



TEACHUP

Final Cross-Country Dialogue Lab Report

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1 INTRODUCTION

This Cross-Country Dialogue Lab Report brings together and summarises the key discussions and conclusions which took place at each Country Dialogue Labs in each of the TeachUP partner countries: Austria; Greece; Estonia; Hungary; Lithuania; Malta; Portugal; Slovakia; Spain; and Turkey in the 3rd year of the Project.

The overall aims of the Country Dialogue Labs across the 3 years of the TeachUP Project were:

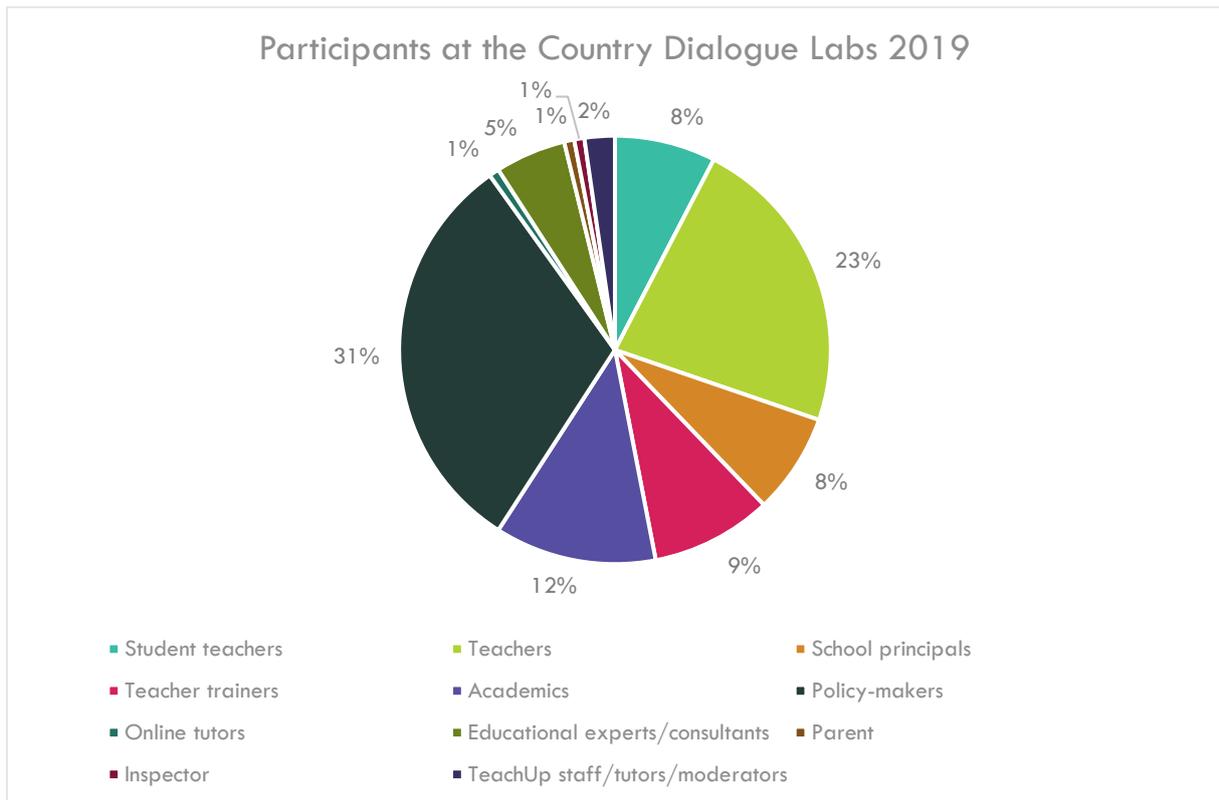
- to involve a wide community of stakeholders in the process of developing and testing the online courses and disseminating the results
- to harness all stakeholders' expertise through the facilitation of knowledge sharing and cooperation between partners involved in the professional development of teachers
- to enable all partners to have an opportunity to have their voice heard and gather a range of different perspectives to inform and improve the development, implementation and evaluation of an online course for teachers' professional development
- to contribute to the generation of evidence-informed advice for policy-makers and others involved in teacher education
- to improve the flows of information across the stages of teacher education (initial teacher education, newly qualified teachers and teachers' career-long professional learning)
- to develop networks of stakeholders and others who can sustain knowledge sharing in teacher education (content, approach, continuum, recognition of teachers within ITE and CPD) and encourage the dissemination and use of the online courses.

