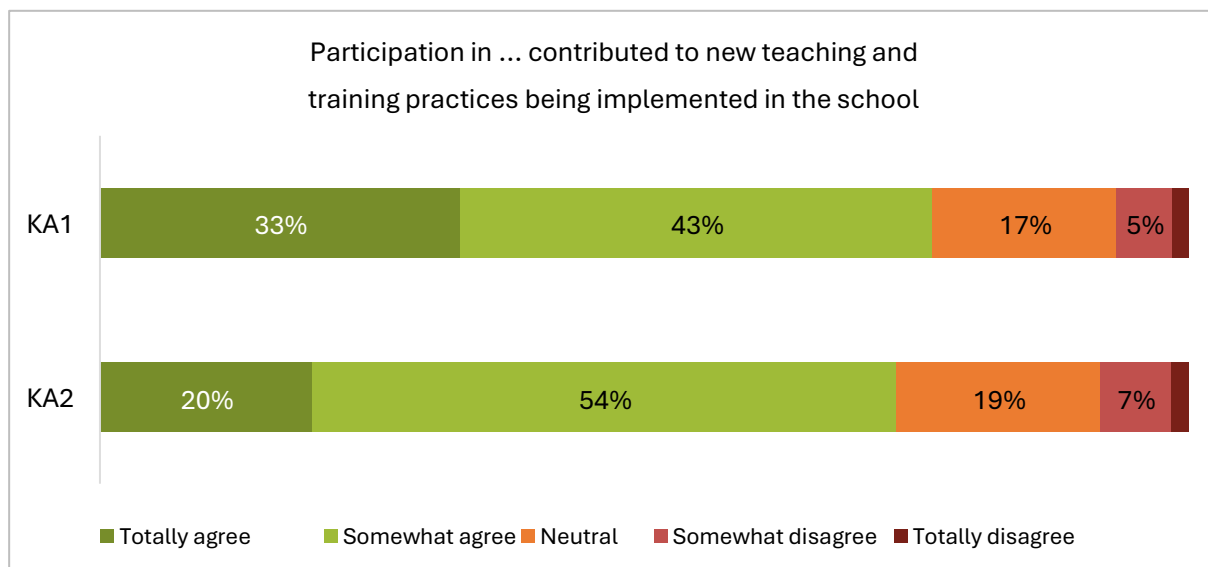
- coordinator -

In the survey, 76% agree that participation in KA1 has helped to implement new teaching and training practices in the school (33% completely and 43% somewhat agree). That proportion is somewhat lower for participation in KA2 (73%, of which 20% agreed completely and 54% somewhat agreed). This is shown in Figure 18 Learning mobility of teaching staff in particular, which falls under KA1, is *specifically* focused on teacher professionalisation. But the teachers involved also pick up a lot of new ideas through the other projects.

⁴ Of the 15 good practice schools examined as case studies in this research through 360° analyses, several participated in job shadowing. However, EPOS figures show that job shadowing is used only to a very limited extent Flanders-wide. The study does show that job shadowing adds great value to educational quality in schools.



Figure 18: Impact of Erasmus+ on new teaching and training practices in schools



Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=136 / KA2: n=123)

eTwinning can also help inspire teachers and adopt new teaching methods. Through the eTwinning platform, teachers get in touch with overseas colleagues and can exchange information about other teaching methods. The use of innovative tools and teaching practices is very common in eTwinning projects.

"I myself have changed a great deal as a teacher and the way I teach. That started with eTwinning, because it puts you in touch with teachers and other ways of teaching".

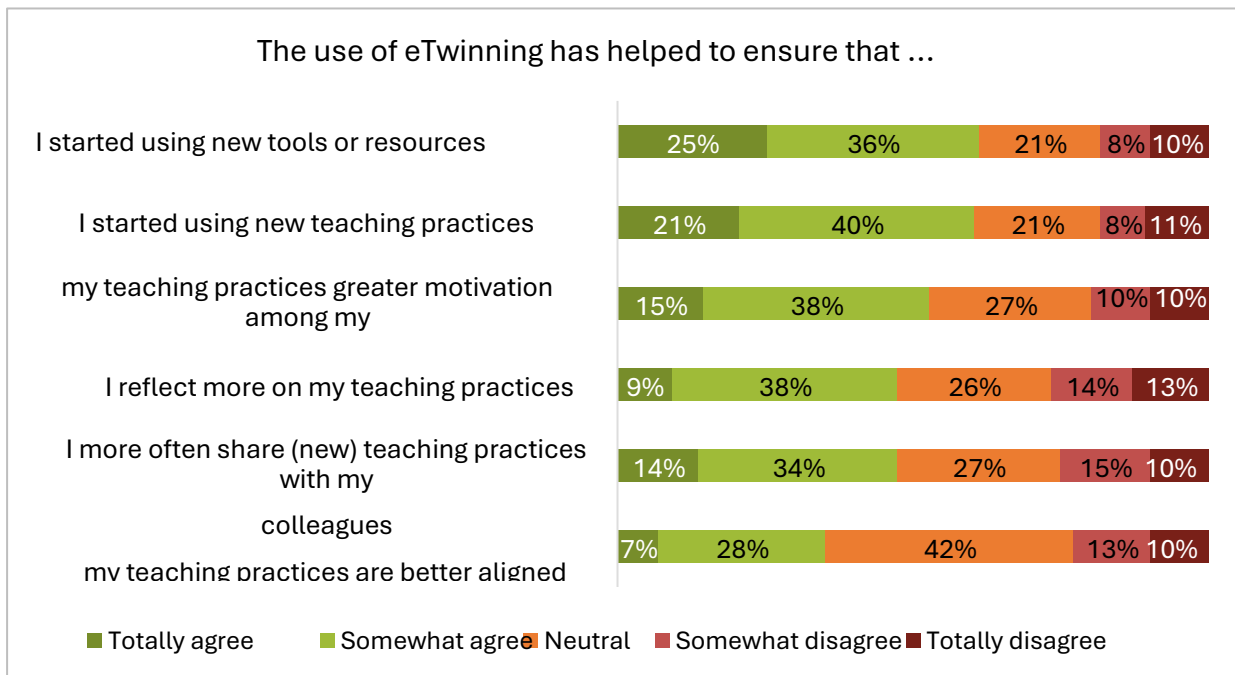
- coordinators -

Figure 19 shows the proportion of teacher-users of eTwinning who indicated in the survey that their teaching practice has changed as a result of using the platform.

- eTwinning has mainly helped them use new tools or resources (25% completely and 36% somewhat agreed) and adopt new teaching practices (21% completely and 40% somewhat agreed);
- Slightly more than half say that eTwinning helps make teaching practices more motivating for students (15% completely and 38% somewhat agreed);
- For just under half, eTwinning helps them reflect more on teaching practices (9% completely and 38% somewhat agreed) and/or share new teaching practices with colleagues more often (14% completely and 34% somewhat agreed);
- 35% agree that the use of eTwinning helps make lessons more responsive to students' needs (7% completely and 28% somewhat agreed).



Figure 19: Impact of eTwinning on teacher-users' teaching methods



Source: Survey of eTwinning users in Flanders (n=131)

OPPORTUNITIES TO LINK THEORY TO PRACTICE

Erasmus+ and eTwinning offer the chance to achieve curriculum objectives in a very authentic and practical way. Students on mobility gain unique experiences and learn at the same time. Students will not easily forget the learning or insights gained in such a way. In addition, teachers on mobility usually also gain inspiration for striking practical examples they can use in the classroom.

"The great thing about the project and the internship is that you get an inroad towards teaching those curriculum goals in a very authentic way, so those students are never going to forget that. They are not just going to simply memorise it for the test, but they are going to remember it permanently".

- coordinator -

During the exchange, teachers encounter practical applications of the theory or observe differences in working methods and visions. These applications and differences can capture the imagination in the classroom in Flanders and give students a practical context to understand the subject matter in depth.

"I once taught in the Finnish school during the internship. I made a barbecue steam train here based on the plans I saw there. I made a wagon there with my students and extended the train, and forwarded photos to the Finns.(...) You see things there that you don't have here. They take so many saunas there, for example. Those exercises in class are also geared towards that".

- coordinator -

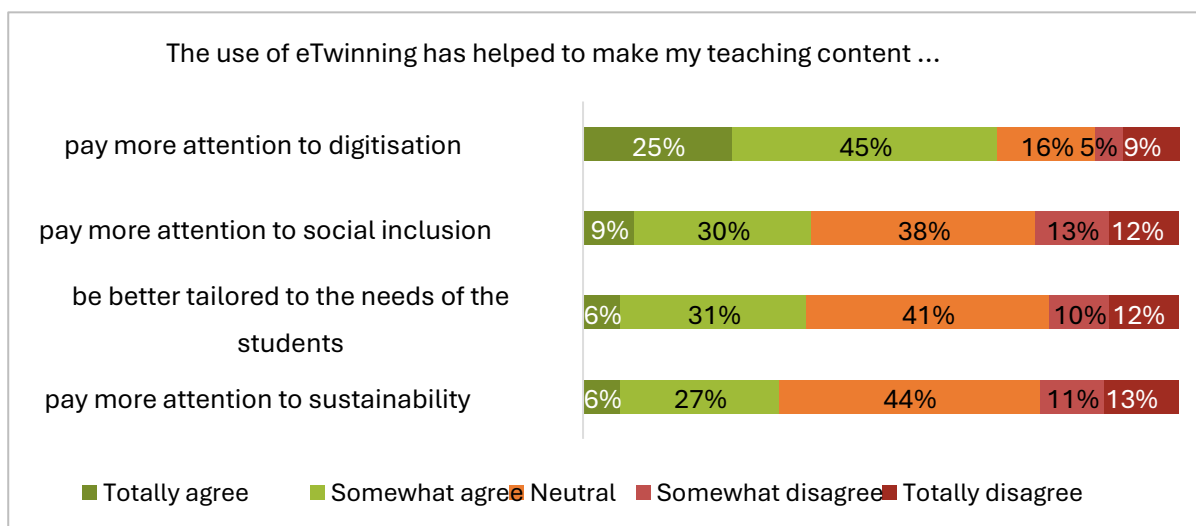


Curriculum objectives can also be achieved in a practical way through eTwinning, e.g. by organising group assignments in which international groups of students work together digitally. In the survey, we asked teacher-users to indicate the extent to which eTwinning has influenced lesson content.

Figure 20 shows the results.

- The focus on digitisation in lessons in particular has increased, 70% agree completely or somewhat that the use of eTwinning contributes to lesson content being more focused on digitisation;
- For 38% of teacher-users, eTwinning helped make their teaching content more concerned with social inclusion, for 33% more concerned with sustainability;
- 38% totally or somewhat agree that eTwinning has helped to better tailor lesson content to students' needs.

Figure 20: Impact of eTwinning on lesson content teacher-users



Source: Survey of eTwinning users by IDEA Consult (n=128)

NEW LOOK AT TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP

What is very striking is that it is very often cited that Erasmus+ helped to create a new vision of the relationship between the teacher and their students.

"I also really enjoyed finding the boundary between: where am I going to coach them and where do I have to take over? You also take that into classroom practice".

- involved teacher -

A lot of involved teachers learn from their time abroad that teachers become less controlling in the classroom and give students more independence. The teacher has more of a coaching attitude. The theoretical introduction is concise and students are more quickly put to work on their own.



"In Finland, I picked up 'daring to let go'. Those teachers give very brief instructions and those students get to work. And the students who need even more explanation, you take to one side".

- involved teacher –

Students also tend to experience freedom, e.g. go to class by themselves, they are allowed to address the teacher by their first name, or there is no school bell in the school. This inspires teachers to also act more as coaches in the classroom and let go of control a bit more. The reinforced belief in the ability of students contributes to this. Moreover, when teachers take up this coaching role more often, there is more room to provide 'tailor-made' guidance to students. eTwinning can also produce that effect, as the quote below from the survey illustrates.

"I have developed a different teaching style thanks to eTwinning. From being tightly in control myself, I have evolved more into a coach. I give students more confidence to complete an assignment properly on their own if given the necessary tools".

- eTwinning user in survey –

BROADER VIEW OF TAILORING LESSONS TO STUDENTS' NEEDS

In second order, the foregoing effects contribute to a better alignment of lessons with students' needs. New teaching methods are applied that appeal or motivate students more, lesson content is applied practically and real-life examples capture the imagination, and a coaching teacher has more space to provide customised support to individual students.

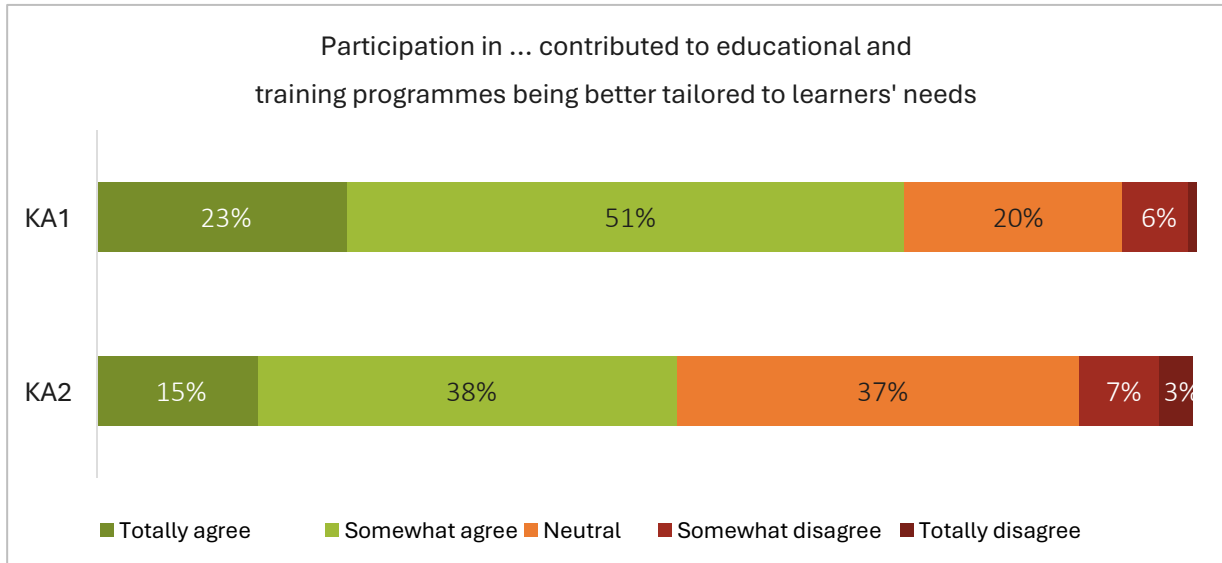
"Colleagues are going to pick up things from their experience abroad. This creates a dynamic: people start teaching in a different way. We now have many more alternative forms of work in the classroom, which place more ownership with the students. The teachers know other tools that allow you to teach in a different way, much more dynamic. This is also fun in TSO, BSO. Those students want practical lessons. And these courses provide tools for that".

- director –



This impact is recognised in the survey by some of the coordinators. Almost three in four trainees indicate that participation in KA1 projects helps to make education and training programmes more responsive to learners' needs (23% completely agree and 51% somewhat agree). For KA2, the proportion is just over half (15% completely agree and 38% somewhat agree).

Figure 21: Impact of Erasmus+ on tailoring education programmes to the needs of learners



Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=136 / KA2: n=123)



FROM A CLOSED TO AN OPEN VISION OF CARE IN GO! DE DRIESPRONG PRIMARY SCHOOL IN MALDEGEM

Increased globalisation contributed to a greater diversity of the school population over the years at De Driesprong. Teachers saw the heterogeneity of their class groups increase, bumped up barriers and faced their limits.

“It used to be: this is my class and I will manage it. But that was not manageable any longer, especially with all this diversity”.

