

## eTwinning Twelve Years On:

Impact on teachers' practice, skills, and professional development opportunities, as reported by eTwinners



Erasmus+

**The summary report highlighting key  
findings is available online at**

[www.etwinning.net/en/pub/publications.htm](http://www.etwinning.net/en/pub/publications.htm)

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

eTwinning – The community for schools in Europe – is an online community working on a safe internet platform that provides a range of activities including joint projects for schools at national and international level, collaborative spaces and professional development opportunities for teachers. eTwinning's unique scale and scope makes analysing the development of this network of schools, teachers and pupils especially interesting. This monitoring report, published every two years, takes stock of the action's key achievements as well as the areas in need of further development, through an analysis of a large-scale survey of eTwinning respondents. The survey is designed to investigate how the programme is perceived by participating teachers in relation to their professional practice and how it might improve the professional development services it offers. Thanks to the 5, 900 eTwinners who voluntarily answered the survey in 2016, the current report provides grounded evidence on which eTwinning can develop its services to the educational communities of Europe.

The results of this second edition of the monitoring survey confirm those of the previous edition; teachers continue to report that eTwinning has a significant impact on the development of their skills and teaching practices. Indeed, respondents' reported impact on teachers' skills and practices as well as on those of students is as high, and in most cases higher, than two years ago. The large majority continues to report that the top skill most impacted by eTwinning is their ability to teach cross-curricular skills (such as team work, creativity, problem-solving, and decision taking), and that this is the practice they implement the most, now more than before, as a direct result of their involvement in the programme. The survey results also illustrate that according to teachers, eTwinning has had a particularly positive impact on their project-based

teaching skills<sup>1</sup> and foreign language skills, as well as other teaching practices such as, multi-disciplinary teaching, students' competence development, student-centred discussions, and the development of learning to learn skills. Development in these areas can be said to be particularly well catered for within eTwinning, representing skills and practices which teachers otherwise may have difficulty or less opportunity to develop.

Concerning the learners themselves, the majority of respondents state that eTwinning has had the most positive impact on increasing student motivation, followed by fostering collaborative work among learners. The survey results concerning eTwinning's collaborative spaces and professional development services are also encouraging, with over 90% of respondents stating they find them quite or very useful. Moreover, 87% of teacher respondents state that they engage in professional self-reflection about their pedagogical practice, more now than before, thanks to their involvement in eTwinning, and more than 80% also state they use new teaching methods, tools and resources as a direct result of their eTwinning engagement. The possibility to experiment with and improve these new skills and practices continues to be the cornerstone of eTwinning's pedagogical added-value for the teachers and pupils it serves across the programme's 36 countries.

While highlighting the continued success of eTwinning's positive impact on individual teachers and students, the survey results also confirm the relevance for eTwinning to consolidate the recent work it has started in targeting schools as well as individual teachers, directly involving senior school management. The additional cross analysis produced for this year's edition of the report illustrates that there is a correlation between the profile of the school in which a teacher works and how much the teacher, the students and school as a whole actually benefit from involvement in eTwinning. The correlation analysis illustrates that teachers working in innovative schools share their eTwinning practices more with other school staff than teachers working in less innovative schools, and also consistently report eTwinning to have had more of a positive impact on various aspects at school level (such as building a sense of European citizenship within the school, fostering cooperation among teachers etc.) than teachers working in less innovative schools. In order to avoid eTwinning mostly benefitting only those who are already working in innovative environments, it will be necessary to further investigate how to raise participation of teachers working in less innovative schools. This might be done through the introduction of targeted national policies in liaison with National Support Services.

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1 Project-based teaching skills foster learners' engagement in studying authentic problems or issues centred on a particular project, theme, or idea. Project-based teaching and learning is inquiry-based and outcome-oriented.

Rewarding individual teachers for their eTwinning work has always been at the heart of the programme since the very beginning through the established eTwinning Quality Label and eTwinning Prizes, but schools where eTwinning has been embedded into the core work of the school and its staff have not until now been officially recognised. To correct this lack of recognition at school level, a new development was launched in autumn 2017, namely, the eTwinning School Label. It is envisaged that the new eTwinning School Label will not only recognise the excellent work of schools who are deeply engaged in eTwinning, but will also encourage these leading schools to become proactive in supporting other local schools, including those less innovative, to begin a developmental journey towards becoming an eTwinning School. The development of the eTwinning School concept may act as an important mechanism in the future to help eTwinning reach out to school management and to less innovative schools. This is an important step to help ensure eTwinning is embedded more effectively at the level of the whole school strategy. It will be essential for eTwinning to monitor the progress of this new development in the coming years, and for the following monitoring survey to focus on this.

The results of this survey illustrate that targeting senior school management continues to be an objective worth strengthening in the coming years. Already the limited work that has been done in this direction so far, the results can be seen in the increasing number of new head teachers registering on the eTwinning platform each year, which has risen from around 2,000 new ones joining in 2013 to over 4,000 joining in 2016. Further engagement with head teachers is a vital condition for better raising awareness of eTwinning's ability to positively impact a school's development, as well as for heightening the possibilities that eTwinning practices will in fact influence school policy and culture.

Interestingly, when respondents were asked who is the most helpful actor in helping eTwinning develop at school level the majority agreed that it is the team of eTwinning teachers within their school. This reflects the fact that eTwinning began as and continues to be a grass-root action which is constantly fuelled by its network of dedicated and enthusiastic teachers. While the programme very much supports the continuation of this bottom-up teacher-led spirit, in order to engage those schools which have up until now not benefitted enough or at all from eTwinning, it will be necessary to more explicitly target other key actors, as the programme is already beginning to do. These include head teachers, to support organisational changes at school level, and Ministries of Education, to embed eTwinning better in national policies. 18% of teachers working in innovative schools declared their school head as the most helpful actor, in comparison to only 6% of teachers working in less innovative schools. This result suggests that teachers working in less innovative schools are less likely to benefit from leadership that supports the further development of eTwinning within the school. This underlines the need for eTwinning to think carefully about possible effective

strategies to reach out to less innovative schools and to work with head teachers who may be working in challenging circumstances currently preventing them from supporting eTwinning.

Thanks to the country level analysis featured for the first time in this second edition of the monitoring report, some important national differences have been observed which the Central Support Service and National Support Services may usefully use as guidance in the future to provide tailored policies at national level. For example, according to the specific respondents of this survey we see that currently in Turkey it is the school heads that are mostly driving eTwinning forward within their schools, whereas in comparison, school heads in Portugal seem to have a minor role in this regard and it is rather eTwinning ambassadors who are considered to be the most effective actors. Such interesting results demand further investigation, and it will be up to the National Support Services to contextualise these findings, knowing the situation in their country and probing further. Any more in-depth analysis at country level would require more respondents from a greater number of participating countries. Nevertheless, we are hopeful that the number of respondents will increase as the survey becomes a regular practice and the communication on its importance for the pedagogical and managerial dimensions of eTwinning is enhanced. This would allow for a more meaningful analysis at global and country level.



# INTRODUCTION

## What is eTwinning?

eTwinning – The community for schools in Europe – is an online community working on a safe internet platform that provides a range of activities from joint projects for schools at national and international level, to collaborative spaces and professional development opportunities for teachers. The action is currently funded by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ programme. However, eTwinning's beginning precedes Erasmus+ as it started twelve years ago in 2005. The eTwinning community has gathered more than 500,000 registered users over its twelve years of existence.

eTwinning offers a high level of support for its users. In each of the participating countries (currently 362) a National Support Service promotes the action, provides advice and guidance for end users and organises a range of activities and professional development opportunities at national level. At European level, eTwinning is coordinated, on behalf of the European Commission, by the Central Support Service managed by European Schoolnet, a consortium of 34 Ministries of Education. This body liaises with the National Support Services and is responsible for the development of the platform, as well as offering a range of professional development opportunities and other activities such as an annual European Conference and a Prize Event, during which teachers and students are awarded for their involvement in outstanding projects.

eTwinning incorporates a sophisticated digital platform that has both public and private areas and is available in 28 languages. The public area<sup>3</sup> offers browsing visitors

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2 eTwinning additionally covers some other neighbour countries under a separate platform named "eTwinning Plus"; because of their different status in the action, they are referred to as 'eTwinning Plus countries'. The National Support Service for eTwinning Plus are referred to as Partner Support Agencies (PSA)

3 [www.etwinning.net](http://www.etwinning.net)

a range of information about how to become involved in eTwinning; explaining the benefits the action offers and provides inspiration for collaborative project work.



Figure a: The public eTwinning portal

The private area of eTwinning (known as eTwinning Live) is restricted to registered users, mainly teachers, and comprises a range of communication and collaboration features. The respondents of the survey are all registered users who have access to eTwinning Live, featured in the image below.

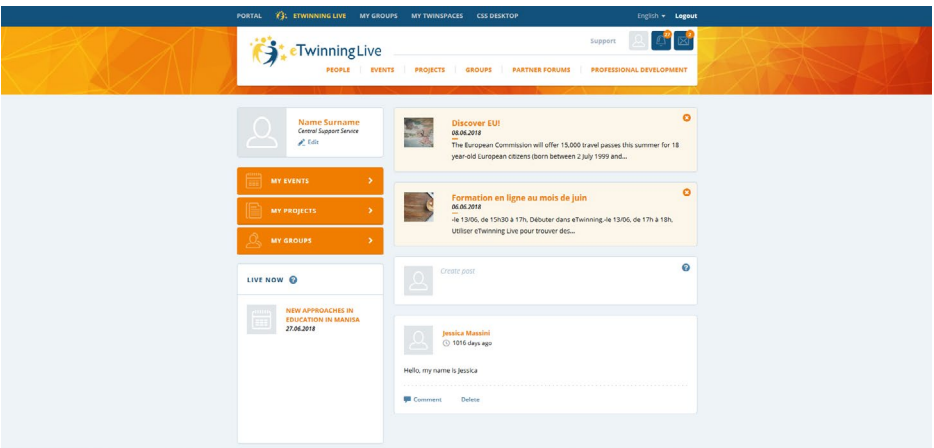


Figure b: eTwinning Live

This area acts as an interface for the registered user to find and interact with other members of the eTwinning community and includes specific collaborative spaces referred to in the report, such as eTwinning Groups (private moderated platforms for

eTwinners to discuss and work together on a specific topic or theme). It also provides access to online professional development opportunities such as Online Seminars (one-hour lectures), Learning Events (lasting two weeks) and Online Courses (lasting around six weeks), also referred to in the report. Previously known as the eTwinning Desktop, this private area became eTwinning Live in autumn 2015, and has since then offered the eTwinning community advanced social networking and collaboration features, including the facility to set up live videoconferencing sessions.

Please note that all terms used to describe various elements of the eTwinning programme are defined in the glossary in section 8 of this report.

## eTwinning's monitoring activities:

In 2016-2017, eTwinning's monitoring activities comprised of two parts:

1. The second edition of the quantitative large-scale survey of eTwinners' teaching practices and professional development activities and needs.
2. The complementary qualitative monitoring activity, comprising upscaling the self-assessment pilot on teachers' competence development launched in 2015 – "Monitoring eTwinning Practice (MeTP)".

This two-fold approach allows on the one hand large-scale monitoring of a sample of eTwinners, and on the other, the possibility of exploring in more depth the conditions behind certain trends.

The current report consists of the analysis of the first of these monitoring exercises: the second edition of the eTwinning monitoring survey launched in the autumn of 2016.

eTwinning's monitoring strategy has a long-term perspective, guaranteeing the possibility of monitoring progress over time, tracking trends and informing the pedagogical direction of eTwinning in the coming years. eTwinning's monitoring survey is updated and made available to all eTwinners every two years. Thanks to the 5,900 eTwinners who voluntarily answered the 2016 survey, the current report also provides grounded evidence on which eTwinning can best develop its services to the educational communities of Europe.

Following 12 years of the programme's successful implementation, this survey analysis contributes to taking stock of the key elements achieved by eTwinning to date, and to looking forward to the best ways to harness eTwinning's potential to foster innovation through international school collaboration and professional development.



## METHODOLOGY

The eTwinning monitoring survey is an integral part of the action's long-term monitoring programme. It is issued every two years and is open to all eTwinners. The first edition of the eTwinning monitoring survey was launched in 2014 and designed to investigate how eTwinning is perceived to be affecting teachers' professional practice and what, in the opinion of teachers, can be done further by eTwinning to improve the professional development services it offers. This current report presents the findings of the second edition of the eTwinning monitoring survey, launched in 2016.

The questionnaire for the 2016 edition of the survey was made up of 44 closed questions and took on average 15-20 minutes to complete. All questions asked were exactly the same as in the 2014 edition, except for some updated terminology referring to new developments within eTwinning (namely, eTwinning Live, the School Education Gateway, and the Teacher Academy<sup>4</sup>), and for two new questions: one focused on the impact of eTwinning in dealing with diversity in the classroom (a topic receiving significant attention at European level), and the other related to actors helping eTwinning develop at the level of the school.

It should be noted that the survey respondents to both editions of this survey were not controlled, meaning that the exact same population has not been surveyed in both instances. This means that while comparisons between both surveys can be interesting they must be considered with caution. It should be noted that the analysis shows that the 2016 results are very similar to those of 2014 in most cases. Therefore, comparison is only made in this report when a difference of at least 10% is observed between the results of the two editions.

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4 For more information concerning eTwinning Live, the School Education Gateway and the Teacher Academy please refer to the Glossary section in this report.

The second edition of the survey was launched on 3 October 2016 and was online for nine weeks. The survey was open to all eTwinners, regardless of how long they have been involved in eTwinning provided they had some level of activity in projects or professional development opportunities. Respondents who had never been involved in any eTwinning activities or projects were not entitled to fill in the survey, given its focus on the perceived impact of eTwinning on teacher's practice, which requires a minimum of experience in eTwinning activities. The survey was made available in three additional languages compared to 2014, namely: Albanian, Bosnian and Serbian. In 2016 the survey was therefore open to all eTwinners in the following 28 languages: AL, BO, EN, FR, TR, IT, BG, PT, PL, RO, DE, HR, EL, ES, SV, DA, LV, LT, HU, SL, CS, SE, SK, ET, NO, FI, NL, MT.

In terms of promotion, the Central Support Service posted a news item on eTwinning Live area on the day it was launched encouraging all eTwinners to take the survey. An [article on the portal](#) was also published on the launch day, as well as a news item in the October edition of the eTwinning newsletter. The incentive for teachers and other educational professionals was provided by the possibility of winning one of three tablets. Promotion was also done at national level by National Support Services and Partner Support Agencies.

The total number of respondents before reviewing the data for incomplete or inaccurate responses was 8,310. Out of these, 1,300 stated that they had not yet "been involved in any eTwinning activities or projects", and for this reason were not considered for further analysis. Additionally, around 3% only answered demographic questions, while a further 10% answered that they were involved in an eTwinning activity, but did not respond to the rest of the questionnaire and were excluded. The report's analysis is based on the final total number of 5,900 valid responses.

It should be kept in mind that this report is solely based on teachers' self-perception of how eTwinning has impacted and influenced their work. Where relevant and to a limited extent, links to existing supporting research are made.

This second edition of the survey monitoring report analyses data for the first time by country in relation to particular questions. Only countries with a minimum of 200 respondents were considered as it is not possible to make any meaningful country-level analysis on the basis of fewer respondents.

It should also be noted that in order to better understand the survey results and detect possible trends and further meaning, four categories were constructed to describe the profile of respondents (novice teachers, very experienced teachers, new eTwinners, and advanced eTwinners, as described under chapter 3.2), and two categories to describe the profile of the school in which the teacher respondents

work (innovative schools and less innovative schools, as described further in chapter 3.5). These categories were made specifically for the purposes of this analysis, on the basis of the data collected. The definition of each category is explained in the table below as well as within the report. The response categories were constructed in order to be able to cross-analyse the data and to observe how this affects the results. It is important to note that the relationships described in this report are only correlations, and it is therefore not possible to make any causal inferences on the basis of this analysis. While a correlation between two factors may appear meaningful, it is not possible with this basic analysis to control other factors which may also be playing a role and in part explain the data. Nevertheless, useful insights can be made on the basis of the results discussed within this report.

Figure c: Categories used for cross-analysis

Category	Definition
Novice/new teachers	Teachers with 3 or less years of teaching experience.
Very experienced teachers	Teachers with more than 21 years of teaching experience.
New eTwinners	eTwinning teachers involved in their first project.
Advanced eTwinners	eTwinning teachers who have been involved in past successfully completed projects, and are currently involved in new projects.
Innovative schools*	Schools in which teachers strongly agree or agree that there is involvement in innovative practices, promotion of collaboration among teachers, active participation in international projects, and engagement in self-evaluation.
Less innovative schools*	Schools in which teachers strongly disagree or disagree that there is involvement in innovative practices, promotion of collaboration among teachers, active participation in international projects, and engagement in self-evaluation.

\* These categories have been constructed purely on the basis of teachers' opinions, collected through the survey, concerning the schools they work in. The categories were constructed to better understand the specific data collected by this survey.



## PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS AND THEIR SCHOOLS

### What are the professional roles, age and experience of respondents?

Figure 1: Respondents' professional roles, age and experience

Roles of respondents (several categories possible)	Age of respondents	Years of experience
91% = Teachers	11% = More than 55	11% = More than 30 years
6% = Head teachers/Principals	35% = 46-55	27% = 21-30 years
5% = Information and Communication Technology (ICT) coordinators	35% = 36-45	40% = 11-20 years
4% = Special needs teachers	12% = 31-35	19% = 4-10 years
5% = Other	7% = 30 or less	3% = 1-3 years

Respondents were asked to tick one or more roles they perform at their schools. As is clear from Figure 1, the vast majority of respondents (over 90%) are teachers in their schools, and this roughly reflects the eTwinning population. Additionally, a small proportion of respondents are head teachers (some are teaching heads) (6%), ICT coordinators (5%), special needs teachers (4%), or play other roles in their schools (5%).

