



Chats

myEUROPE Chats are special activities focused on teaching and learning more about Europe, its culture, history, the environment and contemporary problems. They are also a good opportunity not only to learn more, teach differently but also to discover chats as means of communication.

Integrating ICT into the curriculum

myEUROPE Chat 3

February 21, 2002

Communications make the world smaller! 'Integrating ICT into the curriculum and how?'

Read the [script](#) of this chat or [download it - .rtf format](#).



Participating teachers:

- What do 'distance learning', 'online learning' and 'eLearning' mean?
- Is our life becoming increasingly dependent on technology?
- Do you have some experience in integrating modern technologies to your daily classroom work? If so, how do you manage it?
- How do you collaborate with other colleagues in your school over project work involving ICT?
- Does ICT improve communication and cooperation between pupils inside and outside school?
- Tell us about your successes and failures, so we all learn together.
- Do you get any financial or technical support from local/national authorities?
- Should all teachers and pupils have a laptop?
- How can ICT help better integrate pupils at social risk and/or children of migrants, gypsies, travellers and/or pupils with special educational needs into the school system?
- Are new technologies a support for international educational collaboration? How does it fit in your curriculum?
- Are computers still motivating elements?
- What is your vision of future education with ICT? What will change? Will it be better? Will it be worse? Will we manage?

Anca & Radu Dragomir, Romania

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Bengt.G Larsson, Sweden

Christina Garczyk, Italy

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[EUN-Petru] **Thank you for joining us. Welcome and warmest greetings from Brussels!**

[Arizona] How do you use technology with your students?

[Mihai Mecu] We use Power Points for different presentations and Visual FoxPro for pupils who want to learn programming. And different types on encyclopedias.

[Arizona] What is Visual FoxPro?

[Mihai Mecu] Visual FoxPro is a strong database tool for programming. I'm a programmer and I develop a lot of interesting educational software.

[Arizona] The recession around the world has been hard on education. In Arizona there are budget shortages. I heard of something called Boingo that works with one Internet connection to share with other computers.

[Mihai Mecu] This is an ISP?

[Arizona] Boingo works with a wireless system. The story I heard said it was not expensive.

[Mihai Mecu] Because you can use Windows 98 or Me to share with other computers.

[Arizona] The story said that you can use a potato chip can as a wireless antenna for this system.

[Mihai Mecu] We have two possibilities for this connection.

[Arizona] So, in theory, you could use your home connection and share it with your school.

[Arizona] **How does your website help teachers to integrate ICT into the curriculum, Petru? You know, one question on the list that I was interested in was the education of migrants.**

[EUN-Petru] Arizona, myEUROPE Project is designed to offer teachers activities, resources, tools and specific services for integrating ICT into the curriculum. MyEUROPE activities are flexible and easily adaptable for any curriculum. This is a good offer for any school with Internet connection.

[Arizona] Petru, the activities you mention are designed to help teachers or to help students learn using technology?

[EUN-Petru] Students assisted by their teachers. As I said, our activities can be developed in the classroom as normal lessons.

[EUN-Petru] **How do you define 'distance learning', 'online learning' and 'eLearning'?**

[Nina] Distance learning is something we are trying to launch here in Siberia. It goes this way: in summer 2000, the President declared that every rural school should have Internet and computers. In reality, it's hard to do that because there's no money, no I.T. teachers, nobody knows what it is and how to use it. On the other hand, there are some people in the cities who know how to use all that, and there's a marked trend to use us, that is to make us do a lot of work for free. Online learning is slightly different: I just finished an online professional development course. There were tasks which we had to fulfil at a certain period of time. We learned while we did them, keeping in contact with our instructors. Elearning here is used to embrace a wide range of subjects, roughly anything and everything connected with the Web.

[Ef-Nord] Distance learning is learning with the radio like the Australian kids.

[Arizona] In Arizona some community colleges offer courses on-line.

[Anca] Distance learning - in our country this notion implies a reduced frequency of students in schools.

[Ef-Nord] Online learning it's a modern way to study using the Internet and elearning is electronic learning by e-mail and Internet.

[Arizona] Gradually technology is being taught to students.

[EUN-Petru] Distance learning takes the form of correspondence courses through the Internet. It is highly interactive.

[Eidiko-Greece] They are different professional terms and the result is finally the point.

[EUN-Petru] The experts define eLearning as a learning process on the Internet, anywhere and anytime. It provides a mix of learning methods such as virtual classroom, simulation, and collaboration. It is learning without boundaries, that moves pupils out of the traditional classroom and into cyberspace. The new technologies provide not just text, but also sound, video, simulations, and collaboration with other.

[EUN-Petru] **Is your life or not becoming increasingly dependent on nowadays technology?**

[Nina] I think it's bit early to say that. Digital divide is a reality. On the other hand, the communications make the world smaller giving students and teachers a good opportunity to learn more about different parts of the world from the people themselves, via the Internet. It is much better than just reading about it in a book.

