

Training programme for the mentors of the bivalve mollusc aquaculture sector

Work Package: 3

Author: M.A.R.E. Soc. Coop. Ar.l.

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OPTIMA
Good Practices in Molluscs Aquaculture

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MODULE 3

**1.
Short
description**

This module equips mentors with skills to create and manage online collaborative learning environments, select effective tools, and utilize Erasmus+ platforms for dynamic and inclusive distance learning.

**2.
Objectives
of the
module**

The module trains mentors to identify, select, and effectively use digital tools and platforms, with the aim of creating engaging and effective online learning environments.

**3.
Learning
outcomes**

Mentors will be able to select and use digital tools effectively and create engaging, interactive online learning environments.

**4.
Prerequisites**

Not applicable

**5.
Duration**

150 minutes (100 face to face online, 50 e-learning)



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3. Digital collaboration spaces: sharing the information with learners



3.1 Distance Learning tools

Distance learning tools support students and teachers in collaborating, communicating, and creating content during and after the course.

3.1.1 Collaboration tools: Google Drive, Trello, Asana, Teams

Google Drive

- Store and share files, collaborating in real time
- Automatic updates with instant commenting and editing
- Keep everything organized with shared folders

Trello (<https://trello.com/>)

- Based on the Kanban method, organizes work into thematic boards, to-do lists, and cards
- Assign tasks, track deadlines, and monitor progress clearly
- Cards include checklists, files, comments, and due dates
- Supports students' independent project management

Asana (<https://asana.com>)

- Create and manage tasks, deadlines, dependencies, and reports
- Support long-term planning with customized goals and KPIs
- Ideal for managing complex projects

Microsoft Teams

- All-in-one platform for communication, meetings, and collaboration
- Organize work through teams, channels, and shared spaces
- Integrated with Office tools, ideal for corporate environments



→ Empower mentors to use these tools independently



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3.1.2 Contents creation tools: Canva, Prezi, Power Point

Creating clear, engaging, and well-structured content is essential for effective mentoring. It helps communicate ideas more clearly and makes learning more memorable



Canva is an easy-to-use online design tool that helps create visually engaging content. It offers ready-made templates for presentations, infographics, and more. For mentors, it is useful to create customized materials and support learning through visuals.

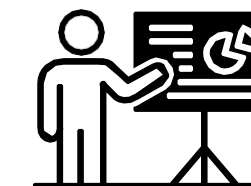


Prezi enables dynamic, non-linear presentations that guide the audience through a visual story. Its zoomable structure lets you move smoothly from overview to detail, making it ideal for explaining complex concepts and keeping students engaged.



PowerPoint remains a key tool for professional presentations. Using features like transitions, animations, speaker notes, and custom templates enhances communication, while its compatibility with educational and business platforms ensures easy sharing and integration.

Exercise: participants will create original content using each of the three tools, learning not only the technical features but also the principles of design and visual communication. Upon completion, each mentor will have built a small creative "toolbox," useful for creating effective, aesthetically pleasing materials that meet mentoring objectives.



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3.1.3 Asynchronous communication tools: Forum, email, chat

Asynchronous communication ensures continuity, flexibility, and inclusiveness in mentoring. This module helps mentors maintain effective dialogue with students outside real-time meetings, focusing on tools like forums, email, and chat.



Forums provide a structured way to exchange ideas on specific topics. In mentoring, they can be used to ask questions, share materials, encourage discussion, and support in-depth, thoughtful participation over time.



Email is a widely used tool for formal asynchronous communication. It's ideal for updates, sharing documents, setting goals, and giving feedback. Effective emails are clear, concise, well-structured, and professional yet empathetic, with attention to response times.



Chats (WhatsApp, Telegram, Slack, Teams) enable quick, flexible communication for coordination and idea sharing. In mentoring, they can support informal interaction while maintaining clear boundaries, structured conversations, and rules to avoid overload and protect students' focus. Among these, **WhatsApp** is often the most widely used tool for reaching bivalve farmers;

Exercise: the mentor will encourage course participants to reflect on the advantages and limitations of asynchronous communication. Real-world situations will be simulated using various types of chat.



