A Summary of the Results, Conclusions and Recommendation of the Keycolab European Project

N.B.*The summaries below are taken from the 3 final reports of the European project as a whole. As with all research of this type there was not complete consensus and it should be noted that each partner was given the flexibility to amend training and evaluation procedures to their own settings and within the constraints in which they are working; so whilst many of the comments and conclusions below apply to all partners others may apply more to some partner countries than to others. For details of the UK project outcomes and recommendations please see the UK specific report.*

Case Study: Results, conclusions and recommendations

N.B. Case Study Results reflect the situation across the partner schools over the 2 years of the project. Research was completed by gathering information from schools/LAs or equivalent/government websites and via questionnaires completed by all partners in the project, thereby reflecting the situation as described during the 2 years of the project. It should be noted that this may not reflect the current situation accurately in all countries. It should also be noted that the results of the case study were not informed by the Keycolab research taking place.
The results of the Keycolab research project are reflected in the teacher training (CPD) and evaluation reports.

- Recommendations of the European Parliament Dec 2006 on key competencies for life long learning were picked up by all countries to varying degrees
- All the countries involved had mixed curricula - subject based and competence based to varying degrees
- The new curriculum of Finland stresses cross-curricular competencies
- From 2014 onwards the European commission put an emphasis on the development of skills related to employability
- Schools perceive that there are a lack of programmes (CPD) available for teachers to encourage the teaching and learning of key competencies; the exception being the Navarra region of Spain which has regional programmes available
- There are some European initiatives but they appear to have a low impact
- No systematic ways were evident across schools to support the evaluation of the key competencies

- There was little written evidence of an explicit relationship between project based learning and the teaching of the key competencies - it was found that practice generally outstripped written references to these connections
- Schools do not perceive teaching of competencies as a high priority - as there are more significant problems to address.

Case Study: Conclusions and recommendations
- European policies need adapting to the real needs of institutions
- There is not a good connection between European policy on education and actual practice in schools
- More effort is needed to develop training and assessment to support the teaching of the key competencies for learning
- There is a need for more programmes to promote the teaching and learning of key competencies
- Project work enables the teaching of competencies but needs to be explicitly related to each competency - practice was observed to be ahead of written references and teachers and schools clearly need to identify the competencies being developed through project work
- The Keycolab project has developed evaluative processes but more research is needed to ensure that they are systematic
- European education as a whole has pressing concerns - immigration, sustainability of education systems, programmes for employment etc

Teacher Training: Results, conclusions and recommendations

Teacher Training/CPD aims - overview-methods
- The aim is to provide teachers with the skills and knowledge, both theoretical and practical needed to enable them to evaluate the key competencies, foster collaborative working with colleagues, foster the learning to learn competency in particular and to develop reflective skills
- Modules 1 and 2 are focussed on the theoretical and were adapted according to the needs and prior training of the teachers in the schools in each participating country
- Modules 3 and 4 are focussed on the practical application of the theory and on the value of reflecting on teaching methodology and outcomes of lessons/activities

- Each partner adapted the training document according to their needs and setting
- Training was undertaken either by an external trainer or the partner association alongside the schools
- Feedback was collected via interviews and questionnaires from partners and participant schools

Teacher Training/CPD : Outcomes-Recommendations

- It was generally felt that the programme was well designed but more like initial training that in-service training; so the recommendation is that it should be less time consuming and more like professional development, adapted to the experience of participants
- Trainers found that the content was useful for enabling training
- Flexibility and time allocation were felt to be the most important factors
- It was felt that teachers need time to adapt to new methods of working
- Teachers said that they would have liked an integrated approach to media - digital tech in learning /blended learning
- CONCLUSION — teacher training achieved its goals and contributed to the professional development of teachers — distance learning of the course should be considered — flexibility is key; according to need.

Evaluation: results, conclusions and recommendations

Evaluation: methods- profiles

- It was agreed to evaluate 4 of the key competencies whilst engaged in cross-curricular activities i.e. project based learning
- The focus was on 6 children in each school across the ability range of a class aged 8-9 years at the start of the project

- The proposed evaluations were to prioritise the use of teacher observation against prior knowledge of the children culminating in a portfolio of evidence to include annotated photographs/video, children's work, assessments prior to the project and assessments at the end of the project, comments by parents, children's own comments and self-assessments, and learning questionnaires. This was to form a body of evidence which could be compared and built on over time. N.B it was agreed that there would be no formal testing used at any time.
- Each country made adaptations according to their own needs, setting and local demands
- The UK schools followed the proposal as set and created a project around the learning experiences of educational visits
- Spain (Navarra - Basque country) created and used a reporting type format to include in the profiles
- Finland included in the portfolio a learning log for students and a final presentation by students as well as developing 18 questions for teacher usage
- Belgium included more peer evaluation, and used an e-portfolio format
- Romania developed a questionnaire for the initial evaluation of pupils using a 3-tier assessment of each competency

Evaluation: Outcomes-Recommendations

- **All schools involved intend, despite current constraints, to explore ways to develop their approach to learning through direct experience.**
- **Outcomes will help to move away from a test driven curriculum**
- **Schools were able to refocus evaluations on children's progress**
- **Assessing key competencies is challenging and demanding of teachers**
- **Evaluation benefits pupils**
- **TA's professional development was enhanced by their involvement**
- **Teacher work load is a problem - time needed to develop new approaches**
- **Teachers were motivated to change practice**

- **Long term profiling considered difficultly in light of present pressures and external demands**
- Pupils are motivated to work and improve when feedback is individualised
- Families are interested in the development of skills

- **<u>Recommendations</u>**
- **Co-assessment to support high-quality and efficiency**
- **Awareness of the importance of evaluation as a key process in improvement**
- **Systematic evaluation needs development**
- **Use of a spread sheet for criteria could help objectify results**
- **Promote self - assessment**
- **Profiles are a sustainable method of assessment**