A Country Dialogue Lab (CDL) took place in each of the three years of the TeachUP Project and they were designed as a series. This third CDL aimed to build on the dialogue from the 1st and 2nd CDLs by connecting to the discussions in the previous CDLS to enable the participants to develop their thinking across the series of three Country Dialogue Labs. The design, implementation and evaluation of the three CDLs were guided by [Country Dialogue Lab Guidelines](#) prepared by the author of this report. The Guidelines set out the format for the CDLs in each country to ensure consistency in approach and in the questions that framed the discussions. The TeachUP project developed and ran four [online courses](#): formative assessment, personalised learning and teaching, collaboration, and creative thinking. The guiding questions related to these courses and the associated online tutoring.

The specific aims of the 3rd Country Dialogue Lab were to discuss:

- the outcomes of the 2nd CDLs and the findings from the 2nd Cross-country Dialogue Lab Report
- the overall research results of the field trials
- a sustainability strategy for the use and further development of the Teach UP project outputs (*online courses, tutoring model*) in each country
- a sustainability strategy for the dialogue process initiated by the CDLs concerning future Dialogue Labs to develop teacher education and other education issues.

A total of 276 participants attended the 3rd CDL across the 10 TeachUP Countries. Policy-makers and Educational Agency Officials, ITE and CPD educators, school teachers and school leaders, educational experts and consultants, parents, school inspectors and student teachers attended the 3rd CDL. Figure 1 below provide the breakdown of the stakeholders attending the 3rd CDL (NB. Some of the participants held dual roles, for example, a teacher and a teacher educator).



2 MAIN POINTS FROM DISCUSSION OF FEEDBACK FROM THE 2ND COUNTRY DIALOGUE LAB

- ⇒ Commonality of points made across all countries in the 2nd CDLs
- ⇒ Role of intrinsic motivation in participation in CPD
- ⇒ Need strategies to increase retention rates
- ⇒ Explore possibilities for National Accreditation Procedures for qualifications acquired at European Level
- ⇒ Develop strategies to further use existing MOOCs in National Context
- ⇒ Increase channels to promote MOOCs

On hearing the feedback from the Cross-Country Report of the 2nd Dialogue Lab the participants of the 3rd CDL expressed surprise that there were so many similar points raised in the discussions taking place across the partner countries, despite the cultural and educational system differences. There was a general view that the topics of the four TeachUP online courses were relevant and timely for teachers' professional development. There was also discussion in several CDLs regarding the need for further clarification of terminology for teachers, particularly relating to understanding summative and formative assessment and personalized learning. In relation to personalized learning there was discussion at a number of CDLs that the reasons and the benefits of using personalized learning for students as well as teacher educators should be made clear.

The discussion regarding the need for a bridge between theory and practice which was reported in the 2nd Cross-country Dialogue Lab Report continued in the 3rd CDL. In a number of CDLs the discussion returned to the need in some countries for teacher education to go beyond theory and be more practice-oriented, and process-embedded. For other countries the discussion centred on finding a more balanced and appropriate relationship between theory and practice in teacher education. It was emphasised that both were necessary for teacher education.

The issues of motivation and retention were a focus of discussions across the CDLs. The need to identify strategies to encourage the participants who initially signed up for the MOOC to see the courses through to completion was emphasized strongly. The discussions included the need to understand more about the role of intrinsic motivation and the reasons why some student teachers and teachers completed the courses and others did not. This highlighted the need to understand teachers as individual learners and the importance of the development of supportive frameworks to enable and inspire a learning culture that supports, recognizes and values engagement in MOOCs. In relation to these points external motivation, such as certification and awards, was also a feature of discussions regarding strategies to improve retention rates. There were differences in views about certification. In some CDLs certification of MOOCs was felt to be essential to increase the completion rate of the courses while in other CDLs intrinsic motivation was emphasised more strongly. Regarding certification, the possibility of the development of National Accreditation Procedures for qualifications acquired at European Level was also raised in some of the CDLs.

The importance of continuing the development of online professional learning for student teachers and teachers was generally recognized across the CDLs. The need to develop strategies to continue and expand the use of MOOCs in a national context was a focus of discussion. There was a desire to continue using the courses developed through the TeachUP project. There was also recognition that specific channels to promote professional learning through MOOCs needed to be identified and increased.

