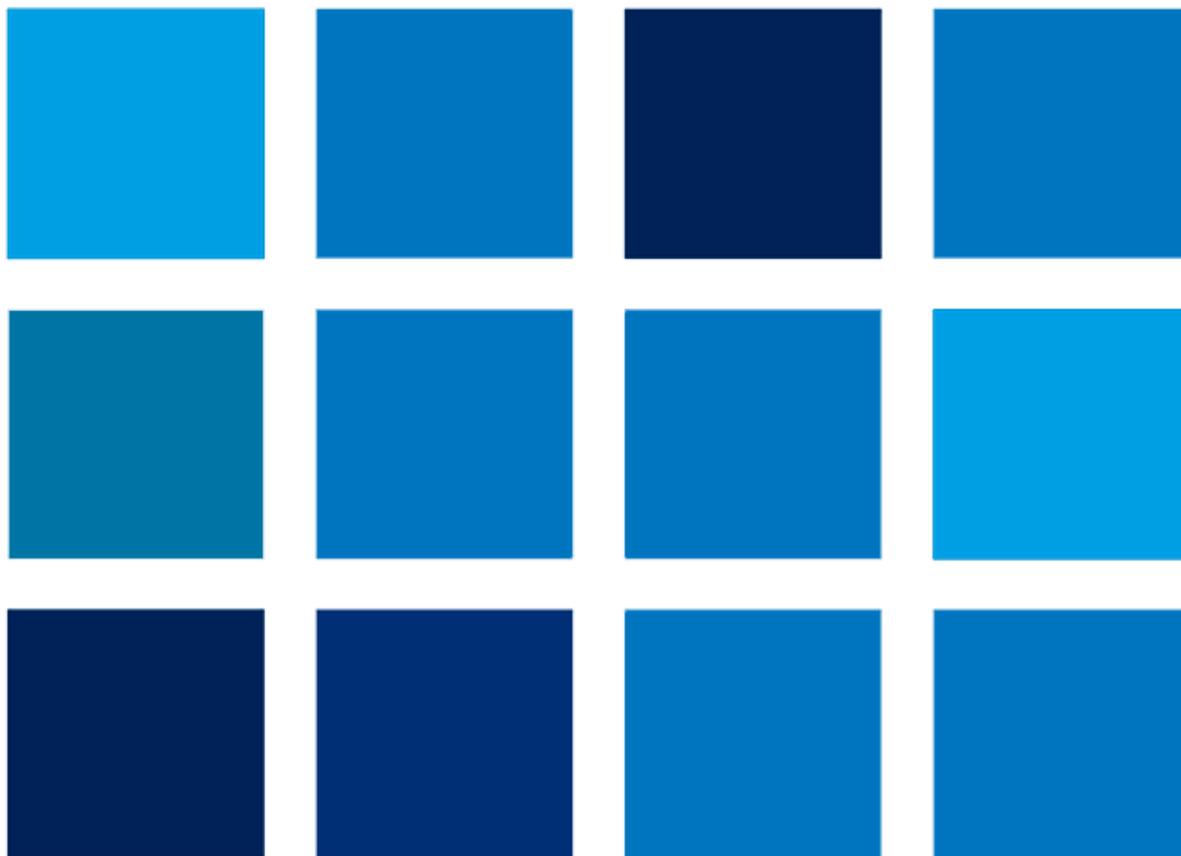


The impact of eTwinning on the in-service professional development of teachers in Italy

Summary Report



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Index

INTRODUCTION	4
THE RESEARCH SAMPLE	4
COMPETENCE AREAS INVESTIGATED	6
DIDACTICS	6
TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM	8
SCHOOL PARTICIPATION	8

Introduction

This fact sheet summarizes the main results of a research conducted in 2020 in order to evaluate the impact of the eTwinning action on the professional development of in-service teachers in Italy. The assessment is based on the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, collected respectively through an online questionnaire, administered to a sample of teachers enrolled in the eTwinning platform, and a series of in-depth interviews with some respondents to the questionnaire. The research was jointly carried out by INDIRE, the University of Florence and the Italian eTwinning unit.