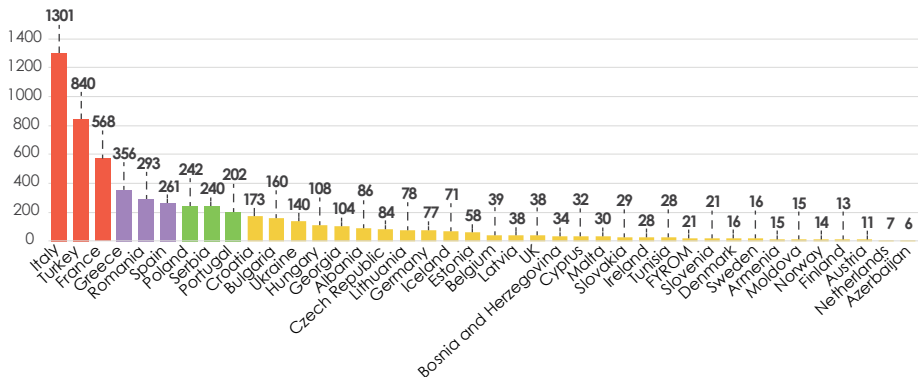
70% of all respondents are aged between 36 and 55, evenly distributed between the lower and upper bands of this age category, and a further 9% state to be over 55 years of age. Only 18% of all respondents are aged 35 or younger.

The large majority of all respondents (78%) have between 11 and more than 30 years teaching experience, meaning that this sample represents a very experienced group

of teachers. Only 19% have between 4-10 years of teaching experience and only a very small 3% say they have between 1 and 3 years of professional experience, illustrating that this survey has been answered by very few novice teachers.

## In which countries do respondents work and what is their eTwinning profile?

Figure 2: Response rate by country

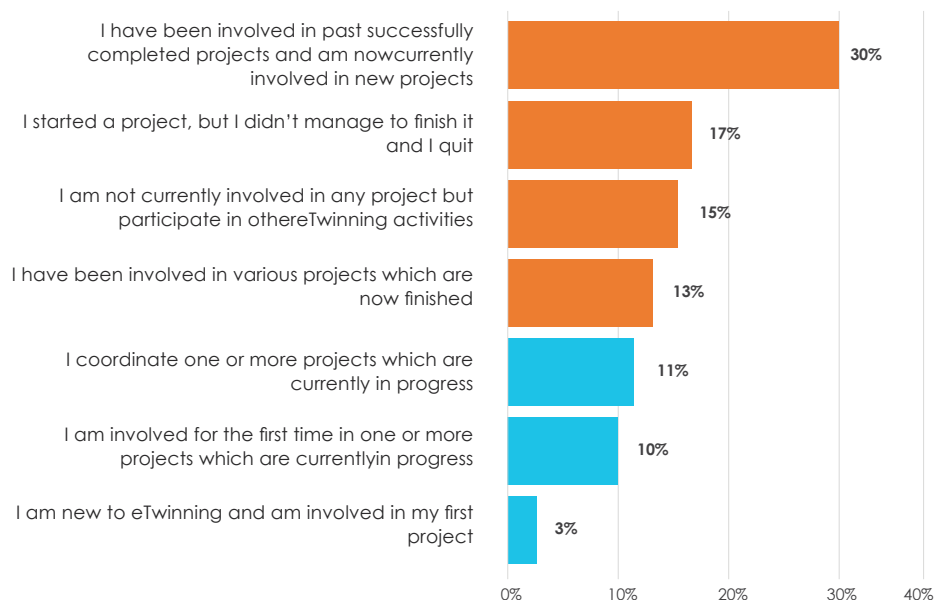


From the 5,900 total number of respondents, a significant number work in Italy (1,301), Turkey (840) and France (568) in comparison to the other countries represented by survey respondents. Six other countries have a relatively significant number of responses: Greece (356), Romania (293), Spain (261), Poland (242), Serbia (240) and Portugal (202). All other countries illustrated in Figure 2 are represented by less than 200 teachers.

The response rate by country is somewhat different to the previous edition of this survey, with Poland and Greece being replaced by Turkey and France in the top 3 countries, while nevertheless remaining in the top nine. Slovakia falls from 238 respondents in 2014 to only 29 in 2016. Lastly, also worth mentioning, is Serbia newly featuring in the top nine countries with more than 200 responses. Serbia joined eTwinning in 2015, just one year before this survey was made available for the first time in Serbian, which might account for this surge of interest from Serbian respondents to some extent. The survey was also made available for the first time in Bosnian in 2016, which also joined eTwinning in 2015, and only 34 responses are recorded from Bosnia. It should be noted however that Bosnia has a significantly smaller population than Serbia. Finally, the survey was also made available in Albanian for the first time in 2016, and the Albanian questionnaire received 86 responses. Albania joined eTwinning one year earlier, in 2014.

Let's now take a look at the eTwinning profile of respondents at global level, taking into consideration the responses received from all countries. Respondents were asked to select the statement which best reflected their current situation in eTwinning. As is evident from the Figure below, perhaps unsurprisingly, the majority of respondents fall under the most advanced eTwinner profile, as defined by the survey question; i.e. they are teachers who have not only been involved in past successfully completed projects, but are also currently involved in new projects. It is likely that these teachers, being the most active ones in eTwinning, were most aware of the survey and also felt they had adequate experience on which to base their answers. Moreover, as very active eTwinners, they are likely to have been motivated to participate in a survey which asks them about their needs and suggestions for improving eTwinning, as they consider themselves to have a large stake in these matters. There are three other groups of eTwinner respondents worth mentioning. 17% are new eTwinners involved in their first project ever. The other two groups represent active eTwinners, with 15% stating that while they are not currently involved in a project they are actively involved in other eTwinning activities, and 13% stating they have been involved in various past projects.

Figure 3: eTwinning profile



## What type and level of education do respondents teach?

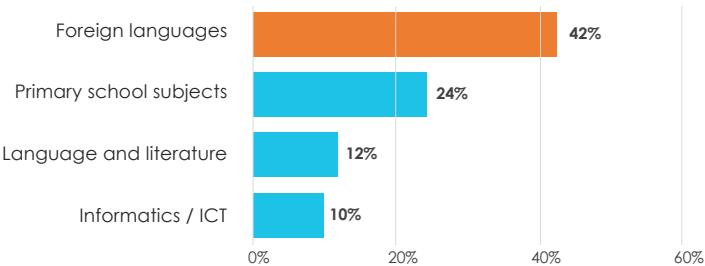
The large majority of respondents (84%) teach in general education, while 10% state they teach in both general and vocational education, with only a minority of 6% teaching exclusively in vocational education.

Respondents were asked to tick one or more student age ranges, according to the levels of education they teach. Around 50% of teachers teach either at primary or lower secondary level, or both. One third of respondents specify they teach at upper secondary level.

## What subjects do respondents teach at school?

When answering to the question concerning subjects taught at school, teachers could select more than one subject from a long list provided, reflecting the list on the eTwinning platform. The Figure shows only the subjects that 10% or more of respondents teach. 42% of all respondents teach foreign languages, which reflects the predominance of foreign language teachers among the eTwinning community (39% of current eTwinners teach foreign languages, according to the information submitted when registering in the programme). Since the beginning of the programme, language teachers have been the most represented group in the eTwinning community, despite the fact that eTwinning is open to all teachers of all subjects at any level of education. A second significant group of respondents is made up of those who teach primary school subjects (24% of all respondents, against 17% of all eTwinners). The next most commonly taught subject by respondents is language and literature (12% of all respondents, against 14% of all eTwinners), and finally Informatics/ICT (10% of all respondents, against 9% of all eTwinners).

Figure 4: Subjects taught

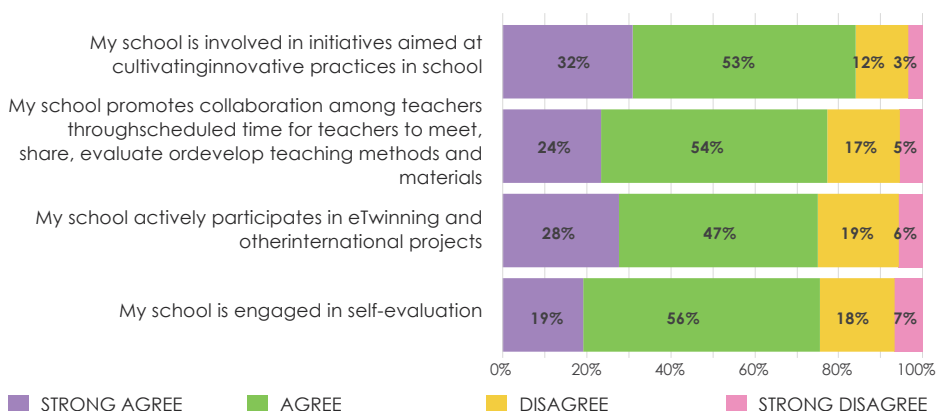


## What is the profile of respondents' schools?

To understand the profile of the school each teacher works in, respondents were asked to which extent they agreed with the following four statements:

- My school actively participates in eTwinning and other international projects
- My school is involved in initiatives aimed at cultivating innovative practices in school
- My school promotes collaboration among teachers through scheduled time for teachers to meet, share, evaluate or develop teaching methods and materials
- My school is engaged in self-evaluation.

Figure 5: Respondents' school profiles



The results illustrate that the majority of teachers agree or strongly agree that their school is involved in initiatives aimed at cultivating innovative practices (84%). While all the other items are also rated highly (above 70%), it must be noted that around one quarter of all respondents disagree or strongly disagree that these statements are applicable to their schools including teachers disagreeing that their schools are actively involved in international projects or that they promote teacher collaboration through scheduled time for this.

The evidence from this survey therefore confirms the findings of other research which argues for the need for schools to further promote teacher collaboration (European Commission (a) 2015; European Commission (b) 2015). eTwinning is very much serving this need, as stated by the surveyed teachers. For those teachers working in schools

where teacher collaboration is not very much promoted, it could be argued that eTwinning is especially important, as it facilitates teacher collaboration between schools in the same country as well as on an international level. Teacher collaboration is at the heart of eTwinning projects. It encourages eTwinners to develop together by evaluating and sharing the results of their projects with other eTwinning colleagues and the rest of their school teaching staff. The importance of each eTwinner sharing the results of their project with the rest of the school cannot be stressed enough, with a view to inspire more teacher collaboration in their school as well as across schools both nationally and internationally. 25% of all respondents also state that their school is not engaged in self-evaluation. Self-evaluation is important for schools in order to constantly improve the quality of their teaching and discover new learning processes. Through peer-learning across borders, eTwinning provides a conducive environment in which teachers and other educational professionals can critically reflect on their own school's strategies.

As presented in section 2 of this report, two categories of school profile have been defined in order to be able to observe whether teachers working in schools with certain characteristics experience eTwinning any differently. The first category defines 'innovative schools', and the second defines 'less innovative' schools (please refer to the table on page 9 of this report for the precise definitions of these categories). These are definitions used for the purposes of this analysis, it should be noted that there is no commonly accepted understanding of what precisely constitutes an innovative or less innovative school and there are certainly more factors to be taken into account than those we can mention here. Moreover, the allocation of schools to these categories has been based purely on teachers' opinions concerning the schools they work in. The categories were constructed to better understand the specific data collected by this survey.

Taking these categories into consideration, we observe that 55% of respondents express that they are working in innovative schools. Therefore, it is important for eTwinning's management to realise that the individual teachers it is attracting are quite often from schools which are very supportive of innovation. Only a very small percentage (5%) stated that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with all four statements, indicating that these teachers feel that they are working in much less innovative school environments. It could seem paradoxical that such a small percentage of teachers working in less innovative schools is involved in eTwinning, even though they would have the most to gain both individually and at the level of their school as a whole. The results of this survey are however encouraging as they show that at least some teachers in such schools, even if at present only a few, do nevertheless become eTwinners. The same trend was observed in the previous edition of this survey. It would be worth considering the usefulness of introducing national policies to encourage the further involvement of teachers working in less innovative environments.

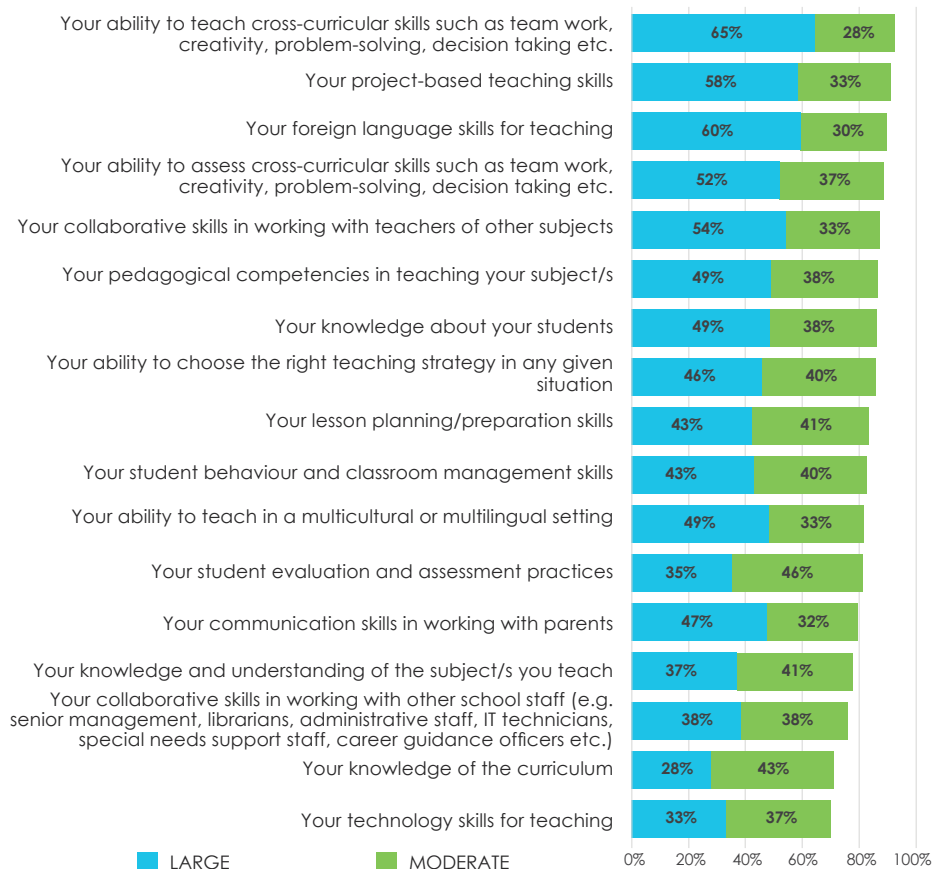


## 1. eTwinning's impact on teachers' skills, teaching practices, and participation in eTwinning professional development

### 1.1. Which skills do teachers report to have developed as a direct consequence of their participation in eTwinning?

Respondents were asked to rate the impact (whether no, small, moderate or large) they consider their eTwinning activities to have had on a variety of skills, listed in Figure 6. This Figure shows the percentage of respondents who rated eTwinning activities to have had a positive impact on their skills (either a moderate or large impact).

Figure 6: Positive impact of eTwinning on teachers' skills



The highest percentage of teachers (93% in total) considered their involvement in eTwinning to have had a moderate or large impact on one particular skill, namely the ability to teach cross-curricular skills such as team work, creativity, problem-solving and decision taking. This is closely followed by two other skills, also rated very highly, project based teaching skills with 91% of respondents stating that their eTwinning activities had a moderate or large impact here, and foreign language skills for teaching where 90% state the positive effect of their involvement in eTwinning on this particular skill. Considering eTwinning's central focus on collaborative project development in a multi-cultural and multilingual environment, it is reassuring that project-based teaching and foreign language skills are considered by teachers to be amongst the skills most improved through their involvement in eTwinning.

Of particular interest is that the ability to teach cross-curricular, transversal skills (such as team work, creativity, problem-solving and decision taking), is the area of competence teachers believe to have been most positively impacted as a direct consequence of their participation in eTwinning. Recent research including national case studies and an international stakeholder consultation led by KeyCoNet5, found that teachers are less experienced and have a lack of training on how to teach and assess transversal skills, with few tools available to help them with this (KeyCoNet (a), 2014). More recent research from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2013 results has confirmed this through a European-wide survey in which teachers expressed a high need for further professional development in how to teach cross-curricular skills (European Commission (a) 2015). It is therefore very positive and reassuring that the data from the eTwinning monitoring survey suggests that eTwinning is an effective resource in meeting this need.

Moreover, we know that teachers not only find teaching cross-curricular skills to be difficult, but also find assessing them particularly challenging. In the KeyCoNet international stakeholder consultation, which surveyed 3,451 teachers and 468 head teachers across Europe, both groups rated the difficulty of developing and implementing new assessment tools for transversal skills as one of the top 3 barriers to the effective implementation of competence-based teaching and learning in the classroom (KeyCoNet (b), 2014). Considering this, it is interesting to note that according to an impressive 89% of respondents of the eTwinning monitoring survey, eTwinning has positively contributed to teachers' development of this skill.

Teachers need to be able to teach and assess complex transversal skills such as collaborative problem solving, a skill which the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) tested with 15 year-old students across the world in 2015 for the first time. The definition used by OECD's PISA 2015 Collaborative Problem-Solving Framework is the following: 'Collaborative problem-solving competency is the capacity of an individual to effectively engage in a process whereby two or more agents attempt to solve a problem by sharing the understanding and effort required to come to a solution and pooling their knowledge, skills and efforts to reach that solution.' (OECD (a) 2015). This definition clearly underlines the specific elements that make collaborative problem-solving much more complex and sophisticated than what is commonly understood as simple group work.

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5 KeyCoNet is the European Policy Network on Key Competences in School Education, which was funded by the European Commission from 2012-2014 and coordinated by European Schoolnet (<http://keyconet.eun.org>).

