

eTwinning Thematic Conference for eTwinning Schools

Shared leadership: towards an eTwinning School approach.

Dates: 21-23 May

Venue: Czech Republic, Prague

Concept note

Total number of participants: 230

Target group:

Leaders of current eTwinning Schools. By Leaders it is referred to staff member who hold a formal leadership role (e.g school principal, deputy school principal, head of department etc.) and an active eTwinning teacher who is a leader in his/her school and serves as a point of reference for eTwinning activities.

Composition of delegations: ideally, 2 participants from the same school: 1 from the management team and one eTwinning leader. 20% of the ones awarded in 2020 and 80% of those awarded in 2019.

Conference objectives:

The overall goal of the Conference is to identify, highlight, feature, recognise and promote the elements which characterise the eTwinning Schools, as presented in the eTwinning Schools Mission. Participating schools will deepen their knowledge of the various fields of the Mission, while examining in depth the concept and practice of the Shared Leadership approach as a factor of change, enabling schools to engage in innovative practices. Examples of good practice, together with theoretical and conceptual framing, will allow participating schools to fully capitalise on the results achieved and further develop as models, promoters and multipliers for others.

More specifically, the conference will:

- Feature and further reflect on the pedagogical, organisational, communication and promotional elements of the eTwinning School (eTwinning School Mission)
- Provide participants deeper knowledge of the concept and practices of the Shared Leadership approach and why it plays a key role in school innovation
- Provide participants tools and methods to implement more inclusive and engaging form of leadership that will bring forth the talents and capacities of all school players: teachers, students and parents.
- Provide schools with ideas and practical activities that will help them improve the different elements of the eTwinning School Mission: collaboration, students agency, inclusion etc.

- Guide the schools to draft an action plan to identify their goals and recognise in which areas they need more support.

Shared Leadership in context

Leadership is defined as a social process of influence, mobilising others' efforts to reach specific objectives serving a vision. It is about learning together, constructing meaning and knowledge collectively and collaboratively. In this sense, a coherent and well-constructed school leadership will enable teachers, school administration staff, directors and head of departments to generate ideas together, reflect and make sense of their work in light of the shared beliefs they have. This in turn, will help them define concrete actions and goals that grow from their common understanding. In this sense, Leadership is not confined within the formal school leadership roles, but it is shared. The decision-making process and goal setting is inclusive, fully collaborative and not imposed from above.

Examining the role of leadership in bringing forth innovative practices and collaboration among teachers, especially in this digital age, school leaders (whether formal or non formal) become the drivers of change to transform learning and teaching. According to Diana Laurillard¹, school leaders need to view **teachers as the drivers of change**: by engaging teachers in collaborative action, by trusting them to build on each other's expertise and experience, by developing a community of knowledge and allow interactive experimentation to adapt the changes needed in the school and become a leading school.

Schools who wish to keep their leading role, and even more eTwinning Schools, must guarantee a strong participation of all teachers, **community, parents and pupils**. Successful, engaging and empowering school leadership, which motivates and includes formal and non-formal leaders, is key to bring the changes we wish see in these schools. Evidence from research shows that if leadership is based on a vision that can be shared by all staff, parents and stakeholders, it also plays a **crucial role for school development and innovation**.

Based on these assumptions, the eTwinning School Conference will focus on Shared Leadership strategies- what it is and how it can assist schools in improving their school practices in: collaboration, student agency, innovative learning, inclusion and networking (as represented in the eTwinning Schools Mission). **Shared Leadership is used as a tool to formulate and achieve goals set by each school according to their context and needs.**

Looking through the lens of Shared Leadership as a school strategy, participants will be asked the following question: "how can I engage teachers, parents and students in designing and achieving our school goals as an eTwinning School?" Having this question in the background participants will be encouraged to reflect upon their own school strategies and practices with the aim to draft an **initial action plan** for their schools. The plan will identify their goals and the areas of the mission they need more support and ideally should be further discussed developed by their colleagues back home.

eTwinning Thematic Conference for eTwinning Schools

Shared leadership: towards an eTwinning School approach

Dates: 21-23 May - **Venue :** Czech Republic, Prague

PROGRAMME

Thursday 21st May:

14:00 – 16:00 Registration, welcome coffee

16:00 – 18:00 Plenary sessions

18:00 - 19:00 Networking Activity

19:00 Networking dinner

Friday 22nd May:

09:00 – 09:30 Registration, orientation for workshops

09:30 – 11:00 Workshops session I: **building blocks of shared leadership practice**

11:00 - 11:30 Coffee break

11.30-13:00 Workshop Session II: **building blocks of shared leadership practice**

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch

14:30 – 16:30 Workshop Session III: **eTwinning Schools Mission: How can we advance?**

16:30 – 19:00 Afternoon break

20:00 Dinner at the brewery

Saturday 23rd May:

9:30 – 10:00 Registration, coffee

10:00 – 12:00 Workshop sessions IV: drafting your school's action plan

12:00 – 13:00 Plenary session – Closing panel

13:00 Lunch