The research sample

- The questionnaire was administered to a sample of 1,034 teachers who had been enrolled in the eTwinning platform for at least 3 months at the time of the survey.
- 91% of the sample is made up of female teachers and 9% of male teachers.
- The sample includes in-service teachers of various Italian regions. The most represented regions in the sample are Lazio (16%), Campania (10%), Puglia (9%) and Sicily (9%) while the least represented are Friuli-Venezia Giulia (0.9%) and Valle d'Aosta (0.2%).
- 31% of respondents worked in upper secondary schools during their teaching career, 30% in primary schools, 27% in lower secondary schools and 7% in infant schools.
- 5% of the sample had teaching experience in more than one school type and/or level.
- The respondents' teaching experience at school varies from a minimum of 1 year to a maximum of 40 years. Overall, the average is 21.18 years (S.D = 8.9).
- At the time of the survey, participants had been registered in the eTwinning platform for a minimum of 3 months to a maximum of 184 months (approximately 15 years). Overall, the average is 50 months, about 4 years.
- 9% of the teachers who answered the questionnaire are eTwinning ambassadors.
- 22% (no. = 227) of respondents stated that they have not taken part in any eTwinning project since joining the platform. 13.7% (no. = 142) of participants reported having participated in only one project, while 85 respondents (8.2%) said they had carried out 2 projects since their enrolment. Finally, 50.6% of the participants (no. = 523) in the survey stated that they have carried out 3 or more eTwinning projects since joining the

platform. 57 participants (5.5%) did not answer the question about the number of eTwinning projects carried out.

- In the 2018-2019 school year, as regards the national and/or European face-to-face training events promoted by eTwinning, 61% of participants (no. = 631) declared that they did not take part in any event. On the other hand, 21.3% (no. = 220) declared having participated in an event. 98 respondents (9.5%) stated that they took part in 2 training events of this type. Finally, 8.3% of respondents (no. = 85) claimed to have taken part in 3 or more of these events.
- Concerning regional eTwinning face-to-face seminars in the 2018-2019 school year, 49.8% of participants (no. = 515) stated that they did not attend any seminars. On the other hand, 28.8% (no. = 298) stated that they had attended only one seminar. 110 respondents (10.6%) stated that they took part in 2 regional seminars. Finally, 10.8 % of the respondents (no. = 111) stated that they took part in 3 or more events.
- With regard to long-term eTwinning online courses, 66.1% of participants (no. = 683) stated that they have not taken part in any long-term courses. On the other hand, 22.1% (no. = 228) declared that they had participated in only one course that falls within this type. 75 respondents (7.3%) stated that they took part in 2 of these courses. Finally, 4.7 % of respondents (no. = 48) said they took part in 3 or more long-term online courses.
- In the 2018-2019 school year, as far as concerns the short-term eTwinning online courses, 41.1% of participants (no. = 425) stated that they did not take part in any courses. On the other hand, 21.9% (no. = 226) declared that they had attended only one course of this type. 157 respondents (15.2%) stated that they took part in 2 courses of this type. Finally, 21.8% of respondents (no. = 226) stated that they took part in 3 or more short-term online courses and 21 participants (2%) reported that they took part in 10 short-term courses.
- 9 respondents to the questionnaire took part in an in-depth interview. The interviewees are all female but differ for geographical area (North, Central and Southern Italy), school type and level in which they serve (primary schools and upper and lower secondary schools), and level of experience in the eTwinning community, established on the basis of the number of projects carried out: basic level (1-3 projects), intermediate (4-8) and advanced (more than 8).

Competence areas investigated

The questionnaire and the interviews aimed to detect participants' perception regarding the relationship between the development of specific skills relating to three different areas - *Didactics, Teacher Professionalism, and School participation* - and the set of experiences made within the eTwinning community, from the participation in projects, face-to-face and distance training, to peer learning with other teachers met through the platform.