The results of the collaborative problem-solving tests administered to students have not at the time of writing been published. Still, it will certainly be useful for eTwinning's Pedagogical Advisory Team to analyse them as soon as they are to understand which specific aspects of this complex skill young people find difficult. It would be useful to identify ways for eTwinning to support teachers in developing this specific skill in their students. The eTwinning monitoring survey results indicate that eTwinning has a specific role to play in helping teachers develop their ability to teach and assess complex transversal skills such as collaborative problem solving. The fact that teachers don't receive explicit guidance on this during their initial teacher training, and often don't receive professional development opportunities at national level, makes this even more challenging. Such transversal skills have received much attention only in recent years and the results of robust research have begun to emerge only recently. It will hence be important for eTwinning to monitor the results of such emerging research from large-scale international surveys such as PISA and from European projects including CO-LAB6, which supports mainstreaming of collaborative teaching and learning through an evidence-informed dialogue between practitioners and policy makers. eTwinning has already planned to further investigate the development of teachers' and students' collaborative skills through its upcoming qualitative work within eTwinning's monitoring programme. The need for this was indicated by a pilot initiative run within eTwinning (Kearney 2016).

Worthy of mention is the importance that both research and European Union policy documents attach to certain teacher competences the development of which, according to the results of this report's survey, is positively affected by the involvement of teachers in eTwinning. In May 2017, the European Commission outlined priority areas for EU co-operation in the field of school education policy<sup>7</sup>. With regard to the teachers, the Commission underlined the necessity for them to collaborate and engage in career-long professional development to improve teaching and learning. The Commission also pointed to the potential of new technologies and digital communities in supporting teachers' competence development.

Other skills reported by 80% or more of respondents as impacted by eTwinning to a moderate or large extent include collaborative skills in working with teachers of other subjects (87%); knowledge about students (87%); pedagogical competencies in teaching a particular subject/s (87%); ability to choose the right teaching strategy in any given situation (86%); and the ability to teach in a multicultural or multilingual setting (82%).

.....  
6 <http://colab.eun.org/>

7 [COM\(2017\)248](#): Communication from the European Commission on school development and excellent teaching for a great start in life ([ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/school-com-2017-248\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/school-com-2017-248_en.pdf)).

Recent research from TIMMS and PIRLS shows that across the 17 EU countries surveyed, on average, only around one third (36%) of fourth graders are taught by teachers reporting a high degree of collaboration with other teachers, aimed at improving teaching and learning. When analysing the nature of this collaboration we find that, on average, not much more than half of students are taught by teachers who share what they have learned about their teaching experiences (57.45%) and discuss how to teach a particular topic (51.24%) with others on a weekly basis. A lower share of students (42.42%, on average) are taught by teachers collaborating weekly in planning and preparing instructional materials. Practices that require closer collaboration, such as working together to try out new ideas and visiting another teacher's classroom, are even less frequent compared to other forms of collaboration mentioned above (European Commission (b) 2015). These results are confirmed by those of KeyCoNet which illustrates that there is a real need for greater teacher collaboration within and beyond schools (KeyCoNet (b) 2014). The traditional organisation of schools has meant that teachers are often isolated in their classrooms and have few opportunities to exchange ideas and insights. Only 36% of teacher respondents from the KeyCoNet research stated to have experienced collaboration and networking as a means of professional development.

In this context, it is very encouraging to see that, according to a large majority of respondents, eTwinning is giving them the opportunity to improve their skills in collaborating with their peers. It would be beneficial for future eTwinning qualitative monitoring activities to investigate exactly what type of collaboration between teachers is taking place, and to better understand which types of collaboration it could offer more support for. Teacher networks may support the development of learning communities and may also stimulate innovation (KeyCoNet (c) 2014). There is a need to increase teacher collaboration by supporting teachers' networks, providing physical and virtual spaces, and developing a collaborative school culture between teachers, students and the wider community. This can be done by developing collaborative-based approaches to teachers' professional development.

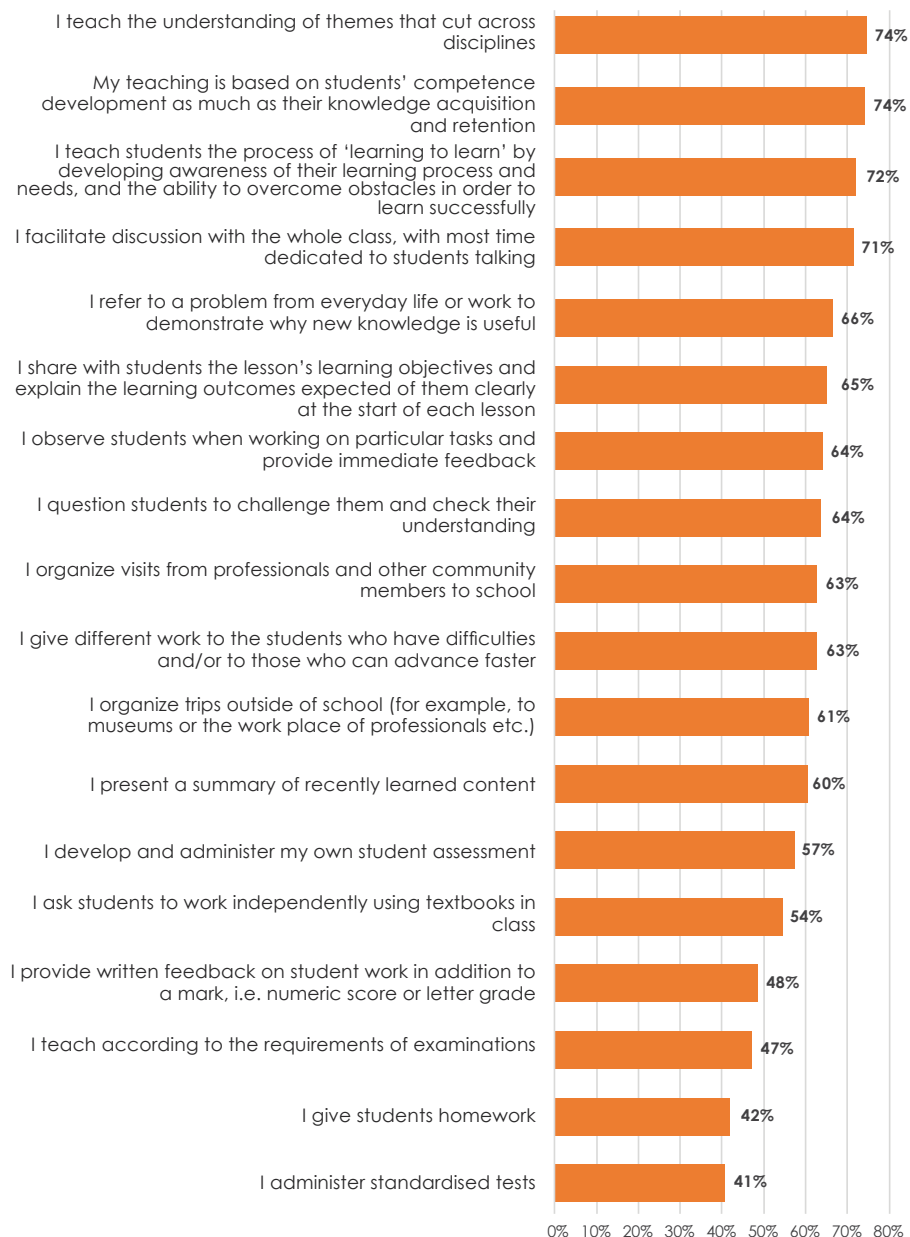
Through the new eTwinning Live platform launched in September 2015 eTwinning has concretely started to do this, by allowing any individual or group of teachers to benefit from a video conferencing tool which they can use for collaborative professional learning with fellow teachers. This tool is very much in the hands of eTwinners rather than the Central or National Support Services, and the teacher community is encouraged to take complete ownership of it to allow for bottom-up innovation to flourish and for teachers to shape their own professional development. eTwinning's Pedagogical Advisory Team, whose remit is to ensure the pedagogical value of eTwinning and steer its growth as a professional community, has recently produced guidelines as well as hosted an online learning event to support teachers to use this tool effectively and to ensure that the participatory and collaborative potential of eTwinning Live is fully

exploited. Since the launch of eTwinning Live, more than 50,000 eTwinners have taken part in eTwinning Live Online Events, ranging from training sessions to sharing practices and partner finding opportunities. Every day there are dozens of Online Events open to all eTwinners.

## **1.2. Which teaching practices do teachers report to carry out more frequently as a result of their participation in eTwinning?**

Respondents were first asked to evaluate whether or not they carry out certain practices and to which extent. This was done to capture as accurately as possible a picture of the actual effect eTwinning has had on the frequency with which teachers carry out specific practices. In a second step they were asked whether they carry out these practices more now as a direct result of eTwinning. This two-step approach was implemented to help teachers self-assess the impact of eTwinning in the most reliable way possible.

Figure 7: Increase in teaching practices as a result of eTwinning



As Figure 7 shows, out of all the respondents who claim they implement the listed practices, four practices in particular are mentioned by a majority to be used more, as a direct result of their participation in eTwinning. These include:

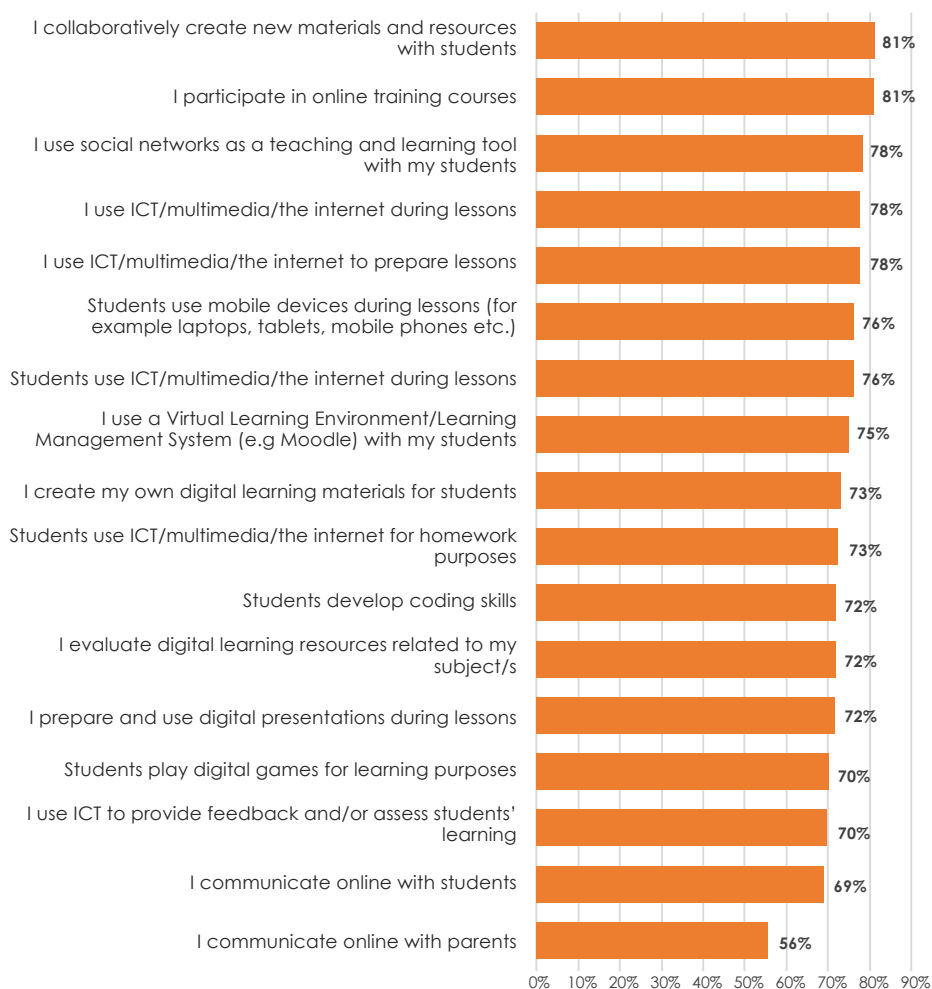
- I teach the understanding of themes that cut across disciplines (74%);
- My teaching is based on students' competence development as much as their knowledge acquisition and retention (74%);
- I teach students the process of 'learning to learn' by developing awareness of their learning process and needs, and the ability to overcome obstacles in order to learn successfully (72%);
- I facilitate discussion with the whole class, with most time dedicated to students talking (71%).

These results are encouraging and perfectly in line with eTwinning's contribution to encourage and support multi-disciplinary teaching and learning using a competence-based, learner-centred approach in a contextualised setting. The first of these practices (teaching the understanding of themes that cut across disciplines), is consistent with respondents' responses in Figure 6, where the large majority (93%) state that eTwinning has had most impact on their ability to teach cross-curricular skills.

### **1.3. Which technology-enhanced teaching and learning practices have increased as a result of eTwinning?**

Teachers were also asked whether they integrated certain aspects of technology-enhanced teaching and learning into their daily work more now than before, as a result of their participation in eTwinning.

Figure 8: Increase in technology-enhanced teaching and learning as a result of eTwinning



As is visible from Figure 8, the digital teaching and learning practices rated the highest include: teachers participating in online courses (81%), teachers and students collaboratively creating new materials and resources (81%), teachers using social networks as a teaching and learning tool with their students (78%) and teachers using ICT/multimedia/the internet during (78%) and to prepare (78%) lessons. It is worth noting that while all the other technology-enhanced teaching and learning practices are rated similarly, the only one to get a notably lower rating is communicating online with parents, which only around half of all respondents state they do more now than before as a result of eTwinning.

## 1.4. What impact has eTwinning had on teachers' use of new teaching methods and tools or resources?

Figure 9: The use of new tools/resources as a result of eTwinning

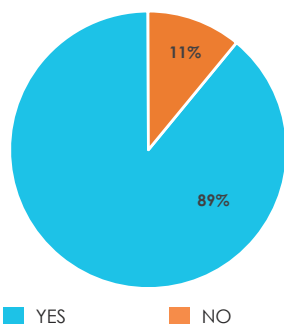
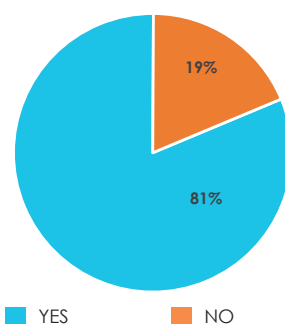


Figure 10: The use of new teaching methods a result of eTwinning



As Figures 9 and 10 show, a large majority, i.e. 89% of teacher respondents state that they now use new tools or resources (e.g. an online educational application) as a direct result of their involvement in eTwinning, compared to 81% who state that they have adopted new teaching methods (e.g. project-based teaching). Both results are very positive. A plausible explanation as to why roughly 10% less express they have integrated new methods into their teaching as a result of eTwinning, could be that changing teachers' methods requires a change of mindset and can take some time. On the other hand, using a concrete tool which one has already experimented with or seen others use within eTwinning is less time consuming and provides an easier way to change your practice in the short-term. Needless to say, however, the two items are closely related, so that by increasing teachers' exposure to new innovative tools and resources and encouraging their use in their daily practice, eTwinning is likely to in time influence their overall teaching methods, and in this way the programme can be said to support this long term change process.

Figure 11: The use of new tools/resources as a result of eTwinning by country

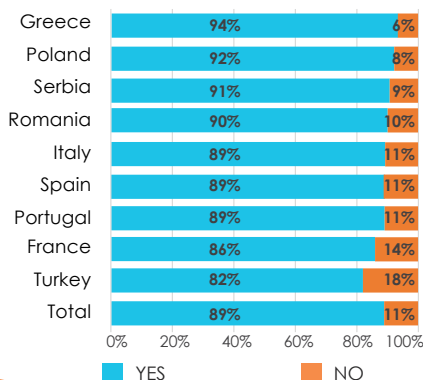
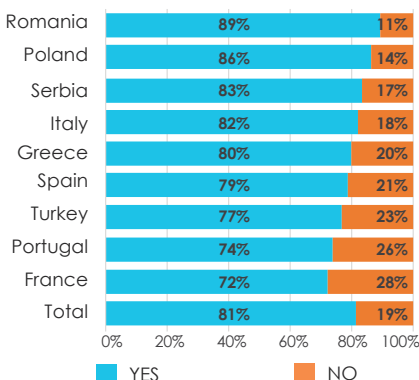


Figure 12: The use of new teaching methods a result of eTwinning by country



If we look at the data for these questions at country level, including only those nine countries with the highest participation rate, we firstly observe that the trend is confirmed. The use of new tools/resources fares higher than the use of new teaching methods. Some interesting distinctions between countries can also be observed. As we see from Figure 11, more than 80% of respondents in all countries state that they use new tools/resources as a direct result of their involvement in eTwinning. However, interestingly, Turkey (18%) and France (14%) have the highest percentage of respondents stating that this is not the case. It could be interesting for the National Support Service of these two countries to perhaps investigate with their national eTwinners why this is the case, and to identify how they might better support them in order to benefit fully from the resources and tools they become acquainted with through eTwinning. Also, in Figure 12 we observe that in Romania (89%) and Poland (86%) the largest majority of respondents state that they have changed their teaching methods as a result of their participation in eTwinning. This potentially might be because these countries, in comparison to the others in the list, are among those with more traditional education systems, which might explain why exposure to eTwinning has especially helped a large number of teachers in these countries to update their teaching methods.

### 1.5. What impact has eTwinning had on teachers' reflection about their own practice and do they share what they learn from eTwinning with other school staff?

Respondents were firstly asked to consider how frequently they reflect on their own practice in general, and secondly, whether or not they do so more frequently as a result of involvement in eTwinning. This two-step question was once again designed to elicit as accurate a self-assessment from teachers as possible.

Figure 13: How frequently do you reflect on your own pedagogical practice?

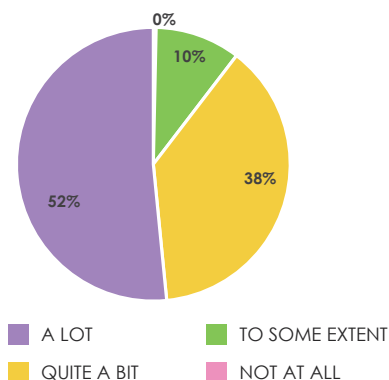
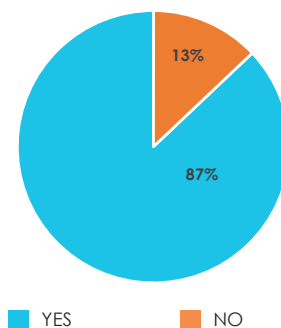


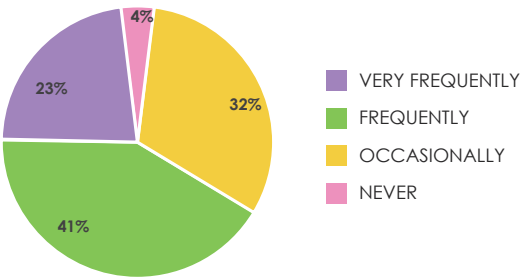
Figure 14: As a result of eTwinning do you reflect more than before on your own pedagogical practice?