- uninvolved teacher -

Thanks to an Erasmus+ exchange, the school discovered a way to meet this challenge.

“The working together, the together-story has stayed with me. How that all came together, parents, supporters, teachers, other students, everyone helped. Thus, everything became one story for those particular students with needs. That was the most important thing for me. We should be able to do the same here with so many people. As a result, that vision has come to our teachers as well”.

- director -

After the exchange, principals and teachers were so inspired about this way of working together. Through their enthusiasm, they drew their colleagues into the story. Gradually, this new vision of diversity and inclusion thus seeped into the school.

“First, we all sat with our doors closed. Now the teacher hardly notices when someone comes in to help. Now supporters are more welcome. By being open to others, you have greater support for yourself and for the child”.

- coordinator -

Erasmus+ substantially changed the vision of care within De Driesprong. Through the exchange, the school evolved from a closed to an open vision of care in which everyone is involved and accountable - teachers, support staff, the care coordinator and the management. A student's individual needs are the starting point.

“Now the supporters come to the care teacher and to me, and we talk about it. Teachers are also more involved than before. We all sit together to discuss how to provide care to a child. ... The support worker used to come and then leave again. Now the support person is part of our team, even though she is not from our school”.

- director -

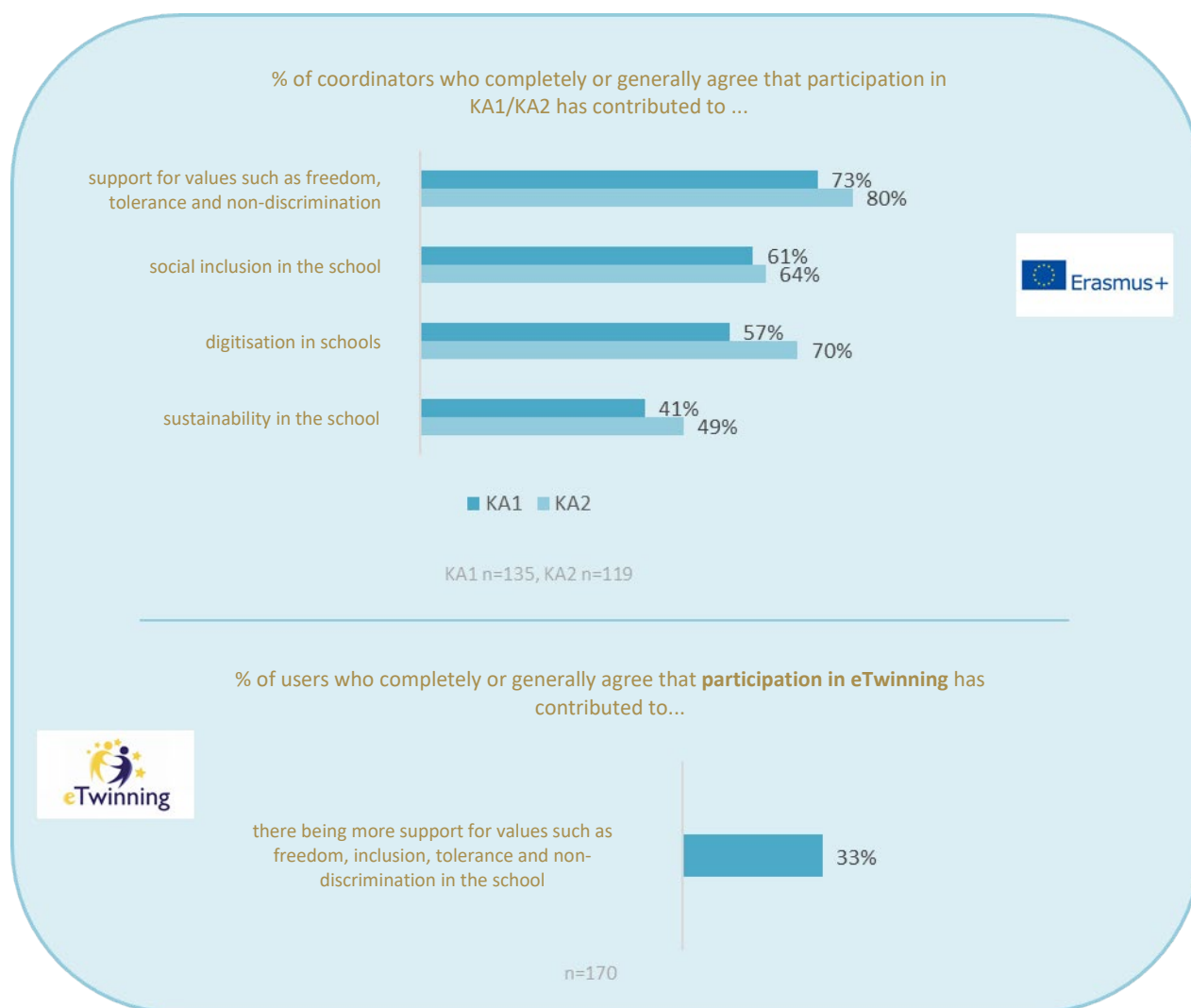




5. Impact on European priorities

In this chapter, we describe the impact of Erasmus+ on three key European priorities and spearheads of the Erasmus+ programme 2014-2020: equality and social inclusion (5.1), digitisation (5.2), and sustainability (5.3).

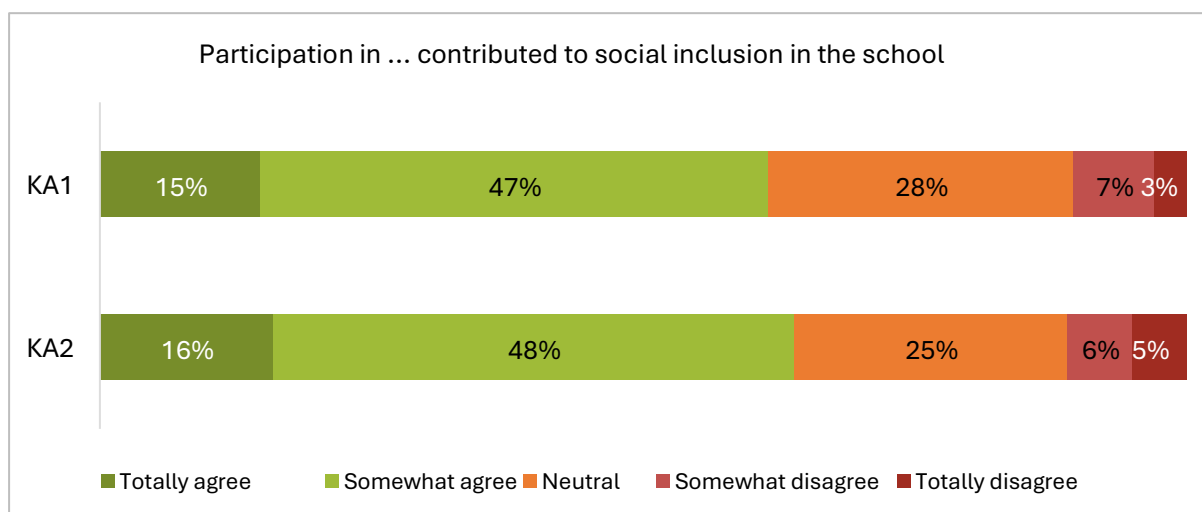
Figure for 5. Impact on European Priorities



5.1 Equality and social inclusion

Participation in Erasmus+ and eTwinning can contribute to social inclusion in schools. In the survey, 61% of Erasmus+ coordinators indicate that KA1 has contributed to social inclusion in the school (15% agree completely and 47% rather agree with this statement). The proportion is slightly higher for KA2 projects, with 64% agreeing sooner or completely. KA2 projects may involve collaborative projects specifically around the theme of social inclusion, which could explain the slightly higher proportion.

Figure 22: Impact of Erasmus+ on social inclusion in schools



Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=135 / KA2: n=119)

INCREASED SUPPORT FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION AS A CORE VALUE

‘Equality and social inclusion’ is one of the spearheads of the Erasmus+ programme 2014-2020. Several projects therefore pay special attention to this dimension, or even focus specifically on it. Reflecting on the theme as a school, organising activities around it and communicating about it will strengthen its support, as the example below illustrates.

“Within Erasmus+, there was a photo competition. They were allowed to creatively make the world a better place, with pictures. The girls from the group especially enjoyed posing. They wanted to bring into the picture that women are still seen as inferior. That’s the little group from Erasmus+ that works that out, but the whole school sees those pictures. That appears on our Facebook page. Then students start talking about that. Then they come into class, ‘Miss, those ones from Erasmus+ are saying women still earn less than men’. I then explain it. Then they say ‘that’s not fair, we’re going to change that, those from Erasmus+ did a good job’”.

- uninvolved teacher -



MORE EQUALITY

Erasmus+ can also play an important role in equality and equal opportunities in schools. Erasmus+ is free for participating students and school staff. European funds should cover costs for participants. This means the financial picture is not a barrier. Students can participate in Erasmus+ regardless of parents' financial situation. In addition, several projects, such as the internships abroad, focus specifically on TSO and BSO students, who sometimes face an undervaluing of their education. Then an Erasmus+ project offers a great opportunity to prove themselves, both personally, and to students in other pathways.

“It is an enrichment for the school. Sometimes we have students who say ‘we’re not in ASO, I’m just in BSO’. If students can then come along to such a project, and they can carry that enthusiasm with them to their classmates and their teachers, they show ‘we are not just BSO here, we are the ones who can change the world’”.

- uninvolved teacher –

Then an Erasmus+ project offers a great opportunity to prove themselves, both personally, and to students in other pathways.

Finally, many projects bring together students from different pathways and levels. Students who otherwise don't get to know each other so easily. This breaks down barriers and creates more cohesion and equality between student groups from different backgrounds.

“The fact that students make contacts with other classes separately from their class is really already an added value. Through these types of things, they get to know each other within the school, including people of other origins and other levels”.

- uninvolved teacher –

GREATER APPRECIATION OF DIVERSITY AND OTHER CULTURES

International projects and cooperation contribute to an increased appreciation of diversity and other cultures. Participants experience from the front row what it can mean to gain experience abroad or work with overseas colleagues or students. The differences are noted but also more strongly appreciated. It becomes clear what anyone can learn from those differences.

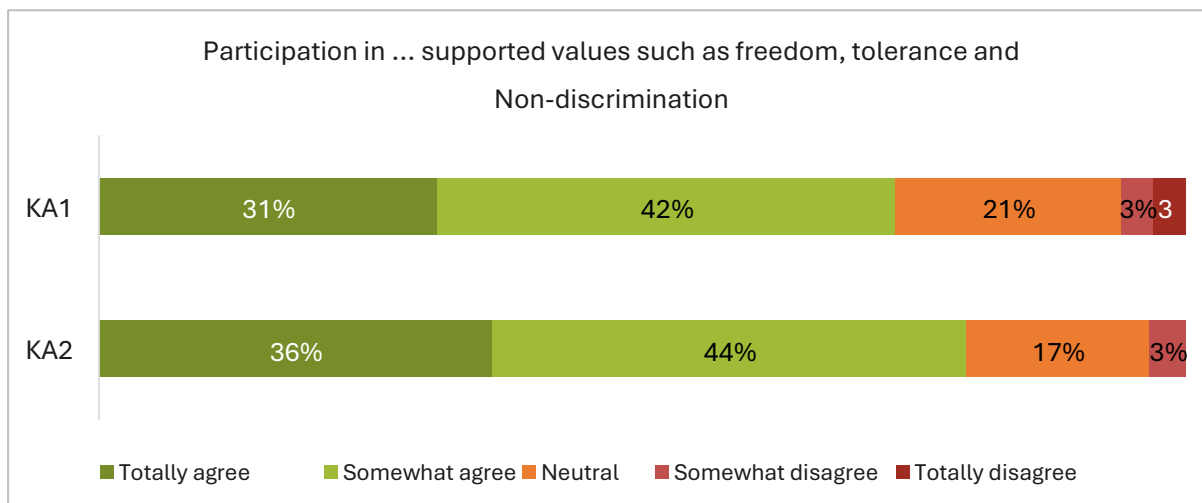
“I believe the better you understand other cultures, the better it works for society as a whole. There are some who have never seen other cultures and then have a lot of prejudices. I do think that's important that you can offer that as a school to collaborate with others for a change”.

- involved teacher –

This impact also features strongly in the survey, as Figure 23 shows. For KA1 projects, 73% of coordinators agree that participation in KA1 contributes to the carrying of values such as freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination (31% completely and 42% somewhat agreed). For KA2 projects, this is as high as 80% (36% completely and 44% somewhat agreed). Again, this higher percentage could be explained by the fact that some KA2 student mobility projects focus specifically on this theme.



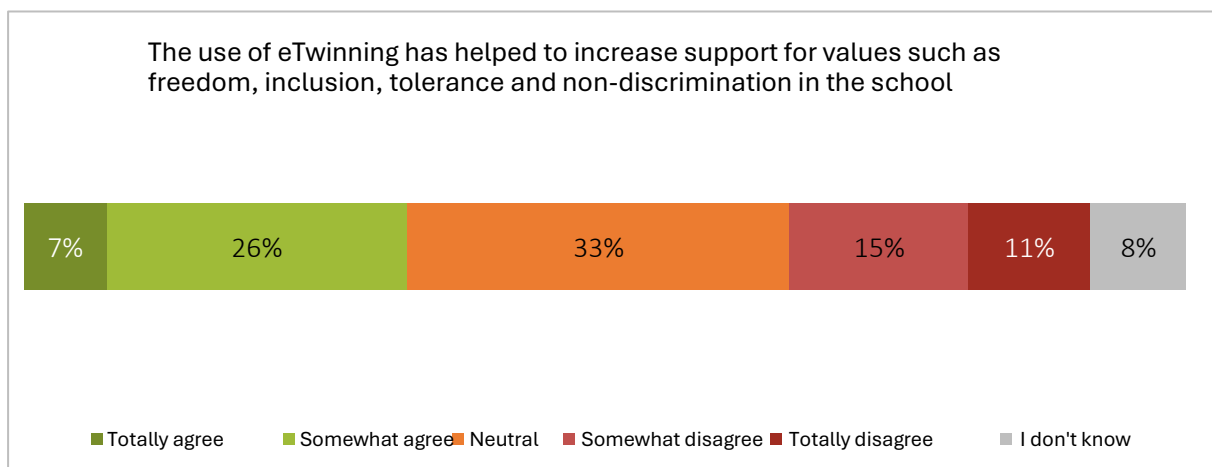
Figure 23: Impact of Erasmus+ on supported values such as freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination



Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=135 / KA2: n=119)

The effects are less significant at eTwinning. There, it very much depends on the context, the theme, and the degree of collaboration. In the survey, one in three eTwinning users totally or somewhat agrees that eTwinning contributes to the carrying of values such as freedom, inclusion, tolerance and non-discrimination (Figure 24).