3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TUTORING MODEL

- ⇒ Importance of developing an atmosphere of trust in the implementation of the tutoring model
- ⇒ Need for greater clarity about the definition and role of the tutor for the tutors and the course participants in advance of starting the course
- ⇒ More flexibility and more tailored to individuals in the tutoring model
- ⇒ More understanding of how to reach participants most in need
- ⇒ Need for consideration of sustainability and economic viability of the tutoring model in a MOOC

Across all the CDLs there was much discussion about the implementation of the tutoring model. Many of the points raised were recognised to be both opportunities and challenges, with potentially positive and negative impacts indicating that the policy experimentation was helpful in learning more about tutoring in relation to MOOCs and learning more about the individual professional learning needs and preferences of student teachers and teachers. It was recognized that the presence of 'human tutors' on online courses strengthens the social aspects of online courses. However, it was also recognized that this means a huge amount of work for the tutors.

In some of the CDLs the need to create an atmosphere of trust among the course participants regarding the implementation of tutoring was emphasised. It was recognised that in some contexts it was not typical

for teachers to ask for help in relation to their own professional learning. It was suggested that in these contexts it may be hard for a teacher to admit that he or she is having a problem and may not ask for help or expect help. In these circumstances, the CDL participants said that 'surprise tutoring' could lead to negative feelings, such as anxiety, a feeling of intrusion or help being interpreted as control. It was emphasised that the purpose and role of the tutoring model should be made very clear in advance of the start of each course. Also, some CDL participants said that the need for tutoring should come from the course participant rather than being offered directly by the tutor. There was also a suggestion that knowing more about the tutor was necessary to build a trusting relationship.

The importance of defining the role of the tutor at the beginning of each course was discussed in several CDLs so a participant knows in advance what tutoring is available. For example, a short introduction of the role and expertise of the tutor could be made available for the participants to enable them to choose whether a tutor would be helpful to support and/or extend their learning. However, to provide a role description for course participants requires clarity and consistency in terms of how the tutoring role is defined in a MOOC.

The question of definitions was discussed in many of the CDLs demonstrating the ambiguity in knowing what tutoring means in practice. A particular question was - Is the intention in the MOOC tutoring or mentoring? The participants said that the difference needed to be clarified. Also, whether 'email prompting' was a task for the course moderator rather than the tutor was discussed. For some CDL participants, their view was that the 'static role' of sending out prompting emails should not be defined as tutoring. There was general agreement that reminder emails were helpful but they had to be timed appropriately and not be overly intrusive. It was also suggested that a chatbot could be used to answer recurring questions in the forum or chat whereas tutoring should be defined as something that is dynamic and personalized, offering individual support rather than customisation of an email template. The notion of the tutoring model being implemented in a more flexible way was linked to personalized learning and a more tailor approach for those course participants who needed it most. Again, flexibility was seen as the greatest opportunity that MOOCs could potentially offer for teachers' professional learning but also the biggest challenge for a MOOC with large numbers of participants. There were strong feelings that tutoring needs to be flexible and personal yet at the same time there was recognition in the CDLs that it is challenging to offer and sustain more personalized tutoring in a MOOC. In particular, it was acknowledged that it is potentially not economically viable in terms of workload of tutors or the numbers that maybe required to provide more personalized tutoring.

In some CDLs it was suggested that the local country context needs to be taken into account in personalizing the tutoring model. However, it was interesting that some CDL participants themselves had very different attitudes about the way a tutoring model should be implemented. Some said they would not accept tutoring at all and would try to find a solution for any problems arising on their own while others said they would make use of a tutoring opportunity. There was also variation between those who said they would like to be offered an opportunity for tutor support. Some said they would most likely seek help from a tutor at the beginning of the course, while others said they would be more likely to accept support at the final part of the course. Some said they would only seek technical help while others said they would ask for content-related support from the tutor. This highlights that it is not only about the implementation of tutoring within a local context but is also about how individuals choose to engage in a MOOC and about individual learning needs and preferences. This illustrates the huge challenges in the design of an effective tutoring model for a MOOC which has to be designed for 'massive' engagement of learners but at the same time aim to offer some flexibility for more personalized tutoring.

It should be noted that the discussions in the 3rd CDLs about the terms 'tutoring' and 'tutor' led to these terms being dropped and replaced with 'personalised support' and 'personalised support agent' for the purpose of clarify in the reporting of the TeachUP findings and results. The [reports](#) summarizing the results

of the TeachUP policy experimentation refer to ‘personalized support’ instead of ‘tutoring’, and to ‘scalable online courses’¹ instead of MOOCs.