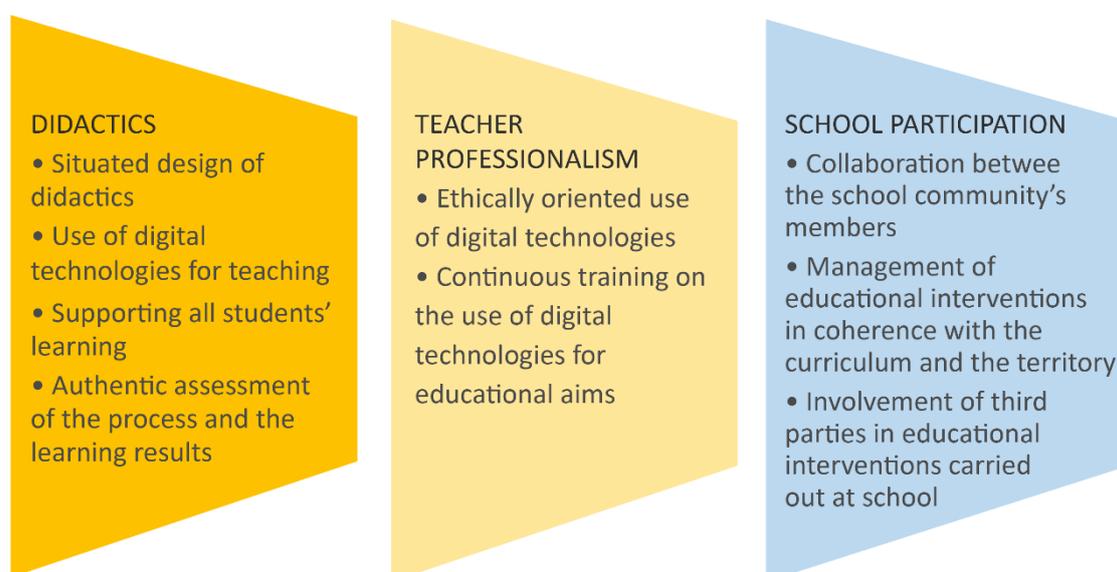


Figure 1. Brief description of the competence areas

Didactics

- The average score of 64.14 (S.D. 9.88) - out of a maximum score of 80 - found in the Didactics area (see figure 2) indicates that on average the respondents to the questionnaire believe that the eTwinning experience has greatly contributed to improving their teaching skills.