As seen in Figure 13, a resounding 90% state they currently reflect on their practice either quite a bit or a lot. This seems plausible when considering that respondents were required to dedicate time to reflect on their own teaching practice in order to be able to answer the detailed questions in this survey. A similarly high percentage (87%) of teachers states that they now carry out such self-reflection about their pedagogical practice more now than before as a result of their involvement in eTwinning (Figure 14).

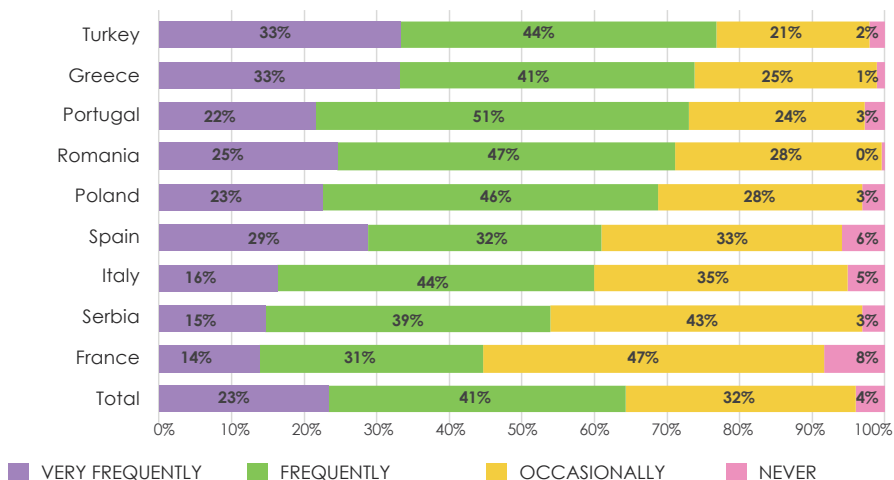
When looking at Figure 15 illustrating the frequency with which all respondents share their eTwinning practices with other school staff, the picture is a bit more mixed.

Figure 15: Frequency with which teachers share eTwinning practices with other school staff



The graph indicates that teachers tend to reflect more on their own practice rather than share reflections with others so that the school's collective knowledge and expertise can be improved. Almost half of all respondents (41%) expressed they share eTwinning practices frequently with colleagues and around one quarter (23%) expressed they do so very often. Around one third of all respondents stated that they only do this occasionally, which indicates that this important sharing phase at the end of an eTwinning project or professional development activity is likely implemented when time and circumstances allow. This report recommends that eTwinning makes a targeted effort to ensure that the sharing of results with colleagues becomes commonly understood as an essential part of the eTwinning process.

Figure 16: Frequency with which teachers share eTwinning practices with other school staff by country



The above graph illustrates the responses to the question on frequency of teachers' sharing practices with other school staff at country level, taking into account only the top 9 countries which had a minimum of 200 respondents (Italy, Turkey, France, Greece, Romania, Spain, Poland, Serbia, and Portugal). It can be observed that three countries have a particularly high percentage of teachers stating that they frequently or very frequently share eTwinning practices with other school staff; Turkey (77%); Greece (74%), and Romania (72%). In striking contrast, just under one third of all respondents in France state that they share eTwinning experiences with colleagues only occasionally and almost 10% say they never do. As a follow-up to this analysis it would be interesting for eTwinning's Central and National Support Services to do a qualitative investigation into why exactly such sharing practices can differ so much from country to country. It would be worth finding out whether this is potentially due to cultural differences, or perhaps more structural reasons at country level, in order to see what might be done in countries where sharing eTwinning practices is less widespread.

Figure 17: Frequency with which teachers share eTwinning practices with other school staff depending on eTwinning profile

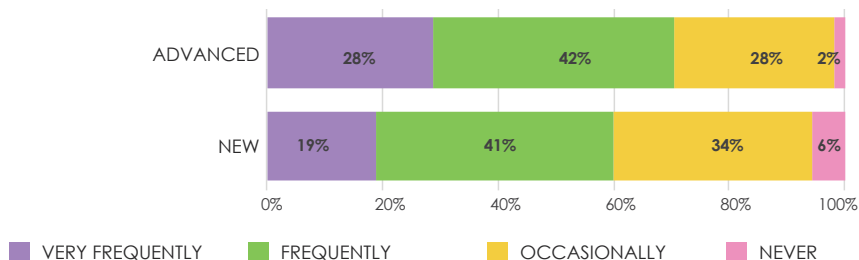
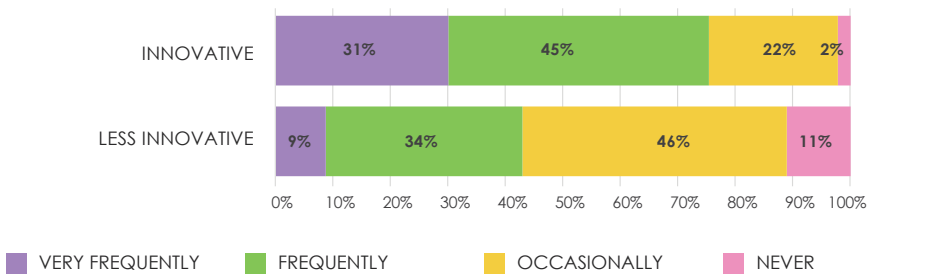


Figure 17 shows the sharing of eTwinning experience (in relation to all respondents) depending on respondents' eTwinning profile. Interestingly, 60% of new eTwinners state they share their eTwinning practices with other school staff, while 70% of advanced teachers state this. This difference might be in part explained by the fact that more advanced eTwinners are more familiar with eTwinning and therefore more confident about sharing how the programme works with other colleagues.

Figure 18: Frequency with which teachers share eTwinning practices with other school staff depending on school profile



Another cross-analysis of the same data suggests that teachers are more likely to share eTwinning practices with colleagues if they teach in an innovative school. From the sample, we see that a large majority (75%) of teachers working in innovative schools state that they very frequently or frequently do so, while by striking contrast only 43% of teachers working in less innovative schools state this. Although the difference is clear, one might remark that it is nevertheless encouraging that over one third of teachers working in less innovative schools share their eTwinning practices with other school staff, including non eTwinners, despite working in less supportive circumstances. Interestingly, there is no correlation between teachers' years of experience and whether or not they share eTwinning practices with colleagues. This would suggest that a teacher's length of professional experience does not in any way determine their sharing practices. Whereas, whether they work in an innovative school or not could potentially have some influence (although it is not possible to infer any causal link from this analysis). The evidence from this survey analysis therefore provides a strong reason for eTwinning to invest more in focusing on making schools more innovative as a whole, rather than only focusing on the development of individual teachers. This is in line with the idea of investing in the involvement of school heads, who are paramount to changing the school culture and to ensuring a whole school approach (see European Commission, 2017). To ensure that a teacher's expertise and learning developed within eTwinning is not lost but rather capitalised on to the benefit of the whole school, it is advisable that the programme continues to encourage the sharing of eTwinning project results with non-eTwinners, and that it uses strategies in the future to do so more directly and explicitly. This should be promoted as an integral part of a successful eTwinning project, and not just as a 'take it or leave it' add-on at the end.

Sharing with other school colleagues should clearly feature as a top tip on eTwinning guidance material for how to successfully disseminate project results to ensure they have a lasting impact on other teachers' professional development. Moreover, teachers should be encouraged to share with the eTwinning community examples of how they presented and discussed their work with the wider school community, through assemblies or other means, to encourage other eTwinners to do the same. eTwinning already provides guidance to teachers in this regard, but more needs to be done to specifically target head teachers and senior school management staff as their role is pivotal in mainstreaming good practice at school level.

To this end, as already mentioned, the Central Support Service has introduced, in the autumn of 2017, a new form of recognition to supplement the existing National and European Quality Labels. While those two labels are primarily for the work of individual teachers in eTwinning Projects, this new initiative called the eTwinning School Label is aimed at recognising involvement in a much broader range of eTwinning activities by teachers in the same school, from involvement in professional development activities to collaboration with other members of staff, to eTwinning promotional activities with parents, other schools and organisations in the local community and beyond. The eTwinning School label reflects the contribution of eTwinning in four main areas of activity:

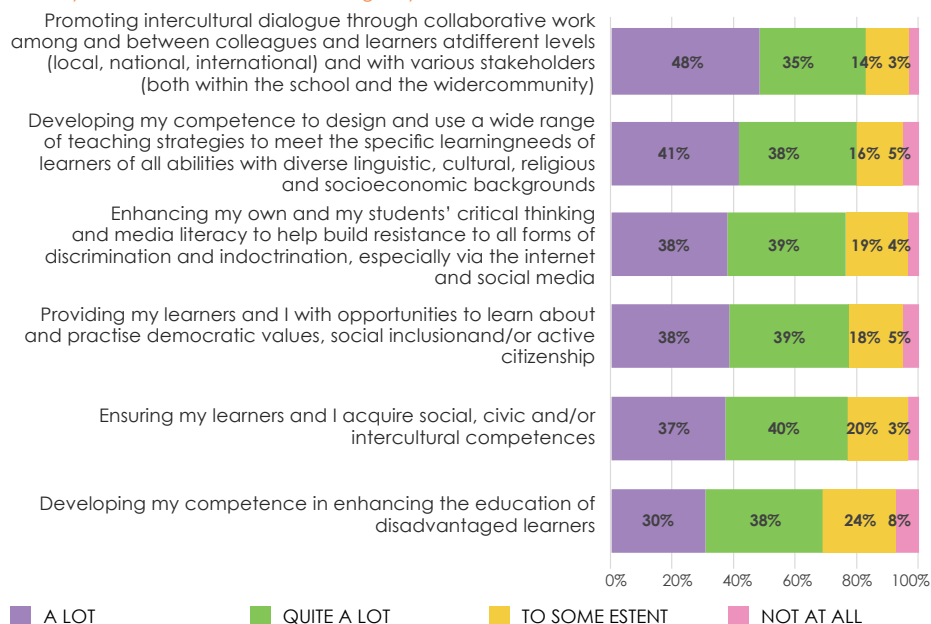
- developing eSafety awareness in the school
- teaching and learning practices, interdisciplinary teaching and project work
- professional development for teachers and other school actors
- strategic development of the school

It is likely that the scope of the eTwinning School Label will be immediately attractive to those schools, which are deemed – in the terms of this report – to be innovative schools. In order to get the label, the application has to be agreed to and certified by the senior management of the school. This is a means of drawing them in more closely to understand what eTwinning is and what it can offer to school development. It is envisaged that the schools who obtain this label will become proactive in encouraging and supporting other schools, including those less innovative, to begin a developmental journey towards becoming an eTwinning School to the benefit of both staff and students.

## 1.6. To what extent has eTwinning had an impact on helping teachers deal with diversity in the classroom?

For this second edition of the monitoring survey we chose to ask respondents to reflect on how their involvement in eTwinning may have positively affected their ability to properly deal with diversity in the classroom, considering that high levels of migration and an increase in extremist attacks in recent times have caused teachers to find themselves facing new challenges. Various aspects of dealing with diversity were asked about, including: the acquisition of social/civic and intercultural competences; opportunities to learn about and practise democratic values, social inclusion and active citizenship; enhancing critical thinking and media literacy; promoting intercultural dialogue through collaborative work; tailor-made teaching strategies; and enhancing the education of disadvantaged learners

Figure 19: To what extent has being involved in eTwinning had an impact on helping you deal with diversity in the classroom in the following ways?



As seen from the Figure above, respondents believe eTwinning to have had the most effect on their ability to promote intercultural dialogue through collaborative work among and between colleagues and learners at different levels and with various stakeholders (83%). All other items also fare highly with around 78% of respondents stating eTwinning has had a lot or quite a lot of a positive effect in contributing to how they approach these various diversity dimensions, as dealt with through education,

In the area of developing teachers' competence in enhancing the learning of disadvantaged learners, 68% report eTwinning to have had quite a lot or a lot of effect.

The three Figures below allow us to examine the data received about the efficacy of eTwinning in helping teachers deal with diversity in relation to respondents' years of experience, eTwinning profile and whether they work in an innovative or less innovative school. Positive impact refers to the aggregation of respondents who answered that there had been 'quite a lot' or 'a lot' of impact in this area.

Figure 20: eTwinning's positive impact on helping teachers deal with diversity in the classroom depending on years of experience

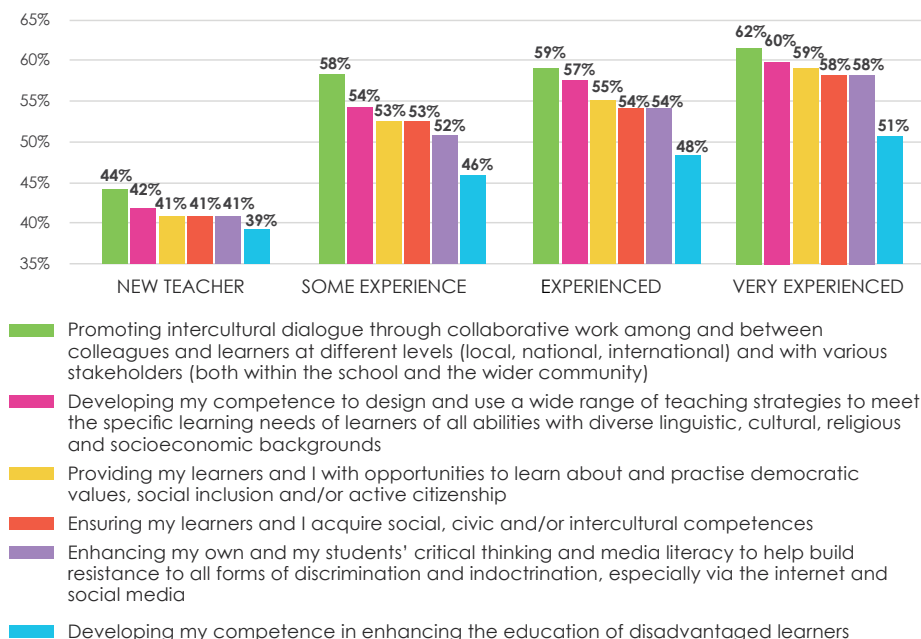


Figure 21: eTwinning's positive impact on helping teachers deal with diversity in the classroom depending on eTwinning profile

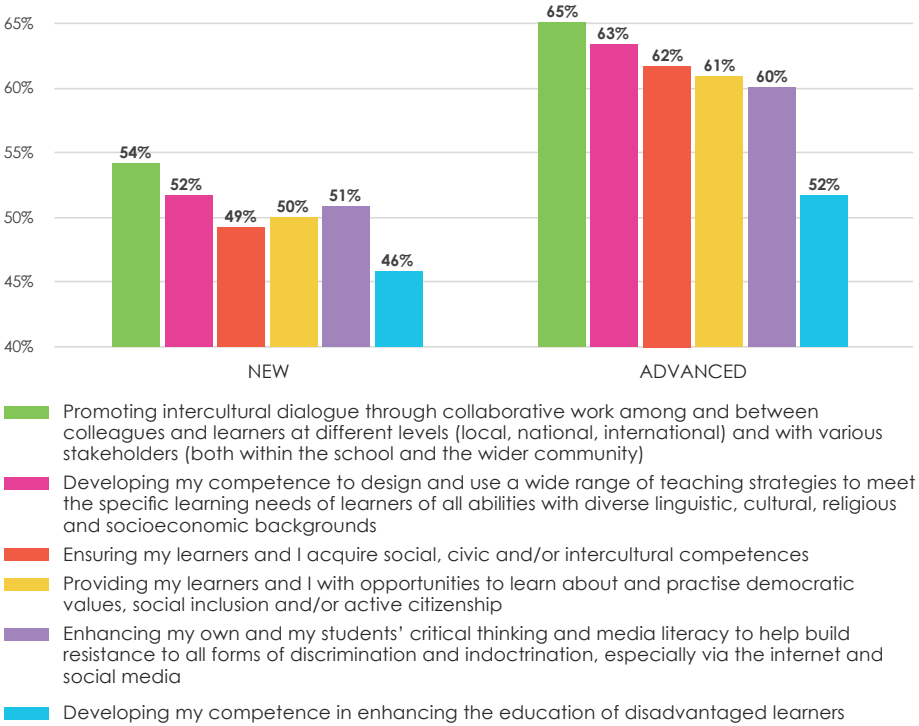
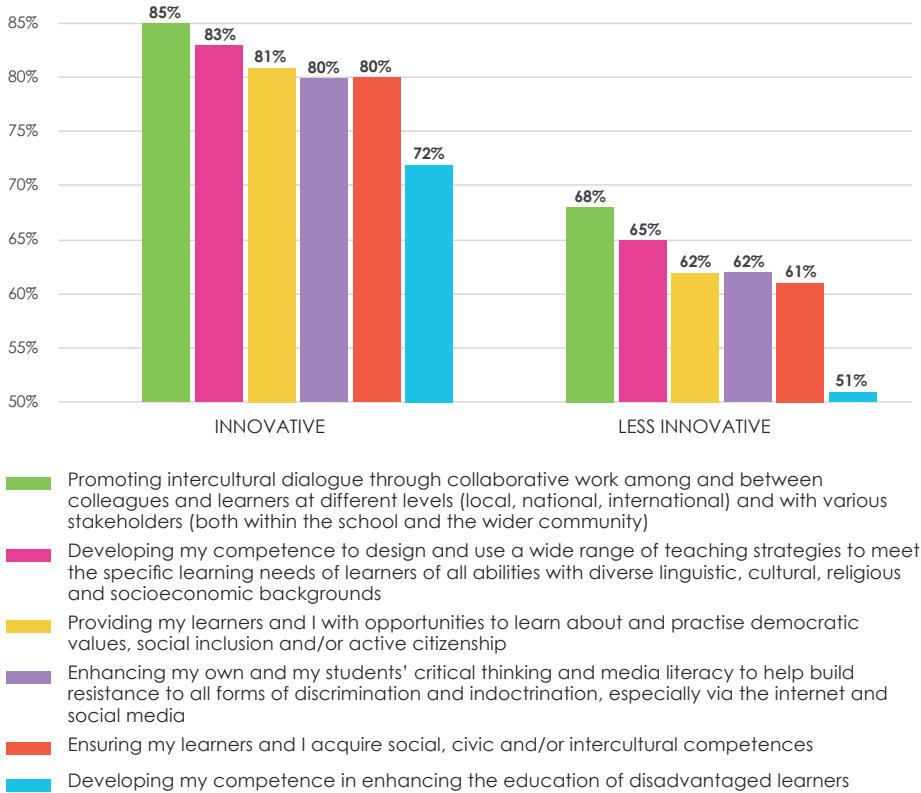


Figure 22: eTwinning's positive impact on helping teachers deal with diversity in the classroom depending on school profile



What we can observe immediately from Figures 20 and 21 is that there is a clear trend showing that the more years of experience respondents have and the more advanced they are in eTwinning, the more they report that the programme has had a positive effect on their competences related to dealing with diversity in an educational context. This may reflect the fact that teachers with more years of teaching and/or eTwinning experience are able to make use of extra resources provided by the programme and handle additional challenges such as those posed by diversity more easily.