[Ef-Nord] Our life depends on the electronic era because a new generation can live without it.

[Vili] I believe more and more teachers will be forced by students to use ICT as they were somehow to use TV and audio cassettes. But it takes time.

[Arizona] Younger teachers are very interested in using technology with students. Maybe getting teachers involved won't be so hard as they move into classrooms?

[Mihai Mecu] I can not live without Internet or new technologies.

[Anca] Young generation's life is indeed hooked-on technology.

[Eidiko-Greece] The same question in every new equipment -how can we control and use it properly.

[Mihai Mecu] Arizona but you agree, don't you?

[Arizona] Yes, the Internet is an open window. Once teachers 'own' technology it is like pen and paper--invaluable. Americans joke about having to ask their children how to use a computer.

[Ef-Nord] We are very dependent on our e-mail.

[Vili] For me I can say, that I can't live without ICT. Yes, the e-mail is essential to me. I feel the Internet more as an open gate or even corridor for work, for learning, for communicating with students and colleagues to find useful resources.

[Anca] I use my computer to prepare my lesson plans everyday. As far as I'm concerned technology has helped me to develop myself.

[Tsai-Taiwan] I am very dependent on WWW and email, sometimes telnet as well. I use email to receive postings from subscribed discussion lists that are very useful to teachers.

[Mihai Mecu] Internet helped me and a few pupils to take part at European Week in Lyon in 2001, for example and to develop visual educational software

[Eidiko-Greece] Technology is part of our life or teaching work.

[Tsai-Taiwan] I agreed with Vili that Internet is a corridor with many doors to different world with knowledge.

[Mihai Mecu] I think pupils like to learn more from a computer than from a book. Visual method is better than theory.

[Vili] Sometimes, yes, Mihai Mecu, but not always and not all.

[Arizona] Some students no longer want to do research in books.

[Mihai Mecu] Yes, Arizona.

[Vili] And, it's not easier...

[Eidiko-Greece] I still enjoy the magic of reading a book than reading it through Internet.

[Mihai Mecu] Eidiko-Greece: not about a novel or something else. About school books

[Vili] Maybe they find ICT more attractive. Of course it depends what language you speak.

[EUN-Petru] **Do you have some experience in integrating modern technologies to your daily classroom work? If so, how do you manage it?**

[Anca] Yes, a lot. During my geography classes I use the computer to find different images or to complete the information from the text books. Students can also draw their own maps.

[Arizona] I like to use a 'smart' keyboard for wordprocessing. It is less expensive than a computer, so I can have 4 in my classroom.

[Vili] A few minutes ago I had my students in computer room and they tried to find information about weather all over the Europe.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] I use computer on the lessons of Literature and history of art as a resource of demonstration (paintings etc.)

[Eidiko-Greece] We can use it as a motivation or support for children with learning difficulties.

[Mihai Mecu] A chemistry lesson is more interesting when use a computer.

[Ef-Nord] Our class did a project called 'Me and my pet'.

[Vili] We use interactive dictionary to explain certain English words.

[EUN-Petru] **How do you collaborate with other colleagues in your school over project work involving ICT?**

[Mihai Mecu] Big trouble with this question.

[Anca] We have created a computer club in which we work with our students to the school site.

[Vili] I find interesting project, engage teachers and we elaborate the topic and they work with students.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] It's much easier than taking kilos of art albums to the lessons, and pupils are really more interested in this way.

[Eidiko-Greece] Visual guides are very essential for children in the Autistic Spectrum.

[Ef-Nord] We work with the English teachers to learn more English because it is necessary for the computer.

[Arizona] Teachers from a program serving 12-14 year old students showed at a conference how they taught the students to make portfolios of word processing, spreadsheets, and art integrated with their school subjects.

[Mihai Mecu] We have to work for a Comenius 1 project and most of the activity of tVilis project involves computer work.

[Anca] Unfortunately, we don't get too much support from our teacher colleagues. Only three teachers from our school take part in the ICT projects.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] It's interesting that it is much easier to involve European teachers than local ones into different project works. Is it a special Hungarian problem?

[Vili] I don't think so, Zsuzsa-Hungary.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] Isn't there too much of administrative work about these Comenius projects? That's why we are a bit afraid of them.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] When all the colleagues are so overloaded (and also the pupils), it's not easy to find anybody to do any not-paid extra work as a project.

[Arizona] Some American children are too involved with computers, video games and television -- they do not exercise enough.

[Eidiko-Greece] Comenius projects are exciting projects and technology is very important in running them.

[EUN-Petru] **Does ICT improve communication and cooperation between pupils inside and outside school?**

[Eidiko-Greece] Yes! One of the biggest benefits.

[Mihai Mecu] Absolutely

[Ef-Nord] Yes, definitely.

[Anca] I think it is the best way to improve communication between pupils. ICT is a modern way to communicate with pupils outside school, to make friends, to exchange opinions.

