INTRODUCTION, CONTEXT AND CURRENT ACHIEVEMENTS

European Schoolnet’s mission is to support ministries of education, schools, teachers and other stakeholders in the transformation of education processes in Europe. European Schoolnet is an Ideas Lab able to help ministries develop policies to support educational reform processes based on evidence and facts.

EUN works on three strategic pillars:

- Providing usable evidence and data in the area of innovation in education to inform policy through peer exchanges, policy experimentations, surveys and reports and via its various working groups.
- Supporting schools and teachers in their teaching practices through the animation of three European networks - eTwinning, Scientix and Better Internet for Kids.
- Developing and sustaining a network of schools engaged in innovative teaching and learning approaches through activities organised around the Future Classroom Lab ecosystem.

The 2020 work programme of European Schoolnet continues to address the priorities defined by Ministries in 2019 but it takes also into account the political priorities defined by the new European Commission whose mandate begins in December 2019, notably innovation in education, science education, climate change and digital skills. These areas will continue to be strengthened in 2020 activities.
FIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2020

At European Schoolnet Steering Committee meetings, ministries of education have confirmed the following five priorities for the next period.

1. SUPPORTING TEACHERS’ PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGIES,
where ministries of education will continue to support the professional development of teachers and carry out further work to support innovation in initial teacher education. This will include exploring new ways in which the Future Classroom Lab concept can be further developed and integrated within schools, initial teacher education institutions and organisations concerned with teachers’ continuing professional development. In this context, the European Schoolnet Academy is a key instrument for supporting at scale teacher education, both continuing professional development and initial teacher education.

2. TARGETING INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION,
where working with providers in this area is a route for mainstreaming successful innovation and preparing future teachers to be fully prepared for the classrooms of today and tomorrow when they enter the profession.

3. LARGE-SCALE DEPLOYMENT OF SUCCESSFUL INNOVATION,
where a key focus for European Schoolnet and ministries of education in the coming years will be to intensify work on defining the most appropriate innovative ecosystems and approaches that support large-scale deployment and adoption of the wide variety of successful innovations developed in its many projects. Three policy experimentations (MENTEP, TeachUP, and Assess@Learning on digital formative assessment) are key opportunities for such mainstreaming of successful innovations, providing concrete evidence to support new approaches.

4. TOWARDS A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH,
where issues such as leadership strategies, digital citizenship education, STEM education, development of flexible learning spaces and innovative pedagogies are themes to be discussed and plans developed at whole school level.

5. SUPPORTING NEW LEARNING ECOSYSTEMS,
where there will be an increasing need to link formal, non-formal and informal learning opportunities that take place in and out of school.
These five priorities will be articulated around the five focus areas:

- Continuing the Future Classroom Ambassadors initiative with the support of those ministries involved and its promotion to other ministries of education.
- Continuing to work with hardware and software vendors to provide seminars and workshops for ministries of education and teachers on new technologies, services, and trends.
- Building on the positive experience of the first School Innovation Forum, EUN will organise a second edition in June 2020 of this public-private sector networking event with a further improved approach and model.
- Encouraging the creation of learning labs as well as the adaptation of learning environments, in particular through FCL guidelines on building learning labs published in 2019. The promotion of the publication will continue in 2020, including possibly translated versions supported by interested ministries of education.
- Integrating activities from the recent Novigado project (Erasmus+ Key Action 2) to strengthen FCL services including developing an active online community for schools, a reference framework for active learning, and a scenario building tool.
- Continuing the FCL communication strategy with targeted and timely messages and information to target audiences: ministries of education, EdTech companies, initial teacher education organisations, teachers, and school leaders, etc.
- Developing further the Future Classroom Validation Service in order to support ICT companies, start-ups, and research projects interested in evaluating ICT solutions by carrying out school pilots. This fee-based service is based on EUN’s extensive experience of running small and large-scale school pilots in EC-funded projects, and on research carried out in the Living Schools Lab project.
- Proposing EUN Academy MOOCs on developing and adapting learning spaces (linked to the work of the Interactive Classroom Working Group) and on shared leadership for teachers and school leaders (connected to the Learning Leadership for Change project).
- Strengthening the FCL programme of training courses, by leveraging the opportunities offered by the mobility strand of Erasmus+ (Key Action 1).
- Further developing cooperation with initial teacher education organisations via sustainability actions in the ITELab project, the eTwinning Teacher Training Initiative, the NextLab and SpaceEU projects, and the TeachUP policy experimentation.
- Scaling up the EU Code Week and working to make it more relevant for schools in Europe with the support of the European Commission and in collaboration with ministries of education.
Engaging more in debates on emerging trends and technologies which may impact teaching and learning in the medium term. The new Impact EdTech project will provide insights from the EdTech sector – EdTech start-ups will be supported in further developing and validating innovative education solutions.