Of most interest is the clear difference that can be seen in Figure 22 between effects reported by respondents in innovative and less innovative schools. Here we see around 20% more of teachers in innovative schools systematically stating that, in all dimensions related to dealing with diversity in the classroom, they find eTwinning to have had a positive effect compared to their counterparts in less innovative schools.

# 1.7. To what extent do teachers use and appreciate eTwinning's collaborative spaces and professional development and services?

Figure 23: eTwinners' use of collaborative spaces and professional development services

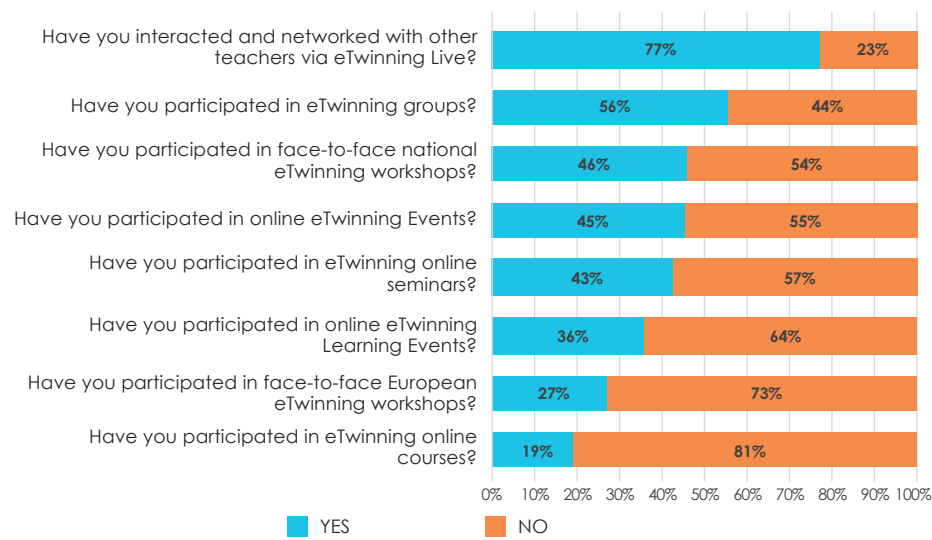
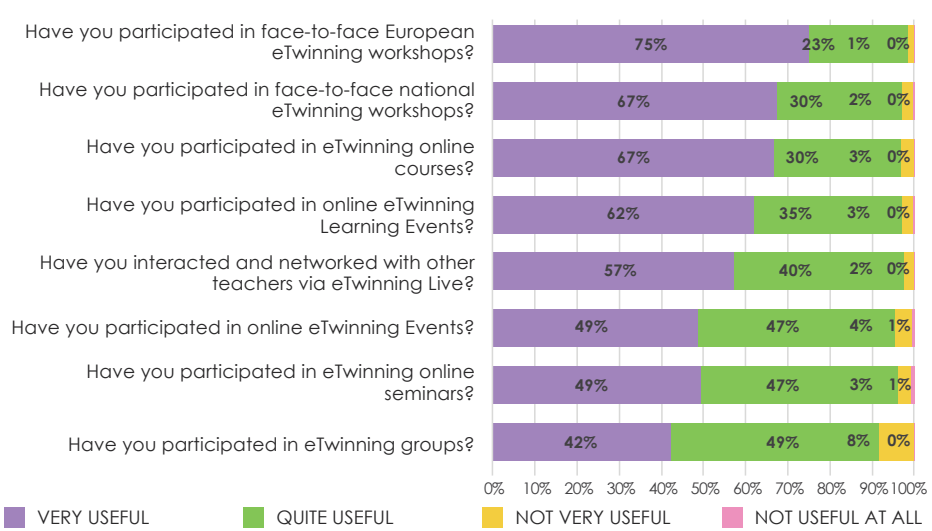


Figure 24: eTwinners' appreciation of collaborative spaces and professional development services

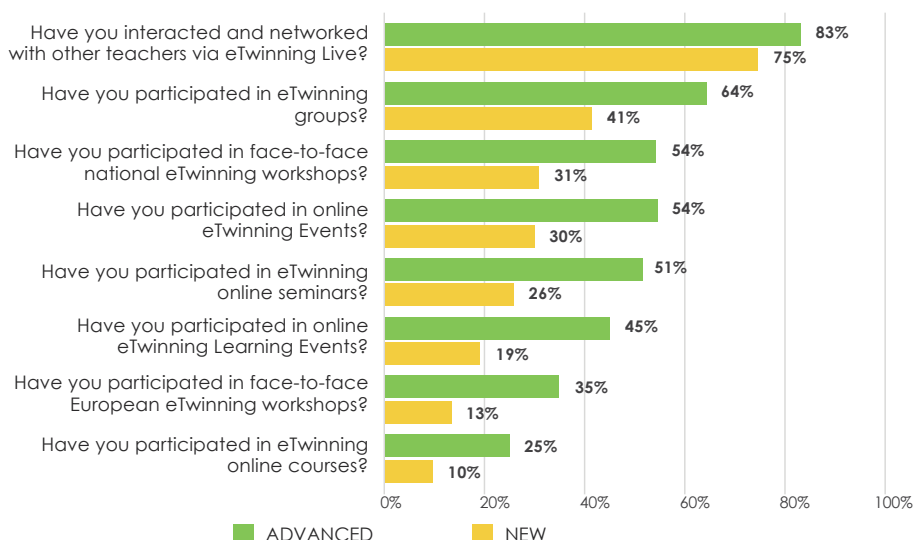


As is clear from Figures 23 and 24, a high percentage (77%) of eTwinners have interacted with other eTwinners via eTwinning Live, and 97% of them have found this to be quite or very useful. eTwinning Live may therefore be seen as a successful interface for individual teachers to make contact with other eTwinners. If we look at the other end of the spectrum, the service least participated in by eTwinners is the eTwinning online courses, with only 19% of all respondents stating to have done so. This may be explained by the fact that the participation in each online course is limited to 150-200 participants who are selected by the National Support Services and is the most time-intensive professional development opportunity currently offered by eTwinning, as it requires teachers to commit themselves over a period of around 6 weeks. However, in terms of how much these online courses are appreciated, a resounding 97% state to find these quite or very useful.

As shown in Figure 23, 56% or less of the respondents participate in all other collaborative spaces and professional development activities. At a first glance this may appear to represent a less impressive percentage of eTwinners who are actually making use of and benefitting from the various collaborative spaces and professional development opportunities available to them. However, if one considers that, on average, roughly only one third of all registered eTwinners actually participate in a project, it is impressive that a larger average percentage of respondents to this survey declare they are participating in networking opportunities made available by the programme. Moreover, when one takes into account that participation in these professional development activities is completely voluntary, undertaken in teachers' personal free time and does not always provide formal recognition, the participation rate can be considered as a positive.

Furthermore, it is of particular note that on average more than 90% of respondents who declare to have participated in these collaborative spaces or training opportunities state that they have found these to be quite or very useful. The 2013 impact study on eTwinning also found that participation in such professional development opportunities has an impact on the motivation and enthusiasm of eTwinners, and on their teaching methods and the ways in which projects are carried out (European Commission / Education for Change, 2013). There is therefore a great potential here for eTwinning to continue investing in the increase of professional development activities and to focus on attracting larger numbers of teachers to take advantage of these tools and opportunities. There is political support for this as the European Union's 2014 Council Conclusions on effective teacher education attaches great importance to teachers' continuous professional development (Council of the European Union, 2014). eTwinning's relevance in this respect is further underlined by a large-scale survey on ICT in education in Europe (including 190,000 responses from students, teachers and head teachers) which highlights the untapped potential of online teacher learning communities (European Schoolnet, 2013).

Figure 25: Use of collaboration spaces and professional development services depending on eTwinning profile



As defined in the methodology section of this report, new eTwinners are eTwinning teachers involved in their first project, while advanced eTwinners are eTwinning teachers who have been engaged in successfully completed projects, and are also currently involved in new projects.

As evidenced by Figure 25, a larger number of advanced eTwinners consistently participate in collaboration spaces and professional development activities compared to new eTwinners. This indicates that the more involved a teacher is in eTwinning, the more they are stimulated to develop their professional learning, highlighting the quality and interest of the opportunities offered to teachers. This trend was also observed in 2014. Yet, interestingly, in 2016 data we see a wider gap between participation rates of novice and advanced eTwinners. It would be worthwhile for eTwinning to continue its efforts to provide additional support to new eTwinners in order for them to be aware of and to be encouraged to take advantage of the various services and tools available to them. One planned activity which will positively contribute to this end is the follow-up to the 'Monitoring eTwinning Practice' pilot (see Kearney 2016), involving the development of a tool to guide eTwinners to specific eTwinning activities and resources corresponding to their perceived level of competence development. Moreover, the eTwinning ambassadors, themselves amongst the advanced eTwinners, have a significant role to play, together with the Central Support Service and National Support Services. The Central Support Service would do well to continue initiatives such as involving eTwinning ambassadors in campaigns targeting newcomers.

## 1.8. Respondents' awareness of recognition in eTwinning

eTwinners who participate in centralised Professional Development activities such as Online Seminars, Learning Events, Online courses or on-site Professional Development Workshops receive a certificate of participation if they meet specific requisites. They range from being actively engaged in a number of activities to having attended a minimum amount of online seminars. Such certificates typically also include the number of hours needed to achieve the expected professional development results. More generally, teachers who are actively involved in any eTwinning activity – running projects, developing community or networking activity, exchanging practice with other peers, organising and/or attending online events, have their efforts validated via the 'Progression Bar', visible in their user profiles on eTwinning Live. This Progression Bar measures the level of involvement in four areas communication, collaboration, professional development and networking and quality. This feature visually represents how far teachers have progressed in their 'eTwinning journey', and also indicates how strong such teachers are in each of these areas. The Progression Bar is both a way to immediately assess one's involvement in eTwinning but also to identify the level of expertise and commitment of other colleagues who may potentially become partners in projects or in other collaborative ventures.

Figure 26: eTwinners' awareness of certificate of participation

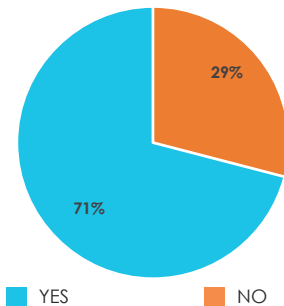
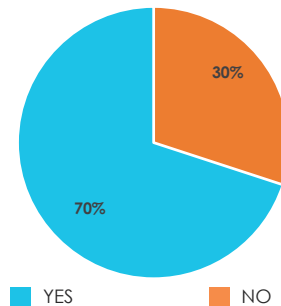
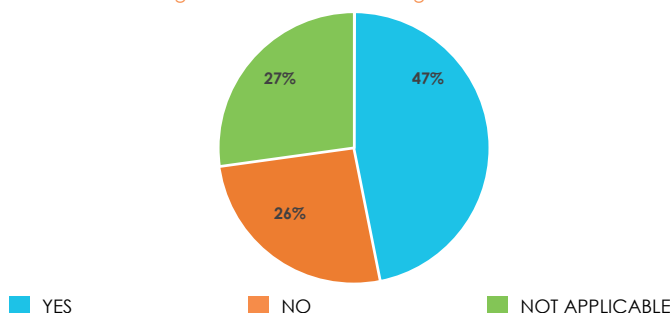


Figure 27: eTwinners' awareness of Progression Bar on eTwinning Live profile



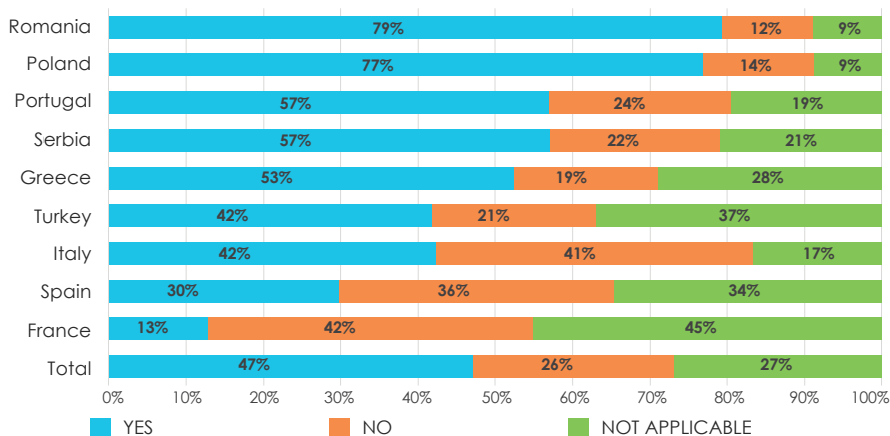
As evident from Figures 26 and 27, around 70% of respondents are aware of the possibility of receiving recognition through the awarding of certificates of participation in professional development activities and the Progression Bar on the eTwinning Live profile. Efforts are needed at the level of the Central Support Service and National Support Services to ensure that a larger majority of eTwinners are aware of these recognition features, as this may well be another motivating reason for teachers to become further involved in eTwinning.

Figure 28: Usefulness of eTwinning certificates for advancing eTwinners' careers



Just under half of all respondents (47%) state that receiving an eTwinning certificate of participation for the professional development opportunities they partake in is useful for their career development. This figure is 10% lower than the percentage of teachers who stated this to be the case in 2014. This is noteworthy, as it indicates that despite there being to some extent a lack of formal recognition of professional development undertaken within eTwinning, a substantial amount of teachers still partake in it and consider it to be useful, as illustrated by Figures 23 and 24. Measures such as further promotion on the eTwinning portal, in national communication (for instance circulars from school authorities) as well as other promotional activities are starting to be implemented in many countries to ensure that all eTwinners are aware of the recognition opportunities eTwinning offers, as this can act as an important motivating force for teachers to actively engage. This is currently being discussed at European level, and national Ministries of Education have been involved, since 2016, in a specific working group with the aim to embed eTwinning in the national school education system. Specific work has been carried out in the areas of innovation, professional development and curriculum to explore how eTwinning might be best integrated into national policies, and how the work of eTwinners might be better recognised.

Figure 29: Usefulness of eTwinning certificates for advancing eTwinners' careers by country

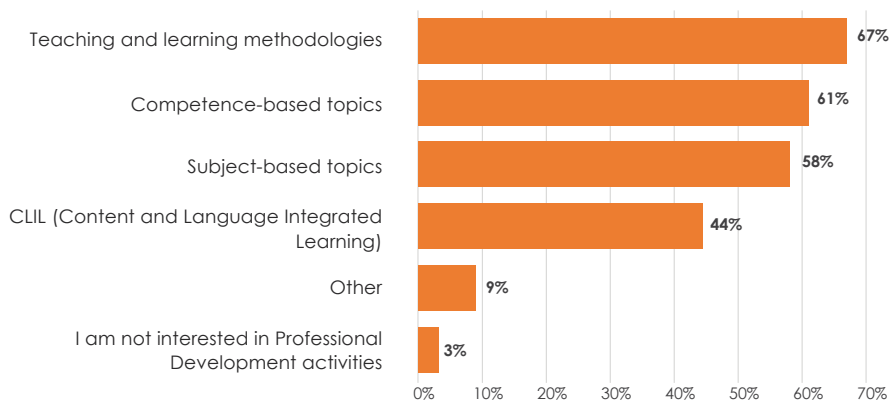


When analysing the responses to this question at country level, we observe quite a varied picture. While countries such as Romania and Poland have almost 80% of teachers stating that eTwinning recognition in the form of certificates is useful for their career advancement, only 30% state this to be the case in Italy and a mere 13% state the same in France. This may well reflect the fact that in Romania and Poland there is a closer relationship between those managing eTwinning at national level and the Ministries of Education – and this is reflected in the way eTwinning activities are formally recognised, whereas in France and Italy formal recognition requires a rather long and complex process involving school authorities, if it happens at all. As already mentioned, the Central and National Support Services are working together with the European Commission to adjust and improve the conditions for eTwinning to become more useful to teachers' career development in a greater number of countries.

## 1.9. In the future, on what topics and in which format would eTwinners prefer professional development activities to be delivered to them?