Figure 24: Impact of eTwinning on supported values such as freedom, inclusion, tolerance and non-discrimination



Source: Survey of eTwinning users (n=170)



5.2 Digitisation

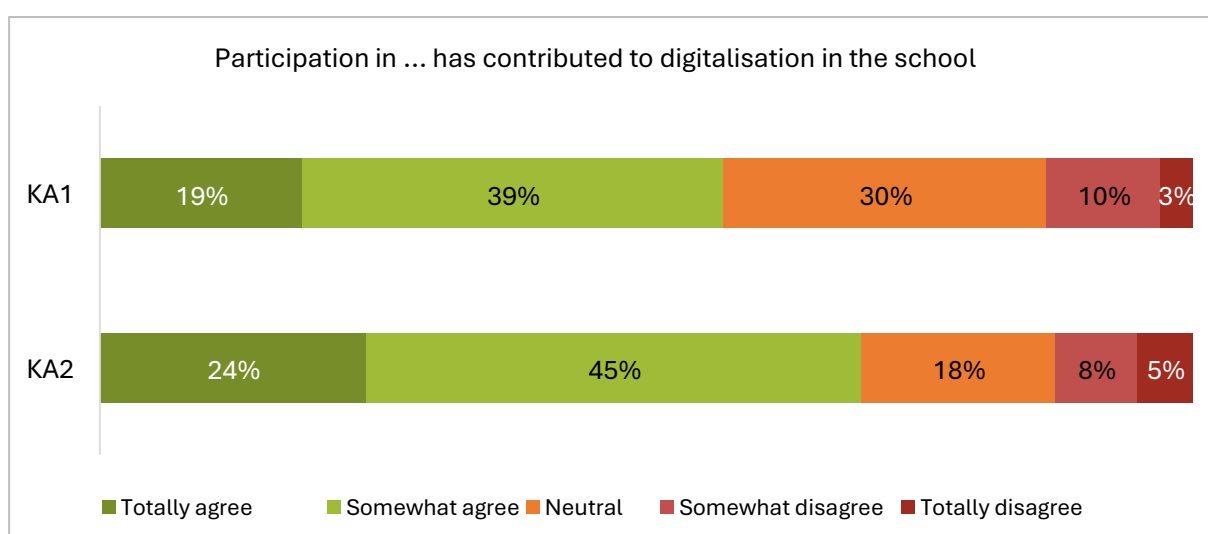
As cited earlier, international cooperation does not go without digital collaboration. In eTwinning and Erasmus+ projects, involved teachers and students are encouraged to communicate digitally with each other, work things out and set things up. This is done via the eTwinning platform, but other channels such as Teams, Zoom, blog platforms, etc. are also used. In addition and thanks to international projects, schools are increasingly coming into contact with new digital tools and learning how to use them. Finally, supporting the digital transition is a key pillar in the Erasmus+ programme 2014-2020, which translates into the focus of projects on the ground.

"Digitalisation has increased a lot at school. Methods and organisation from other partner schools are applied in adapted versions in our school".

- coordinator -

In the survey with Erasmus+ coordinators, 57% totally or somewhat agree that KA1 has contributed to digitisation, for KA2 it is 70% (Figure 25). That proportion may be higher because KA2 projects may focus specifically on the theme of digitisation.

Figure 25: Impact on digitisation in the school



Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=135 / KA2: n=119)

ENCOURAGES USE OF DIGITAL TOOLS AND PLATFORMS

As part of Erasmus+ and eTwinning projects, those involved come into contact with various digital tools and platforms. The possibilities are endless, not only for making appointments and consulting, but also for organising educational activities. From the experience and inspiration from abroad, aspects are taken and implemented in the school.



"We had made the digital leap three years ago. Colleagues who went on international internships were quick to both try out digital learning tools and distribute them to colleagues".

- coordinator -

ENCOURAGES INVESTMENT IN DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

By strengthening and raising their digital profile, schools are also investing more in digital infrastructure.

"We were introduced to their approach to digitalisation at our partner school in Finland. Thus, we introduced a system in which (preferably underprivileged) students can borrow laptops at school".

- coordinator -

"For example, 3D printing 8 years ago. In Portugal, this is what the mobility project was about. I didn't experience that here. And I brought that here, and I bought that printer here".

- coordinator -

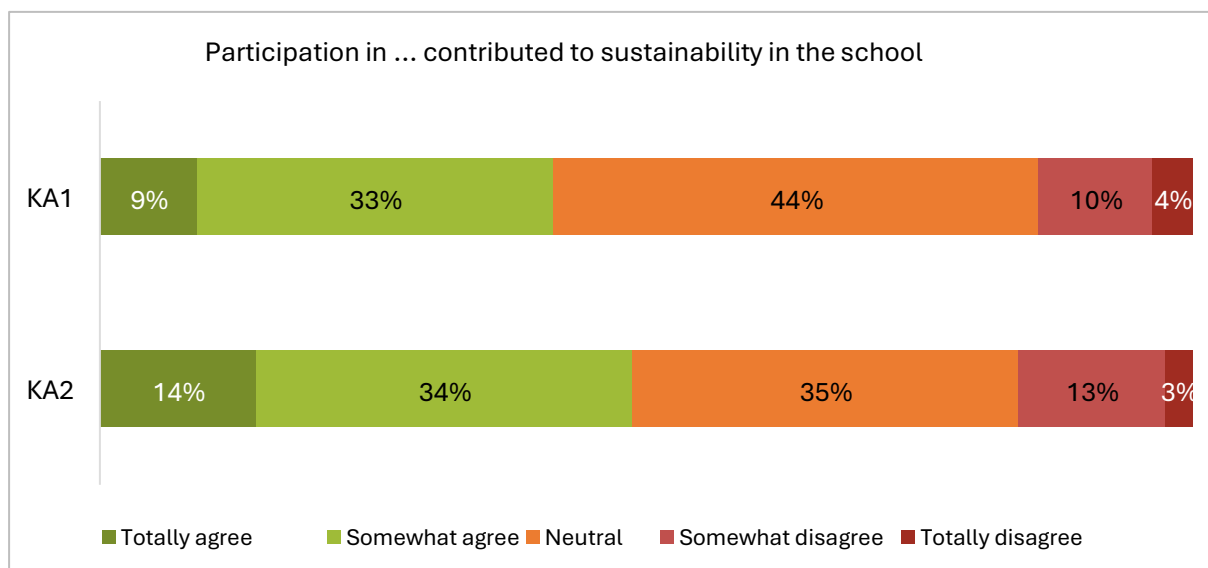
5.3 Sustainability

Sustainability is also a key focus of the Erasmus+ programme. By and large, the impact on sustainability is limited to projects that really focus on this theme. We can also see this in the relatively moderate results in the survey, shown in Figure 26.

For KA1, 9% completely and 33% somewhat agree with the statement that participation in KA1 contributed to sustainability in the school. For KA2, the figures are 14% and 34% respectively. So that share is slightly higher, perhaps also because within key action 2, thematic cooperation projects focusing on sustainability are being set up.



Figure 26: Impact of Erasmus+ on sustainability in schools



Source: Survey of coordinators of Erasmus+ projects in Flanders (KA1: n=135 / KA2: n=119)



GREENING THE PLAYGROUND OF SINT-LAMBERTUS 4 IN WESTERLO THROUGH THE 'ECOMENTALITY' PROJECT

In the KA2 project of the Sint-Lambertus 4 (SILA) in Westerlo, sustainability and 'ecomentality' is the central theme. It was a logical choice for the school to work around this theme, as the school already profiles itself as an MOS school¹ and as a sustainable school. The school also notes that climate is an issue that is very much alive among the students, quite a few of whom joined the climate demonstrations.

Together with partner schools from Portugal and Hungary, SILA will work to strengthen the 'ecomentality' in schools. Each partner school focuses on a specific aspect. For SILA, that is greening. More specifically, the school will focus on greening the school grounds. Several actions are taken to achieve this objective, involving the whole school as much as possible. By the end of the project, the aim is to already have a much greener playground, but also to have developed an action plan for further greening the estate.



ECOMENTALITY

"Creating a change of mindset towards a strong EcoMentality"



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

¹MOS stands for Environment At School (Milieu Op School) and is an initiative of the Department of Environment, Nature and Energy, which supports schools in the process of making their school an environmentally friendly and sustainable learning environment.

6. Impact on students



Although strictly speaking it cannot be seen as 'impact on schools' - the central question of this study - we nevertheless add the impact of Erasmus+ on students. Indeed, this impact was spontaneously centralised by the surveyed teachers, school staff and management in most cases. It is the driving force behind the commitment of teachers and schools to Erasmus+ projects. Consequently, enthusiasm about the effects of participation in Erasmus+ on the students involved is high. These are mainly the projects with student mobility.

The impact of Erasmus+ on learners is in the following areas:

- Broadens horizons
- Provides unique opportunities for vulnerable learners
- Increases self-reliance, sense of responsibility, belief in own abilities, self-confidence, social skills, etc.
- Technical and content reinforcement
- Strengthens language skills and fluency (we see that eTwinning also has an impact on this aspect in particular)
- Boost motivation
- Enhances employment opportunities or further study

"You really get back students who have changed and grown tremendously".

- uninvolved teacher -



BROADENS HORIZONS

Participation in Erasmus+ broadens students' horizons when they come into contact with overseas students, families, cultures and customs, standards of living and so on in the framework of these international projects. This effect is strongest when students are staying with families in the host country as part of an exchange or internship and they are fully immersed. But even when students stay together in accommodation, the impact is significant. Students who participate in an overseas workplace during an internship gain a huge number of impressions. In other projects, students from Flanders work intensively with students from other countries to complete an assignment. It opens students' eyes and stimulates interest in other cultures.

"On those 3 weeks, the students grow tremendously, which is wonderful to see. In terms of independence, personality, insights into the world. They come back much more mature".

- uninvolved teacher -

PROVIDES UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR VULNERABLE STUDENTS

In almost all schools, the great added value for students from families from lower socio-economic backgrounds, who do not have the opportunity to travel abroad from home, was highlighted. Some students rarely go outside their own municipal boundaries.

"The majority is showing its best side. This is a side they are not encouraged in from home. Some didn't know they had that side".

- coordinator -

Through Erasmus+, schools can give these students the chance to have an experience abroad - free of charge – and expand horizons, and strengthen certain competences that are not so much encouraged at home. Especially for these students, international mobility is a unique opportunity that the school can offer.

"That funding is very important. Otherwise, you also have a completely different audience along, then you have the students along who are strong at home. We are really trying to make sure that we bring in students who would otherwise never be able to do that".

- involved teacher -



INCREASES SELF-RELIANCE, SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY, BELIEF IN OWN ABILITIES, SELF-CONFIDENCE, SOCIAL SKILLS, AND SO ON.

For students, the international exchange not only provides an opportunity to broaden their outlook, but also strengthens several other competences. It encourages the independence of the students. On exchanges, students should be able to draw their plans, try speaking another language, find solutions to unexpected problems. For many students, it is the first time they have had to take that into their own hands - albeit with some support from accompanying teachers. Students learn to take responsibility themselves.

"We drop them off when they're feeling really apprehensive, and when we come to pick them up, it looks like they've been working in London for five years. They have completely flourished".

- coordinator -

Students are also responsible for household chores in many projects. Many of them have never cooked, washed, ironed, etc. themselves before the exchange... During the overseas stay, these students all come into contact with this. Some schools also provide a preparatory pathway for students in this, via e.g. a number of "workshops" around cooking, ironing, laundry, budget training, a language bath and so on.

"We want to give them the experience of seeing what it's all like: working and coming home and doing the housework. They have to learn to cook, wash, iron and also do budget management, for example".

- coordinator -

This independence gives a boost to the self-confidence of students. Often, an overseas experience of this kind is something exciting for the students. They step out of their comfort zone. When they find that they can do it - live independently, go to a new workplace, complete an internship in an overseas workplace, express themselves in another language and more - it gives them a huge boost.

"They see that what they do succeeds. They do something unknown and they get something positive out of it. That gives a huge growth in self-confidence".

- coordinator -

Students going on overseas mobility are also challenged in living together. In some schools and/or projects, it involves living with other students from the school, while in other projects, students stay in a host family. In both cases, students have to adjust to the 'new' housemates and find a role in this new dynamic. This strengthens the social competences of the students.



"We had also told them to solve quarrels internally. This is also how we try to grow students so that they have to tackle problems on their own. They also learn a lot from that".

- involved teacher –

Finally, an Erasmus+ project is often a practical exercise in collaboration. This is an important aspect, especially in KA2 projects. On the one hand, it is about cooperation between students from the Flemish school involved in the Erasmus+ project, often students across classes and years. But on the other hand, working with students from the partner schools form part of it. In projects organised through the eTwinning platform, this international cooperation between students can also be facilitated.

TECHNICAL AND CONTENT STRENGTHENING

Content knowledge and skills are also promoted through Erasmus+. It provides an opportunity to apply what has been taught practically, as well as to acquire new learning in a practical way.

"Because they go to another country, they start questioning methods they have learnt here. I think, for example of care in Malta, there they get 1 hour to wash someone and here they have to do it in 12 minutes".

- coordinator –

In student mobility in the context of a KA1 project, the main focus is on vocational competences. During internships, students can learn on the job. They experience what it is like in an overseas workplace. Often, different methods are used there or there is a different vision or approach, prompting students to reflect on 'Flemish' practice.

Also in KA2 projects with student mobility, the knowledge of the participating students is strengthened around a theme. The project is situated around a relevant theme, e.g. robotisation, greening, women's rights, etc., in which the participants delve into content. Students who are not directly involved also learn - depending on the dissemination and valorisation strategy used - about the topic.

"Our students completed a lot of projects in England around gender equality, and on their return they then wanted to do more. The question came from them: why don't we participate in Gender Equality day? And then they themselves mobilised teachers to put their shoulders to the wheel".

- director –

STRENGTHENS LANGUAGE SKILLS AND FLUENCY

International projects through Erasmus+ or eTwinning strengthen language skills. Students practice another language in real life. This not only reinforces the language skills needed to make their plans abroad or have a chat with colleagues or overseas students, but they also learn jargon specific to their subject (in overseas internships) or to a theme (in thematic exchange projects).



“They learn to communicate in another language. We note that our students are actually often non-native speakers and are ahead of other schools. Communication runs relatively smoothly. That reinforces interest in languages”.

- director –

Involved teachers and coordinators indicate that students are also reinforced in their self-confidence and speaking skills. Often students are shy and uncertain at the start, but then find that they can express themselves confidently in another language, and compared to students from many other countries, even relatively well. It also highlights the added value of multilingualism during an international experience. This boosts motivation to learn other languages. In an ordinary classroom setting, this is not always easy to achieve. An interest in languages is encouraged.

“The students who went to Fuerteventura said, ‘miss, I should have paid better attention in French class after all, because French and Spanish are similar’. That was cool, then I said, ‘you see, French is good’”.

- involved teacher -

For students, an Erasmus+ project can be a huge boost in motivation. The overseas experience is something students look forward to and truly experience. In some schools, 'attitude' is an important selection criterion for going on an Erasmus exchange. In these schools, you really notice that students' behaviour and attitude adjust to be able to gain that opportunity. But even after the exchange, the experience creates a positive atmosphere. The students are proud of what they have accomplished. Sometimes it also allows them to look at their home life from a distance, and learn to appreciate certain things better or put things in perspective.

“For many sixth-formers, the final sprint to the diploma is pretty tricky. And then that overseas experience still gives a boost to their effort. This gives a push that students need. That comes from the child personally”.

- director –

Those involved in some schools even believe that the outflow is lower because of the opportunity Erasmus+ offers students.



REINFORCES OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER STUDY OR THE LABOUR MARKET

Finally, participation in Erasmus+ can result in reinforced opportunities for further study and/or the labour market. The motivational boost they receive is highly important in this regard. But growth in maturity, independence, self-confidence, etc. also plays a significant role. In addition, students gain so many impressions during a mobility abroad that interests can be sparked that they want to pursue further.

"I was once in Seville to pick them up, and a student was in the archives in Seville. He was scanning old books in an old monastery. That student then said: I am going to study history. That is so beautiful to see. That student suddenly had that drive".

- involved teacher -

This leads to graduates who are more enthusiastic for what is to come, be it studies or a job, and who can make more focused choices. Especially for post-school students immediately when moving on to the labour market, the overseas experience strengthens their position in the labour market, as employers consider the overseas experience an added value on the CV.