4 EVALUATION OF THE EFFECT OF THE TUTORING MODEL ON COURSE PARTICIPANTS AND CONDITIONS FOR HIGH RETENTION OF TEACHERS ON ONLINE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES

- ⇒ Better understanding of the challenges of the relationship between course topic, schedule, participant attitude to learning, quality and timing of tutoring, external factors and completion rates
- ⇒ Support for teachers’ use of digital devices and media in educational institutions needs greater attention including digital security
- ⇒ Identification of the conditions for retention of the tutoring

The dialogue in the CDLs across the 10 countries highlighted that a lot of factors in different combinations can impact on retention of student teachers and teachers on online professional development courses. Some of the factors that were identified in the discussion about the implementation of the tutoring model were revisited in relation to the effect of tutoring on participants and retention rates. For example, the discussion of the effect of the tutoring model on the course participants returned to the definition of tutoring and a lack of understanding of what to expect from the tutoring model. A more ‘automated model of tutoring’ was viewed as likely to have a less positive effect on the course participants than a more ‘human-centred’ model of tutoring. Also, the importance of tutoring including positive reinforcement with feedback guidance in order to have an effect on course participants and retention rates was emphasized. Required competences of tutors were proposed. For example, it was suggested, ‘high quality tutors with good communication skills and the ability to provide high motivational input’ may make a difference to retention rates. Some CDL participants suggested that the selection of tutors with these competences is essential. It was also proposed that a tutor’s profile should be clear and they should be provided with excellent training for the tutoring role in a MOOC. In summary, these elements were thought to be decisive in the success of retention rates by some of the participants of the CDLs.

The discussions in the CDLs also returned to the link between implementing more personalized tutoring and improving the retention of course participants. For some participants it was recognised that the effect of the tutoring could increase the likelihood of student teachers and teachers completing the courses. However, in some CDLs it was also suggested that some of the sample of teachers in the TeachUP policy experimentation might not have been motivated to complete the courses regardless of any ‘tutoring’ offer. Some teachers may lack the commitment to complete the course if there is no ‘pay’ or ‘career promotion opportunity’ and/or no national certification. It was further suggested that it is necessary to strengthen the ability of self-regulated learning of teachers and student teachers and to understand more about their motivation to participate in a MOOC. The different attitudes of the course participants to

¹ Scalable Online Courses: courses designed in a way that there is no practical, technical, or other limit to the number of learners in the courses. While those courses have the potential to accommodate ‘massive’ numbers of learners, they do not necessarily do so. Massive Open Online Courses or MOOCs would be considered a typical example of such a course – but the term ‘massive’ could be misleading in this context as numbers of learners are not necessarily high.

learning and their different motivations were discussed. It was suggested that some participants may not have completed the entire course because they only wanted to engage with the content they needed or were interested in or they only wanted to watch the videos and/or download the material. There was also discussion of the different professional learning needs and motivations of student teachers compared to teachers in relation to their engagement in a MOOC. However, there was recognition that in terms of tutoring there was no 'one size fits all' so differences may be more individual rather than due to career stage. Yet again this highlights the dilemma of understanding the need for different types of support but at the same time recognising that the scale of a MOOC created a challenge for personalized tutoring. The requirement for appropriate tools to identify course participants' professional learning needs was emphasised. This was particularly the case for participants most in need of support from a tutor. Some CDL participants considered the baseline survey/initial questionnaire to be the best resource for identifying the teachers in need and they made helpful suggestions about what information should be collected e.g. learning intentions, learning styles, willingness to accept tutoring.

Other significant factors thought to effect retention of course participants were time and place of study. According to the discussion in some CDLs, the main reason for dropping out and not completing the courses was the lack of time. The everyday challenges of life were acknowledged as they can distract participants' focus away from competing the courses. It was suggested that when considering the implementation of online courses, it is important to balance the offer of course content with time for participant self-study process. For example, more time to complete a course and more time between courses. It was also suggested that an introductory video at the beginning of the course should be provided to help participants to understand the MOOC process and help them to estimate realistically the time required to complete the courses. An extended period prior to the start of the first course to give the participants longer to sign-on to the courses and acquaint themselves with the platform and welcome and introductory videos were also suggested. Rigid start dates were viewed as adding to the challenges for some participants who did not continue on the courses. The timing of the MOOC courses could have impacted on retention if they coincided with times when it was difficult for the participants to engage in study because of other commitments (e.g. school examinations, too close to school holidays/end of semester). Also, it was recognised that the family circumstances of some participants meant they could not engage in the online courses at home after working hours or at the weekends. It was suggested that a time-frame in school when a teacher could take part in on-line courses could be established. Also, if online courses were conducted at school all or specifically chosen/motivated teachers could attend them.