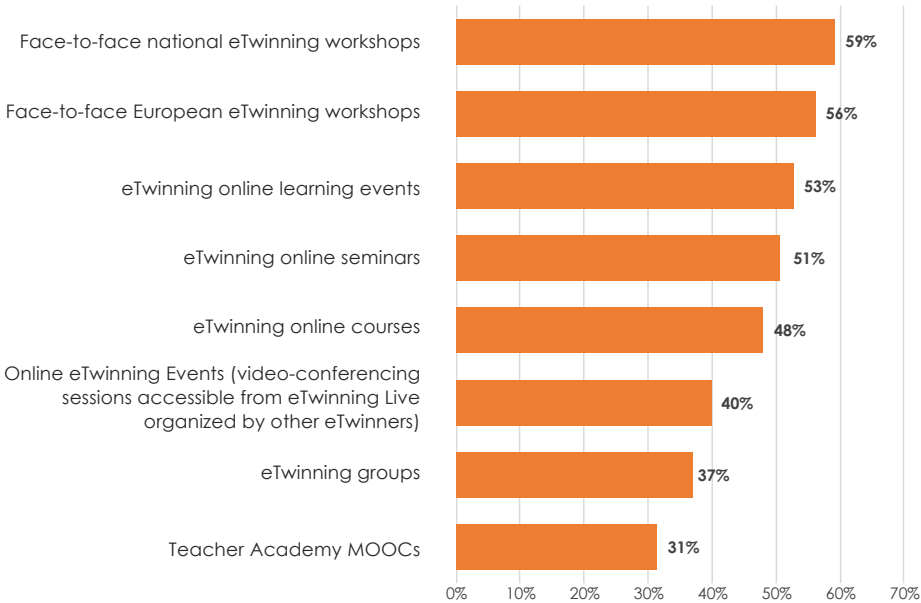
With a view to best adapt the PD offer in the next 2 years, respondents were asked to select one or more of the options seen in Figure 30 to indicate the topics they would most like to receive professional development on, in the future, via eTwinning. Teachers' preferred topic for professional development according to respondents is teaching and learning methodologies (67%), closely followed by competence-based topics (61%) and subject-based topics (58%). Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is less popular with respondents, with only 44% showing interest. This is unsurprising as while the other topics are more generic and relevant to all teachers, CLIL is rather a specific area practised and of interest to a relatively smaller number of teachers.

Figure 30: Preferred topics for professional development



When analysing teachers' preferences for professional development at national level, we see that most of the countries with the highest number of responses follow the European trend quite closely, with a few interesting country distinctions. France is the only country to have below 50% of respondents stating that professional development devoted to teaching and learning methodologies is amongst their preferences as compared to other countries with between 58% and 75%. This may be in part because they receive sufficient and satisfactory training in teaching and learning methodologies through national continuous professional development programmes, and rather turn to eTwinning for professional development in other areas such as subject-based topics (61%) and competence-based topics (59%). The country most interested in competence-based professional development is Greece (73%), and the one most interested in subject-based professional development is Turkey (69%). Most countries have less than 50% of respondents favouring CLIL-related professional development, except in Spain (60%) and Italy (56%).

Figure 31: Preferred formats for professional development



As illustrated by Figure 31, face-to-face national and European professional development workshops are rated most highly by teachers, with 59% and 56% of them respectively stating these to be their preferred formats for future professional development within eTwinning. This result is consistent with Figure 24 which reveals that around 98% of teachers find the face-to-face professional development activities they have already participated in to be quite or very useful.

In terms of the online professional development offered, respondents most preferred format is that of the online Learning Events. It is interesting to observe that established online professional development opportunities (which have been already running for several years, including online Learning Events, Seminars and Courses), are preferred in terms of format by a higher percentage of respondents in comparison to newer forms of professional development (namely, the online eTwinning events and Teacher Academy Massive Open Online Courses) which have been introduced within eTwinning rather recently in 2016. This, on one side, has to do with the limited offer at the time of the survey (late 2016) and on the other with teachers being less familiar with these newer opportunities within eTwinning. It will be interesting to monitor whether respondents' preferences change in the coming years once these most recent additions to the professional development offer of eTwinning become more established.

While we observed in Figure 24 that respondents appreciated various online professional development activities to the same extent, we noticed that the participation in these events was not to the same degree. Just as the participation in the eTwinning online courses was the lowest, so is its rating in terms of preferred format (even if only slightly lower). This cross analysis could indicate that while online Learning Events and online courses are appreciated to the same degree, they are not participated in to the same degree potentially because of their difference in format (although it is impossible on the basis of this data to infer a causal link). While online Learning Events last only two weeks, online courses last around 6 weeks, so it is possible that the shorter format is more convenient for teachers' busy schedules, hence why it may have a higher rating as a preferred format. This trend was also apparent in the 2014 data. Moreover, it should be noted that online courses, while open to all eTwinners, have specific target audiences (eTwinning ambassadors, online moderators), and participants are proposed by National Support Services via a quota per country, which also accounts for their lower participation.

## **ETWINNING'S IMPACT ON TEACHERS' SKILLS, TEACHING PRACTICES AND PARTICIPATION IN ETWINNING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN A NUTSHELL**

According to the respondents of the 2017 eTwinning monitoring survey:

- Teachers feel that eTwinning has had a particularly positive impact on their cross-curricular teaching skills, project-based teaching skills and foreign language teaching skills.
- eTwinning has also positively effected their collaborative skills in working with teachers of other subjects, their knowledge about students, their pedagogical competencies in teaching a particular subject/s, their ability to choose the right teaching strategy in any given situation, and the ability to teach in a multicultural or multilingual setting.
- As a result of their involvement in eTwinning, eTwinners engage in more multidisciplinary teaching as well as focus on developing students' competences as much as their knowledge acquisition.
- eTwinners teach their students the process of 'learning to learn' more now than before as a result of their eTwinning engagement, and also dedicate time to student-focused whole class discussions.
- As a result of eTwinning, teachers have increased their participation in online training courses as well as their use of ICT and social media as teaching tools.
- A large majority of teachers have integrated new tools, resources and teaching methods into their practice thanks to their involvement in eTwinning.
- eTwinning encourages teachers to reflect on their own teaching practice, although this does not necessarily mean that such reflections are shared with colleagues at school level, especially in less innovative schools.
- Experienced teachers and advanced eTwinners, and all those working in innovative schools, are better placed to deal with diversity thanks to their participation in eTwinning activities.

- More than 90% on average of teachers who have participated in eTwinning's collaborative spaces and training opportunities find them to be quite or very useful.
- eTwinners (both new and advanced) particularly enjoy interacting via eTwinning Live and use eTwinning Groups quite a lot.
- Advanced eTwinners are strongly involved in professional development activities taking place on the platform although just under half of all respondents state that formal recognition in eTwinning through certificates awarded for participation in specific professional development events is useful for their career development at national level

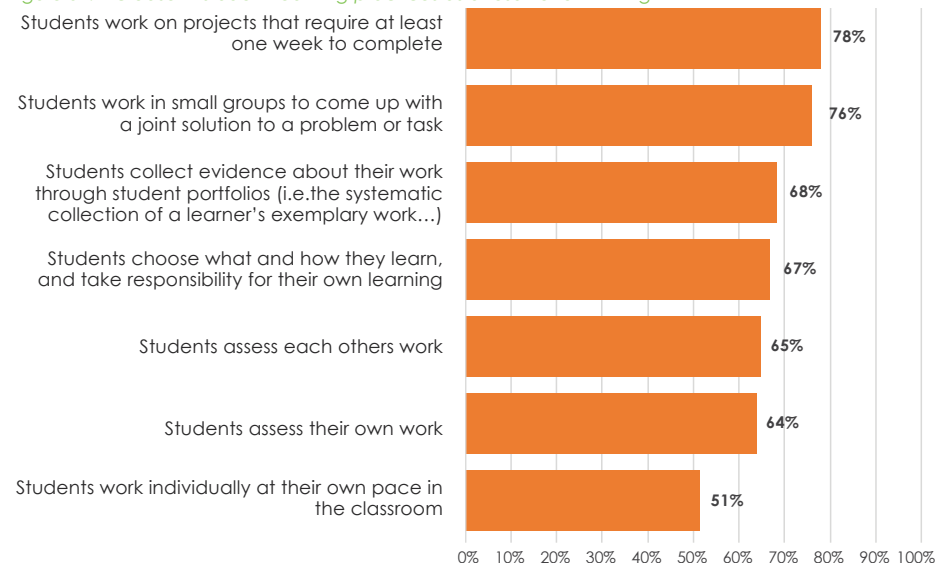


## 2. eTwinning's impact on students' learning

Whilst the main target population of eTwinning are teachers, the programme also has an impact on students. This short section looks at how the respondents perceive the increase of their student's learning practices as a result of involvement in eTwinning and the varied effects of eTwinning on other aspects of student behaviour.

### 2.1. Which student learning practices have increased as a result of eTwinning?

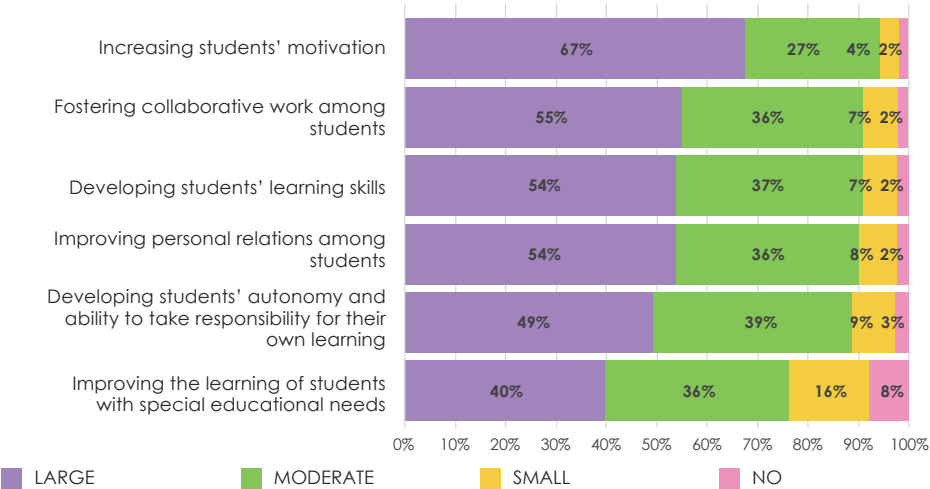
Figure 32: Increase in student learning practices as a result of eTwinning



As Figure 32 demonstrates, 78% of teachers report that, as a result of working through eTwinning, their students are more involved than ever before in project work lasting at least one week. Nearly as many teachers (76%) state that, thanks to eTwinning, they now engage students in small group work more than they did before, allowing them to work on collaborative problem solving. It is very promising to observe such a high percentage of teachers integrating these 21st century teaching methods more often into their daily teaching and attributing this increase in frequency directly to their involvement in eTwinning.

## 2.2. What level of impact has eTwinning had at student level?

Figure 33: eTwinning's impact at student level



According to teacher respondents the largest effect eTwinning has had on their students is increasing their motivation, with an overwhelming 94% of teachers declaring eTwinning to have had a large or moderate impact on this. This is an encouraging result echoing the previous edition, which confirms that eTwinning continues to be a positive force in the current context of high school drop-out rates in Europe. This result is closely followed by fostering collaborative work among students, which 91% of teachers believed eTwinning to have contributed to, to a large or moderate extent. Without the programme specifically targeting this group in particular, 76% of respondents nevertheless state that eTwinning has had a moderate or large effect on improving the learning of students with special educational needs. This is an area which affects a relatively small proportion of the teacher and student population, yet is an important one which often does not receive enough attention. eTwinning might

consider whether it has a role to play in being more proactive in this area and which kind of support it could offer teachers working with students with special educational needs.

### **ETWINNING'S IMPACT ON STUDENTS' LEARNING IN A NUTSHELL**

According to the respondents of the 2017 eTwinning monitoring survey:

- An overwhelming majority of eTwinners believe eTwinning increases students' motivation and improves their interpersonal relations through fostering collaborative work among students.
- Thanks to eTwinning, students are more engaged in project work, small group work focused on collaborative problem solving, and also create, together with their teachers, new materials and resources.

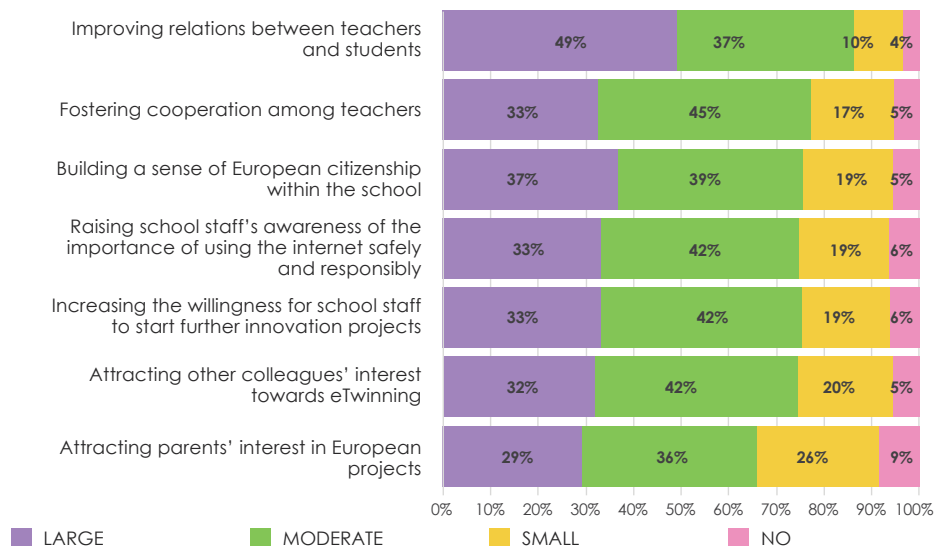


## 3. eTwinning's impact on schools

### 3.1. What level of impact does eTwinning have at school level?

Teachers were asked about the extent to which eTwinning has impacted their school as a whole in relation to various factors (listed in Figure 34 below).

Figure 34: eTwinning's impact at school level



The general trend is that around one third of all respondents state there has been a large impact on most areas, around 40% state that this impact is moderate, roughly 20% state it is small, and less than 10% state there is no impact at all. There are however two interesting exceptions. Improving relations between teachers and students is the aspect on which the largest majority of respondents (86%) agree eTwinning to have

had a moderate or large impact on in their schools. This is a very positive result, proving that although eTwinning most explicitly targets teachers in the first place, the ultimate impact of the programme is on the learners themselves. The only other area which is rated slightly higher in terms of impact compared to the others is building a sense of European citizenship within the school, with 76% of teachers in total agreeing that eTwinning has had a positive impact in this respect to a moderate or large degree. This is also very encouraging since fostering a sense of citizenship and solidarity has been particularly relevant and important in recent times, in the context of the refugee crisis in Europe and the series of terrorist attacks worldwide. A substantial amount (65%) of respondents state that the programme has helped to attract the interest of parents in European educational projects; comparatively, this aspect is also the least positively rated, with over a third of all respondents stating that eTwinning has had no or only a small impact in this regard. This relative lesser impact in relation to parents recalls an earlier finding in section 5.2 where we observed that communicating online with parents was rated by around half of all teachers as not increasing, as a result of their involvement in eTwinning. This may be because, until now, parental involvement has not been a priority for eTwinning and has not received much dedicated attention. It is worth noting here that this is, of course, an integral part of the activities required for the new eTwinning School Label and will be interesting for eTwinning to monitor in the coming years.

### **3.2. Is the impact of eTwinning reported differently by novice and experienced teachers, or teachers working in innovative or less innovative schools?**

In order to understand this school impact data a little better, we cross-analysed it with certain categories of respondents, to see whether we observe any trends.

Firstly, we investigated whether teachers' years of experience had any potential bearing on their opinion of eTwinning's impact at school level. To do this, we categorised 'novice teachers' as those with 3 years or less teaching experience, and 'very experienced' teachers as those with 21 or more years of teaching experience.

By comparing Figures 35 and 36 we can conclude that the length of experience as a teacher does not seem to have any bearing on how much eTwinning eventually impacts their school, as the results for novice and very experienced teachers are very similar.

Figure 35: eTwinning's impact at school level (novice teachers)

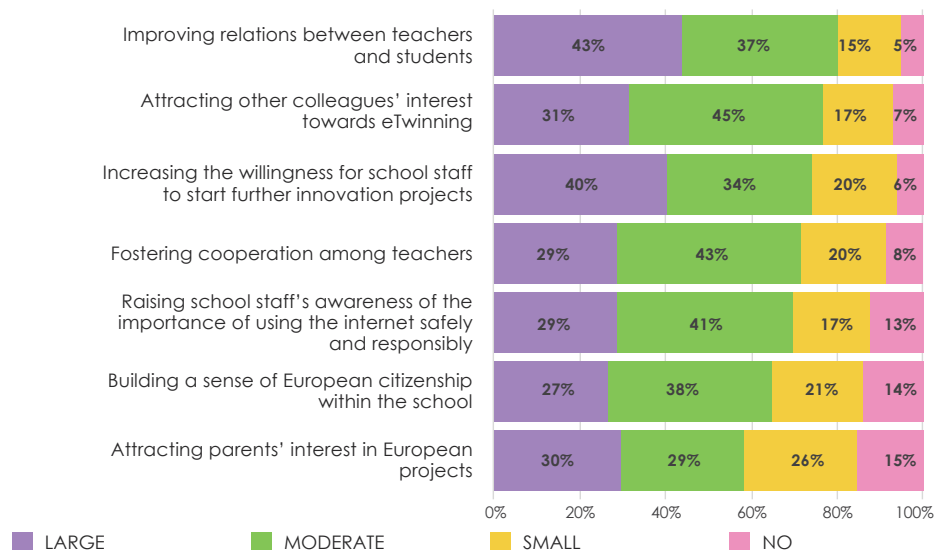
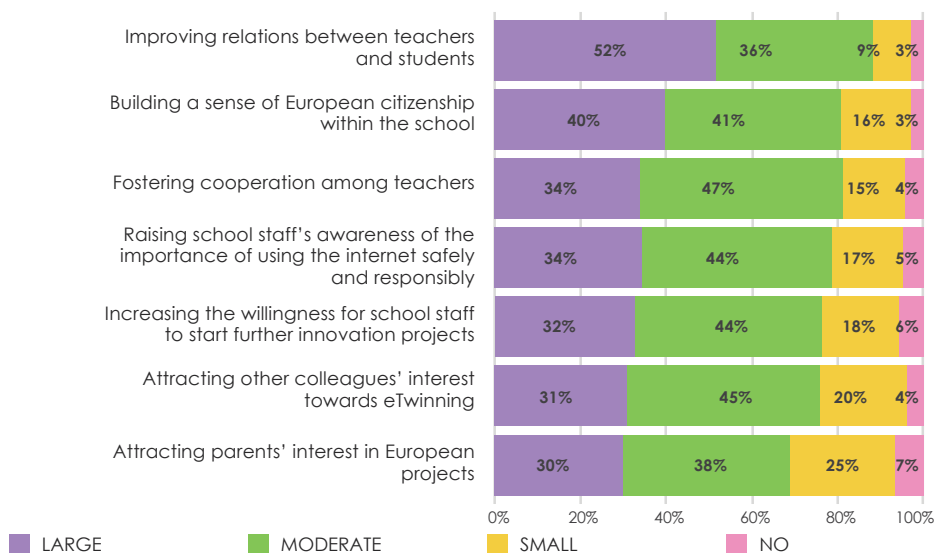


Figure 36: eTwinning's impact at school level (very experienced teachers)



Interestingly, when we cross-analyse the school impact data with teachers working in innovative or less-innovative schools, we observe a clear difference in the level of impact they report.