"For the students, it is very good for their CV"

- uninvolved teacher -



7. Success factors



Chapters 2 to 6 offered insights into the impact that Erasmus+ and eTwinning have within schools. In this 7th and final chapter, we build on this. We discuss the factors underlying positive change (through participation in Erasmus+/eTwinning). They contribute to the successful implementation of Erasmus+ within a school and to its sustainable and school-wide anchoring. Successively, we offer insights into success factors at the level of (1) the school, (2) the teachers, (3) the students, (4) the projects, (5) cross-school level and (6) external factors.

7.1 At school level

At the school level, we were able to identify seven success factors that contribute to the successful realisation of Erasmus+ and eTwinning within schools:

- supported by the management;
- structural embedding;
- providing replacements for absent teachers;
- formal dissemination;
- tradition of internationalisation at school;
- start with small successes;
- involve all staff members.

We describe each of these factors below.

CARRIED BY MANAGEMENT

Principals who believe in the added value of Erasmus+ and help promote its functioning and vision have an essential positive influence on the successful and school-wide realisation of Erasmus+.

Managers succeed in this in various ways:

- First of all, they show appreciation for colleagues who engage; they encourage teachers to participate in exchanges; and they themselves participate in international projects, emphasising their importance to their team.
- They also free up time and space to take up tasks for internationalisation; facilitate the implementation of projects, provide a platform to communicate about the functioning (to other colleagues, to parents, etc.) and enable projects to be structurally embedded into the school organisation.
- Finally, they provide involved teachers with the confidence and ownership to build a vision of internationalisation appropriate to the school policy; are open to new and innovative ideas brought forward by the internationalisation team.
- Above all, they create a positive and appreciative culture within the school that motivates staff members to make a commitment to internationalisation.



"Above all, we as management need to create a culture in which there is an opportunity to go along with that. The practical work is then carried out by teachers who are going along with it".

- director -

STRUCTURAL EMBEDDING

Providing a structural embedding appears strongly recommended to ensure the continuity of an Erasmus+ operation within a school. In many schools, its functioning appears to depend heavily on the goodwill and enthusiasm of coordinators and a few involved teachers. Throughout the school visits, coordinators stressed that the task load for them is high, sometimes challenging their carrying capacity greatly. Above all, it appears that when they fall away, the Erasmus+ functioning within schools is often at risk of grinding to a halt or being discontinued.

"Once with Poland ... that had bled out because we could no longer find teachers to supervise that. They are people with small children, and changing family situations. If too many people drop out, you can't keep that alive".

- director -

To avoid this, it appears successful to structurally embed the functioning within the school. This can take shape through (1) establishing a team/working group, (2) developing a vision for internationalisation, or (3) building procedures and structures within the school organisation.

Establishing a working group brings a number of positive consequences. A more systematic approach is adopted in developing the projects, it encourages reflection and the development of an internationalisation policy and vision within the school, and the division of tasks within the working group reduces the individual task load.

Structurally embedding Erasmus+ also brings the advantage of giving internationalisation a clear face within the school. An internationalisation team makes clear who is responsible for internationalisation and lowers the threshold for asking questions and taking part in a commitment. The team will also have an easier platform to communicate about internationalisation, for example during staff meetings.

"Five years ago, there was no such working group. Then, as a teacher, you had to go looking for info yourself. If you say you are interested now, you can just speak to someone from the group. It has grown through the working group, it is starting to live more. The threshold is lower for teachers to participate".

- uninvolved teacher -

Moreover, it proves successful to provide structural time for (at least) one staff member within the task package. This time is highly valued by coordinators. They mainly use this time to perform project administration.



PROVIDING REPLACEMENTS FOR ABSENT TEACHERS

However much schools report experiencing positive impact from Erasmus+, the consequences it brings to the school organisation do not always appear evident. For the most part, accommodating absent teachers remains a challenge. Efforts should be made as much as possible to avoid disadvantages for homebound students or teachers.

“If you don't, the resistance is going to come. We need to minimise the impact on lagging teachers and students”.

- director -

Nevertheless, many schools try to deal with this creatively and look for solutions that try to minimise the extra burden on stay-at-home teachers and the impact on students. Some of the options are: limiting the number of teachers going on the exchange as much as possible, limiting teacher absences by only going abroad at the start and/or end of the exchange/internship, alternating teachers (one teacher supervises the exchange one week, another teacher then takes over the next week), providing substitute tasks for students so that teachers staying at home do not have to take over teaching hours, involving care staff (e.g. educator, support workers, and so on, educator, support staff, etc.) who are willing to step in for a few hours, or attempts are made, for example, to organise domestic placements simultaneously with the exchange, thus reducing the number of teachers needed. In some cases, teachers also spontaneously take over hours from absent teachers, for example, to catch up on learning in those classes. Finally, schools with a more flexible school organisation also appear to be able to cope more smoothly with absences (e.g. via grade classes).

Erasmus+ regulations allow for the provision of replacements for absent teachers. This is perceived positively by those involved. In practice, however, this is proving difficult to achieve for many schools. It is not obvious to recruit and hire interim teachers for the short period of the projects.

“With us it's grade classes, then you can easily accommodate that. Those from the sixth class then sit with those from the fifth class for a few days. We work with grade goals anyway. As a school we are pretty flexible”.

- uninvolved teacher -

FORMAL DISSEMINATION

In addition to informal dissemination (see 7.2. At the level of Teachers), various forms of formal dissemination also contribute strongly to achieving school-wide impact. These forms are permanently built into the school functioning. People find this dissemination generally valuable, as it allows the knowledge accumulated during exchanges to be better disseminated within the school.

Post-exchange communication is often also a prerequisite from the management to carry out the exchange. With it, they also hope that the exchanges will bring added professionalisation value for stay-at-home teachers. In addition, principals try to indicate through the condition that an exchange is not optional and must generate added value for the teacher and the school.



“I think that is very good of our management to make it a requirement, that you have to share it. Otherwise, a lot might get lost”.

- uninvolved teacher –

HOW TO FORMALLY COMMUNICATE ABOUT ERASMUS+ WITHIN THE SCHOOL? SOME OPTIONS AT A GLANCE:

- Internal infomercials. These are used by leaders or the internationalisation team before or after an exchange to share experiences, get students and teachers excited about participating, or inspire teachers professionally.
- Internal newsletters and service announcements. All school staff stay informed by sharing items about Erasmus+ in newsletters or through service announcements.
- Staff meetings. This form of dissemination is most common in schools. On the one hand, they use this meeting to introduce the Erasmus+ operation and get teachers excited about a commitment, and on the other hand to report on the experience after an exchange, for example after a job shadowing or international course. The aim is to strengthen support for Erasmus+ within the school, but above all to encourage colleagues to innovate and reflect on their own professional actions.
- Class councils. Leaders distribute information about Erasmus+ during class councils to warm up colleagues. In addition, class councils are used in some schools to make the selection of students to leave on exchanges.
- Communication through subject or working groups. During subject or working group meetings, teachers often report on Erasmus+ experiences to bring in knowledge gained so that it can be put to use.
- Workshops at pedagogical study days or internal courses. These workshops or courses offer the chance to organise professionalisation with their own teachers. These teachers can therefore introduce colleagues to new techniques, methods, and so on, acquired through an international exchange. This method remains highly effective given that teachers have often already translated the new knowledge gained into the school context. As a result, colleagues experience these workshops as very positive. They can easily translate to their own classroom practice.
- Evaluation meetings. A consultation at which teachers sit together with management after an exchange. During these consultations, teachers reflect on their exchange experience. Principals try to distil working points or possible new directions for the school from this.
- Written communication. In some schools, teachers report on their exchange in writing through evaluation forms or provide good ideas and tips to colleagues. Experiences are also disseminated through online school platforms, blogs or social media. In addition, many schools also have a shared folder in which materials can be stored and shared.
- Visual communication. Some schools provide wall cabinets inside the school to showcase Erasmus+ projects and operation through photos. In addition, videos are sometimes



TRADITION OF INTERNATIONALISATION AT SCHOOL

In schools in which a long tradition has already been established around internationalisation, the implementation of Erasmus+ tends to be easier. Over the years, these schools were able to build a strong base of support through various international projects, such as overseas trips, Leonardo projects or Comenius. As a result, schools often experience less resistance from teachers when rolling out Erasmus+ or eTwinning. Moreover, in Chapter 6, we described how, on the one hand, Erasmus+ projects interact (e.g. KA1 and KA2) and, on the other hand, Erasmus+ and eTwinning mutually reinforce each other. Once a tradition of internationalisation is built within a school, it has a self-reinforcing effect.

"That support is there and has grown through the positive experiences of the past".

- coordinator -

STARTING WITH SMALL SUCCESSES

Not only to create a step-by-step support base among teachers, but also at school level, it turns out to be appropriate to start with small success experiences and gradually expand them further. It is recommended to start with one project or one direction within the school and from there, evolve towards a sustainable and school-wide tradition.

"We deliberately started small in the Netherlands with a one-class exchange. And then another direction was added, and then another, and so on. Systematically, things have been added".

- director -

In doing so, schools recommend a bottom-up approach in which small success experiences grow from teachers' enthusiasm, with principals taking on a supportive role in the process. Once large enough, it is then important that managers provide a structural framework (see above) to facilitate the expansion. At that point, management can also start setting some targets because, at that point, sufficient support has often already been created within the school.

"It has to come from the bottom up. This can never succeed if as a director you say: you get time for that, you build that up and within five years everyone has to go on overseas internships. That really doesn't work. But you have to support the enthusiasm. Everything that is being done, you have to give time and space for that".

- director -



INVOLVING ALL STAFF MEMBERS

To develop school-wide support for Erasmus+, it is important to create commitment at all levels within the school. In this respect, involving non-teachers in the internationalisation team, such as reception staff, student counsellors or care coordinators, proves to be successful. These involved individuals prove very valuable given that they do not have teaching duties and can therefore take on more flexible tasks for the implementation of projects: they can take on the role of point of contact within the school and can perform some of the tasks that need to be done during the day, e.g. calling EPOS or international partners, attending in-service training on Erasmus+ (e.g. writing sessions).

"The advantage of my administrative position is that I am not in front of the classroom. I can already make a phone call and send an email during my regular job. That is sometimes practical for a non-teacher to be involved in order to relieve the other".

- coordinator -

Involving student counsellors or care coordinators is also interesting because they often have good contact with students in vulnerable family situations. From here, they often succeed more easily in pulling these students and their parents over thresholds to make participation possible after all.

7.2 At teacher level

At teacher level, a second set of factors leads to the successful realisation of Erasmus+ within a school. The following factors prove essential:

- Gradually spread experience of Erasmus+ among teachers;
- well-considered selection of teachers to participate in projects;
- informal dissemination for sharing lessons learned and practical information;
- involving uninvolved teachers in Erasmus.

GRADUALLY SPREADING ERASMUS+ EXPERIENCE

To anchor the impact of Erasmus+ projects sustainably within a school, a successful strategy for many coordinators is to spread the positive experience of Erasmus+ until it starts to catch on. Often internationalisation starts small: a few teachers take an overseas course, participate in job shadowing, use the eTwinning platform or a limited group of enthusiastic teachers sets up a first Erasmus+ project. Often, this experience creates an appetite for more and important initial contacts are made. Gradually, the positive effects of internationalisation are becoming more visible and enthusiasm is growing. Thus, it piques the interest of more and more colleagues. Moreover, this strategy of gradual spreading proves successful both in building up the number of teachers with overseas experience and in building an internationalisation team within the school.



“It starts to catch on. One brings a positive experience, then the other wants to join that”.

- director -

This step-by-step expansion is not without controversy within schools. Coordinators, especially at the start, often have to win over teachers or adjust certain ideas (e.g. 'Erasmus+ is a holiday', 'the students can't do that because they can't speak English').

“The first few years, there were some colleagues who did say, 'why does this have to happen now? Does it really have to go to another school now?' Now, though, this is less the case. Not because the resistance is broken, but because colleagues notice that it is not added value”.

- coordinator -

It proves successful to be able to motivate these teachers to have an initial, often low-threshold, experience. Once the fire is fanned, teacher engagement tends to be smoother. To encourage teachers to undergo the first experience, the enthusiasm of teachers who were already involved is crucial. Their enthusiasm is contagious. In addition, it also helps to explain the Erasmus+ operation to these teachers several times along with its added value. Nevertheless, it remains important to understand teachers' resistance and, above all, to give them enough time to get into the Erasmus+ story.

“But the fear among colleagues about going abroad is there. It doesn't come naturally. We are quick to think: teachers can do that. But we also have to take that into account. You should try to bring them into your story slowly. And once they have gone along and they make the right contacts, they are off. You only need to be involved once”.

- coordinator -

Schools motivate teachers to a first experience in different ways. Both supporting the preparation of students going on exchange and guiding a KA2 project appear to be low-threshold stepping stones for teachers to participate in a job-shadowing or KA1 project.

“Counselling is more approachable than going on a course, or job shadowing. There is a different intention, you do it for the students, but you also learn a lot yourself. While a job shadowing, that's just for yourself”.

- coordinator -



VARIOUS STRATEGIES TO GRADUALLY SPREAD ERASMUS+ WITHIN THE SCHOOL:

- Sending out as many different teachers as possible who could not yet gain experience abroad.

“We want to send as many new teachers abroad as possible. That way, you have fewer who are not involved and it is easier to have broad support”.

- director -

- Pairing an inexperienced teacher with a teacher who has already taken part in an exchange.

“So for the first projects I was always along as a mentor, but my co-mentor was always someone else. Thus, five different teachers have already been able to come along as mentors”.

- coordinator -

- Sending several teachers on an exchange together to fuel enthusiasm as widely as possible.

“If you go somewhere with several people at the same time, it can be a success story. You need an enthusiastic crowd who can keep up the energy afterwards”.

- director -

- Sending out teachers from as many different subject groups, directions and years/degrees as possible.

“The added value in the projects is that people from the different departments attend... From each department, someone is represented in the projects. These then spread the story within the department”.

- coordinator-

We do note that the principle of gradual spreading does not always apply to eTwinning. Often, use in schools is limited to a few teachers. Figure 28 shows the distribution by the proportion of teachers using eTwinning in the schools of active eTwinning users who participated in the survey. In 28% of these schools, the proportion is less than 1%, for another 53% between 1% and 10%. We asked the same question about the proportion of eTwinning users in the school in the survey targeting the Erasmus+ coordinators, where the results showed the same trend.

Although the added value of the platform was recognised by most interviewees, the user-friendliness of the platform appears to be too limited for many and constitutes a barrier (see 7.6 External factors for a concrete explanation of the platform's user-friendliness).



TRANSITION TO A PEDAGOGICAL PROJECT FOCUSING ON PERSONAL LEADERSHIP AT MARICOLEN (THE VIRGO SAPIENTIAE INSTITUTE) IN MALDEGEM

Towards *personal leadership* as a central concept within the pedagogical project

The educational project of the Maricoles in Maldegem underwent a transition due to participation in Erasmus+. The project was remembered and the focus was placed on personal leadership (*'the leader in me'*) of students. The school thus found a more specific fulfilment of the mission it has long promoted in which it wants to bring out the best in every student. Teachers will start working more specifically with the concept during their lessons today. Students learn self-insight, self-management, motivation and commitment. In the first year, students thereby go through four steps through a specific series of lessons, after which in the higher years, there is a strong focus on taking responsibility and commitment.

“The idea is to let students make their own decisions and implement them. ... With the new building, for example, we also involved the students”.

- coordinator -

How did the school achieve this transition?

Everything started with an initial teacher exchange. He observed in the UK how schools encouraged student independence. This inspired him. He started thinking about what this could mean for his school and bought a book on the concept of *'the leader in me'* that he had been able to observe during the exchange. With that, he moved to the quality working group within his school. They got to work with the concept and decided to write their own Erasmus+ project on this theme, for which they set up a collaboration with several partner schools. The working group's loose ideas were structured through the project.

