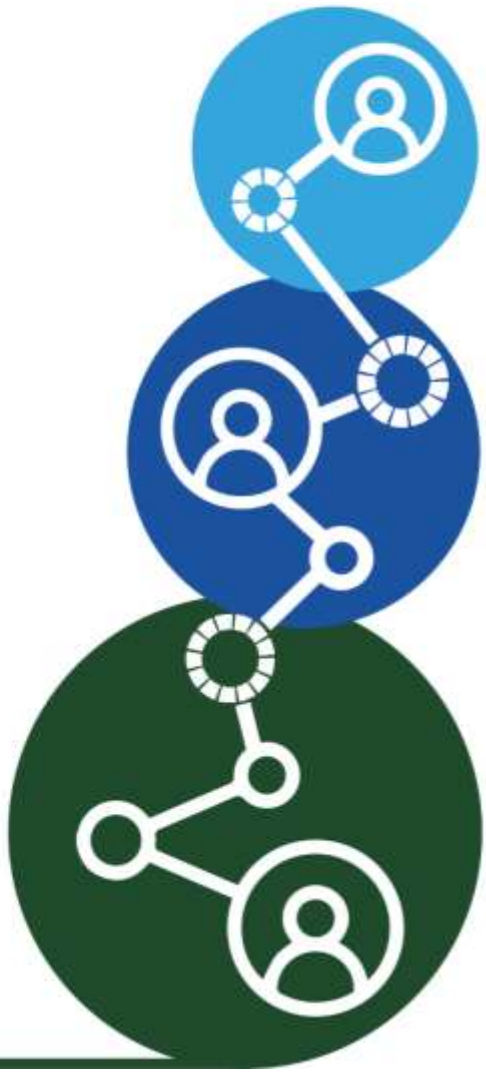
SYNERGY AND ENVIRONMENT TO EMPOWER DECENTRALISED SCHOOLS

GREEN·S.E.E.D.S

TOOLKIT GREEN S.E.E.D.S.

MODULE 5
Seeds for Networking

UNIT 3
The European Platforms



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1. Training of the national responsible (5-6.03.2020)
2. Training of the teachers at local level (1.04.2020 – 31.06.2020)

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PARTNERS

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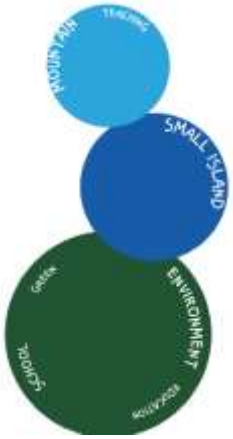
UNIT 5.3

THE EUROPEAN PLATFORMS

"Thanks to the Erasmus+ Programme I had wonderful opportunities to work and volunteer in 2 different countries. What to tell about these experiences? Sharing and exchanging are not limited to the fields of implementation of your project. The whole experience involves daily life, languages learning, cultural enrichment, improving digital skills. It's a journey from which you come back a changed person, with broader horizons and a limitless background" (Evgenia, elementary school teacher).

Sustainable development in the 21st Century can be achieved by improving the education systems all over the world. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) can play a significant part to the transformation of education and training. However, according to the OECD report on Students, Computers and Learning (2015), we are still far behind in the integration of ICT tools in European Schools. Education policymakers on EU level recognise the role that ICT can play to ensure that Europe will remain a competitive economy. The European Commission has created a series of online platforms to promote innovative ways for ICT use in schools around Europe. In this Unit, we will provide you with a short description of the key European platforms that teachers and schools can use to enrich their knowledge and practices.



1.What is the School Education Gateway?

School Education Gateway

http://schooleducationgateway.eu

The SCHOOL EDUCATION GATEWAY (SEG) is the European Commission's online portal for school education. It is available in 23 EU languages and provides to teachers information about professional and learning development, peer assistance and networking opportunities, joint projects and mobility prospects, policy insights etc. The SEG is addressed not only to the teachers' community but also to all organisations that participate in the Erasmus+ Programme actions such as schools and other educational providers and institutions; national authorities and policymakers; NGOs; businesses; etc. The platform is accessible worldwide with the expectation that it will enhance the ties between policy and practice in European school education, but also to encourage policies based on the school's and job market's actual demands.