Figure 37: eTwinning's impact at school level (innovative schools)

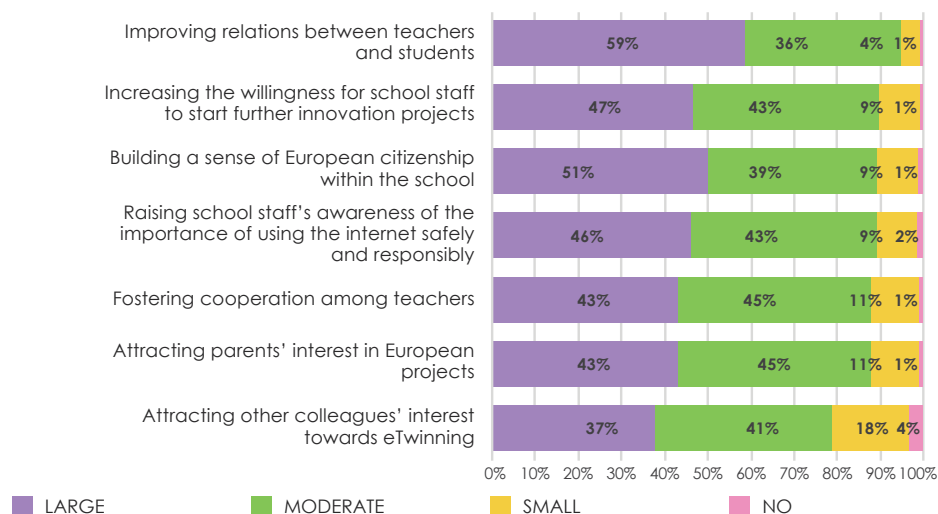
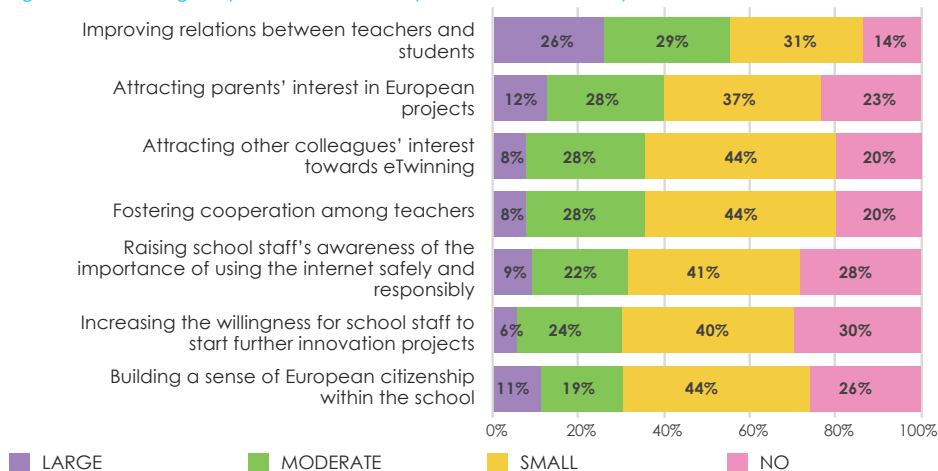


Figure 38: eTwinning's impact at school level (less innovative schools)



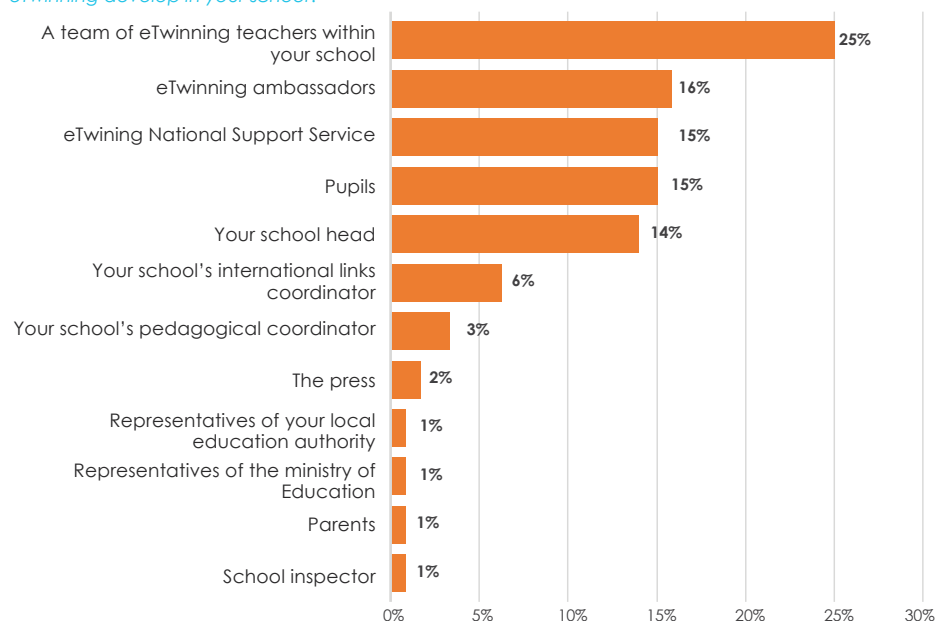
According to the responses to this survey, eTwinning has a much larger effect at school level when the teacher involved in eTwinning works in what this analysis refers to as an 'innovative school' (i.e. a school which actively participates in international projects, cultivates innovative practices at school, promotes collaboration among teachers and is engaged in self-evaluation, as defined in section 3). An impressive 88% or more of all teachers working in innovative schools state that eTwinning has impacted their school as a whole in relation to all areas, compared to only around 35% of teachers working in less innovative schools. In the latter, a relatively higher

impact is reported when it comes to improving relations between teachers and students, where more than half of all teachers (55%) in less innovative schools rate eTwinning as having a moderate or large impact in this regard. Although it is not possible to infer any kind of causal relationship between the type of school a teacher works in and the impact eTwinning can have on that school, this correlation does seem to suggest that a school's profile may be important in determining how much benefit is gained at school level from a teacher's involvement in eTwinning. Yet again, these results support the direction that the eTwinning School Label will promote: to move beyond targeting the development of individual teachers and to focus on how the whole school can benefit from eTwinning.

### 3.3. Who is the person or group of people who has most helped/is still helping eTwinning develop in schools?

Respondents were asked, in a new question added to the 2016 edition of the survey, to select one person or group of people that they believe has most helped or is still helping eTwinning to develop within their school. It is important to stress that respondents were asked to answer the question in relation to their own school and not their opinion about schools in general.

Figure 39: In your opinion who is the person/group of people who has most helped/is still helping eTwinning develop in your school?



As we see from Figure 39 there is a clear agreement among respondents (25%) that it is a team of eTwinning teachers within their own school which have had the most influence in helping eTwinning flourish in their school. Closely following this top rated group are other actors working within the school (pupils themselves and school heads) as well external actors including the National Support Services and eTwinning ambassadors (around 15% of respondents respectively). All other actors, from the specific perspective of teachers, are not considered to have any real impact in this regard. These include the Ministry of Education, school inspectors, local education authorities, international links coordinators, pedagogical coordinators and the press, all of whom were selected by around 5% or less of respondents. It is important to stress that this is the self-reported opinion of teachers in relation to their own school, so it is to some extent natural that from their perspective they see those who they are most closely in contact with on a daily basis (such as other eTwinning teachers in their schools and pupils for example) as most helping drive the development of eTwinning in their school. As already mentioned, eTwinning's management is currently exploring further ways to engage with Ministries of Education in mainstreaming eTwinning, so it will be interesting to monitor how this opinion might change over time. What this data confirms is that eTwinning is and remains very much a grass-roots action.

Figure 40: The most helpful actors for the development of eTwinning at school, depending on years of experience

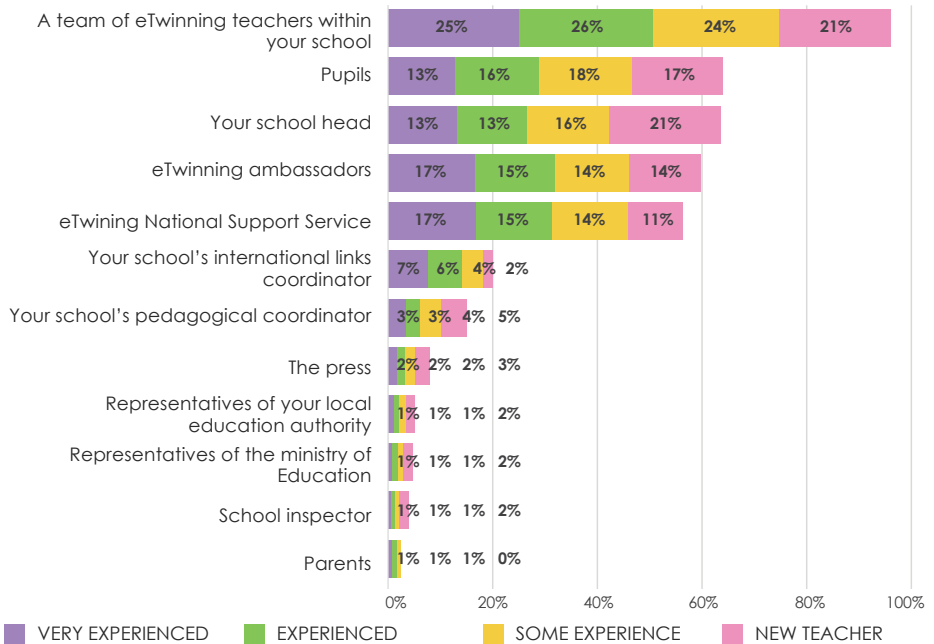


Figure 41: The most helpful actors for the development of eTwinning at school, depending on eTwinning profile

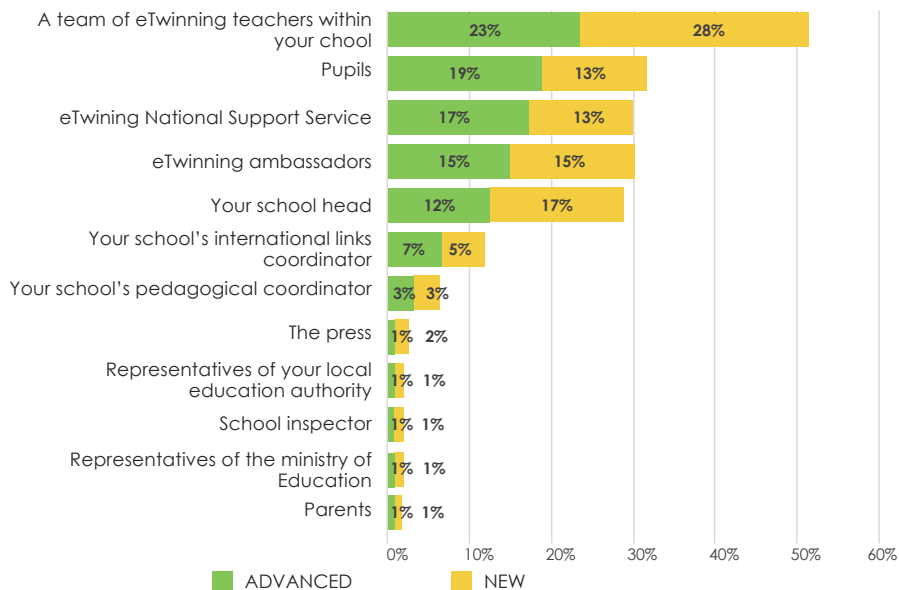
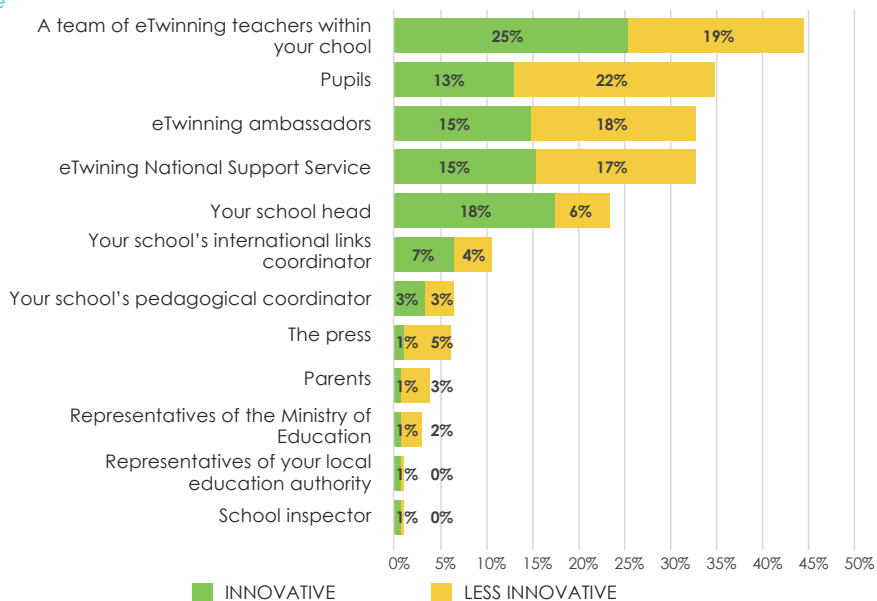


Figure 42: The most helpful actors for the development of eTwinning at school, depending on school profile



Cross-analysing this data reveals some interesting perspectives. If we look at Figure 40 which shows which actors are most helpful in relation to respondents' years of experience, we can see that there are some interesting differences between new teachers (with 3 years or less experience) and very experienced teachers (with 21 or more years of experience). For example, the "school head" was selected by more than 20% of new teachers as the most helpful actor in helping eTwinning develop at their school, in contrast to almost 10% less of very experienced teachers. This might indicate that new teachers are more reliant on getting the approval and support from their school leadership to take eTwinning forward in their schools, and school heads may be more inclined to help young professionals starting their career, in comparison to very experienced teachers who may need less support. Interestingly, very experienced teachers seem to rely slightly more on the National Support Service in their countries to help them further develop eTwinning in their schools (17%), compared to newer teachers (11%).

If we examine the graph showing which actors are most helpful according to respondents' school profile (Figure 42) we again see interesting differences in relation to two actors. School heads are reported by 18% of respondents in innovative schools to be the most helpful in developing eTwinning at school level in comparison to only 6% of respondents in less innovative schools. This result seems rather logical as innovative schools often benefit from effective leadership which one could argue includes encouraging staff to engage in European educational projects for their own development as well as that of their pupils. Respondents in less innovative schools are more likely not to benefit from such leadership and consequently the needed support in order to further develop eTwinning within their school. Interestingly, we observe the reverse result in relation to pupils, with more respondents from less innovative schools reporting they are the most helpful actor (22%), and less respondents from innovative schools stating this to be the case (13%). This may indicate that teachers in less innovative environments rely on the enthusiasm of their pupils to drive eTwinning forward because they are unable to rely to the same extent on school management as teachers in more innovative schools.

	IT	TR	FR	GR	RO	ES	PL	RS	PT	Average
School Heads	18%	24%	9%	10%	10%	14%	11%	18%	8%	14%
Team of eTwinning teachers	35%	14%	23%	23%	29%	24%	27%	26%	28%	25%
Pupils	8%	22%	18%	21%	17%	17%	24%	11%	16%	15%
eTwinning ambassadors	15%	14%	20%	22%	6%	12%	9%	17%	24%	16%
National Support Service	9%	15%	9%	17%	11%	14%	15%	19%	15%	15%

Figure 43: The most helpful actors for the development of eTwinning at school by country

The above table provides responses from the nine highest participating countries in relation to the five most helpful actors, as reported by all respondents. Interestingly, while these countries follow the general European trend, there are some noteworthy differences at the national level. As already mentioned, a team of eTwinning teachers is the most powerful force for helping eTwinning progress in a school according to the majority of respondents. However while this seems to be particularly true for Italian respondents (35%), almost 20% less of Turkish respondents state this to be the case in their country. School heads on the other hand can be said to play an important role in developing eTwinning in Turkish schools (24%), while having a distinct smaller role in Portuguese schools (8%), according to respondents. Pupils are a driving force for the development of eTwinning in Poland (24%), while they are not considered so much so in Italy (8%), and the National Support Services seem to have more of an impact in Serbia (24%) than in France (8%) or Italy (8%). Lastly, eTwinning ambassadors appear to be more active in developing eTwinning at schools in Portugal compared to all countries, especially Romania where only 6% of respondents indicated the ambassadors as the most helpful actor. It will be very useful for the Central Support Service to take note of these international comparisons to identify where best to target additional resources to support actors at local level. At the same time it will be important for National Support Services to look vertically down the table to gain a better understanding of how teachers perceive the various actors within their own country, and what might they do to maximise the benefit of successful actors at national level, as well as target those that could be potentially doing more.