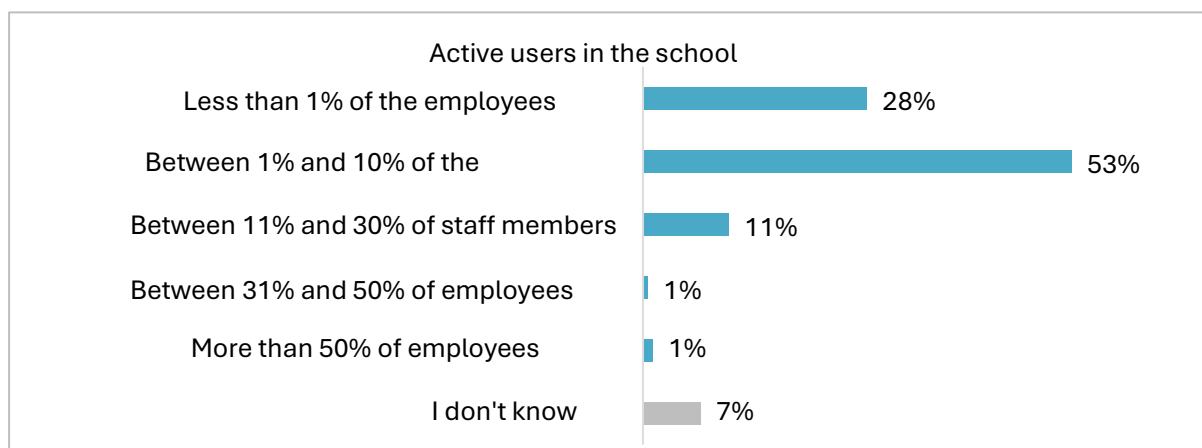
This project then accelerated the implementation of the concept within the school. More teachers and students were involved. Then the concept found its way to the policy level and the transition was incorporated within the pedagogical project. All teachers were then immersed in the concept during an educational study day. It started to spread step by step within the school.



Today, all students in the first year are being taught about the concept and thinking about further rollout in the senior years. The concept is also widely promoted visually via stickers on the windows and doors of the school building (see image).



Figure 28: Proportion of eTwinning users in the school



Source: Survey of active eTwinning users by IDEA Consult (n=170)

WELL-CONSIDERED SELECTION OF TEACHERS TO PARTICIPATE IN PROJECTS

To enhance the impact of Erasmus+, it appears important to select teachers consciously to participate in an international exchange. The most gain to be found, according to the schools, is by linking teachers to projects that match their own strengths or interests, or those of the subject group or working groups in which people are involved. There should always be an opportunity for professional development. On the one hand, teachers show stronger intrinsic motivation for participating in these projects. On the other hand, it also increases the learning effects and the likelihood that knowledge gained after an exchange finds its way into the classroom practice of the teacher or subject group.

"In addition, your teachers know their strengths. For example it is now about ICT, if there is a teacher who is not ICT-minded, you should not send them. You need to know which people you are deploying and where. There should be an opportunity for professional development".

- coordinator -

For international internships, it also proves valuable to send an internship supervisor on an exchange who also has experience with internship supervision in Flanders. This allows the internship supervisor to evaluate appropriate competences in students on overseas internships.

"The school internship supervisor is the same person who does overseas internships. It should be a surplus to the internship they do here for the students. If someone comes along who does not know what they should be able to do here on placement, the added value is gone. There has to be someone to follow it up with, otherwise it is separate from standard functioning".

- director -



INFORMAL DISSEMINATION TO SPREAD ACQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICAL INFO

Informal sharing of Erasmus+ experiences contributes greatly to gradual spreading within a school, increasing support for Erasmus+ and warming up additional teachers. In addition, this informal dissemination also promotes the critical reflection of teachers. By sharing their stories, these teachers inspire the ideas and beliefs of their colleagues. The stories are professionalising. This informal dissemination takes place primarily through sharing experiences or chatting with colleagues in teachers' rooms, in professional groups, during conversations between teachers and students or when teachers address colleagues directly for which they find the experience gained abroad relevant.

"Then you get a range of issues opened up: is that responsible? Why do they do that? That opens people's valves. That is then brought in via team talks".

- director -

"The informal aspect also creates an effect in the teacher's room. The informal structure is important. We had 2 teachers who were against it at first, but they were addressed by another teacher. The informal ambassadorship provides broadening".

- director -

This informal type of communication has an even stronger effect when the principle of repetition is used. Step by step, this often reduces resistance from uninvolved teachers.

CREATING ENGAGEMENT WITH UNINVOLVED TEACHERS

Based on the interviews, it appears that schools are also strongly committed to involving teachers who are not (yet) involved, teachers who are not (yet) going on exchanges. This involves, on the one hand, teachers who may yet through time still be encouraged to take part in an overseas experience. On the other hand, it is about a group of teachers who do not want to go abroad, for example because of the home context, but appreciate the fact that by participating in activities at school, they can still experience a form of internationalisation.

"Everyone is willing to take up a task, but going along with it, that's the sticking point. They don't want to leave their children alone".

- director -



This group of teachers is mainly involved in Erasmus+ activities taking place at the school itself. On the one hand, this involves activities in which the uninformed teachers help prepare students for an exchange (e.g. making a French film in French class).

On the other hand, it involves activities that go on at the school when overseas teachers or students visit. Non-involved teachers are asked to help out during these visits, educational exchanges with the overseas teachers or students are made possible, or teachers are invited during leisure activities organised for the overseas teachers and students (e.g. tourist trip, party, etc.).

“For example, if there are overseas teachers in Belgium, we make sure too that those teachers can take a lesson from their subject here. We often put them in touch with professional colleagues. This way, our colleagues can also experience that it is also rather fascinating to talk to someone from another school”.

- involved teacher -

7.3 At the level of students

From the 360° analysis, we were able to identify five factors at the learner level that contribute to the successful realisation of Erasmus+:

- putting together a considered selection of students;
- removing barriers among students and their parents;
- communication to engage and encourage students;
- providing support before, during and after an exchange;
- providing a full range of services for students who stay at home. We describe each of these factors below.

A CONSIDERED SELECTION

Putting together a considered selection of students who may leave on exchanges is crucial, according to the schools. Students' intrinsic motivation to participate plays an essential role in this selection. Students should show their interest and be personally convinced of the added value of an exchange. It is these students who, according to those involved, get the most value from an exchange and learn the most from it. An exchange also entails extra efforts for which students must show sufficient commitment and independence.

“We want to check the real motivation: Do you want to come along for a week of no lessons or to get something out of it?”

- involved teacher -



Besides motivation, other selection criteria are also taken into account in some schools: commitments that students take up at school throughout the school year, student performance, maturity, attitudes, social and communication skills. In many schools, teachers also consider the potential impact of the exchange on the student's academic year, especially if students have to catch up on learning content independently after the exchange or if the student's results are not as good at that time. The exchange should not jeopardise a student's chances of success at the end of the school year.

"For example, in one direction, the internship is not in the class schedule. There the selection is stricter, as those students have to catch up on everything afterwards. They may not get themselves into trouble after that".

- coordinator -

To arrive at an informed selection, schools employ several strategies. Some schools work with selection tests in which students create a cover letter/task and then have an interview with a jury. In other schools, students save points throughout the school year by taking up commitments within the school. In some cases, teachers make the selection themselves by, for example, assigning students to internships.

A selection process brings a positive atmosphere within the school and at the same time, can be a valuable learning opportunity for students.

"That selection is serious. Students have to do something to be there. They have to create something and discuss it verbally. That way, it's easy to get a motivated group. That guarantees that those are going to do well. This preparation is highly effective".

- uninvolved teacher -

However, not all teachers experience this selection process as evident. Some teachers struggle with rejecting students or with the fact that only a selection of students can join. In this respect, it appears crucial to always take good care of students who were not selected and properly explain the decision taken with reasoning. In this way, students themselves often come to realise that the exchange is still too early for them or could complicate the completion of their academic year. In doing so, it is important to properly clarify the selection criteria to students beforehand. This way, they tend to understand arguments more easily afterwards.

"Then they often come to realise for themselves that maybe it wasn't for them after all. Then when you discuss it with them, they do say 'that's true'. We then do a talk on why we don't take them, but usually they understand because we have reasoning".

- involved teacher -



CREATIVE SELECTION PROCESS IN GO! RUSSELBERG ATHENEUM IN TESSENDERLO

In the selection procedure of the Atheneum Russelberg, besides attitude, motivation is mainly the selection criterion for Erasmus+. It is allowed, but students do not have to communicate this motivation by letter. They can do that in any way they like. Students may come up with their own creative ways to show their motivation.

These included students who came to tap dance and sing. Another student had baked *pasteis de nata* for an exchange project to Porto. Another student had pieced together a model of a temple. This is followed by another short interview in which the team of teachers concerned asks questions on why the candidate is keen to go along.

In this way, the school avoids that only the most language- and writing-savvy students can go along. Selection is not based on cognitive qualities, but on the predetermined criteria: motivation and attitude (both before and after the exchange).

“That might also be a boost for students: finally those points don’t count. Everyone starts on an equal footing”.

- An uninvolved teacher -

At the info evening, these criteria will be pointed out. At that point, students are also immediately prepared for the possibility of not being selected. Just like applying for a job: you apply, but there is a possibility that you won't get the job. To those students who fail the selection, detailed explanations are given as to why this is so.

EXTRA ATTENTION IS PAID TO VULNERABLE STUDENTS WHO DID NOT APPLY SPONTANEOUSLY

When making a considered selection, it is very important for schools to be mindful of a group of students who apply less spontaneously because of their home situation. However, schools want to offer equal opportunities to all students, especially given the socially inclusive dimension promoted by Erasmus+. Some school used to make use of compulsory participation in Erasmus+. However, they mostly came back to this. It required a lot of energy from teachers to convince all students and the obligation sometimes brought negative consequences when students considered choosing another school.

“That has been important: the obligation was gone. Then there is no more struggle, there were students who really did not want to do that. They changed schools in order to avoid doing Erasmus+”.

- coordinator -

In order to still provide these vulnerable students with sufficient equal opportunities, teachers give these students extra encouragement. They make extra efforts for these students because the growth curve and positive impact of an exchange for these students is so high.



“I just want to involve those people where I know ‘they need that’. Then I know those can learn a lot. That’s a difference from saying ‘I want those along that are already doing well’. With us, it is just that audience where it is not so obvious”.

- coordinator-

In this persuasion process, teachers try to pull students, but often also their parents, over some thresholds. This is primarily about mitigating fear of the unknown. Many of these students have never been away from home or never had the opportunity to go abroad. As a result, the student, but especially the parents, are often very concerned. In addition, these students often experience language barriers, they fear that problems would arise for themselves or their families relating to their stay in Flanders, and financial barriers also come into play. Thanks to the free-of-charge nature of an exchange, participation often becomes possible for these students. In other cases, these students would have to pass up an overseas experience of this kind.

COMMUNICATION TO ENGAGE AND ENCOURAGE STUDENTS

In order to strengthen the impact of Erasmus+, it turns out to be very beneficial for students to tell each other about their Erasmus+ experiences. By sharing stories, students often involve home-schoolers in Erasmus+. In addition, they often encourage new students to participate in an exchange and manage to pull doubtful students over their thresholds.

“Yesterday, they made these cupcakes here and then handed them out in the refectory. Then the students ask why they get that, and then the other students explain. I had a student and he said yesterday, ‘Miss, I ate a cupcake yesterday for Erasmus+ day, and I want to join in too”.

- uninvolved teacher -

Student communication is mostly informal through word-of-mouth in the playground. Sometimes it happens more formally when students give presentations to lower-year students. Many schools are making a targeted effort to make students into ambassadors after their exchange to get new students excited about an exchange.

“They have to make a presentation on what they did in front of the students. It’s so passionate when they talk about it. And they then say: you have to experience that for yourself”.

- involved teacher –



RHIZO KORTRIJK'S MASCOT COLUMBUS WANTS TO SEE THE WORLD

At RHIZO in Kortrijk, the cuddly rabbit Columbus is the mascot for internationalisation. The cuddly toy goes on all overseas projects and trips. The students and teachers involved post pictures of the cuddly toy in the different countries on social media channels, communicating all the school's internationalisation activities in a playful and recognisable way. The cuddly toy even has its own Instagram account: 'Rhizocolumbus'.



PREPARATION AND AFTERCARE

Creating an exchange experience that produces positive and lasting effects in students requires adequate support before, during and after the exchange.

"The students are prepared very strongly, and they do need that."

- coordinator -

Beforehand, it proves positive to prepare students for an exchange through a preparation process that students go through with the other selected students. This pathway mostly focuses on cooperation, independence, and language skills.



"The students are prepared very strongly, and they do need that."

- coordinator -

An exchange, especially with older students, appears to require a certain independence and maturity for which students need to be prepared. Not all students, or parents, find this evident. This is why most schools encourage independence as much as possible, but also provide adequate supervision during the exchange. This is in case any problems should occur and to reassure parents.

"In France, for example, they live in a flat, there they have to do everything themselves. In Dublin, they live in host families. This way, students also have choice of how they want to stay. After I do the info evening, many still say "I will go to France because I can get the most out of it". They choose consciously".

- coordinator-

Some schools also offer students the choice. Students can choose whether they want a more independent or guided exchange. Schools then want their students to make a conscious choice more than anything else. In other schools, they tailor the amount of guidance to the needs of the group.

Besides support before and during an exchange, sufficient attention to aftercare is also important. Indeed, some students experience an adjustment period upon their return. They need some time to get used to the school mentality and their school system again. Some schools already explicitly take this into account while scheduling the exchange.

"The downside is that they are not motivated to return to classical education the following week. We do experience that. Then we have to get back to business as usual".

- coordinator-



PREPARATORY TRACK AT IKSO HOESELT

Some schools provide thorough preparation for students who will spend time abroad independently. For instance, in a number of schools we spoke to, students received a number of "workshops" before departure: cooking, ironing, laundry, budget training, a language bath, etc. This preparation then also involves a lot of other teachers who are not necessarily going on exchange themselves. For example, the specialist care teacher is responsible for the ironing and washing workshop, the specialist teacher of French, English, etc. for the language bath, and so on.

In IKSO Hoeselt, the preparation consists of a course lasting 10 months. The highlight is a week-long basic skills training in Germany, which is worked towards throughout the course. Students have to truly live together in small groups (e.g. cooking, cleaning up and so on) in a holiday home, with all the challenges involved. Learning to argue in a polite manner is one of the most important skills they need to master.

"We are going to Germany with the 3 different classes. These usually can't stand each other... And we then put them in little houses, all mixed together. Then after the 1-week stretch, they get to know and appreciate each other... It is a very tough training as we push against their limits, both physically and mentally. But it works. One of the most fun tasks, surprisingly enough, is cooking. Students run errands together for the house. And then there's one night when we come to see and we say: everything you need tonight, put it ready on the table. And then we swap the students from the house without their mobile phones. And then we say: voila, now you have to cook food with what is on the table here. And when they finish, we swap the groups back. So they do not eat what they have prepared themselves. They always have comments. That's something for when they are abroad.

When they come back from work and it's not exactly what they want. They have to learn to deal with that".

FULL RANGE FOR HOME VISITORS

Besides supporting students who leave on exchanges, it is also important to provide a full range for students who stay at home. All schools try to avoid at all times that stay-at-home students would enter studies. First and foremost, therefore, when scheduling exchanges, attempts are made to minimise the trajectory of stay-at-home students.

"We also think it is important that our students are taken care of. We don't want to just put them in the study, we don't want to lose them. So we frame that well and we still want to bring them into the project in a positive way".