The SEG provides an extensive choice of topics such as:

- Good practices from European projects;
- Monthly blog contributions and video interviews of European school education experts;
- Online lessons for teachers on how to tackle classroom challenges;
- Resources which include teaching materials, tutorials and the European Toolkit for Schools;
- Information on school education policies;
- News and events;

It is imperative to stress that the SEG also offers specific tools to assist teachers and school staff in finding opportunities for training, mobility and professional development (on-site courses, job shadowing, teaching assignments), which can be funded through Erasmus+ Key Action 1. These tools are:
The Erasmus+ tool "Course Catalogue" (for face-to-face training opportunities);
The Erasmus+ tool "Mobility Opportunities" (for teacher mobility under KA1);

If you have never used the School Gateway platform, follow the link below and navigate through its different sections. You will be fascinated with the resources you will find!

2. What is eTwinning?

www.etwinning.net

The ETWINNING is another initiative of the European Commission to foster the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) among teachers and schools. It was founded in 2005, under the European Union's e-Learning programme. Since 2007 it is part of the Lifelong Learning Programme. In 2014, the e-Twinning was integrated into Erasmus+ the European programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sports. Nowadays, e-Twinning has become a community of teachers from all levels of education, pre-primary to upper secondary. The platform enables teachers to form partnerships and collaborative projects with teachers and schools from around Europe. The eTwinning Portal is available in twenty-three languages. Apart from cooperating in projects, the eTwinners can participate in discussions with colleagues and develop professional networks as well as to find a variety of professional development opportunities (online and face-to-face).

Also, teachers can visit its Theme pages and explore the content of nine key priorities in school education:

- Basic skills
- Citizenship
- Early childhood education and care
- Language learning
- Inclusive education and tackling early school leaving
- Teachers and school leaders
- Cultural awareness and expression
- Personal development and well-being, and
- Entrepreneurship education

The teachers and schools who participate in eTwinning get support by their National Support Services (NSS) during the process of registration, partners' research and project actions. These Services organise professional development activities for the teachers; they promote the eTwinning Action, deliver awards, and quality labels.

The Central Support Service (CSS) coordinates the National Support Services and is also responsible for the development of the eTwinning online platform and the design of teachers' professional development activities at European level.

The benefits that eTwinning brings in the educational community can be summarised as follows:

- Increasing motivation and improvement in the learning outcomes of students
- In the development of electronic pedagogy
- In professional and pedagogical development of teachers
- A growing culture of cooperation within and among school units

As characteristically mentioned by Commissioner for Education, Training and Culture, Ján Figel in his speech during the European eTwinning prize ceremony which took place in 2009, the becoming increasingly success of eTwinning is an example to foster creativity in education. We need to promote innovation through education in order to improve the quality and effectiveness of Europe's school systems and support young Europeans to be prepared for the society and economy of the future."(European Commission, 2009).

Modern constructivist educational approaches place particular emphasis on the active participation of students, in group work, the guided discovery learning and the interaction with adults or more capable peers (Aldhahery et al., 2014). The eTwinning action has strengthened and developed school networking via a European-wide scheme that would make it possible for all European schools to build pedagogical partnerships with a school elsewhere in Europe.

At the student level, it enables direct contact with other students around Europe, allows them to exchange information and express their opinions, enhancing cooperation between the European schools and therefore contributing to European identity formation. Students also have the opportunity to improve their language skills as well as to acquire their knowledge of ICT skills through their project activities (European Commission, 2013).

Are you registered in the e-Twinning platform? If not, now it's the time! Visit the link and create your profile! The eTwinners community is waiting for you!

3. Are there any other platforms available?

THE ERASMUS+ PROJECT RESULTS PLATFORM

This platform is a repository of projects that have received funding under the Erasmus+ Programme. You can find information on projects' results, collection of good practices and success stories as well as description and details for the organisations who were or are members of the consortium. You can also search for possible partners for your Erasmus+ project ideas.

Schools can apply under the Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility and KA2 School Education. If you are interested in working on an idea you have and submit an application to receive

funding, you will need to read the priorities (horizontal and specific ones) carefully as they are written in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide. It is published every year, and you can download it from the National Agency of your country or the website of the European Commission https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/programme-guide_en

If your idea is in line with the call priorities, you sick assistance on how to write a successful application. There many tutorials on youtube but also on the Web. Here are some useful links for you
http://www.easyerasmus.com/erasmus-programme-how-to-write-a-good-project-smarter-goals/
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ss_HAv5klr8

EUROPEAN SCHOOLNET

European Schoolnet is a network of 34 Ministries of Education in Europe. Its base is in Brussels as a not-for-profit organisation. The network aims to bring innovation in teaching and learning. Its key stakeholders are Ministries of Education, schools, teachers and researchers. Its activities are divided into three strands: a) Policy research and innovation, b) school services and c) learning resource exchange. The network has created an online Academy which offers Massive Open Online Courses tailored to the needs of teachers. You can access the platform in this link https://www.europeanschoolnetacademy.eu/

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