



# Transforming education in Europe

Learn - Network - Create - Research



welcome

European Schoolnet is now more than 10 years old, and we are growing from strength to strength. With 31 Ministries of Education now members, European Schoolnet looks set to develop even more in the future, with more countries in the process of joining. What's more, a recent decision by the Steering Committee will open membership of European Schoolnet Partnership to the wider educational community, including regions, non-governmental organisations and educational institutions such as universities and schools.

Thanks to our broad outlook - reaching out across Europe and indeed across the globe - we remain committed to our core stakeholders: Ministries of Education, schools and teachers. Through our various activities and projects, we provide both Ministries and schools with information services relating to education technology, outreach campaigns on specific educational topics such as maths, science and technology, and research activities in the fields of ICT policy, practice and technical interoperability of learning systems.

We provide our member Ministries with in-depth analysis of the state of play of ICT in education across Europe. We also facilitate peer learning activities between Ministries of Education in key areas such as development of digital learning resources, standardisation, impact of ICT in schools, use and impact of interactive whiteboards and 21st Century digital skills for teachers and pupils. We thus provide a platform where all Ministries can define together the agenda for the future development of ICT in education and exchange policy and practice.

In addition, we provide a unique space for collaborative teaching and learning for any teacher or school in Europe. We thus also act as a forum for teachers to share practices and experience at grassroots level, as part of a pan-European community of teachers.

The European Commission is also a key actor in our work; many of our flagship projects have been funded via European programmes over the years. Such activities demonstrate the significant role we play in the field of ICT in education - whether in Europe or across the globe.

We invite you to learn more about European Schoolnet and its activities in this brochure. As you can see, our work is diverse, innovative and international in nature. Together with our member Ministries of Education, we are looking forward to a bright future. Care to share it with us?

**Giovanni Biondi & Marc Durando**  
**President & Executive Director of European Schoolnet**

## ***Policy, research and innovation***

European Schoolnet has effectively demonstrated how ICT can support change in teaching and learning. However, innovation in practice is difficult without policy support. Our work in the area of policy development, research and innovation is closely linked to the network of Ministries of Education that make up the Steering Committee. European Schoolnet collaborates with the Ministries to identify evidence, scalable and transferable practice, eSafety measures and emerging priorities in education in Europe. Through a series of successful collaborative projects and initiatives, we enable peers from various Ministries and agencies to discuss and learn from each other.

### ***Working with Ministries***

European Schoolnet has successfully connected Ministries of Education and other stakeholders through three key initiatives :

The first initiative, the **Insight Observatory for New Technology and Education** was set up by European Schoolnet and our member Ministries to promote peer exchanges and analyse the impact of different measures and policy within schools in Europe. These shared experiences provide Ministries and stakeholders with an up-to-date and timely overview of the issues and challenges facing countries when defining the school of the future and the skills of teachers and students for the 21st century.

Via our database of policy papers and country profiles, policy makers can gain a deeper and broader insight into emerging trends and the needs of today's education systems. Insight is the hub for policy makers, researchers and practitioners looking for impartial information about the latest developments in European and national Educational ICT policy, school practice and technology trends.

A second key achievement is the development of the **Learning Resource Exchange** (LRE): the first pan-European platform to exchange digital resources as a public service offered by Ministries of Education to schools. The LRE enables users anywhere to search for digital learning resources in any of the linked national repositories, thus increasingly significantly the choice and diversity of materials available to teachers in Europe.

The third initiative is the annual **EMINENT Conference**, held in various locations in Europe since 2000. EMINENT is designed to inform and inspire policy-makers, researchers, school leaders, leading-edge practitioners and industry partners who find it a unique opportunity to meet, make new contacts and discuss common ICT initiatives that foster the development of education in Europe.

### ***Research into school practice***

Through various research projects, European Schoolnet carries out in-depth studies on practical activities of schools in the domain of ICT and education. Past studies have examined the impact of ICT in various school settings, while current research is looking at the use of games in schools, ICT at primary school, use of learning objects, the impact of new pedagogies on student motivation, web services for environmental education and many other topics. We rely on a network of pilot schools and local coordinators across Europe to facilitate our research.

<http://insight.eun.org>

<http://lre.eun.org>

<http://eminent.eun.org>

## **School services**

European Schoolnet has established a strategic position as a European platform to:

- help schools achieve effective use of new technologies in teaching and learning,
- promote the European dimension in education,
- enhance learners' educational experiences through innovative pedagogical approaches,
- equip teachers and learners with the skills to achieve better in the knowledge society and raise interest in subjects such as maths, science and technology.