- involved teacher -



HOW TO DESIGN AN OFFER FOR STAY-AT-HOME STUDENTS? SOME OPTIONS:

- Classes will continue as normal for students staying at home. Students on exchange must catch up on missed learning content afterwards.
- Substitute tasks or independent assignments are anticipated, avoiding study.
- Similar activities are planned (e.g. a domestic internship) at the same time as the exchange, thus largely pursuing the same learning objectives. Afterwards, students can learn about each other's experience and compare domestic and overseas experiences.
- One activity involves stay-at-home students in the international projects by providing assignments for them during the exchange that are linked to the project theme.
- When overseas students come to Flanders, they actively involve students who did not go on exchange themselves.
- People share photos or videos during exchanges to include the students who stay at home in the overseas experience as well.

“There is also a board in the playground on which there is sharing. The exchange of students is displayed with photos. Then it also becomes more real for the students who were not there”.

- uninvolved teacher -

7.4 At project level

Promoting the impact of Erasmus+ within a school starts as early as the writing stage. Based on the school visits, we were able to identify four factors that contribute to successful projects:

- Connection to the needs of the school, teachers and students;
- Embedding in a broader learning pathway;
- Achievable goals with tangible results;
- Well-considered selection of partners.

We explain each of these factors below.

CONNECTION TO THE NEEDS OF THE SCHOOL, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

From the interviews, we could see that successful projects best start from the needs of the school, teachers and students. Projects add value when they are substantively relevant. They are not optional experiences. The stronger this content relevance, the more impact it brings, according to the schools. In that respect, schools like the fact that they have to prepare an in-depth project dossier. This makes people give due consideration to the relevance of the project.

“It is not a school trip, it is extremely well prepared. It really is a total package. That's a strength, it's not a case of 'we'll throw something together'. It has been thought through”.

- involved teacher -



To create sufficient content relevance, schools make connections with the school's pedagogical vision or with other school projects. There are attempts to incorporate the school's individuality into the projects.

"This is how we helped shape the project step by step. Then we first started thinking which topics we wanted to get into it. We knew we wanted to work around sustainability because we are also an MOS school".

- involved teacher –

To add value for teachers and students, it appears important that the project is closely linked to their lifestyles, interests and needs. This connection increases teachers' chances of implementing knowledge and newly learned competences they have acquired in the school following an exchange or classroom practice. In students, intrinsic motivation is enhanced and a greater willingness to learn is observed. Selecting overseas internships that are ahead in the sector is already proving to be a valuable strategy in this regard.

Besides connecting with students' interests, many schools also try to make the projects fit with students' curriculum. A number of teachers involved do indicate that they feel it is important that the curriculum objectives are broadly interpreted here and given creative interpretation. Participating in an exchange offers students great added value. They learn through the projects in many areas. As a result, stakeholders feel that students do not always have to make up all missed learning at school.

"That was also the case with current affairs. It was the same with those climate marches. That was very much present at that time. They are also students (the ones participating in the sustainability project) who really do focus on the sustainable. They do get involved in those climate demonstrations. They then really wanted to do something there themselves".

- involved teacher –

EMBEDDING WITHIN BROADER LEARNING PATHWAYS AT SCHOOL

To make the impact of a project more sustainable on both students and teachers, most schools ensure the embedding of a project in a wider school trajectory. With students, for example, they link pre- or post-project learning activities to the project or have students create tasks and reports on the project to stimulate their critical reflection. Among teachers, we saw that after an exchange, for example, they take refresher courses in Flanders to deepen the theme of the exchange or translate it to their own context.

"They end with an experience report. They then have to explain the difference of care in Belgium and the Netherlands. Then that is discussed also with their supervisor there as well. Then they can work on that for 3 weeks and formulate ideas around it, positive and negative aspects. There is a lot of emphasis on that".

- involved teacher –



SETTING ACHIEVABLE GOALS WITH TANGIBLE RESULTS

According to the schools, a good project is shaped by setting achievable goals and linking them to results that are tangible. First of all, the goals should be formulated feasibly, so that they do not exceed the carrying capacity of coordinators or teachers involved. In this way, the continuity of the Erasmus+ operation within a school is monitored. In addition, schools recommend setting up projects that involve specific and visible results within the school.

"We have to be careful not to oversupply. If they experience it as 'it adds value in my daily functioning', it will be carried. But if it comes out on top, it risks getting lost".

- director -

As a result, according to them, the effects of projects take hold more permanently in the school and do not simply disappear after the project ends. Moreover, these visible results promote motivation and self-esteem in students.

"Objectives that are too abstract are much harder to shape ... if you have a concrete, tangible result, it gives you something that you can conclude with the feeling of 'something did change'. ... Somehow I sometimes think, all that work put in there. If you then have something tangible, then you can build on that".

- director -

Moreover, it appears appropriate to focus projects on various directions, degrees, themes. This allows the impact of Erasmus+ to spread school-wide.

WELL-CONSIDERED SELECTION OF PARTNERS

Selecting good, reliable and committed partners pays off, according to the schools. This usually leads to smooth communication and brings out a great deal of energy and commitment.

"The experience was also so positive because it was so well organised. They always knew where to go. Our partners were so reliable, so it always went well. Those contacts are very important".

- coordinator -

To achieve a good partnership, according to the schools, it is important that there are clear expectations, that the cooperation has a substantive added value for all partners, that the partners are complementary, and that a similar style of communication and approach is used. Language also plays a role (e.g. English language skills), but their importance varies from project to project. For example, in projects for trade directions, it appears to be more important for the partner's English level to be up to scratch than, for example, in care directions.



Besides partnerships with schools or internships, some schools also work with an intermediary partner abroad. This organisation supports the school in coordinating and supporting students on overseas placements. While this requires an investment of resources, the schools using this found out that this mainly significantly reduces the task load of teachers involved, allowing more time to go to tutoring students themselves.

"We used to organise everything ourselves, now we outsource. Then you can focus much more on the students and we present it to them as a trajectory. We used to focus only on finding internships. That is of no use to students. And that took a lot of energy. That is an improvement for us".

- director -

Finally, to arrive at an informed selection of partners, prospecting proves to be a successful strategy. Teachers visit the partner in advance to assess their quality.

"We want to keep the quality high. We never sent students to a school we had not attended ourselves. We did it once, and it was a very bad experience. ... We will first go on site for an exploratory interview".

- director -



COLLABORATION WITH ERAM PARTNER OF THE WIJNPERS IN LEUVEN

The Wine Press in Leuven has established a fruitful collaboration with their partner ERAM, the university for audiovisual communication and multimedia, photography and performing arts in Girona in Italy.

A partnership that adds fantastic value to the school ...

This partner offers huge added value for the KSO pathway in Leuven. The university offers a wider range of artistic disciplines than the Wijnpers offers, which students can sample during the exchange. The university also has a lot of equipment available, which the school itself does not have at its disposal. Finally, the teacher from ERAM who accompanies the Flemish students during the internship can bring in their own, different expertise.

"I think that at KSO, a lot of people think about sculpture and painting. But the field is so big and you are not at home on all markets".

- involved teacher -

... in a project with an impressive end result

In 2020, sixth-year KSO students at the Wijnpers in Leuven created a large mural in the university's future new entrance hall during an internship abroad with ERAM. It was a large and ambitious project, which the teacher was very personally impressed that the group managed to complete in 2 weeks.

"That teacher came to explain that the Monday morning. The first week was really drafts, at a very fast pace. Those students were still drawing in the evening. ... And week 2 was just painting. It turned out

absolutely beautifully".

"The approach to such a project, I learned an awful lot there".

- involved teacher -

On social media, the Wijnpers states:

"A wall no less than 25m long and 4m high became the canvas for this commission. Quite a challenge, then, giving them complete creative freedom, both in terms of theme and style. A challenge that all the students, perhaps hesitantly at first, still soon embraced with full conviction. In no time, the most exciting concepts emerged and the first design sketches appeared, so that by the end of the first week, there were no fewer than 13 exciting designs ready to choose from. These designs were presented to the client, the management of ERAM. Who made the choice, as only one design could be implemented during the second week... the results of all that hard work by our students did not go unnoticed. We are proud of this group, who have brilliantly shown their worth, not only as a group, but also as artists and future creatives of our society. Ready, after four years of KSO, to fly out..."



7.5 Cross-school levels

Besides school-level factors, cross-school level factors also play an important role in creating a sustainable Erasmus+ impact within a school. This includes both support provided at school group/community level and forms of dissemination beyond the school. We describe the two success factors below.

SUPPORT FROM THE SCHOOLGROUP/COMMUNITY

School groups and communities take part in spreading the impact of Erasmus+. On the one hand, seminars organised at school group/community level contribute to this. During these seminars, they share expertise and engage in co-creation. On the other hand, a coordinator at this level appears to bring positive influence.

“The schools that are now furthest along in the school group ... those are the schools that have completed Erasmus+. Now we feel that other schools in the school group are also carrying out internationalisation. They are all doing something, either eTwinning or job shadowing. It had already started to catch on in the school group, however”.

- coordinator -

This coordinator can support the schools in terms of communication, coordination, as well as finances. This reduces the task load for the coordinators and teachers involved at school.

- Communication: the coordinator introduces schools to the Erasmus+ functioning and eTwinning and directs schools to courses and projects.
- Coordination: the coordinator supports schools administratively in writing project dossiers in addition to Epos support, links schools to potential partner schools, writes dossiers or follows up the administration of ongoing projects.
- Finance: the coordinator manages the projects financially and arranges insurance, for example.

“The threshold for doing this is already high. We crossed the threshold through our school group. For schools that do not know it yet, it is good that they learn about it through the school group. And after that, there could be a whole process”.

- director -

However, schools cite a key concern when working with a cross-school level coordinator. The individuality and soul of each school should be preserved in the projects. Otherwise, it becomes too generic and the projects are less in line with the school's needs.

DISSEMINATION OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL

In addition to internal communication, schools are also placing a strong focus on communication that goes beyond the boundaries of the school to strengthen the impact of Erasmus+. Schools share information and positive experiences about Erasmus+ with the outside world through various means: on social media (Facebook, Instagram and so on), via their website or in school magazines, with information stands during open days, international evenings to which parents and local partners (e.g. companies) are invited during refresher courses or during activities within the school group.



Through these communications, schools seek to involve as many people as possible in the Erasmus+ operation and encourage support for projects.

"It's kind of nice that they have that Facebook group where that they are required to post what they eat. If you are not with them, you are still so involved".

- uninvolved teacher-

In addition, this dissemination also has an important role in projecting a positive image of the school. This proves important in convincing parents or prospective students to choose the school or can positively influence the relationship with placement companies in the area.

"On social media ... we bring out the image of the school that way. We do that very specifically. The videos are also on our website. That is the best way to make it clear how things are going in the school".

- director –

7.6 External factors

Finally, some external success factors also contribute to the sustainable and school-wide anchoring of Erasmus+ within schools. These include:

- Epos' support to schools;
- participation in international contact seminars;
- acquiring accreditation;
- the eTwinning platform.

Below, we describe these four factors in turn.

SUPPORT OF EPOS

The support that EPOS offers schools is a key success factor for many schools towards achieving a successful project. Schools experience writing project files, administrative monitoring of projects and reporting of mobilities as very labour-intensive and complex. In doing so, they highlight the unfriendliness of some European platforms (Mobility Tool, Europass, etc.).

"I can imagine that there are schools that have the will, but are afraid of this extra workload. That does come across as imposing when you see that European platform. There lies the threshold. I was scared for a while the first time too, I didn't know how I was going to do it".

- coordinator –



Because Epos' support in this administratively difficult process is very concrete and approachable, it is highly valuable for many schools.

“The success factor lies in the specific. Not of 'how does it work?', but 'let's write the file'.”

- director –

In this regard, the inspiration days and writing sessions are received very positively and as quality by the schools. These sessions prove to be much needed to arrive at well-drafted dossiers. Although schools appreciate physical sessions the most, they say webinars offer the important advantage that explanations can be revisited afterwards.

In addition, these sessions are also an important networking opportunity for the schools, especially when they take place physically. People strongly emphasise the added value of being able to meet like-minded people in an open atmosphere without competition between schools. Leaders indicate that they return to their schools mostly brimming with enthusiasm and energy after these sessions, full of encouragement to get a project underway.

“The beauty of these inspiration days or writing sessions is that there is no distinction between schools. When we did our first project, a director would say: come on down, we'll talk about it. At that point, there is no competition because you all write your own project tailored to your own school. People help each other. These are all people who want the same thing, which is a pleasant feeling”.

- coordinator –

Ideally, EPOS should expand the sessions even further, according to the schools. Thus, it could cater to various profiles with its offerings, e.g. starters versus more experienced profiles.

Not only the sessions, but also EPOS's personal support to schools is welcomed. Schools find EPOS easily accessible and experience a positive, helpful contact.

“EPOS is very close, you email and you get an immediate response. There is genuine collaboration when it comes to solving problems”.

- director –

Finally, throughout the interviews, a number of aspects emerged for which optimisation appears possible. On the one hand, according to the schools, EPOS support can still improve in two areas. Therefore, there is a demand for sufficient continuity in the file manager per school so that a relationship of trust can be built up. In addition, an overview with clear points of contact would be a valuable addition according to the schools, especially when starting a first project as a school.



"Maybe get a schedule by school of who to go to for what. When you show up there, it's really hard to understand. In the beginning, that was a really major factor. Making that application and the justification, and the fear that it's not going to turn out well".

- coordinator -

On the other hand, the schools are calling for the Mobility Tool to be optimised. For developing project files, they need a clearer evaluation framework with clear terminology and evaluation criteria. Finally, linking databases could prevent multiple loading of the same data.

"There is also sometimes ambiguity around the criteria. Terminology that is not is always clear: what is a supervisor? How many days should you count? We have also had discussions about the distances".

- director -

COURSES ABROAD - CONTACT SEMINARS: BUILDING (INTERNATIONAL) NETWORK

Contact seminars allow schools to build their international network. These seminars are proving to be a fruitful way for many schools to start new projects and collaborations. Through the seminars, schools and the field can meet in an approachable and time-efficient way. The physical encounter increases confidence when engaging with a partner or, for example, internship, an aspect whose importance we indicated earlier (see 7.5. At project level). In addition the seminars greatly stimulate teachers' enthusiasm to start projects and, when they return, they transfer this energy to new teachers, which often boosts the Erasmus+ functioning.

"You work in a school with different kinds of people with different interests and views. In such a contact seminar, surely you all have something in common, you all have the same vision, more or less. That provides a huge boost. You come back tired, but mentally you are fully recharged. Then you are full of ideas on how to get on with it".

- coordinator -

ACQUISITION OF ACCREDITATION

In order to generate sustainable impact with Erasmus+ projects, gaining accreditation appears to be very important for schools. The accreditation eases the administrative burden significantly for schools, and it encourages reflection on and development of a long-term vision and structure around internationalisation. An accreditation also ensures greater collaboration within the school and it makes it easier for coordinators to enthuse new teachers.



"It used to have to be applied for year by year. Now we have accreditation. This allows us as a school to build a structure to engage with parents, students. Now a long-term view is possible. And it is required. Otherwise, you can never get a team excited about it if something is questionable every year".

- director -

"At first, we carried out our projects separately. Now because of this accreditation, we have started working more together, which was a positive evolution. We have also been given a new direction. They did not have to do much for that application -

the bulk of the work had already been done. They did not like that paperwork at first, but we had already done that preparatory work. It lowers the threshold for bringing new people along".

- coordinator -

THE ETWINNING PLATFORM

eTwinning succeeds in engaging teachers in internationalisation, including those teachers who show some resistance to an overseas exchange or do not like the administrative burden of an Erasmus+ project. Through the approachability of eTwinning, schools still manage to engage these teachers in internationalisation. In practice, this first eTwinning experience then sometimes turns out to be the stepping stone to an exchange with Erasmus+. Schools also name several benefits of eTwinning. For instance, the tool initially proves advantageous because, unlike Erasmus+ projects, its use does not put pressure on the school organisation and teachers can use it independently.