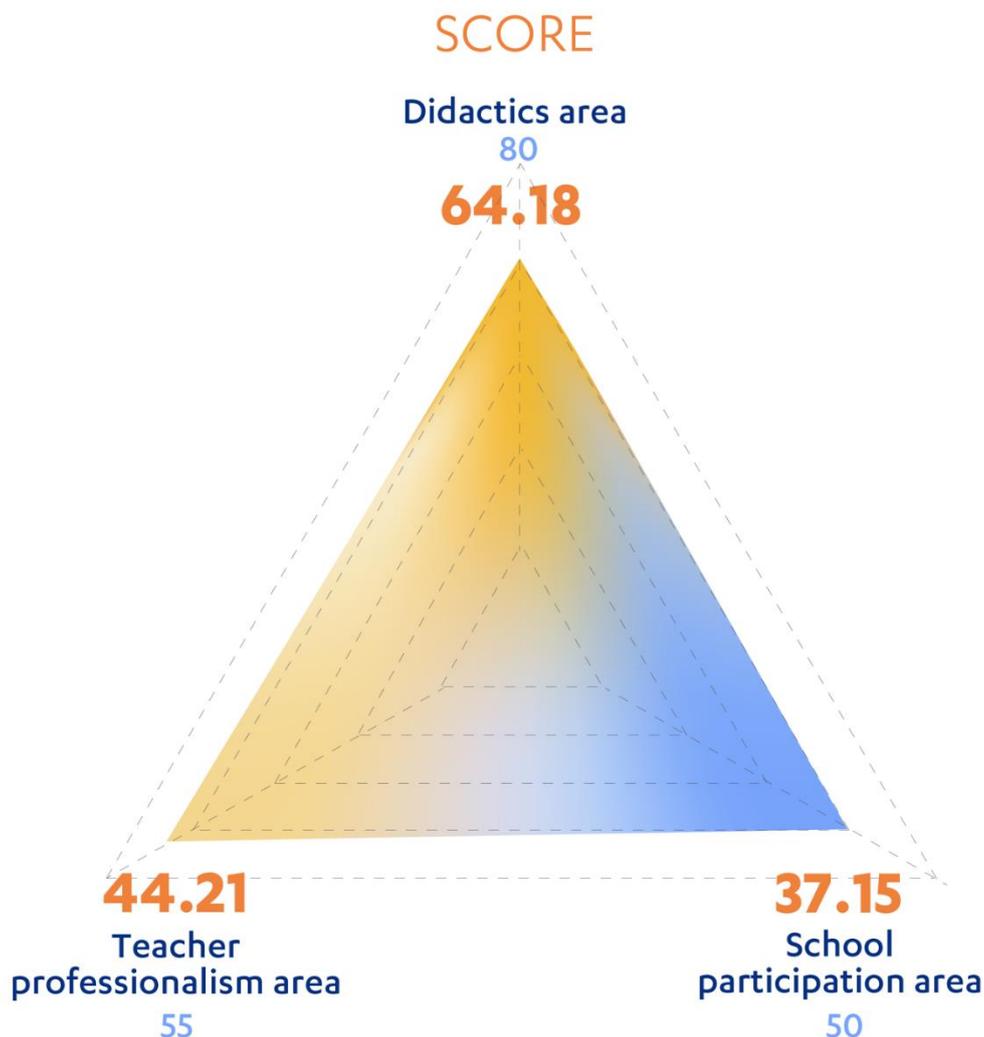


Figure 2. Scores detected in the teaching area

- Positive and significant correlations were found between the level of satisfaction detected in the Didactics area, the number of projects carried out and the number of training events in the 2019-2020 school year. These data suggest that a more intense participation in teaching and training activities corresponds to a better perception of the impact of the eTwinning experience on one's teaching skills.
- The most recurrent specific benefits of the eTwinning experience perceived by interviewees are: 1) the improvement of the ability to co-design educational interventions; 2) the expansion and diversification of the use of digital technologies for teaching; 3) the promotion of students' transversal and digital skills.

- In some cases, the interviews revealed that the digital skills acquired in the context of eTwinning teaching or training activities have been successfully transferred to "ordinary" teaching.
- Some interviews highlighted how eTwinning projects contribute to the inclusion of students with special educational needs and/or with a migrant background in the learning process, as well as to the experimentation of diversified and more authentic assessment methods, in the school context.

Teacher professionalism

- The average score of 44.21 (S.D. 9.88) - out of a maximum score of 55 - in the Teacher Professionalism area (see figure 2) indicates that on average the respondents believe that the eTwinning experience has contributed significantly to their professional growth.
- Positive and significant correlations were found between the level of satisfaction detected in the Teacher Professionalism area, the number of projects carried out and the number of training events in the 2019-2020 school year. These data suggest that a more intense participation in teaching and training activities corresponds to a better perception of the impact of the eTwinning experience on one's professional growth.
- The most recurrent specific benefits of the eTwinning experience indicated by the interviewees are 1) the constant cultivation of digital ethics in a digital platform perceived as "safe"; and 2) the effectiveness of peer training on the use of digital teaching technologies, in particular through the transnational sharing of good practices.
- In some interviews it was observed how eTwinning projects have been a stimulus to raise the awareness of school colleagues and parents regarding an ethically oriented use of digital technologies.

School participation

- The average score of 37.15 (S.D. 6.66) - out of a maximum score of 50 - found in the School participation area (see figure 2) indicates that on average the respondents believe that the eTwinning experience has helped to promote their own and others' commitment in the school community but the positive trend detected is less marked

than in the other two investigated areas.

- Positive and significant correlations were found between the level of satisfaction detected in the School participation area, the number of projects carried out and the number of training events in the 2019-2020 school year. These data suggest that a more intense participation in teaching and training activities corresponds to a better perception of the impact of the eTwinning experience in promoting one's own and others' commitment in the school community.
- The most common specific benefits of the eTwinning experience indicated by the interviewees are 1) the mutual and timely support between the Partners involved in the projects; 2) the highly sustainable integration of eTwinning projects into the school curriculum; 3) the positive reception of eTwinning didactics by parents.
- A critical issue widely shared by the interviewees is the difficulty in involving colleagues of their school in eTwinning projects.
- On some occasions, from the interviews, it emerged that eTwinning projects can be easily developed not only in coherence with the school curriculum but also with the territorial context.

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