In these areas, European Schoolnet has proven experience in engaging schools. Additionally, we regularly work with industry and institutions to organise school activities - for instance, the European Commission or federations of industry.

## **International and European cooperation in education**

International education is at the very heart of our work with schools to promote exchanges and projects across borders. Pupils benefit from getting to know other cultures, languages and customs during their schooling.

Most of European Schoolnet portals for schools are available in the EU's official languages so that schools can access content in their national languages. Additionally, we have established extensive multinational teams of educators who support, inform and localise our approaches so that they meet the needs of European teachers and students.

At European level, European Schoolnet cooperates with the European Commission and industry to foster the European dimension and integrate European citizenship in curricula, providing materials, competitions and activities for schools - such as online debates with European political figures. European Schoolnet also works with international networks including the Consortium for School Networking (USA), education.au (Australia), the Euro-Asia Foundation (Singapore), KERIS (Korea), RELPE (Latin America) and NIME (Japan) to advance the international dimen-

sion of education in areas such as the sharing of learning resources, school cooperation and intercultural dialogue.

## **School networking**

European Schoolnet has an extensive network of schools in Europe who participate in projects, innovative school pilots and other activities. Many thousands of schools are engaged in our programmes, either on the basis of a class, several classes, or individual teachers. This base of practitioners and institutions is a reason why several organisations entrust European Schoolnet to organise campaigns, as it can guarantee large scale impact at the grassroots level. European Schoolnet has particularly worked on enhancing cooperation across Europe between schools, such as the EU's eTwinning and the promotion of the European dimension in education (myEUROPE, Spring Day for Europe).

## **Maths, science and technology education**

European Schoolnet is now a keystone of European initiatives to stimulate young people's interest in studies and careers in the area of maths, science and technology (MST), through the establishment of Xplora, the European portal for teachers. It provides tools, resources and materials for science education. Related to this hub, European Schoolnet establishes regular campaigns and competitions on a range of topics such as earth and space science, sustainable development, energy, environment, chemistry and materials.

[www.etwinning.net](http://www.etwinning.net)  
<http://springday.eun.org>  
<http://dyp.eun.org>  
[www.futurenergia.org](http://www.futurenergia.org)  
[www.xplora.org](http://www.xplora.org)  
[www.xperimania.net](http://www.xperimania.net)

## ***Learning resource exchange and interoperability***

European Schoolnet is at the forefront of global initiatives related to the exchange and interoperability of digital learning resources. With the commitment of participating Ministries of Education and support from European Commission research programmes, European Schoolnet is building a new Learning Resource Exchange (LRE) service for schools that will enable teachers and learners to find educational content from many different countries and providers.

A major question addressed by the LRE is how teachers and learners can more easily make use of educational content that is in a different language, part of a different curriculum, or that uses an unfamiliar pedagogical approach. A key element of the LRE is to identify resources from national repositories that can 'travel well' across linguistic and geographic borders.

In order to be able to identify this sort of content, the LRE is adopting new 'social tagging' approaches to metadata creation so that teachers can add their own key words to resources from other countries that they have successfully used in their classrooms. By analysing the tags of teachers' favourite resources, together with ratings given to LRE content by teachers, the LRE will enable users to see that some content can indeed be shared beyond a national context.

### ***Network of learning resource repositories***

The Learning Resource Exchange is built upon a technical architecture that allows Ministries and other content partners to easily become part of a federation of repositories. This federated approach to linking repositories has been adopted as it allows LRE partners to maintain maximum control over their own collections of resources. It is also a strategy that is in line with both European and global developments in this area. A measure of the success of the strategy is that, in the

MELT project, 16 Ministries of Education in Europe are already making available approximately 40,000 learning resources and over 100,000 learning assets via a beta version of the LRE. Additional resources from LRE Associate Partners in both Europe and the USA are also being included in the LRE prior to the launch of the public service.

### ***Standards and interoperability***

The development of the LRE over the last few years has been possible because European Schoolnet has been working, not only on content exchange (in projects such as CELEBRATE, CALIBRATE and MELT), but also on a wider set of issues related to standards and interoperability of eLearning services (in projects such as LIFE). This work is continuing via the ASPECT project and ongoing active participation in international standardization bodies such as CEN/ISSS, IMS Global and SIF.