"eTwinning is much more approachable. And to get a first success story is really positive. The applications you have to write for Erasmus, you can't ask that from an average teacher. Whereas with eTwinning, you can".

- director -

In addition, the tool allows you to establish contacts with potential partners. However, schools do not always find it obvious to connect with the right partners through eTwinning or to check the reliability of a partner. An eTwinning ambassador appears to pay off in this regard, as they have more visibility into trusted partners. In addition, online eTwinning training also appears to be able to connect with teachers interested in similar topics. With this as a basis, new collaborations can then emerge.

While eTwinning is a success factor in schools to get more teachers involved or to start new collaborations, many schools still experience frustrations when using the platform and the platform can also be prohibitive. Indeed, people describe the platform as complex and unfriendly. In doing so, they cite the many error messages, blocking of the tool, the lack of proper notifications (e.g. when receiving messages) and the difficulty for efficiently uploading media. People experience the platform as unintuitive, inaccessible and cluttered, and report getting lost in the amount of information in the app and website. Finally, people are not finding it easy to locate projects, especially regarding current projects. In some cases, schools therefore discontinue their use early.



“I started eTwinning several years ago. I tried it, but I dropped out because it was too difficult. Students also came out disappointed. It wasn't worth it”.

- involved teacher –

Teachers see the added value of the closed and secure environment offered by eTwinning, which is good for sharing documents. They drop out because they perceive dissemination to the outside world and external partners as too difficult or are unaware of the opportunities offered by the platform. Consequently, people are betting on other, more user-friendly media that do not require additional registrations or log-ins (Whatsapp, Instagram, Facebook). Moreover, people find the platform unintuitive and unwieldy as a system.



8. Conclusion

This research provided insights via surveys aimed at Erasmus+ coordinators and eTwinning users and via in-depth interviews with 360° analyses in 15 Flemish schools:

- the impact or, in other words, the effects that Erasmus+ and eTwinning produce according to the schools surveyed;
- the success factors or, in other words, the factors that underlie positive changes through participation in Erasmus+/eTwinning and thus contribute to the successful realisation of Erasmus+ within a school and to its sustainable and school-wide anchoring.

Impact can be divided into several dimensions. An impact on organisational development is perceived. Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning can contribute to a transition in school culture towards an open, innovative and inviting school. Participation in the international projects can also lead to a renewed school functioning with innovation in the pedagogical project and a renewed school infrastructure. Finally, international projects also lead to an improved image of the school and strengthened cooperation with partners.

Another dimension concerns the impact on internationalisation. This impact shows through increased capacity for international projects, as a strong learning curve is visible in participation in Erasmus+. The international network is also being further developed, often resulting in lasting partnerships. Systematically, internationalisation is built into the school organisation and structure, and an internationalisation team is often set up. Participation in the international projects leads to a strengthened international mindset, where internationalisation can become part of the school's DNA with a strong tradition. The survey also showed strongly that the different types of Erasmus+ projects and eTwinning are mutually reinforcing.

In addition, we identified an impact on European priorities 'equality and social inclusion', 'digitalisation' and 'sustainability', with stronger support for these values.

There is also the impact on the quality of education. This impact shows itself in different ways. First, through teachers and the growth they experience: for teachers, participation in Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning motivates and inspires, Erasmus+ strengthens the team atmosphere and cooperation between teachers and offers a perspective for the Flemish educational reality. In addition, Erasmus+ and eTwinning lead to professional and personal growth. Finally, participation in Erasmus+ leads to greater understanding and respect between students and teachers. In the lessons, participation in Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning shows itself in the use of new teaching methods, the introduction of inspiring practical examples, and the relationship between teacher and students changes to the teacher acting as coach. All this contributes to lessons that better meet students' needs.

Finally, there is the impact on students. Erasmus+ offers huge growth opportunities for students. The impact on students was generally centralised by the teachers, school staff and management interviewed. Participation in Erasmus+ (with student mobility) results in a broadening of horizons, a growth in self-reliance, a sense of responsibility, belief in one's own abilities, self-confidence and social skills for the students involved. It also leads to enhanced professional and content knowledge and skills, strengthened language skills and fluency, and a motivation boost. In this way, it strengthens opportunities for employment or further study. In eTwinning, the schools involved experience an impact mainly on language skills and fluency.



Finally, many success factors were identified that contribute to the successful implementation of Erasmus+ within a school and to sustainable and school-wide anchoring. These success factors are located at different levels.

At the school level, several factors were identified. Principals who believe in the added value of Erasmus+ and help promote its functioning and vision have an essential positive influence on the successful and school-wide realisation of Erasmus+. Providing a structural embedding appears strongly recommended to ensure the continuity of an Erasmus+ functioning within a school. Setting up an internationalisation working group also brings with it a number of positive consequences. In addition, replacements should be provided for absent teachers. In addition to informal dissemination, various forms of formal dissemination also contribute greatly to achieving school-wide impact, as this allows the knowledge accumulated during exchanges to be better disseminated within the school. In schools in which a long tradition has already been established around internationalisation, the implementation of Erasmus+ tends to be easier. At school level, too, it appears appropriate to start with small success experiences and gradually expand them further within schools. Finally, to develop school-wide support for Erasmus+, it is important to create commitment at all levels within the school and to involve non-teachers as well.

At teacher level, a successful strategy is to gradually spread the positive experience of Erasmus+ within the school. With teachers, too, selection for participation in projects should be deliberate. Informal dissemination for sharing lessons learnt and practical information ensures a more profound level of gradual spreading within the schools. Finally, involving uninvolved teachers in Erasmus+ is a success factor.

At student level, putting together a well-considered selection of students, removing barriers among students and their parents, low-threshold communication to engage and enthuse students, providing support before, during and after an exchange, and offering a full range of offers for students who stay at home are important for successful implementation of Erasmus+.

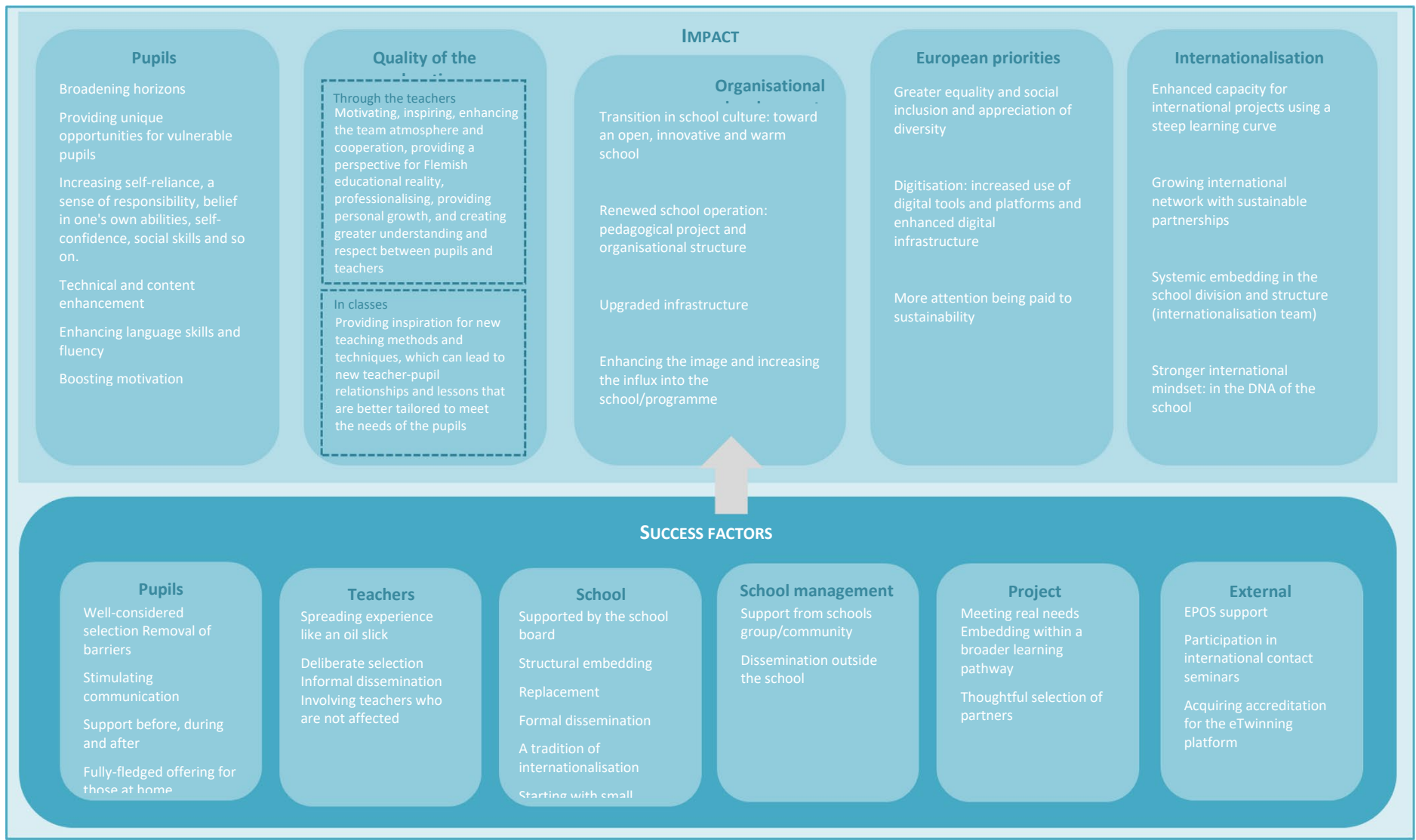
At project level, it appears important that the Erasmus+ project matches the needs of the school, teachers and students. In addition, it is important to embed the projects in a broader learning path and to select partners in a well-considered way.

At cross-school level, support from the school group or community and dissemination of information and positive experiences about Erasmus+ to the outside world appear to be particularly important.

Finally, we identified some external factors. The support that EPOS offers schools is a key success factor for many schools towards achieving a successful project. In addition, contact seminars are a fruitful way for many schools to start new projects and collaborations, as schools build their international network through these seminars. In order to generate sustainable impact with Erasmus+ projects, gaining accreditation appears to be very important for schools. Finally, in schools, eTwinning is seen as a successful tool for engaging more teachers or to start a new collaboration. Yet many schools also experience frustrations when using the platform, which these users describe as too complex and unfriendly.

This summary of impact and success factors is shown in the figure below (Figure 29).





Source: IDEA Consult





Annexes

Report – 18 February 2022

Commissioned by Epos vzw



Annex 1. Research questions

Quality of the education	
1	To what extent have the projects contributed to innovative teaching and training practices in the schools? <i>E.g. STEM, language teaching</i>
2	To what extent have the projects contributed to education and training programmes being better tailored to students' needs?
3	To what extent have the projects helped teachers and other staff to developed their competences further?
4	To what extent are the observed effects in terms of quality of education sustainable?
5	What factors underlie positive changes (due to participation in the projects) in terms of quality of education?
Organisational development and new challenges	
6	To what extent have the projects had an impact on the organisation and governance of the schools?
7	To what extent have the projects led to the introduction of new subjects, curricula or new educational activities in the schools?
8	To what extent have the projects contributed in terms of digitalisation, social inclusion and sustainability in schools?
9	How do teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders perceive these changes?
10	To what extent have the projects led to enhanced cooperation between schools and labour market players and civil society?
11	To what extent have the projects contributed to promoting common values such as freedom, inclusion, tolerance and non-discrimination?
12	To what extent are the observed effects in terms of organisational development and the take on new challenges sustainably?
13	What factors underlie positive changes (resulting from participation in Erasmus+/eTwinning) in terms of organisational development and taking on new challenges?
Internationalisation	



14	To what extent have the projects contributed to schools creating a vision and strategy around internationalisation? To what extent is it implemented in practice?
15	Is the strategy around internationalisation formatted according to available funding (e.g. Erasmus+) or is the strategy drawn up independently of the resources available and the necessary funding sought to turn strategy into reality?
16	To what extent have the projects helped build a team that is responsible for internationalisation at school?
17	To what extent have the projects contributed to the management of European funds becoming professionalised?
18	To what extent have the projects helped schools build an international network that they can draw on in the future for student placements, long-term student exchanges (study), job shadowing, internships or teaching assignments for teachers and so on?
19	To what extent have the projects contributed to a positive attitude in the schools versus overseas teaching assignments, job shadowing and training?
20	To what extent have the projects strengthened schools' capacity to initiate or join new European/international projects?
21	Do beneficiaries find their way to eTwinning through key actions 1 and 2 or do they find their way to core action 1 and 2 via eTwinning?
22	To what extent are the observed effects in terms of internationalisation sustainable?
23	What factors underlie positive changes (due to participation in Erasmus+/eTwinning) in terms of internationalisation?



Annex 2. Erasmus+ coordinators survey

Thank you for participating in our survey. Filling it out will only take a few minutes of your time. Through this survey, we want to gain insight into the impact of Erasmus+ on your school, in terms of (1) quality of education, (2) organisational development of the school, and (3) internationalisation. We would like to understand the full scope of Erasmus+ in your school! Perhaps participation in an Erasmus+ project in your school brought some nice unexpected outcomes? We therefore provide plenty of open response fields for you to share these experiences with us as well. All your answers in this survey are personal and confidential.



Effects of KA1 - Individual learning mobility

*

7. What effects do you think participation in KA1 has had on the quality of teaching in your school? Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the statements below. Participation in KA1 has helped ...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
new teaching and training practices are implemented in the school					
education and training programmes are better tailored to students' needs					
teachers and other staff have further developed their competences					

8. What other effects, outcomes or changes in terms of teaching quality do you think participation in KA1 has brought about in your school?



*

9. What effects do you think participation in KA1 has had on organisational development in your school (e.g. coping with new challenges, implementation of innovations)? Please indicate to what extent you agree with the statements below. Participation in KA1 has contributed to ...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
a new organisational structure in the school (e.g. adaptation of organisational chart, management team, etc.)					
new subjects, curricula or pedagogical activities in the school					
digitalisation in schools					
social inclusion in the school					
sustainability in the school					
stronger cooperation with labour market players or civil society					
the bearing of values such as freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination in the school					



10. What other organisational development effects, outcomes or changes do you think participation in KA1 has brought about in your school (e.g. coping with new challenges, implementation of innovations, and so on)?



*

11. What effects do you think participation in KA1 has had on internationalisation in your school? Please indicate to what extent you agree with the statements below.

Participation in KA1 has helped ...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
a vision and strategy around internationalisation was developed					
a team responsible for internationalisation was set up					
the management of European funds has been professionalised					
an international network has been established that can be used in the future for new exchanges, internships or teaching assignments					
there is a positive attitude towards overseas teaching assignments, job shadowing and/or training					
capacity to initiate or join new European or international projects has been strengthened					



12. What other effects, outcomes or changes in terms of internationalisation do you think participation in KA1 has brought about in your school?



KA2 - Strategic partnerships

* **13. In which year(s) did your school participate in a KA2 project? Multiple answers possible**

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

2019

Impact of KA2 - Strategic partnerships

* **14. What effects do you think participation in KA2 has had on the quality of teaching in your school? Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the statements below. Participation in KA2 has helped ...**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
new teaching and training practices are implemented in the school					
education and training programmes are better tailored to students' needs					
teachers and other staff have further developed their competences					



15. What other effects, outcomes or changes in terms of teaching quality do you think participation in KA2 has brought about in your school?



*

16. What effects do you think participation in KA2 has had on organisational development in your school (e.g. coping with new challenges, implementation of innovations)? Please indicate to what extent you agree with the statements below. Participation in KA2 has contributed to ...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
a new organisational structure in the school (e.g. adaptation of organisational chart, management team, etc.)					
new subjects, curricula or pedagogical activities in the school					
digitalisation in schools					
social inclusion in the school					
sustainability in the school					
stronger cooperation with labour market players and civil society					
the bearing of values such as freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination in the school					



17. What other organisational development effects, outcomes or changes do you think participation in KA2 has brought about in your school (e.g. coping with new challenges, implementation of innovations, and so on)?