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3.1.4 Tools for evaluation: Google Forms, Kahoot

Evaluation is a key part of mentoring, helping track progress, measure goals, and provide constructive feedback. This module focuses on digital tools for interactive and participatory evaluation, highlighting Google Forms and Kahoot!.



Google Forms lets you create surveys, quizzes, and feedback forms to assess knowledge, monitor learning, and collect opinions. Responses are automatically organized for easy analysis, supporting structured, evidence-based evaluation throughout the mentoring process.



Kahoot! is a game-based platform for creating interactive and fun quizzes. It actively engages students, supports content review, and allows live or asynchronous participation, with real-time results to help mentors adapt learning to students' needs.

→ At the end, each mentor will be able to effectively integrate assessment tools into their mentorship process, adopting a conscious, transparent approach oriented towards the development of the student's potential.



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3.2 Be able to use the different platforms for video conference and select the most adapt to the target group

3.2.1 Comparison of video conferencing tools: Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet (audio/video quality, screen sharing, collaboration features)

In the post-Covid era, video conferencing tools are essential for communication, productivity, and remote learning. Platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet each have unique features and use cases, making it important to choose the right one for meetings, classes, or informal gatherings.



vs

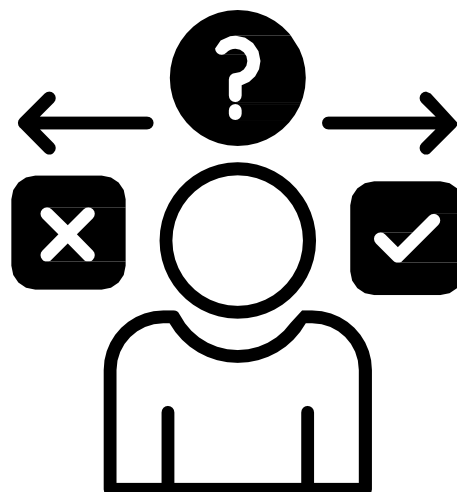


Microsoft Teams

vs



Google Meet



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Feature/Platform	Zoom
Key Strengths	Ease of use, rich interactive features, reliable for large groups, webinars
Ideal For	Webinars, large online events, interactive courses, dynamic meetings with many features
Ease of Use	Very intuitive to start and join meetings, even for new users
Interactive Features	Breakout Rooms, advanced polls, virtual whiteboards, reactions, virtual backgrounds, remote screen control
Ecosystem Integration	Extensive integrations with many third-party apps (via marketplace)
Audio/Video Quality	Generally high and stable even with low bandwidth
Attendee Capacity	Up to 100 in the free version (time limits), hundreds/thousands in the paid versions
Security and Privacy	Has implemented significant improvements after initial criticism (end-to-end encryption for some modes)
Recording	Available (local or cloud, depending on the plan)



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Feature/Platform	Microsoft Teams
Key Strengths	Deep integration with Microsoft 365, full collaboration hub, enterprise security, structured work channels
Ideal For	Organizations using Microsoft 365, complex team and project management, structured enterprise environments
Ease of Use	Requires some adaptation period to take advantage of all the integrated collaboration features
Interactive Features	Persistent chat, integrated file sharing, topic channels, third-party applications, whiteboards (Microsoft Whiteboard), real-time translation
Ecosystem Integration	Deep and native integration with the entire Microsoft 365 ecosystem (Office, SharePoint, Outlook, Planner, OneDrive)
Audio/Video Quality	Good, but may be more dependent on connection and hardware for optimal performance
Attendee Capacity	Up to 100 in the free version, hundreds in the paid versions
Security and Privacy	High security and compliance standards, suitable for corporate and public environments
Recording	Available (cloud)



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Feature/Platform	Google Meet
Key Strengths	Ease of use, native integration with Google Workspace, browser accessibility, reliability
Ideal For	Google Workspace users, quick and simple meetings, essential online lessons, high accessibility
Ease of Use	Extremely simple and immediate to start or join a meeting
Interactive Features	Screen sharing, chat, polls (recently integrated/paid in some versions), questions and answers, real-time subtitles
Ecosystem Integration	Deep and native integration with Google Workspace (Gmail, Calendar, Drive, Docs, Sheets, Slides)
Audio/Video Quality	Excellent and reliable, optimized for use via browser
Attendee Capacity	Up to 100 in the free version, hundreds in the paid versions
Security and Privacy	Google security and privacy standards, encryption during transmission
Recording	Available (cloud, depending on the plan)