<http://etb.eun.org>  
<http://celebrate.eun.org>  
<http://calibrate.eun.org>  
<http://info.melt-project.eu>  
<http://lre.eun.org>

## Flagship projects and clients EU-funded



• **eTwinning** is arguably Europe's largest educational initiative with over 40,000 schools registered. European Schoolnet runs the Central Support Service for eTwinning and the eTwinning portal, on behalf of the European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture and the Education and Culture Executive Agency. [www.etwinning.net](http://www.etwinning.net)



• **MELT** (Metadata Ecology for Learning and Teaching) is a ground-breaking content enrichment project. It is examining whether 'folksonomies' and 'social tagging' approaches lead to the creation of more and better metadata to facilitate greater cross-border reuse of open educational resources in schools and is supported by the European Commission's eContentplus programme. It contributes towards the European Schoolnet's strategic plan for the Learning Resource Exchange (LRE) service for schools. <http://info.melt-project.eu>



• **ASPECT** is a large-scale Best Practice Network supported by the European Commission's eContentplus Programme. It involves 23 partners from 16 countries, including 10 Ministries of Education. For the first time, experts from all international standardisation bodies and consortia active in eLearning are working together in order to improve the adoption of learning technology standards and specifications.

• **STEPS** (Study on TEchnology Impact in Primary Schools) is a study to compare and analyse the main strategies for integration of ICT in primary schools in every country in Europe, their impact and future development perspectives. The findings aim to provide evidence of impact of ICT in primary schools and lead to policy recommendations. The STEPS study is carried out on behalf of the European Commission DG Education and Culture and is a continuation from a successful study conducted in 2006 on the impact of ICT in schools in Europe.



• **INSAFE** Plus coordinates the European safety awareness network of national awareness raising centres. The network aims to promote safe, effective and ethical use of internet and mobile phones and is set up and co-funded within the framework of the European Commission's Safer Internet plus Programme. As the coordinator of the network, we provide practical and logistical support to network members, organise the global 'Safer Internet Day' and maintain the network portal. [www.saferinternet.org](http://www.saferinternet.org)



• **Xplora** is the European hub for the science education community with a wealth of resources, tools and information for maths, science and technology teachers. It is the gateway for innovative information and resources for teaching and learning aiming to increase young people's motivation for studying maths, science and technology, produced by campaigns, research institutes, Ministries, industry partners, science foundations and others. Xplora was originally funded via the DG Research European Science Education Initiative, and other projects such as INSPIRE, funded by DG EAC, contribute to its ongoing development. [www.xplora.org](http://www.xplora.org)

## Flagship projects and clients

### Multi-stakeholder partnerships



- **eLearning Awards** - an annual event to identify and reward excellent practice in using ICT for teaching and learning. Each year leading industry partners and education stakeholders support the event, such as Adobe, Apple, Belgacom, Intel, Interwrite Learning, Microsoft, Promethean, SIVICO Romania, SMART Technologies, Telefónica O2, UPC, Young Digital Planet and others. <http://elearningawards.eun.org>



- **e-Skills** - a pilot project to launch the first e-Skills Career Portal at a European level. It aims to be a one-stop-shop to support young people and professionals in upgrading their ICT skills, in response to the growing demand for ICT skills in working life. It is supported by the e-Skills Industry Leadership Board, which brings together major stakeholders such as Microsoft, Cisco and Oracle with SMEs.



- **TeachToday** - helps and guides teachers on the safe use of internet and new technologies. It explains the necessary knowledge to use, and to instruct about the use of new communication tendencies. It is a useful guide for teachers in how to take advantage of new communication tools in a responsible way. The project is financially supported by a consortium of mobile phone operators and social networking providers (e.g. Vodafone and MySpace). <http://en.teachtoday.eu>



- **Xperimania** - aims to enhance awareness, understanding and interest in chemistry and materials science, with a special focus on the diversity of applications of petrochemistry. Through inquiry-based methods, activities and competitions, this project encourages teachers and students to become more engaged in science. This project is coordinated by European Schoolnet on behalf of Association of Petrochemicals Producers in Europe (Appe). [www.xperimania.net](http://www.xperimania.net)



- **FuturEnergia** is a programme produced by European Schoolnet and financed by PlasticsEurope. The main target of FuturEnergia is to promote the use of advanced materials to contribute to sustainable energy development, rising awareness about global climate change and reinforce education in schools on sustainable energy. [www.futurenergia.org](http://www.futurenergia.org)



- **Games in schools** is a project carried out on behalf of the Interactive Software Federation of Europe (ISFE). Based on a survey conducted in schools, it aims to analyse how games can be used in a school context, and in what ways their use can have an impact on motivation and learning processes. Once analysed, the results will be then used as a basis to develop recommendations for policy makers and practical examples for teachers. <http://games-blog.eun.org>

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\*membership process underway \*\* observer



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