* **18. What effects do you think participation in KA2 has had on internationalisation in your school? Please indicate to what extent you agree with the statements below. Participation in KA2 has helped ...**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
a vision and strategy around internationalisation was developed					
a team responsible for internationalisation was set up					
the management of European funds has been professionalised					
an international network has been established that can be used in the future for new exchanges, internships or teaching assignments					
there is a positive attitude towards overseas teaching assignments, job shadowing and training					
increased capacity to launch or join new European or international projects					



19 What other effects, outcomes or changes in terms of internationalisation do you think participation in KA2 has brought about in your school?

Using eTwinning in your school

20. Does your school use eTwinning as part of Erasmus+ project(s)?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

21. Apart from participation in Erasmus+ project(s), is eTwinning used in your school?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

22. How many staff in your school are active eTwinning users?

- Very few staff members - less than 1%
- Few staff members - less than 10%
- Between 11% and 30% of staff members
- Between 31% and 50% of staff members
- More than 50% of staff members
- I don't know

23. What is the relationship between the use of eTwinning & participation in Erasmus+ in your school?

- Through participation in an Erasmus+ project, the school found its way to the eTwinning platform



In conclusion

24. We have come to the end of the questionnaire. Thank you for your participation! If you have any other comments about Erasmus+ or eTwinning, please feel free to share them with the researchers. Click 'complete' to send your answers



Annex 3. eTwinning users questionnaire

Impact of eTwinning Thank you for participating in our survey. Through this short survey, we want to gain insight into the impact of using eTwinning on yourself and your school. Filling it out will only take a few minutes of your time. All your answers in this survey are personal and confidential.

* **1. What is your role?**

- Teacher
- Management
- ICT coordinator
- Pedagogical support worker
- CLB employee
- Care teacher
- Other

* **2. How many teachers work in your school?**

- Fewer than 20
- 21-50
- 51-100
- More than 100



Your use of eTwinning

3. How often do you log into the eTwinning platform?

Daily

Weekly

Monthly

Several times a year

Never

4. Which eTwinning activities have you participated in over the past 2 years? Multiple answers possible

- 1 project
- 2-5 projects
- More than 5 projects
- Networking activities through eTwinning Live
- At least 1 eTwinning Learning Event
- At least 1 eTwinning Group
- At least 1 online eTwinning Course
- At least 1 online eTwinning Seminar
- At least 1 National training or conference (online or on-site)
- At least 1 workshop (on-site)
- At least 1 eTwinning Featured Group

None of the above



Effects of eTwinning

*

5. What effects has your use of eTwinning had on your teaching and learning practices? Indicate to what extent you agree with the statements below. Using eTwinning has helped to ...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I reflect more on my teaching practices					
I started using new teaching practices					
I started using new tools or resources					
I share (new) teaching practices with my colleagues more often					
my teaching practices are better aligned with learners' needs					
my teaching practices create greater motivation among my students					



*

6. What effects has your use of eTwinning had on the content of your lessons? Indicate the extent to which you agree with the statements below. The use of eTwinning has helped to make my lesson content ...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
be better tailored to students' needs					
pay more attention to sustainability					
pay more attention to digitisation					
pay more attention to social inclusion					



*

7. What effects has your use of eTwinning had on your professionalisation? Indicate to what extent you agree with the statements below. The use of eTwinning has contributed to my ...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
further developed my competences					
expanded my network with overseas partners					
cooperate more often with overseas partners					
be more open to cooperation with overseas partners in the future					

Using eTwinning in your school

*

8. How many staff in your school are active eTwinning users (including yourself)?

- Very few staff members - less than 1%
- Few staff members - less than 10%
- Between 11% and 30% of staff members
- Between 31% and 50% of staff members
- More than 50% of staff members
- I don't know



Effects of eTwinning on your school

9. What effects do you think the use of eTwinning has had in your school? Indicate to what extent you agree with the statements below. The use of eTwinning has helped to ...



	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
new teaching and training practices are implemented in the school						
education and training programmes are better tailored to students' needs						
new subjects, curricula or pedagogical activities are introduced in the school						
the professionalisation of the teaching staff was strengthened						
there is more support for values such as freedom, inclusion, tolerance and non-discrimination in the school						
an international network has been built to exchange knowledge and practices or to launch eTwinning projects						
an international network has been established that can be drawn on for						



exchanges, internships, job shadowing or teaching assignments abroad (e.g. under Erasmus+)							
---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

In conclusion

10. What other effects, outcomes or changes has using eTwinning brought about in yourself?

11. What other effects, outcomes or changes do you think the use of eTwinning has brought about in your school?



Annex 4. Topic lists in-depth interviews

TOPIC LIST INTERVIEWS ERASMUS+ COORDINATORS

Intro

At the request of EPOS, the National Agency for the Erasmus+ programme and the National Support Service for eTwinning in Flanders, IDEA Consult is investigating the impact that Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning can bring about in schools.

The first step in this study involved a broad online survey, which reached a large number of participating schools in Flanders. Now, in a second step, we visit 15 of these schools to understand in more depth the effects of international cooperation on the school.

Through interviews with different parties (i.e. the management, the coordinators, involved and uninvolved teachers), we want to gain an insight today into the knock-on effects of the experience, knowledge and outputs of Erasmus+ and eTwinning in the school.

What specific changes has Erasmus+ brought about in you, and in your school? How have these changes or effects manifested themselves? In doing so, we would like to hear specific stories and examples that illustrate this, and can be inspiring for EPOS and for other schools.

Introductory questions

- What international activities are organised in the school? Does the school participate in international networking and mobility?
- Why do you think internationalisation is important for the school?
- Do you have an elaborated vision and strategy around internationalisation?
- How is internationalisation of the school funded?
- How is internationalisation supported and managed in the school?
- Are mobility figures for recent years available? Own experience and role
- What is your personal experience of Erasmus+ (KA1 and KA2) and eTwinning? What is your role?
- Are you involved in other projects or actions aimed at internationalisation? Effects on the school
- What do you think are the most important (top 3) effects of participating in Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning at your school? What has it changed in the school/for the school?
- What other effects of participation in Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning can you identify? What has it changed in the school/for the school?

For each of these changes:

- What specific changes in behaviour, knowledge, attitudes are observed? What (lasting) impact will this have on the school?
- How has this change manifested itself?
- When?
- With whom?
- What is the link to international activity? How did it cause the change?
- Did you foresee this change? Does the result match your original expectation?

Can you give a specific example of how you can see this change in practice?



- Have unwanted effects occurred? Which ones?
 - How, when, with whom?
- How do the benefits (positive effects) compare to the investment?

Relationship between Erasmus+ projects and eTwinning

- Do Erasmus+ projects and eTwinning enrich and reinforce each other? In what way? Can you give a specific example of what this enrichment looks like in practice?

Depending on the projects participated in:

- Between successive Erasmus+ projects
- Between KA1 and KA2 projects
- Between student and teacher mobility
- Between Erasmus+ and eTwinning Dissemination and exchange of results/lessons
- Are the knowledge and experience gained disseminated?
 - With other colleagues?
 - With other schools?
 - With other partners (e.g. companies, organisations, municipality, etc.)?
 - In what way?

Support for EPOS

- To what extent does EPOS support contribute to achieving the positive effects?
 - What is going well?
 - What could be more/different/better?

TOPIC LIST MANAGEMENT INTERVIEWS

Intro

At the request of EPOS, the National Agency for the Erasmus+ programme and the National Support Service for eTwinning in Flanders, IDEA Consult is investigating the impact that Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning can bring about in schools.

The first step in this study involved a broad online survey, which reached a large number of participating schools in Flanders. Now, in a second step, we visit 15 of these schools to understand in more depth the effects of international cooperation on the school.

Through interviews with different parties (i.e. the management, the coordinators, involved and uninvolved teachers), we want to gain an insight today into the knock-on effects of the experience, knowledge and outputs of Erasmus+ and eTwinning in the school.

What specific changes has Erasmus+ brought about in you, and in your school? How have these changes or effects manifested themselves? In doing so, we would like to hear specific stories and examples that illustrate this, and can be inspiring for EPOS and for other schools.

Introductory questions

- What international activities are organised in the school? Does the school participate in international networking and mobility?
- Why do you think internationalisation is important for the school?
- Do you have an elaborated vision and strategy around internationalisation?
- How is internationalisation of the school funded?
- How is internationalisation supported and managed in the school?
- Are mobility figures for recent years available? Own experience and role
- What is your personal experience of Erasmus+ (KA1 and KA2) and eTwinning? What is your role?
- Are you involved in other projects or actions aimed at internationalisation? Effects on the school



- What do you think are the most important (top 3) effects of participating in Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning at your school? What has it changed in the school/for the school?
- What other effects of participation in Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning can you identify? What has it changed in the school/for the school?

For each of these changes:

- What specific changes in behaviour, knowledge, attitudes are observed? What (lasting) impact will this have on the school?
- How has this change manifested itself?
- When?
- With whom?
- What is the link to international activity? How did it cause the change?
- Did you foresee this change? Does the result match your original expectation?
- Can you give a specific example of how you can see this change in practice?
- Have unwanted effects occurred? Which ones?
 - How, when, with whom?
- How do the benefits (positive effects) compare to the investment?

Relationship between Erasmus+ projects and eTwinning
- Do Erasmus+ projects and eTwinning enrich and reinforce each other? In what way? Can you give a specific example of what this enrichment looks like in practice?

Depending on the projects participated in:

- Between successive Erasmus+ projects
- Between KA1 and KA2 projects
- Between student and teacher mobility
- Between Erasmus+ and eTwinning

Dissemination and exchange of results/lessons

- Are the knowledge and experience gained disseminated?
 - With other colleagues?
 - With other schools?
 - With other partners (e.g. companies, organisations, municipality, etc.)?
 - In what way?

Support for EPOS

- To what extent does EPOS support contribute to achieving the positive effects?
 - What is going well?
 - What could be more/different/better?



TOPIC LIST FOR INVOLVED TEACHERS INTERVIEWS

Intro

At the request of EPOS, the National Agency for the Erasmus+ programme and the National Support Service for eTwinning in Flanders, IDEA Consult is investigating the impact that Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning can bring about in schools.

The first step in this study involved a broad online survey, which reached a large number of participating schools in Flanders. Now, in a second step, we visit 15 of these schools to understand in more depth the effects of international cooperation on the school.

Through interviews with different parties (i.e. the management, the coordinators, involved and uninvolved teachers), we want to gain an insight today into the knock-on effects of the experience, knowledge and outputs of Erasmus+ and eTwinning in the school.

What specific changes has Erasmus+ brought about in you, and in your school? How have these changes or effects manifested themselves? In doing so, we would like to hear specific stories and examples that illustrate this, and can be inspiring for EPOS and for other schools.

Own experience and role

- What is your personal experience of Erasmus+ (KA1 and KA2) and eTwinning? What is your role?
- Are you involved in other projects or actions aimed at internationalisation? Effects on involved teacher
- What are the main (top 3) effects of your participation in Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning on you as a teacher? What has it changed in you/for you?
- What other effects of participation in Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning can you identify? What has it changed for you/for you? (if necessary, ask further questions on the 3 axes - quality of education, organisational development, internationalisation)

For each of these changes:

- What specific changes in behaviour, knowledge, attitudes are observed? What (lasting) impact does this have on you as a teacher?
- How has this change manifested itself?
- When?
- What is the link to international activity? How did it cause the change?
- Did you foresee this change? Does the result match your original expectation?
- Can you give a specific example of how you can see this change in practice?
- Have unwanted effects occurred? Which ones?
 - How, when, with whom?
- How do the benefits (positive effects) compare with your investment? In retrospect: did this make your participation worthwhile?

Effects on the school

- What do you think are the most important (top 3) effects of participating in Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning at your school? What has it changed in the school/for the school?
- What other effects of participation in Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning can you identify? What has it changed in the school/for the school?

For each of these changes:

- What specific changes in behaviour, knowledge, attitudes are observed? What (lasting) impact will this have on the school?
- How has this change manifested itself?
- When?
- With whom?
- What is the link to international activity? How did it cause the change?
- Did you foresee this change? Does the result match your original expectation?



- Can you give a specific example of how you can see this change in practice?
- Have unwanted effects occurred? Which ones?
 - How, when, with whom?
- How do the benefits (positive effects) compare to the investment? Relationship between Erasmus+ projects and eTwinning
- Do Erasmus+ projects and eTwinning enrich and reinforce each other? In what way? Can you give a specific example of what this enrichment looks like in practice?
-

Depending on the projects participated in:

- Between successive Erasmus+ projects
- Between KA1 and KA2 projects
- Between student and teacher mobility
- Between Erasmus+ and eTwinning Dissemination and exchange of results/lessons
- Are the knowledge and experience gained disseminated?
 - With other colleagues?
 - With other schools?
 - With other partners (e.g. companies, organisations, municipality, etc.)?
 - In what way?

TOPIC LIST FOR UNINVOLVED TEACHERS INTERVIEWS

Intro

At the request of EPOS, the National Agency for the Erasmus+ programme and the National Support Service for eTwinning in Flanders, IDEA Consult is investigating the impact that Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning can bring about in schools.

The first step in this study involved a broad online survey, which reached a large number of participating schools in Flanders. Now, in a second step, we visit 15 of these schools to understand in more depth the effects of international cooperation on the school.

Through interviews with different parties (i.e. the management, the coordinators, involved and uninvolved teachers), we want to gain an insight today into the knock-on effects of the experience, knowledge and outputs of Erasmus+ and eTwinning in the school.

What specific changes has Erasmus+ brought about in you, and in your school? How have these changes or effects manifested themselves? In doing so, we like to hear specific stories and

Own experience and role

- What is your personal experience of Erasmus+ (KA1 and KA2) and eTwinning? What is your role?
- Are you involved in other projects or actions aimed at internationalisation? Effects on uninvolved teacher
- Has your school/your colleagues' participation in Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning had an impact on you as a teacher? What has it changed in you/for you?

For each of these changes:

- What specific changes in behaviour, knowledge, attitudes are observed? What (lasting) impact does this have on you as a teacher?
- How has this change manifested itself?
- When?
- What is the link to international activity? How did it cause the change?
- Did you foresee this change? Does the result match your original expectation?
- Can you give a specific example of how you can see this change in practice?
- Have unwanted effects occurred? Which ones?
 - How, when, with whom? Effects on the school
- What do you think are the most important (top 3) effects of participating in Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning at your school? What has it changed in the school/for the school?



- What other effects of participation in Erasmus+ and/or eTwinning can you identify? What has it changed in the school/for the school?

For each of these changes:

- What specific changes in behaviour, knowledge, attitudes are observed? What (lasting) impact will this have on the school?
- How has this change manifested itself?
- When?
- With whom?
- What is the link to international activity? How did it cause the change?
- Did you foresee this change? Does the result match your original expectation?
- Can you give a specific example of how you can see this change in practice?
- Have unwanted effects occurred? Which ones?
 - How, when, with whom?
- How do the benefits (positive effects) compare to the investment? Relationship between Erasmus+ projects and eTwinning
- Do Erasmus+ projects and eTwinning enrich and reinforce each other? In what way? Can you give a specific example of what this enrichment looks like in practice?

Depending on the projects participated in:

- Between successive Erasmus+ projects
- Between KA1 and KA2 projects
- Between student and teacher mobility
- Between Erasmus+ and eTwinning Dissemination and exchange of results/lessons
- Are the knowledge and experience gained disseminated?
 - With other colleagues?
 - With other schools?
 - With other partners (e.g. companies, organisations, municipality, etc.)?
 - In what way?





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