

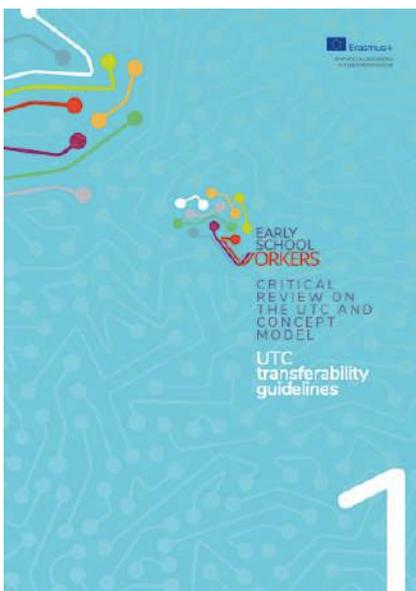


## Dear Reader,

As you may know, on the 1st of October 2020 the **last year of the project** has started.

It seems like it was only yesterday that we were in Warrington (UK) to visit the UTC for the first time, but actually two years have passed by and we are already starting our last year of the project. Meanwhile, we have also faced the COVID-19 pandemic that pushed us to cancel meetings and trainings and to re-think our activities. We adapted ourselves to the new situation, we worked from home and we met online. Now that schools started again throughout Europe, the ESW partners are ready to test the **new curriculum**.

During these two years we have studied the **UTC model** and worked on the **transferability guidelines (First Intellectual Output available [here](#))**, presented during a public event in Brescia (IT) in May 2019. Then we developed a methodological framework and the necessary tools for developing a new curriculum (**Second Intellectual Output available [here](#)**), we organised some **trainings for trainers** and now, finally, we are ready to kick off the **PBL activities** conceived.



This is what we have planned: VET centres (the so-called “user partners”) will start the activities in November and they will proceed for the whole school year, till April. Meanwhile, we will evaluate them using questionnaires, interviews, grids, etc. This part, in particular, will be led by the UTC itself (responsible for the last I.O.) and the Cattolica University, that



The project aims at supporting the renovation of VET systems in Europe with the ultimate goal of tackling Early School Leaving and increasing the employability of youngsters while fostering their active role in the society.

In order to reach this objective, the project intends to further strengthen the key and technical-professional competences of young people attending the VET pathways, analysing and adapting the English UTC model to the Italian / German / Spanish context. It will recognise the skills acquired by the learners after the practical application of the curriculum.

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together with the UTC developed all the **evaluation tools**.

At the end of the year (and of the project) we will then have a **new curriculum based on the UTC characteristics** and adapted to the Italian, German, and Spanish contexts, that will be collected into the **Third Intellectual Output**.

## The impact of COVID-19 on communication and dissemination activities of the Early School Workers project

Due to the containment of the Coronavirus pandemic, and, consequently, the fact that most European countries have enforced strict border shutdown and lockdown measures, **European projects**, which involve regular travels across Europe, have been deeply affected.

Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic crisis has hit the **Vocational and Education Training sector** particularly hard, and it impacted many professionals that formed the backbone of economic and social life during the lockdown on vocational education qualifications.

All **events** and “face-to-face” **meetings** have been cancelled and/or postponed in Europe. Of course, project meetings can still be organised virtually. Nonetheless, this is impossible for final events or **conferences** where it is planned to communicate about the project.

The same applies to **deliverables**: some tasks can be performed or finalised remotely. However, it gets much more complicated if an activity requires the use of specific **infrastructures** (laboratory, equipment, and so on), most of which being closed until further notice.

Cancelled events and in person meetings, closed **infrastructures or schools**, suspended until further notice **staff mobilities and students’ exchanges** have affected also the **communication and dissemination activities** of the Early School Workers project.

Moreover, within the ESW project the pandemic led us to cancel not only meetings and bring them to the online dimension, but also **trainings**. In conclusion, we adapted ourselves to the new situation and had to re-think our activities and also how to communicate about those, as well as the best way to disseminate our progresses.

In view of the current situation and future challenges, in particular the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the green and digital transition in times of change, European Vocational Education and Training systems need to be reformed.

It is quite hard to minimise the COVID-19 crisis for **VET and European projects**, and we hope that they will be soon restored like before as soon as the pandemic measures will no longer be applied.

We also hope that the Early School Workers project will end with physical meetings and final event in order to effectively communicate its **outcomes and positive results**.



## PBL activities at CJD in Germany

Despite the fact the COVID-19 pandemic laid a paralysing layer over everything, CJD like their European partners, continued to work on their European projects and did their best to carry out the ESW-project at the CJD association North-Rhine-Westphalia South/Rhineland.

The two VET training courses that are participating at the ESW project at CJD, the painters and varnishers at the CJD Frechen, and the VET training for sales (helpers) at the CJD Gummersbach, were on distance learning for several weeks, like everywhere else. As shortly before the summer the yearly exams for the VET courses were scheduled, CJD did take the chance to make use of the new way of exam preparation also for the ESW project.

One of the PBL activities that CJD prepared within the project is the online preparation for the exams. Absolutely not an easy task, but as we all learned within this year a must-have within the current situation. Furthermore, the PBL activities that CJD developed are based on the long experience on hands on VET trainings combined with aspects learned within the ESW project.

As of today CJD regrets to say that a piloting of the PBL activities is unfortunately not possible at the CJD association North-Rhine-Westphalia South/Rhineland, as on top of the COVID-19 pandemic, internal restructuring does not stand in favour of the project.

## The new school year at IES Puerta Bonita...

We have started a new school year at IES Puerta Bonita with great enthusiasm and desire to learn. Despite the difficulties in these times of pandemic, we are implementing all the planned activities, combining face-to-face teaching (50%) with online teaching (50%).