The suggestion of teachers working together in school or in a community of teachers on the MOOC was discussed further. The development of an active community of teachers as learners engaging in the courses was suggested as a way of increasing retention. The importance of providing multiple channels of communication for the course participants to interact with each other in a variety of ways was discussed. Contact with other course participants was linked to the development of collaboration in learning and a sense of belonging to a community. This was also linked to motivation to continue on the course and to extend learning through engagement with other learners. The creation of a motivated community of learners who feel positive about the value of a MOOC was also viewed as important in encouraging other teachers to engage in the MOOC. The personal recommendation of innovative ideas or educational courses by colleagues known to them may be a strong motivator to other teachers to engage in the MOOC.

The combinations of factors effecting participation and retention were discussed. For example, the CDL participants discussed the relationship between the course topics, the scheduling of the courses, school and personal factors of the participants and retention rates. The importance of high-quality courses was emphasised as an essential factor in course retention. In some CDLs the participants stressed there is no substitute for good course content and structure, no matter how skilled the course managers, tutor, moderator, help-desk etc. are. It was also suggested that the course topic/title may have an effect on the completion rate of a course. The quality of the first course was thought to be important as it may affect participants' decisions about continuing to engage in the other courses.

Technology was discussed in several CDLs in relation to teachers' engagement in a MOOC. The point was made strongly that even though digital media influences the lives of many teachers and learners, the use of digital devices and media in educational institutions has not yet received sufficient attention. The initial inhibition threshold towards the use of technology in teaching must be overcome. It was suggested that internal school training in technology should be expanded, in close connection with MOOCs and a suitable tutoring model. The training should be geared closely to the needs of the teachers and the school context. It was also proposed that school and cluster management should take greater responsibility for the professional development of the teaching staff and should thus make sure that the conditions for positive completion of training are provided. It was emphasized that teachers as well as learners should be enabled to use the opportunities of digital transformation within the school with support when needed as well as independently.

The related point of digital security was highlighted in some CDLs. It was emphasised that the discussion of the opportunities for the use of digital devices and media offered needed to include examination of questions relating to security aspects and alerting teachers to the possible dangers associated with the use of digital media.

There were many suggestions made during the CDLs across all 10 countries about the conditions for retention of teachers on online professional development courses. These suggestions are summarized below in no particular order:

- An introductory video or a webinar at the beginning of the course should be provided to help participants understand the MOOC process and how the platform works and to help them realistically estimate the time required.
- Comments and feedback to the online course participants should be prompt.
- Emphasis should be put on understanding the motivations of the participants.
- Participants should be asked before their participation in a MOOC if they want support during the course, and if they want, to have the opportunity to reach out and communicate with the tutors when they need support.
- Tutors should offer support to the tutees during the MOOCs considering the courses' material and activities, not only for their final activity.
- The tutoring role needs to have positive reinforcement and guidance built into it.
- Train tutors and improve selection procedures.
- Team-tutoring could be implemented.
- Reinforce the team of moderators and tutors with other more qualified and available trainees.
- After completing small sections, the participants should receive badges, positive marks or humorous elements showing their progress throughout the course.
- Ability for the participants to respond e.g. to a forum.
- Request trainees to create short videos to validate readings.
- More flexible scheduling of courses.
- Automatic responses and online scheduling with an agreed time between the tutor and course participant.
- Instant Help should be provided when required
- A FAQ section should be provided (not only for technical questions).

5 HOW PEER ASSESSMENT WORKED IN THE TEACHUP COURSES

- ⇒ Peer assessment is a weak point that requires greater attention
- ⇒ Structured rubrics with specific criteria to guide peer assessment should be provided
- ⇒ Training for peer assessment is needed

The discussions in a number of the CDLs made the point that peer assessment is often perceived as a weak point in assessments as it is viewed as less trustworthy than feedback from tutors/experts. Some participants pointed out that even when peer assessment is perceived as valuable, it is not always of the same quality. For example, it was recognised that peer assessment can have a demotivating effect if a participant has given detailed feedback to a peer but receives little feedback in return or sometimes no feedback at all. However, in the CDLs it was suggested that part of the problem is that course participants may not be used to writing feedback as they may have no prior experience of providing feedback to peers. It was suggested that tutors and experts have more experience in giving feedback and have a larger vocabulary and ‘a larger treasure trove of experience’ to draw on, which affects the quality of the feedback given. Another drawback expressed was the view that peers may be more reluctant to give feedback because they do not want to offend anyone or they would not like negative feedback themselves so were more generous in their comments.