Developing a research agenda, articulated in cooperation with countries that have implemented the FCL model. A potential move from a Future Classroom Lab (with a classroom focus) towards a Future School Lab (with a whole school approach) will also be investigated.

EUN activities related to knowledge building and policy development have confirmed the importance to be given to strategic areas such as:

- School leadership as a key element for a comprehensive and successful implementation of ICT in teaching and learning. Cooperation activities will continue to be developed to create and test new training content for school leaders. The Learning Leadership for Change (L2C) project, funded by the Erasmus+ programme KA3 strand, will further develop this component.
- The evolving role and competences of the teacher; initial teacher education and continuing professional development, particularly in the pedagogical use of ICT and collaborative learning (via the sustainability activities of the MENTEP and CO-LAB projects), supported by a new vision for teaching and learning in school education.
- With its new operational platform, the EUN Academy will progressively develop stronger connections with initial teacher training institutions in order to prepare the next generation of teachers to make the best use of educational technologies (via the TeachUP project). Through the TeachUP project, further development will be take place on certification, as well as on improving the retention rate (which is already comparatively good) and the competence of participants to self-regulate their learning. In addition, through a new series of strategic seminars about certification, the EUN Academy will continue to investigate accreditation aspects at national level (e.g. in Portugal, Spain, Italy).
- European Schoolnet will continue to work on digital formative assessment through the new Assess@Learning project and organise thematic seminars for European Schoolnet members on specific challenges relating to digital assessment, for example, equipment requirements, usability of data, data privacy, ethics, data property, use and access.
- EUN will be part of the consultative expert group supporting the development of the new OECD Global Teaching Insights Initiative which aims to create a worldwide online library of teaching practice videos.
**Digital citizenship** is an increasingly important knowledge domain for pupils, teachers, and parents/carers more widely, as online technologies play a growing role in the lives of children and young people.

With new political priorities taking shape at European level, following the 2019 elections, **children’s rights in a digital world** continue to figure prominently on the European Commission agenda. The recent Mission Letters for the Commissioner-designates underline the **importance of digital literacy and education** in equipping children, young people and adults with the knowledge and skills they need. Citizens need to be made aware from an early age of disinformation and other online threats.

In this context, the EC-funded Better Internet for Kids (BIK) initiative will continue to be the major building block of activities developed by EUN and ministries. EUN will also continue to develop activities in **media literacy** and investigate opportunities offered by future calls at the level of the various programmes of the Commission.

Meanwhile, schools have a growing need for assistance in managing their **use of technology in a safe and responsible manner**. Focusing on aspects ranging from infrastructure to policy and practice, EUN will continue to develop the eSafety label initiative, drawing upon the results of the strategic partnership project eSafety Label+ which ended in 2019. This provides a holistic framework that supports schools in **shaping a culture of safe and responsible use of digital technology** amongst pupils, teachers and other school staff.

In addition, the position of EUN as a leading organisation in terms of 21st century skills for teachers and pupils will be further strengthened by a number of new projects and activities, such as:

- The **CORE** and **ySkills Horizon 2020** projects which will help to establish a better evidence base in regards the impact of technological transformations on children and youth, while ensuring the emerging knowledge informs education policy making and actions.
- The **Games in School** project to explore game-based learning in schools.
- Projects on **entrepreneurial learning**, for example, Entrepreneurship Education and Women in Entrepreneurship.
- Organising an annual **FCL course on digital skills, literacy and citizenship**.
- Submitting new proposals covering the areas of **digital skills, fake news, online hate speech** and **digital citizenship**.
As a leading organisation in providing services to schools in Europe, EUN is active in **supporting school partnerships and networks**.

2015 was the first year of the new phase of European Commission’s platforms **eTwinning** (originally launched in 2005) and the **School Education Gateway**, for which EUN provides the Central Support Service activities.