Google Meet



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stands out for its remarkable ease of use and wealth of interactive features



ideal for large-scale webinars, dynamic virtual events, and meetings that require a high level of participant engagement



excels in its structured, enterprise-level collaboration and integration with the Microsoft 365 suite



ideal for companies seeking a unified collaboration environment.



characterized by its simplicity, broad accessibility, and seamless integration into the Google Workspace ecosystem



ideal for quick and efficient communications, particularly advantageous for users and organizations already operating in the Google environment.



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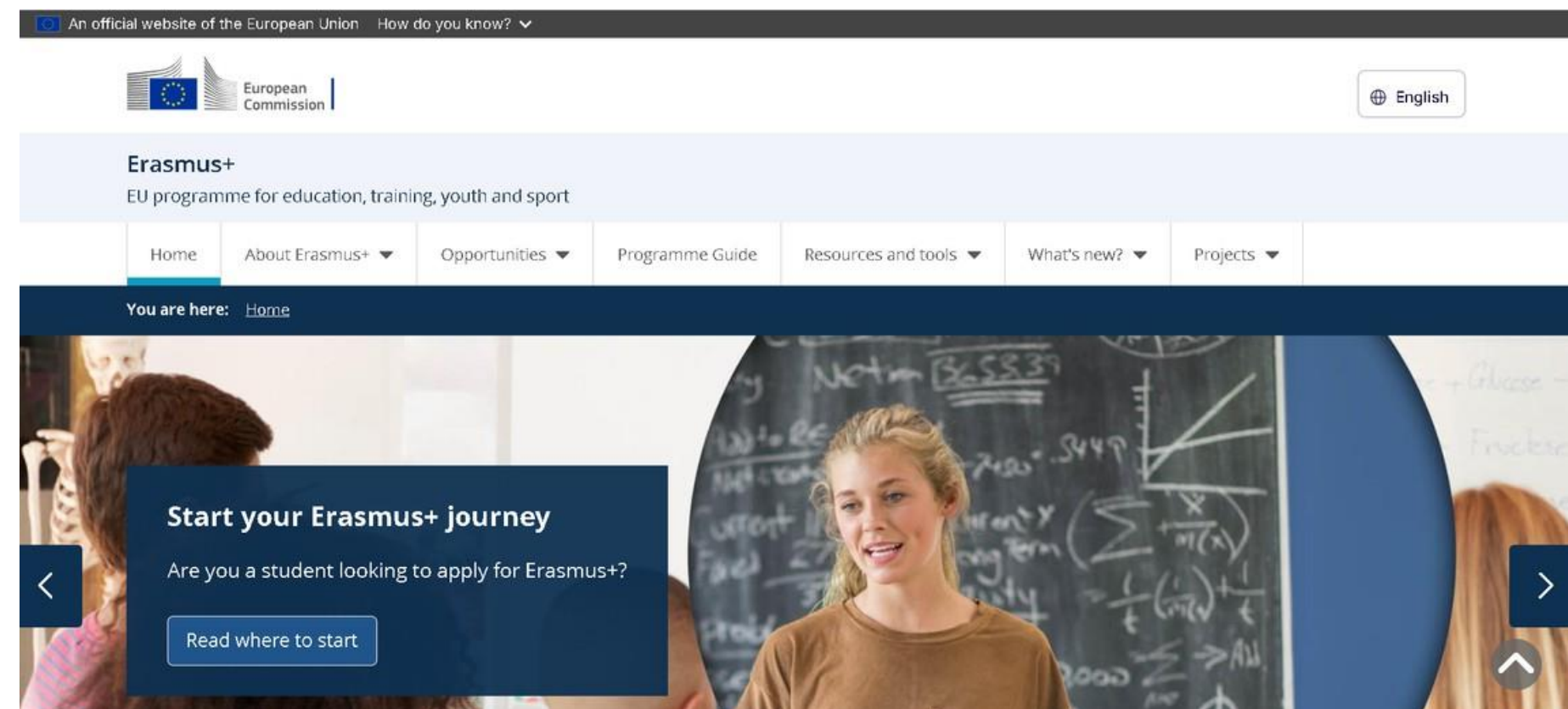
3.3 Erasmus+ platforms for learning and training

Erasmus+ platforms offer digital tools that support collaboration and learning.