It was suggested that peer assessment should be based on specific criteria to assist in the giving and receiving of feedback. It was also suggested that peer assessment needs well-structured rubrics in order to lead to useful results of high quality. Training of the tutees was recommended to prepare them in using the rubrics and exemplary materials and helping them to understand how to provide effective peer-assessment and feedback. It was also suggested that training and encouragement was needed to raise the confidence and self-esteem of the tutees. The training could be provided through videos with specific guidelines given by experts regarding feedback in general and in relation to the value of peer assessment.

In one CDL a two-step approach was proposed. It was suggested on a case-by-case basis low quality peer assessment could be enhanced by the provision of tutor/expert feedback, so that ‘all participants receive feedback of equally high quality’. This was recognised as challenging in a MOOC. However, it was thought this challenge could be overcome when there are many participants working in the same school. They could engage in the training for peer assessment collectively and be encouraged to seek support from each other instead of asking a tutor. School management/leaders could contribute by encouraging an environment of cooperation in learning for the teachers engaging in MOOCs. A suggestion arising from one CDL proposed an ‘assessment workshop’ that is active during MOOCs as a way to develop understanding of self and peer assessment and is then maintained as an assessment learning community locally or nationally post-MOOC.

The blending of online learning with traditional forms of professional learning for teachers was also proposed in other CDLs. For example, it was suggested that MOOCs should be linked in some way with national initiatives in order to be used sustainably by a larger number of teachers in the context of school development or in the context of a national school network (e.g. eEducation of schools interested in digital school development). The content or tasks from MOOCs could be used as material for face-to-face workshops carried out in schools to learn and discuss together. The activities could also be carried out directly at the school location in groups.

6 PLANS FOR SUSTAINABILITY OF THE USE OF TEACHUP OUTPUTS

- ⇒ Some countries already have plans to continue to use the TeachUP MOOCs nationally
- ⇒ Certification at national level for MOOCs is viewed as urgent in some countries
- ⇒ Provision of information about the course aims and content needed by ITE providers
- ⇒ Marketing of MOOCs including recommendations from teachers who have already completed the MOOC
- ⇒ Use of social media to market courses and link teachers together in learning communities during and after the MOOC

It appeared that plans for sustainability of the use of TeachUP outputs depended on national contexts as in some countries there were some specific requirements or challenges to address. This meant there were different ideas and suggestions for sustainability of the use of the TeachUP outputs due to the specific contextual circumstances. For example, alignment with specific national requirements for professional development courses for teachers in terms of career progression, enhancement of salary etc. In one CDL the participants suggested that a change of culture regarding professional learning was required and constant support would be needed to sustain MOOCs as a way of learning. In another CDL, there was concern that ITE and CPD institutions do not currently have the appropriate systems or platforms to implement such training. The need to have the knowledge, guidelines, e-platform and application to create new online courses was emphasised. An urgent requirement was identified concerning learning how to create and manage online courses, including a tutoring model. Sustainability depending on whether national tutoring models could be offered for MOOCs was one of the areas of greatest similarity in the CDL discussions across the partner countries. Doubts about how tutoring could be sustained in ‘**massive**’ online courses re-surfaced in this discussion. The effectiveness, the cost and the availability of suitably trained tutors was raised again in some CDLs. In terms of policy experimentation project sustainability two modalities were suggested in one CDL: i) a ‘free modality’ where there is no tutor – which is flexible and no certification; ii) a tutoring modality – with a toolkit, assessment tasks and certification.

Certification of online teacher professional learning was also viewed as an urgent issue in a number of countries which would need to be addressed to align with teachers’ engagement in other modes of professional learning. However, a more easily attained solution was suggested in one CDL as an option – course participants could obtain a badge for each course they finish successfully, being able to collect them within a digital passport.

In one CDL the TeachUP MOOC was discussed as the content basis for a training model to be planned and organised nationally. In another CDL it was suggested that a new pilot at a national level could be set up using the TeachUP courses in order to test different tutoring models and foster national research on the course topics and on the use of MOOCs. In another CDL, the participants said that while the videos in the TeachUP MOOC were inspirational some teachers could not envisage implementation of the ideas in their own classrooms. They said that the learning situations were ‘presented in a foreign environment, and subject and age group might not match either.’ The participants suggested to sustain the use of the TeachUP MOOC videos would need to be made showing country-specific examples with teachers from

their own context. There were plans in place in this partner country to develop these more localised videos.