## ETWINNING'S IMPACT ON SCHOOLS IN A NUTSHELL

According to the respondents of the 2017 eTwinning monitoring survey:

- eTwinning has had a particularly positive impact at school level on improving the relationship between students and teachers and in building a sense of European citizenship, especially in innovative schools. eTwinning has potential for developing its positive impact on attracting parents' interest.
- eTwinning remains a grass-root initiative with a team of teachers considered to be the group of actors most helpful in driving the development of eTwinning at school level. This is followed by eTwinning ambassadors, pupils, the National Support Services and school heads.
- The role of eTwinning teachers and school heads is stronger in innovative schools, where the impact of eTwinning is also more visible.



## LESSONS LEARNED AND THE WAY FORWARD

The results of this second edition of the monitoring survey confirm those of the previous edition; teachers continue to report that eTwinning has a significant effect on the development of their skills and teaching practices. Indeed, respondents' reported impact on teachers' skills and practices as well as those of students are as high, and in most cases higher, than two years ago. While these results are positive and reassuring, eTwinning is keen to go further, moving beyond the level of the individual teacher or student, so as to positively affect the school as a whole.

This report has identified elements which influence the effects of eTwinning. The results of the survey clearly show that the type of school, leadership, and recognition opportunities available according to different country contexts all play an important role.

### Schools matter

Why should eTwinning focus on the school as a whole? The additional cross analysis produced for this year's edition of the report further confirms the strong correlation existing between the profile of the school in which a teacher works and the extent to which the teacher, the students and school as a whole actually benefit from involvement in eTwinning. The correlation analysis illustrates that teachers working in innovative schools share their eTwinning practices more with other school staff than teachers working in less innovative schools. They also consistently report eTwinning to have had more of a positive impact on various aspects at school level (such as building a sense of European citizenship within the school, fostering cooperation among teachers etc.) than teachers working in less innovative schools. Although the results also show that teachers working in less favourable school environments still participate in eTwinning and benefit from it, it is clear that the highest participation and the most benefit is enjoyed by teachers already working in what this report defines as innovative schools – learning environments which foster a culture of self-evaluation, teacher collaboration, engagement in innovative practices, and involvement in international projects.

Moreover, in response to the additional question asked in the latest survey concerning eTwinning's impact on teachers' ability to deal with diversity in the classroom, the contrast of responses between teachers from innovative and less innovative schools was clearly greater than in comparison to novice and experienced teachers or new and advanced eTwinners. This is evidence once again that the school's profile is what really seems to matter. In order to avoid eTwinning mostly benefitting only those already working in innovative environments, it will be necessary to further investigate how to raise participation of teachers working in less innovative schools. This is something which has already been specifically targeted at European level in 2017 under the umbrella of eTwinning's annual theme on inclusion in which various projects and activities have taken place involving teachers in disadvantaged schools which are also likely to be less innovative. It may be of value to further investigate how this might be done through the introduction of targeted national policies in liaison with National Support Services and through discussion with Ministry of Education representatives.

## Recognition matters

While making progress in reaching out to the untapped potential eTwinning could be having in less innovative schools, it is also important not to forget the schools that have already gained cumulative impact from being deeply involved in eTwinning, by ensuring they are recognised. Such recognition is not only fully deserved and has not been bestowed at this level until now but is also important in serving as a best example for other aspiring schools to follow. While rewarding individual teachers for their eTwinning work has always been at the heart of the programme since the very beginning through the established eTwinning Quality Label and eTwinning Prizes, in 2017 those schools where eTwinning has been embedded into the core work of the school and its staff will now also have the opportunity to be officially recognised. In 2017, eTwinning's Central Support Service, together with National Support Services and the European Commission, has developed the concept of the eTwinning School Label, aimed at recognising involvement in a broad range of eTwinning activities by teachers in a particular school, from involvement in professional development activities to collaboration with other members of staff, to eTwinning promotional activities with parents, other schools and organisations in the local community and beyond. It is envisaged that this new eTwinning School Label will not only recognise the excellent work of schools who are deeply engaged in eTwinning, but will also encourage these schools to become proactive in supporting other local schools, including those less innovative, to begin a developmental journey towards becoming an eTwinning School.

The criteria for becoming an eTwinning School is strongly linked to the school's ability to demonstrate that it is committed to its own development (by aiming to increase the frequency and quality of its engagement in interdisciplinary projects and digital citizenship practices for example), but also importantly, to the improvement of

eTwinning at European level. This means that the Central Support Service will soon be in a position to work further on developing this new network of eTwinning schools to put into practice the key recommendations already proposed in the last edition of this report. These include organising focus groups with head teachers to better understand the current barriers they face in further embedding eTwinning at school level, as well as potentially setting up a mentoring system whereby eTwinning schools could support less advanced schools. The mechanism through which to implement these actions has been established and once enough time has passed, eTwinning will usefully be able to monitor its progress in reaching out to school management and to less innovative schools. Since the last publication of this report, it is encouraging to see that eTwinning's management (Central Support Service, National Support Services and the European Commission) have taken this important step to ensuring eTwinning is embedded more effectively at the level of the whole school.

## Leaders matter

The results of this survey illustrate that targeting senior school management continues to be an objective worth strengthening in the coming years. Already the limited work that has been done in this direction so far can be seen in the increasing number of new head teachers registering on the eTwinning platform each year, which has risen from around 2,000 new ones joining in 2013 to over 4,000 joining in 2016. Further engagement with head teachers is a vital condition for better raising awareness of eTwinning's ability to positively impact a school's development, as well as for heightening the possibilities that eTwinning practices will in fact influence school policy and culture. This is important, as it is only if a head teacher is aware and convinced of the benefits of eTwinning, that he/she will ensure school policies are conducive to the programme flourishing within their school, or indeed create new policies or structural arrangements to facilitate its smooth running.

Interestingly, when respondents were asked who the most helpful actor is, in helping eTwinning develop at school level, the majority agreed that it is the team of eTwinning teachers within their school. This reflects the fact that eTwinning began as and continues to be a grass-roots action which is constantly fuelled by its network of dedicated and enthusiastic teachers. While the programme very much supports the continuation of this bottom-up teacher-led approach, in order to engage those schools which have up to now not benefitted enough or at all from eTwinning, it will be necessary to target other key actors more explicitly, including head teachers and Ministries of Education, as the programme is already beginning to do. 18% of teachers working in innovative schools declared their school head as the most helpful actor, in comparison to only 6% of teachers working in less innovative schools. This result suggests that teachers working in less innovative schools are less likely to benefit from a leadership that supports the further development of eTwinning within the school. This result underlines the need for eTwinning to think carefully about possible effective

strategies to reach out to less innovative schools and to work with those head teachers who may be working in challenging circumstances currently preventing them from supporting eTwinning.

### **National context matters**

Moreover, thanks to the country level analysis featured for the first time in this second edition of the monitoring report, we observe that there are some important national differences which the Central and National Support Services may use as guidance in the future to provide tailored policies at national level. For example, from the results of this survey we see that currently in Turkey the school heads are the primary factors in driving eTwinning forward within their schools. In Portugal however, school heads seem to have a minor role in comparison and it is rather eTwinning ambassadors who are considered to be the most helpful actor. Such interesting results demand further investigation, and it will be up to the National Support Service to contextualise these findings, knowing the situation in their country and probing further with questions such as: Is there a bigger role for school heads to play in Portuguese schools or would it be more worthwhile for Portugal to further invest in effective eTwinning ambassadors, which up until now seem to have had the most impact? The results of this survey have also shown that teachers' sharing practices with other school staff also differ significantly from country to country. It is suggested that a qualitative monitoring activity be put in place to investigate the reasons for these differences to generate recommendations for countries where sharing eTwinning practices is less widespread.

It must be underlined that while the total sample of respondents is enough to provide us with a good flavour of the situation at global level, the number of respondents per country is far more limited. This means that any more in-depth analysis at country level would require more respondents from a greater number of participating countries. eTwinning therefore calls on its whole community to take part in the third edition of this monitoring survey, which will be launched in autumn 2018, with the results published the following year. It is hoped that by becoming a regular practice and increasing the communication around the importance of the survey in guiding the pedagogical and managerial dimensions of eTwinning, the number of respondents will increase, allowing for more meaningful analysis at global and country level.

### **Looking forward to the next eTwinning monitoring survey:**

The eTwinning School Label was officially launched in autumn 2017. It will therefore be very interesting to add a new question to the third edition of this monitoring survey, specifically asking respondents about their perceptions and experience of the eTwinning School Label process. Reflecting the professional representation of the main registered group of eTwinners on the platform, the large majority of survey respondents are teachers. However, seeing as eTwinning is moving towards the whole school approach, and plans to do more to target school management, it would

be advisable for the next edition of the survey to launch a specific communication campaign to encourage head teachers to participate so that we might learn about their specific perceptions and experience of the new eTwinning School Label.

Additionally, in relation to the usefulness of certification for involvement in professional development activities, we saw that just under half of all respondents (47%) state that receiving an eTwinning certificate of participation for the professional development opportunities they partake in is useful for their career development. However, there is no clear picture of the link with the official recognition at national level of such certification and such an analysis would be useful to include in the 2018 edition of the survey.



## GLOSSARY

### **Ambassadors (eTwinning)**

Experienced eTwinners working at local and national level, eTwinning Ambassadors are appointed by their National Support Service and their role is to promote eTwinning, provide training and in general support eTwinners.

### **Central Support Service**

The European eTwinning office, run on behalf of the European Commission by European Schoolnet in Brussels. The Central Support Service is responsible for the central coordination of eTwinning activities across Europe including the eTwinning platform, the centralised professional development opportunities and all activities run at European level.

### **Conference (eTwinning)**

The annual eTwinning Conference is a three-day event that brings together over 500 participants (teachers, head teachers, National Support Services and stakeholders) to discuss eTwinning and its development, giving participants the opportunity to meet other eTwinners and share ideas. The Conference usually takes place in autumn and participants are selected by the Central and National Support Services.

## **Countries (eTwinning)**

There are currently 36 countries involved in eTwinning. A full list is available here:

[www.etwinning.net/en/pub/get\\_support/contact.htm](http://www.etwinning.net/en/pub/get_support/contact.htm).

At present only teachers belonging to these countries' educational systems can officially participate in eTwinning.

## **eTwiner**

Anyone involved in eTwinning and registered on the eTwinning Portal (mostly teachers but also other school staff such as principals, ICT coordinators, librarians etc.).

## **eTwinning**

A European action that promotes school collaboration and networking between schools in Europe. Connect at: [www.etwinning.net](http://www.etwinning.net).

## **eTwinning Live**

eTwinning Live ([live.etwinning.net](http://live.etwinning.net)) is the restricted environment for registered users launched in 2015 and allows eTwinners to find each other, communicate, network, exchange ideas and practice, organise and run eTwinning online events (video conferencing sessions to discuss about project ideas, lessons, teaching practice etc.).

## **eTwinning Plus**

eTwinning Plus is a twin action which provides a platform for schools in Europe's immediate neighbourhood and links them with schools participating in eTwinning. The eTwinning Plus countries are: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Tunisia and Ukraine. A specific portal is dedicated to eTwinning Plus at: [plus.etwinning.net](http://plus.etwinning.net)

## **eTwinning Project (European and national)**

A European project is a set of collaborative activities involving teachers and pupils from at least two schools from two different countries. As from 2014, national projects can also be set up. They involve schools from the same country as a first step to European collaboration.

## **European Schoolnet**

European Schoolnet ([www.europeanschoolnet.org](http://www.europeanschoolnet.org)) is the coordinating body of eTwinning at European level, on behalf of the European Commission. European Schoolnet manages the Central Support Service for eTwinning.

## **Groups (eTwinning)**

### **+ Featured groups**

Communities within eTwinning for like-minded teachers to discuss, exchange, learn and share by subject, theme or topic. eTwinning Groups can be created and run by any eTwinner and there are currently more than 1000 such Groups. The Central Support Service coordinates some 15 Featured Groups on specific topics, involving thousands of teachers.

## **Learning Events (eTwinning)**

Learning Events are short intensive online events on a number of themes. The themes are related to pedagogical aspects in particular. They are led by an expert, and include active work and discussion among teachers. Learning Events include asynchronous and sometimes synchronous activities, and are run in a widely-spoken European language. Users can receive certificates of participation.

## **Learning Lab (eTwinning)**

A special platform developed for eTwinning Learning Events.

## **Prize Events**

Prize winners organise, with the help of the Central and National Support Services, a celebration in their schools to reward teachers and pupils. The European Commission, Central Support Service and National Support Services are involved, together with local authorities, parents, national and local press.

## **National Support Service**

The organisation that represents and promotes eTwinning at national level. Each National Support Service provides training and support, organises events and runs media and communication campaigns at regional and national level. The National Support Services for eTwinning Plus countries are called Partner Support Agencies (PSA).

### **Online courses**

The eTwinning Online Courses are long courses aimed at addressing the needs of the eTwinning community in the area of online moderation, teaching and learning, and ambassadors at national and European level. Each year, eTwinning promotes one course. Online Courses are led by a group of experts, and include active work and discussion among teachers.

### **Online seminars**

Online Seminars are live communication sessions where eTwinners have a chance to learn, talk and discuss with peers. The topics covered by Online Seminars are related to pedagogy and eTwinning aspects in general. They are led by an expert, and are run in a widely-spoken European language. Teachers receive a certificate for participating.

### **Pedagogical Advisory Team**

The Pedagogical Advisory Team is a group of experts with a background in eTwinning and education. Their brief is to work with the Central Support Service to develop new approaches for the involvement of teachers and schools in eTwinning. They have published two working documents to date, one on the Pedagogical Use of eTwinning Live, and the other on the Concept of the eTwinning School. It is this latter document which forms the basis for the eTwinning School Label initiative mentioned in this report.

### **Portal (eTwinning)**

The multilingual public internet platform to get familiar with eTwinning. It includes gallery of projects, kits, news and a map of all eTwinning schools. It is available in 28 languages at [www.etwinning.net](http://www.etwinning.net).

### **Project Kits (eTwinning)**

Step-by-step guides to successful projects with concrete ideas for teachers on how to implement a European collaborative project in their class. Kits can be used in their entirety or adapted to specific teaching contexts.

### **Prizes (eTwinning)**

There are two types of prizes awarded in eTwinning: National Prizes awarded in each country, and European Prizes. The European eTwinning Prizes are awarded yearly to teachers and pupils who have demonstrated outstanding results in an eTwinning project. To take part, one must have already received a European Quality Label.

### **Professional Development Workshops (national and European)**

Face-to-face workshops aimed at teachers who want to improve their skills in various areas, including pedagogy, ICT and collaboration. They are organised by the National Support Services and Central Support Service and are held in different European cities throughout the school year.

### **Quality Label (national)**

Users can be granted a Quality Label for the work they do in a project. The process starts with the submission of a form via eTwinning Live (all members of a project can do this). Then the National Support Service evaluates the submission (normally once a year) and either approves the submission or rejects it (and provides a motivation for this). If the submission is approved, the users are given the Quality Label for his/her work in that specific project.

### **Quality Label (European)**

Users can be granted a European Quality Label (EQL) for the work they do in a project. The European Quality label is awarded and assigned in conjunction with the European Prize submission once a year to those projects that fulfil 2 requirements: the project has been proposed for the EQL by at least one National Support Service, after a screening process, and at least two partners from different countries have already received a National Quality Label for their work in the project.

### **Recognition**

eTwinning offers a number of ways for teachers to gain recognition for their work, including European and National Quality Labels, and eTwinning Prizes at national and European level. Pupils are given recognition in the form of National Quality Label certificates.

## **Registration**

When teachers sign up for eTwinning, they gain access to eTwinning Live (<https://live.etwinning.net>) with all its available tools. All registered teachers are validated by the National Support Services to ensure the maintenance of a safe and reliable teachers' database.

## **School Education Gateway**

Launched in February 2015, the School Education Gateway (<https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu>) provides a single online point of entry for teachers, schools, experts and others involved in early childhood and school education, helping them to stay informed about European policy and actions for schools.

## **School Label (eTwinning)**

The eTwinning School Label is a new recognition for Schools (as opposed to recognition for individual teachers) introduced in the autumn of 2017. The scope of assessment to obtain the label is very broad, and stretches across the range of eTwinning activities that a team of teachers in a school may be involved in. The label can only be granted if the school head/senior manager certifies the accuracy of the information contained in the application.

## **Teacher Academy**

The Teacher Academy ([https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/teacher\\_academy.htm](https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/teacher_academy.htm)) was launched in May 2016 as part of the School Education Gateway. The Teacher Academy provides online courses and adds to the existing teaching materials available on the School Education Gateway.



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## About eTwinning

eTwinning<sup>8</sup> is a vibrant community that has involved, in its 12 years of existence, almost 500,000 teachers working in 182,000\* schools. More than 61,000\* projects have been run, involving more than 2,000,000 pupils across the continent over the years.

eTwinning – the Community for schools in Europe – is an action for schools funded by the European Commission, via the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, within the framework of the Erasmus+ programme.

eTwinning incorporates a sophisticated digital platform that has both public and private areas and is available in 28 languages. The public area [www.eTwinning.net](http://www.eTwinning.net) offers browsing visitors a range of information about how to become involved in eTwinning; explaining the benefits the action offers and provides inspiration for collaborative project work. The restricted area for registered teachers, called eTwinning Live, is the individual teacher's interface with the community: it enables users to find each other, interact, collaborate in projects and participate in professional development activities organised at national and European Level. When teachers work together in a project they have access to a restricted and dedicated area unique to that project called the TwinSpace.

eTwinning offers a high level of support for its users. In each of the participating countries (currently 42) a National Support Service, or a Partner Support Agency (for eTwinning Plus) promotes the action, provides advice and guidance for end users and organises a range of activities and professional development opportunities at national level. eTwinning is coordinated by the Central Support Service which is managed by European Schoolnet (a consortium of 34 Ministries of Education), on behalf of the European Commission. The Central Support Service liaises with the National Support Services and Partner Support Agencies and is responsible for the development of the platform, as well as offering a range of professional development opportunities and other activities such as an annual European Conference and a Prize Event which awards teachers and students for their involvement in outstanding projects.

8 In this report the term "eTwinning" is used generically to refer to both the original eTwinning platform and the parallel platform for EU neighbouring countries, named eTwinning Plus.

\* Data as of September 2017.