They act as hubs for sharing knowledge, fostering peer learning, and encouraging innovation among participants.

3.3.1 Erasmus+ Portal: primary source of information on: calls, guides and funding opportunities.

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/>



The Erasmus+ Portal is the main online hub for accessing program information, funding opportunities, and calls for proposals. It helps individuals and organizations navigate European projects, supporting participation, collaboration, and project development in a clear and transparent way.

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Erasmus+ Portal is a crucial tool for several reasons:



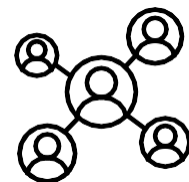
Funding

helps users **find funding opportunities**, including calls focused on digital transformation in education, with clear and detailed information on available funding streams.



Guides and Digital Resources

provides **easy access to program guides and digital resources**, supporting remote collaboration and helping teams work effectively on project proposals.



Networking

thanks to the Project Results Platform it's possible to explore funded projects in order to **discover potential partners for future e-learning initiatives**.



Digital Applications

offers **step-by-step guidance and links for digital applications**, making it easier for applicants worldwide to apply



Digital Education Policies

check official guides to **align your e-learning proposals with EU digital education priorities**



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Erasmus+ Portal is a crucial tool for several reasons:



Calls for Proposals



key section for applicants

It includes:

- **Annual Work Programmes:** Documents outlining priorities, actions, and budgets for the next year; essential for planning e-learning projects.
- **Specific Calls:** Announcements for funding cycles in all education sectors, with deadlines, eligibility, and thematic priorities (including digital skills).
- **Application Forms & Guidelines:** Direct links and instructions to prepare and submit applications via digital platforms.
- **Programme Guides:** Comprehensive reference documents (e.g., Erasmus+ Programme Guide), often called the “Bible” for applicants.



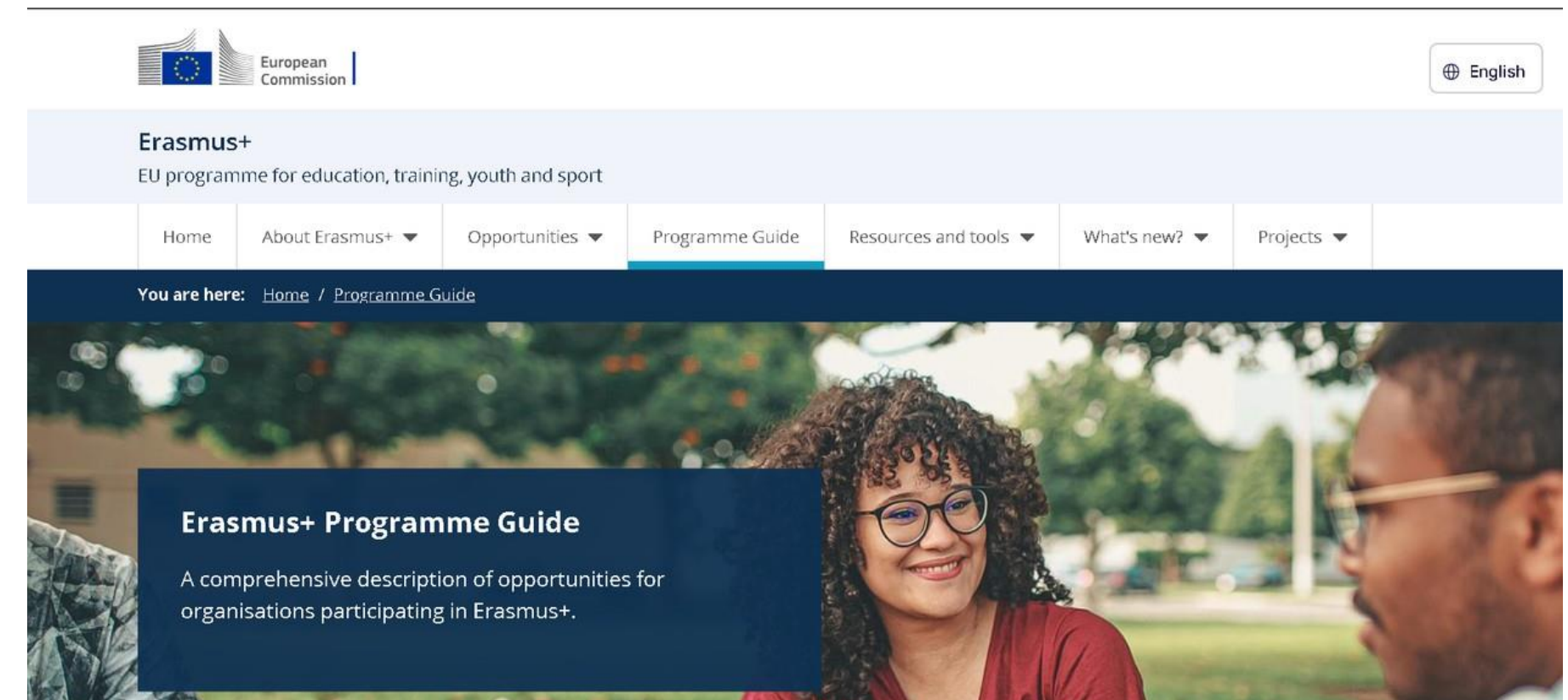
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The Erasmus+ Programme Guide contains:

- **Detailed Rules and Conditions:** Eligibility for applicants and organizations, funding rules, and project durations for all Actions.
- **Policy Context** How Erasmus+ supports EU policies, including the Digital Education Action Plan, relevant for e-learning initiatives.
- **Action-specific Information:** Descriptions of Key Actions (KA1, KA2, KA3) and formats for mobility, cooperation, and policy support, many including e-learning.
- **Funding Opportunitie:** Overview of activities eligible for funding:
 1. **Mobility Projects (KA1)** – Support for physical and blended mobility, with e-learning tools for preparation and virtual components.
 2. **Cooperation Projects (KA2)** – Innovation and exchange of good practices; includes online courses, digital teaching materials, and virtual collaboration platforms.
 3. **Policy Support (KA3)** – Policy reform and development through studies or conferences, often with digital or e-learning outcomes.



<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/programme-guide/erasmus-programme-guide/introduction>



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The portal also contains links to other useful resources:

- **National Agencies:** Contact information for agencies in each country that provide local support and guidance to applicants.
- **Erasmus+ Project Results Platform:** Insights into funded projects, helping to find inspiration and potential partners for new digital initiatives.
- **Statistics and Impact Reports:** Data on program reach and success, useful for understanding the broader European education context.



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3.3.2 EPALE: the reference platform for Lifelong Learning in Europe

EPALE (Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe) is the EU's digital hub for lifelong learning. Managed by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), it **connects adult education professionals** (e.g., trainers, researchers, policymakers, social workers, and learners) **across Europe**.

EPALE provides a dynamic space for **sharing resources, best practices, and professional development opportunities** to improve the quality of adult learning.



EN English

EPALE - Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe

Home

Contribute ▾

Collaborate ▾

Learn ▾

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About ▾

<https://epale.ec.europa.eu/en>



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The platform acts as a virtual meeting point, offering a wide range of content and features:

- **Multilingual Content:** Articles, case studies, news, events, publications, and Open Educational Resources (OER) available in multiple languages, breaking language barriers and promoting inclusion.
- **Thematic Sections:** Organized by key adult education topics (e.g., basic skills, workplace learning, social inclusion, and quality), making it easier to navigate and find relevant information.
- **Communities of Practice:** Discussion groups and forums where professionals can exchange ideas, share experiences, and develop innovative solutions to common challenges.

