

KEYCOLAB PROJECT



KEY COMPETENCES LABORATORY

REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEACHER TRAINING ON KEY COMPETENCES IN PRIMARY EDUCATION



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Comparative Report on the Implementation of Teacher Training on Key Competences in Primary Education in 5 European Countries.

1. Teacher Training on Key Competences – the course and modules

- Demographic information of participants

The Faculty of Education of the University of Turku, Finland, a major teacher training institution in Finland with its primary goal to educate highly qualified professionals of primary school teaching, has led the KEYCOLAB Training Programme development activities and developed the KEYCOLAB TeacherTraining (TT) with the contribution of partners.

The TT was implemented in all partner countries: Spain (Navarra region), UK (Oxfordshire), Finland (Varsinais-Suomi / Southwest, Finland), Belgium (Flemish region) and Romania (Timisoara). Partners agreed on implementing the TT to primary school teachers teaching children of 9-10 years old.

- The inter-relationship among the modules

During the UK project meeting, December 2016, the Finnish partner presented the TT and explained the content of the 4 modules and the time distribution proposal. Modules 1 and 2 are theoretical and need could vary according to prior training. Modules 3 and 4 are practical application and reflection. Each partner had the opportunity to adapt the TT to their own needs.

- KEYCOLAB teacher training implementation

Each partner organised the implementation of the TT based on the common TT course, and adapted to their own specific needs.

Each partner proceeded an individual partner report of the TT implementation in their country. The participating teachers and the teacher trainers were asked to fill in an online survey.

2. Results

- Analysis

All partners developed an individual report on the teacher training implementation in their country, on which this analysis is based.

The KEYCOLAB teacher training was implemented by the partners of 5 European countries and involved 82 teachers and 13 trainers.

The goals of the teacher training were set:

- Develop a common understanding of key competences
- Applying theoretical and practical knowledge regarding key competences
- Fostering learning to learn, especially reflection skills
- Promoting collaborative working among teachers
- Developing appropriate professional attitude
- Developing teaching and learning practices in everyday school context concerning key competences

All individual reports show that the goals were achieved to a greater or lesser degree:

In Finland teachers already had a very good knowledge and competence concerning key competences, the actual curriculum and project work in a collaborative manner. All of them have a master degree. So the major part of the goals were already met from the start. Hence they generated a project plan that focused on key competences concerning the need of the teachers. The main focus was how to realize the key competences in the lessons and to exercise cooperative teaching.

In Romania project based learning is not a very popular method. The KEYCOLAB teacher training was an effective way to change the perception and knowledge of teachers on key competences and contributed to the teaching skills of the teachers, as well as it raised a better awareness on continuing professional development.

In Belgium the overall goals of the KEYCOLAB teacher training are achieved. The teachers are motivated to change their classroom practices. The project meets the promotion by the inspectorate of competence based teaching and learning approach and it contributed to the development of an appropriate professional attitude.

In Spain the goals of the teacher training were achieved, especially regarding the professional development of teachers through the reflection module. Most of them changed their opinion on the use of project based learning methodology in their lessons.

The individual report of the UK partner shows there is clear evidence that important skills are being soundly developed through the project. The UK project was focused on an innovative approach to teaching and learning.

There has been a complete fusion of children's learning and professional development throughout, the UK project was focused on an innovative approach to teaching and learning free from the constraints imposed by conventional schooling.

All partners concluded the KEYCOLAB teacher training to be well designed to achieve the set goals. The main comment of all partners is, due to the workload of teachers, the teacher training, which is in fact not a training (initial teachers) but a professional development, should be less time consuming and more flexible so that the training can be individualized to the needs of the teachers. Recommendations made by the partners are to make a shorter version of the training, f.i. as a 'distance learning' version, to adapt the modules to previous knowledge of the participants and to certify participating teachers.

- Results from questionnaires, including results from open-ended questions and teachers' comments

Both trainers and teachers were asked to fill in a questionnaire.

All trainers had prior knowledge about key competences before the training program. They all recognize that the KEYCOLAB teacher training was helpful to carry out their duty as a trainer and easy to use. According to all trainers the training objectives were met and the structure of the training with de 4 modules is relevant. All trainers agree that the group work approach is good for the training and that the training was learner-centred. 58 % of the trainers state that the time allotted for the training was adequate, where as 33 % of the trainers are neutral and 9 % disagree.

Being asked what they would change and what should be improved most upon 'time' and 'flexibility' is the most important answer. One trainer stressed the importance of the link between knowledge, skills and competencies, so that there is one efficient assessment for all three levels. One trainer also mentions the requirement of a module of digital literacy of teachers.

As for the teachers survey most of the teachers are satisfied with the implementation of the course on the whole. 100 % of the participants were satisfied about the course, of which 74,6 % showed good to excellent.

Asked what should be changed if possible some teachers mentioned time, time to work things out, to adapt to the new methods, flexibility to adapt to the project requirements. Hence asked what the one thing could be to be improved upon the main answer as time, a full timeline to show the key events and expectations, and tools, i.e. about the methodology (PBL) and portfolio.

All questions on the KEYCOLAB teacher training:

- The training and professional development
- The methods and didactics
- Clarity and efficacy of the modules
- Context: general organisation of the course

were answered in a rather positive way (excellent – good – neutral).

The idea of presenting the project work and writing the learning and reflection log scored positive (excellent/good/neutral), as for 1.8 % and 1.9 % these aspects of the course scored poor, although no further comment/explanation was given. 1.9 % of the participating teachers thought the course should have integrated media in a more effective way (blended learning, digital technology in learning), although most participants were satisfied (72.3 % good to excellent).

3. Discussion

Based on the individual reports of the KEYCOLAB partners of all 5 European countries, and on the surveys of the teachers and trainers, we can conclude that the teacher training designed in the KEYCOLAB project achieved its goals and contributes to the professional development of teachers. Since workload is an issue for teachers in most of the countries, a distance learning version of the course could be considered (now available on eTwinning). The design with the 4 modules, Modules 1 and 2 being theoretical and need could vary according to prior training, and Modules 3 and 4 being practical application and reflection, could be used flexible according to the need of the teachers.

4. Recommendation to improve teacher training on key competences

It is recommended to make to increase the flexibility to make the KEYCOLAB teacher training more a professional development rather than an initial training and to be able to adapt the course/modules to the individual needs of teachers.

The teacher training could be enriched with more tools for teachers to implement the methodology of project based learning, ICT and assessment of key competences, i.e. knowledge, skills and attitude in an integrated way.

Annexes

Individual partner reports TT implementation

Survey participating teachers

Survey participation teacher trainers

Statistic analysis and graphics of the results