A university teacher emphasised that the participation of ITE students in online courses, such as the TeachUP MOOC, would require university teachers having information about the goals, content and structure of the courses. This information was needed in order to assess how to integrate the TeachUP MOOC into the content and teaching of their university subjects. It was also stressed that the online courses should follow the time-frame of a semester for student teachers and be synchronized with their plan of study. Teacher trainers/educators were also recommended as ambassadors for the culture change to encourage more use of online learning and peer assessment by beginning the change in initial teacher education.

At another CDL there was a strong recommendation that the specific competences that teachers would develop through the MOOC related to their professional development should be made clear, with stronger connection made throughout the courses of the link to teacher competences in a visual form. For example, a competence tree: showing how the course content and activities are connected with competence development.

A key aspect to consider raised in one CDL was quality standards linked to the recognition of MOOCs as continuous training. An example of work towards recognition in higher education was identified (the European MOOC Consortium Common Microcredential Framework, https://emc.eadtu.eu/images/EMC_Common_Microcredential_Framework.pdf). The participants of the CDL posed the question, 'Could progress be made in something similar in Europe (or at least in each country) for teacher training?'

Marketing and motivation for engagement on the TeachUP MOOC was discussed in the CDLs. CPD providers attending the CDLs indicated the need for targeted marketing to highlight the benefits and added value of online courses. They suggested there is a need to talk about the TeachUP MOOC and online courses in general in other forums and conferences to share the information widely. In other CDLs it was suggested that for the success of online courses to be realised it is important that teachers motivate other teachers. An excellent suggestion was that students and teachers who completed the TeachUP MOOC could become designated 'eTeachers' of the courses and encourage and motivate others to participate. The recommendations of teachers would be based on their positive experiences of online courses. In one CDL the importance of evaluating and receiving feedback from course participants was highlighted. It was suggested that if the courses had high added-value and the feedback from teachers is excellent they would recommend the MOOC to other colleagues who would then recommend it to teachers in other schools. A further suggestion at another CDL was that teachers should receive strong recommendations and motivation from the school principals to take appropriate online courses. However, the need for an information campaign among school principals and school quality managers was emphasised so they can find out about innovative training formats available, the knowledge and skills they help to develop and how teachers can use them. In several of the CDLs specific people such as Education Learning Coordinators were identified to develop communication channels and promote the use of the TeachUP courses. In other countries specific online providers were either present at the 3rd CDL and ready to develop national courses or in some cases learning networks were planned to be created. Finally, in relation to marketing, linking MOOCs to social networks was recommended for ongoing communication and for teachers to become aware of MOOCs offered via social networks.

A certain limitation for the CDL participants was that they could not attend the TeachUP courses themselves. This was particularly the case for university teachers, school heads, teacher trainers and policy makers. Although the courses were briefly presented and shown at the outset of CDL they were not fully acquainted with the courses. The CDL participants' discussion was more influenced by their own experience with different online courses at their institutions and schools than experience with the TeachUP online courses.

7 PLANS FOR THE SUSTAINABILITY OF DIALOGUE LABS FOR ONGOING DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION

- ⇒ Positive about continuing CDLs
- ⇒ CDL format was highly appreciated
- ⇒ Identified a range of potential ways to continue CDLs in national and regional contexts
- ⇒ Potential to sustain CDLs online or in blended form of face-to-face and online

Most CDL participants were positive about participating in future dialogue labs. The CDL format was highly appreciated by all participants and it was suggested that CDLs should be further used in the national context for further development of teacher education. For example, it was suggested that CDLs could be sustained through face-to-face ‘think tanks’ to periodically discuss current issues in teacher education. It was also suggested that the CDLs could be further sustained by having an online dimension which complements the face-to-face dimension. However, it was emphasised that face-to-face and online would be necessary. The view expressed was if an attempt to sustain the CDLs only online the group would eventually disappear. A further suggestion was that the CDLs could be sustained through learning communities.

It was also highlighted that CDLs could be used for national networking. An idea proposed in one CDL was to create a slot at the country’s eEducation network conference twice a year to work with an interdisciplinary group focusing on the further development of teacher education. Similar possibilities were identified in other countries to apply the CDL format for dialogue about specific areas of policy development.

In one CDL the participants suggested sustaining the practice of national ‘dialogues’ for national issues, within the scope of specific projects or reflection groups, in different contexts with different themes. Another CDL suggested implementing the Dialogue Lab Model in Teacher Training Centres (continuing teacher education) and other training entities (e.g. initial teacher education). It was also suggested that the Dialogue Labs could be sustained and extended by implementing them in regional contexts (in some cases autonomous regions) since each region acts differently advantage could be gained by understanding the different perspectives arising in different regions.