It provides access to:

- **Innovative Online Learning:** Blended courses, MOOCs, webinars, and digital tools in adult education.
- **Networking & Collaboration:** Connect with European professionals and partners for online projects.
- **CPD (Continuing Professional Development) for Trainers:** Webinars and online courses to improve digital teaching skills.
- **Tech Integration Best Practices:** Examples of using digital tools to overcome learning barriers.
- **Digital Inclusion:** Resources for adult digital literacy and accessible e-learning courses.



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3.3.3 Other useful Erasmus+ platforms: eTwinning, E+ Project Results platform

eTwinning

<https://school-education.ec.europa.eu/en/etwinning/about>

Is a **collaborative platform that connects schools across Europe**, allowing teachers and students to work together on shared projects using digital technologies.

It was launched in 2005 by the European Commission and is managed by European Schoolnet, with support from National Support Services in each country.

The platform provides a safe, multilingual, and engaging online environment where **participants can collaborate, exchange ideas, and develop important transversal skills such as communication, teamwork, and digital competence.**



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It offers an environment for distance learning, providing:

- **Distance and blended learning:** eTwinning supports both online and mixed learning formats, enabling collaboration even when participants are not in the same place.
- **Collaboration tools:** It provides tools like chat, forums, document sharing, and collaborative pads through TwinSpace, a secure space for project work.
- **Digital skills development:** Teachers and students improve their digital competences by using the platform, creating content, and communicating online.
- **Language learning:** The multilingual environment allows users to practice languages in real and meaningful communication contexts.
- **Resources and professional development:** eTwinning Live offers access to teaching materials, idea exchange, webinars, and online training focused on innovative and digital teaching methods.
- **Flexibility and inclusion:** Projects can be adapted to different ages, levels, and needs, ensuring participation for all learners, including those with fewer opportunities.



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It is structured into various section, including:

- **eTwinning Live:** A professional social network where teachers can connect, share ideas, access resources, and join training activities.
- **TwinSpace:** A private and secure virtual space where teachers and students collaborate, share materials, and manage project activities.
- **Institutional support desk:** A support system managed at European and national level that helps with registration, project development, and teacher training.

ETWINNING
LIVE



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Studies highlight the important pedagogical benefits of eTwinning, because it permits:

- **Active and cooperative learning:** Students collaborate with peers from different countries, developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills.
- **Improvement of digital and language skills:** Regular use of the platform and communication in a foreign language (often English) strengthen these competences.
- **Increased motivation and critical thinking:** International projects make learning more engaging and encourage deeper reflection on different topics.
- **Intercultural awareness:** Working with students from diverse backgrounds promotes understanding, respect, and openness to other cultures.



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E+ Project Results

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects>

Is a public online database that collects and shares the results of Erasmus+ projects.

It allows users to explore project objectives, partners, materials, and outcomes. Its main purpose is to showcase good practices and make project results accessible to everyone.



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This platform is a valuable resource for e-learning and innovative distance learning:

- **Sources of inspiration:** It helps teachers and educators discover successful projects and adapt ideas and methods to their own teaching contexts.
- **Sharing and reuse of good practices:** It makes project results accessible, allowing the reuse of resources such as e-learning materials and online courses.
- **Support for training:** It provides real examples of innovative teaching practices that can be used for professional development and improving lessons.
- **Support for research and development:** It allows researchers and policymakers to analyze data, identify trends, and improve education systems.



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Through eTwinning and E+ Project Results, the following are promoted:

- ✔ **Networked learning:** These platforms create communities where educators can collaborate and share ideas.
- ✔ **Digital skills development:** They help users build essential skills for today's digital learning environment.
- ✔ **Active learning methods:** They promote student-centered approaches, even in online settings.
- ✔ **Support for European goals:** They contribute to inclusive and international education, in line with European policies.



complementary tools of enormous pedagogical value



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It is essential, however, that their use be supported by training that includes:

- **Continuous mentor training:** Develops skills for using platforms effectively and applying innovative teaching methods.
- **Technical capacity:** Ensures schools have the necessary digital infrastructure.
- **Adequate evaluation:** Monitors impact and helps improve the effectiveness of initiatives.