In 2020, eTwinning will be in its last year of activity under the current Erasmus + programme. This will provide the opportunity to further consolidate its role as **the biggest teachers’ network in Europe**: the theme of the year will be “Climate change and environmental challenges” and a range of activities, campaigns, news, interviews and projects will be developed around this essential topic for our future; the **eTwinning School** concept will be fully deployed with the involvement of thousands of new schools; the participation of **teacher training institutions** will become fully embedded in the action; existing tools and features will be optimised to offer an even better **one-stop-shop for innovative teachers in Europe**. **Professional development and networking** will be a strong focus, in addition to the yearly theme, on priorities such as digital literacy, active citizenship and vocational education, with specific attention to rural areas. **More countries** are in the pipeline to join eTwinning and eTwinning Plus, with the aim to surpassing a total of 800,000 users and 100,000 projects registered by the end of 2020.

Since 2015, European Schoolnet has also managed the **School Education Gateway** platform on behalf of the European Commission. A platform for the school education community, the Gateway provides stakeholders with **information on European-level actions and initiatives** for schools through articles, good practices, teaching materials, video interviews, surveys and more. The platform also includes the **Teacher Academy**, offering online courses and three Erasmus+ tools to support schools with Erasmus+ applications and projects.

**eTwinning and the School Education Gateway** with all its additional services will continue to represent an important component of EUN activities in 2020.

The final set of projects and activities will focus on **Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)** challenges.

**STEM** education is high on the political and industry agenda owing to concerns over the **declining interest and participation**, especially among girls, in scientific and technical studies and careers. The potential of ICT in this domain is obvious. **Scientix 4** is expected to start in January 2020 and will continue to benefit from the advice and support of the ministries of education STEM representatives Working Group created after the 2015 Eminent conference in Barcelona. More particularly, in 2020, Scientix 4 will ensure the continuation of the current Scientix 3 activities, including:

- **a. the portal,**
- **b. professional development activities for teachers,**
c. the involvement of ministries of education, National Contact Points and Scientix Ambassadors, and
d. the organisation of the 2021 fourth Scientix conference.

Furthermore, Scientix 4 will test the setting up of STEAM (the A represents Arts) European partnerships at national level. These partnerships will develop new approaches for creative and innovative STEM teaching and learning opportunities, connected to existing national practices. These new approaches will be tested in all countries in Europe, with the support of various Future Classroom Labs established in some countries. The conditions for large scale deployment of these approaches will also be investigated. Finally, the results will be shared with the European network of STEAM partners.

In 2020, we will consolidate the STEM Alliance activities with the support of major industry partners. Within the STEM Alliance initiative, industry and ministries of education will join forces to:

- Support the competitiveness of companies by ensuring a STEM-skilled workforce
- Promote the attractiveness and importance of STEM jobs in all industrial sectors
- Improve and promote all existing industry-education STEM initiatives supported by industry
- Contribute to innovation in STEM teaching at all levels of education (primary, secondary, tertiary) by developing greater contextualisation of STEM teaching and making STEM studies more attractive for young students

- Enhance industry-education collaboration at national level across all member states. More particularly, a major political conference on this topic will be organised in Ireland in March 2020.

At whole school level, the STEM School Label will continue offering a self-assessment tool as well as action plans and an ecosystem of resources and support for schools to improve their STEM strategies. At teacher and student levels, the STE(A)M It project which will work on the first integrated STEM framework. Other STEM projects, Space EU, AmgenTeach, BRITEC, TIWI, will continue to support the STEM agenda.
In 2020, European Schoolnet will continue to rely on the work developed by its Learning Resource Exchange (LRE) Subcommittee and its four working groups.

The LRE Subcommittee has reviewed its strategy and priorities and in 2020 LRE members aim to continue to develop closer synergies with EdReNe by co-organising face-to-face meetings and webinars. The LRE subcommittee will also continue developing its white paper series, with one or two on key topics in 2020.

EUN’s four Working Groups will continue:

**THE INTERACTIVE CLASSROOM WG (ICWG)**

will address issues related to developing **flexible learning spaces in schools**, building on 2019 outputs (a toolkit on makerspaces for schools, practical guidelines for schools on how to set up makerspaces including case studies, FCL guidelines for schools). In 2020, a particular priority will be to run an authoring workshop for teachers involved in the 2019 case studies to finalise videos on makerspaces and provide networking and professional development opportunities. The group aims to leverage the 2019 results build a community around Fablads and makerspaces in schools. In 2020, the group aims to link work on new learning spaces with three topics: **inclusion**, **how technology can support special needs**, and **computational thinking** (a workshop will be organised on this topic). Other possible topics include **whole school implementations**, e.g. progressive schools with learning spaces and 1:1 devices. **Study visits** to member countries will continue and contribute to discussions and the development of the Future Classroom Lab.

**THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION STEM WG**

will support European Schoolnet’s STEM education strategies, with potential developments in the following areas: the importance of **supporting primary schools in STEM teaching**, the limited information on **STEM careers**; how to get leading schools from different countries to **work together** and **share their expertise**; how to **mainstream practices**, **validation** and **piloting** from different initiatives; how to make **science research results more accessible** to teachers and students; providing a **platform for ministries of education** to share their expertise and support each other in any weaker areas. In 2020, the Working Group will concentrate on strengthening the **STEM education agenda** in all EUN activities, particularly in the development of the first Integrated STEM Framework.
Also in 2020, European Schoolnet will launch with its interested ministries two reflections groups: the first on small and rural schools and the second on digital assessment.

Finally, there will be a study visit on digital assessment, the third in the ongoing programme of peer learning visit, the first hosted by Sweden and Norway in 2018 on computational thinking and the second by Denmark in 2019.

EUN will also continue to address the topic of Special Needs Education. Although there is no working group on the topic since the end of the funding of the SENNET project, EUN will continue to monitor developments and seek opportunities to submit a project in this important area.

EUN’s Working Groups enable ministries to share experiences and problems and to learn from each other. The EUN research agenda will be defined by these Working Groups and projects will also be launched to address clearly defined, strategic priorities, rather than simply to exploit the opportunities presented by EC calls that, in some cases, may only partially address ministries’ priorities or interests.

Finally, as requested by the Steering Committee, EUN will continue to develop an effective approach to share project results and outcomes for those ministries of education not directly involved in specific projects.
EUN will continue to develop its partnerships in 2020, notably with the European Commission, regional authorities, foundations and industry. Outside Europe, EUN will continue to exchange with networks such as CoSN, Keris, Education Services Australia, RELPE in South America, Global Learning Portal in Africa, and the South East Asian Ministries of Education Organisation.

More specifically, a more structured and regular cooperation will continue with the OECD. Ministries of education see complementarities regarding the activities developed by both organisations, as illustrated by EUN participation in the OECD PISA/ICT 2021 experts working group, and a request from the OECD to discuss possible cooperation concerning classroom teaching practice videos under the framework of the TALIS Global Video Library of Teaching Practices.

Dialogue with industry bodies, (ERT, the EeSA, FEP, EFPIA) will help define a new business model as well as cooperation with individual companies such as Acer, Apple, Aver, Cisco, Dassault Systèmes, DELL EMC, DragOnSlide, DJI, Ecophon, Esri, Facebook, Google for Education, Gratnells, GSMA, Hey!Education, HP, Iris Connect, Learning by Question, Leba Innovation, Lego Education, Liberty Global, Makeblock, Matatalab, Matific, Microsoft, NEC, Nureva, Oracle, Oyoty, Konica Minolta, PASCO, RM, SCM Secure, SMART Technologies, Steelcase, Teléfonica Educación Digital, Texas Instruments, Triseum, Ultimaker, Vernier, ZIOXI and other potentially interested companies.

EUN will continue to develop links with foundations for specific activities, such as studies regarding school innovation, teacher training, STEM teaching (the Amgen Foundation with the development of a last phase of the programme in Life Science initiated in 2015). Cooperation with the industrial sector will continue to be a key area of development in 2020. Major IT companies will continue to support European Schoolnet through a variety of activities or their engagement in projects.
CONCLUSION

Over the last 20 years, European Schoolnet has consolidated its position as a network that provides ministries of education with a multi-stakeholder platform for schools, head teachers, teachers, teacher trainers, researchers, and industry with exchange mechanisms, study visits, working groups, projects and cross-country policy experimentations that support the agenda of transforming education in Europe.

As the network moves into an exciting new era in its development, many unforeseen challenges are sure to emerge. However, with the ongoing support of all of its members, European Schoolnet will reinforce its role as a major Ideas Lab addressing those challenges by continuing to support teacher capacity building, reinforcing its whole school approaches to implement innovative practices, and working with others to bring about systemic change in our educational systems in Europe.

In order to bring about this transformation over the next decade, the central focus of European Schoolnet will be on all dimensions of school education innovation processes, aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of teaching and learning.
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