One of the basic objectives of our educational project is to learn through real practices and to

offer real products. Therefore, promoting teaching with real production facets, based on project-based learning, is a priority for the entire educational community of IES Puerta Bonita.



And although for this course the circumstances are somewhat more complex for the development of the practices, we have already started a large part of them.



With the aim of promoting international actions and projects, we have also initiated the activities included in the ESW project: Early School Workers, within the Erasmus+ KA2 program, that will allow us to share with partners from Italy, the United Kingdom, and Germany our practices developed through the "Project Based Learning" PBL methodology.



In this line of work, we have planned the "Recording/Shooting Week" in which all of the students from the first year courses of Image and Sound that we teach at the IES Puerta Bonita will

work together to produce diverse short films, working like real professionals.



Participating in ESW project will get to compare and contrast several PBL educational experiences of the different countries members of the project, to achieve a much broader and more complete teaching perspective. And, at the same time, learn about the experience of the English model University Technical Colleges - UTCs, analysing the difficulties and the strengths that help us improve the teaching-learning process.

### ...and at ENDO-FAP

The 2020-2021 school year at the ENDO-FAP Don Orione center in Piacenza began on September 14 under the banner of prevention measures against COVID-19 contagion.

The students of the Prima Grafici class found a classroom full of single and spaced desks: a novelty for the VET Center, where for some time the spaces have been set up to encourage group work, circular exchange, and practice vs passive listening.

But do not worry: the teachers proposed an activity to make the classroom welcoming and above all to rejuvenate and beautify the old second-hand desks. Together with the teachers of

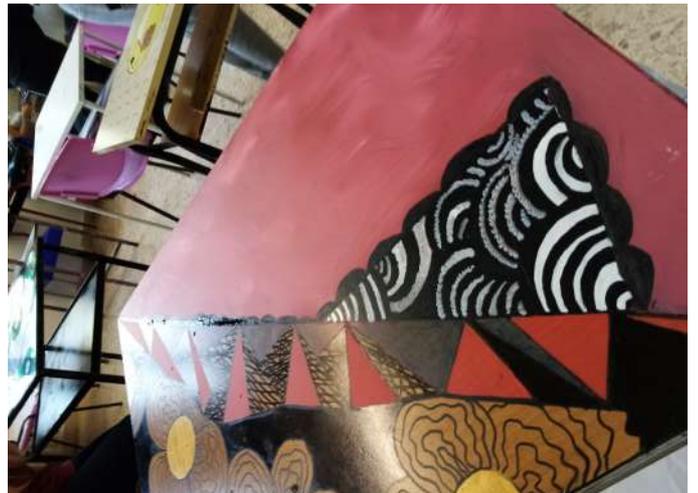
the Languages area, girls and boys designed, drew, coloured, and painted the surface of their desk to personalise it.





The activity is included in the Didactic Unit "*It is not a school*", through which new students are welcomed every year: in this way we want to help them understand the new didactic context, so different from the traditional education they are used to. No desk for the teachers and no bell to

mark the time; personalised signage to share the rules of coexistence in the classroom and in the school, multimedia tools to document life in the classroom: through a practical and unstructured activity, students socialised with each other and were the protagonists of the teaching experience.



**Happy school year to all!**

## The Early School Workers project at the EfVET Roundtables 2020

EfVET offers European project members the opportunity to disseminate progress, results and products of their projects as a way to valorise good practice outcomes and sustainability.

During the “Roundtables” session project promoters have the opportunity to provide more in-depth information to all interested people and discuss future cooperation opportunities.

During this event ESW partnership will present the main results of the project, namely:

### **INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 1 - UTC transferability guidelines**

UTCs ([www.utcolleges.org](http://www.utcolleges.org)) are innovative schools in the UK and their approach seems to be capable of addressing and preventing the Early School Leaving (ESL) problem, as well as the lack of key competences among young people. In these schools knowledge and skills are acquired through the resolution of real problems or projects. Their approaches deliver an innovative training concept, which is able to narrow the gap between knowledge and competences acquired at school and those required by the companies. The possibility to reach these excellent results has been possible thanks to innovative methodologies and by re-thinking spaces, times and learning approaches.

The first Intellectual Output consists of a report on the University Technical Colleges - UTCs and how to transfer the model in other contexts.

The IO1 analyses the following variables:

- Ideal dimensions of schools;
- Organisation of times and spaces;
- How to relate with the companies;
- Standard soft skills PiXL Edge (Leadership, Organisation, Communication, Initiative and Resilience);
- How to realise the PBL didactic model (Problem and Project Based Learning);
- How to personalise the learning process.

### **INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 2 - Methodological framework & common tools for developing new curriculum**

The partnership designed a methodological framework and created tools useful for the creation of new training paths (curriculum) based on the UTC model. This tool allows to combine the national standards of Italy, Spain and Germany with the innovative elements of the UTCs.



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## EfVET Roundtables 2020

Thursday, 19 November 2020

Online event, 14.00 – 15.30 (CET)

### First Roundtable

**14:00** Welcome of participants

**14:10** First roundtable

- Overview of the project
- IO1 UTC transferability guidelines
- IO2 Methodological framework and new curriculum
- IO3 Result of the pilot

**14:30** Q&A and closure

### Second Roundtable

**14:45** Welcome of participants

**14:50** First roundtable

- Overview of the project
- IO1 UTC transferability guidelines
- IO2 Methodological framework and new curriculum
- IO3 Result of the pilot

**15:20** Q&A and closure

PARTNERSHIP