In several CDLs the participants said that the Dialogue Labs are already motivating and enriching experiences in their country but they could be sustained by exchanging ideas with partners from different countries in a trans-national dialogue lab.

8 COMMENTS ABOUT THE DIALOGUE LAB PROCESS

- ⇒ CDL process and structure was considered a success by the participants and it should be used and replicated in different national contexts - either in the scope of specific projects or as regular practices in the different institutions/agencies present in the CDL.
- ⇒ Detailed 'Country Dialogue Lab Guidelines' written for the CDLs each year guided the process and provided reflective questions which stimulated, framed and supported the dialogue
- ⇒ Provision of opportunities to engage in dialogue about policy and practice with a variety of key stakeholders of teacher education and digital learning was very valuable
- ⇒ The process of rotating participants around tables throughout the CDL enabled the participants to engage in dialogue with different people which provided valuable insight into and understanding of different perspectives.

The format of the CDLs was widely praised by the participants and some participants said that the format has seen an uptake among colleagues from other institutions nationally who had heard about the CDL processes. For example, in one CDL the participants suggested the CDL structure and processes could be used in symposiums/conferences (one keynote and a number of small group discussions). The CDL process could form the basis for working groups, made up of participants from different entities.

The Country Dialogue Guidelines prepared each year were also praised. They were detailed and made the structure, processes and activities clear. The guidelines were particularly important in guiding the country TeachUP teams and the participants where the format of interactive dialogue between policy-makers, practitioners and other key stakeholder was not normal practice. However, the guidelines were also useful in context that were more familiar with interaction between meeting participants. In one such CDL the country team said the detailed guidelines made the 'preparation for the CDL simple and problem-free due to the excellent documentation provided.' For busy professionals this is important if the process or activity is to be sustained over time.' Also, the reflective questions which were provided in the guidelines for the activities to frame and support the dialogue were perceived to be stimulating and useful.

The first two CDLs in Year 1 and Year 2 of the TeachUP project were planned over 1 day. However, the participants said they preferred the CDL to be organised over 2 days (the afternoon on day 1 and the morning on day 2). The 3rd CDL was organised over 2 days in some countries to meet the participants' request. The participants agreed that 2 days were preferable as the extended time enables more discussion and networking between participants. However, they acknowledged that the cost was higher if the CDL included an overnight stay and could hinder sustainability of future CDLs.

Overall, the comments from the CDLs showed that all the participants had found the CDL process motivating, enjoyable and valuable. The experience of the CDLs was considered to be of great value due to the variety of profiles, the process of rotating the participants around different tables throughout the day and highly recommended to be further used nationally and internationally, as it enabled the exchange of the perspectives of the participants. The participants also commented that the systematic rotation of participants kept energy levels high and kept momentum going for the day.

The interdisciplinary composition of the CDLs was particularly highlighted as being an important feature. It was agreed that the process of the CDLs enabled a topic to be considered from different perspectives (e.g. of teachers, student teachers, school leaders, university researchers, teacher educators, consultants, inspectors and policy-makers). The CDL participants particularly acknowledged the importance of the involvement of practitioners in policy development as ‘it makes it possible to take the reality of the school into account.’

The diversity of the stakeholders participating in the CDLs was also seen as offering a positive way to network and as an opportunity for the professional development of all those involved in the CDL. For example, in one CDL the following comment was made, ‘The Country Dialogue Lab has always been seen as a welcome opportunity to exchange views and network across all roles and professional groups. In this sense, it has been a professionalization meeting for people from the education system and valuable in both senses.’ In another CDL the participants summed up the experience by saying, ‘The annual [CDL] meetings create a feeling of community for the participants.’

9 ANY OTHER COMMENTS

Additional comments about the CDLs not mentioned above included:

- Open and high-level discussion, reflection and share of ideas on relevant topics
- Opportunity to reflect on teacher professional development
- Cooperation between various professional profiles, with great interventions and good relationships between the participants
- Integration of a synergetic project with other countries
- Great organization and work methodology.

Finally, in summary 3 comments from participants at the end of the Year 3 Country Dialogue Lab:

‘I think that these kinds of meetings that enrich and unite the educational ecosystem are very interesting and necessary.’

‘Congratulations! This format is very interesting and enriching.’

‘It is a pity that the series of Dialogue Labs has now come to an end with this third event.’