[Arizona] My school district does not allow students to use e-mail from school. This blocks participation in many projects.

[Vili] To Petru. Yes, it does, a lot.

[Mihai Mecu] I think this an important step before you establish a partnership.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] Till they can use ICT mainly only in the school, it is only a utopian dream.

[Vili] Yes, but students can get support at school and help, too.

[Ef-Nord] to support a project, all the children collaborated and brought new materials and ideas. They brought photos, interviews and other suggestions.

[Eidiko-Greece] Children with special needs can use it as a tool to solve the problem of communication.

[Vili] I think projects and ICT make students work harder on languages as they use it for real thing.

[EUN-Petru] **Please, tell us about your successes and failures, so we all learn together.**

[Mihai Mecu] I have a few students who have Internet connection home and they like to communicate with other students from Romania or outside.

[Eidiko-Greece] I use technology a lot for handicapped or mentally retarded pupils.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] Of course, and they do enjoy it, in case they have access to all these resources.

[Anca] Happily, we haven't had any failures so far.

[Anca] We are involved in many myEurope activities and Comenius projects and our work has been appreciated.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] Phone costs are too high in Hungary that's why most of people don't have Internet access at home

[Vili] I can be happy about some interesting projects like 'The image of the other'. But sometimes partners don't co-operate well and then ...

[EUN-Petru] **Well, a delicate question now, do you get any financial or technical support from local/national authorities?**

[Arizona] We have a program that assists schools in tracking the progress of children of migrant workers.

[EUN-Petru] Arizona, please detail.

[Arizona] The Federal Govt. gives U.S. States special funds to assist migrant students. Schools help these student obtain health care and share information with other schools through a central terminal connected by internet when the students move. There are programs that use laptop computers for secondary students who travel between states (16000 km) each year to help them to graduate.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] Only some moral support - but it's not enough for such a big work.

[Anca] Yes, we have got some support from the major of our town. He gave us on Christmas Eve nine new computers.

[Vili] Anca, what did you do to get such a present?

[Anca] We have worked a lot with our projects, we made them public and the first person who appreciated that was the major of our town.

[Mihai Mecu] That's good.

[Mihai Mecu] We don't have any financial support for our local or national authorities.

[Ef-Nord] No, we don't have support from local authorities but we received financial help from Peace Corps and parent's committee.

[Mihai Mecu] Only words.

[EUN-Petru] Vili, please tell us how do you use a computer in your school, during one day?

[Vili] Depends what classes I have. But with small ones I work in some projects like 'My favourite toy', 'Now' with Japan. The older ones use the electronic dictionary, Encarta or other CDs to prepare words or topics. I also used Blackboard with students together with Antwerp school in Belgium.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] Don't you think that these international project are sometimes only a good reason for students exchanges? If there's no possibility for it, most of schools are not really interested in virtual collaboration only.

[Anca] To Zsuzsa-Hungary: We are interested in virtual collaboration, not just in projects.

[Vili] I agree Anca.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] I mean we do something using ICT, but after having it made nobody really cares about its contents anymore.

[Vili] I teach our six graders to build a web page and older ones. They are quick to learn.

[EUN-Petru] How can ICT help better integrate pupils at social risk and/or children of migrants, gypsies, travellers and/or pupils with special educational needs into the school system?

[Nina] I think first they should be integrated into society and school as such, then introduced to new technologies. If some or all of them cannot even read, it's useless to try and teach them the new technologies.

[Anca] Yes, I think ICT can help them, because communication is everything. A person who has special education needs can answer faster using a computer, it can stimulate them, make them curious

[Eidiko-Greece] Over pass their difficulties with the proper technological equipment or software, Petru.

[EUN-Petru] Maria, tell us more as you work in a special school, please.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] We've been searching partners for a complex Blue Danube virtual project for a long time, but we haven't found any - nonsense!

[Arizona] Some computer programs can assist in teaching spelling and grammar to second language learners by using a spelling/grammar check feature.

[Vili] I'm in a VISIOCOM project - international for videoconferencing, aimed to students with hearing disabilities.

[EUN-Petru] Zsuzsa, I have seen your ideas in the partner finding forum. You should insist, you have very good ideas! Try again, why not?

[Vili] Arizona, what do you teach?

[Arizona] I teach English to migrant children. Most are from Mexico or Central America.

[Eidiko-Greece] There are many reasons to use it. Success, concentration, self-estimation, reading and writing skills.

[Mihai Mecu] Petru, we don't miss ideas we need a team who want to be involved.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] However I want to use ICT on my lessons, if there is no technical background for it (only 1 projector in the school, PC-s are used in labs only that are full all the time) how can you manage?

[Eidiko-Greece] Visualisation, direct correction, approval, communication.

[EUN-Petru] Arizona, how do you help them to integrate into another society?

How do you help them to keep their cultural roots?

[Arizona] In America it can be difficult to keep one's roots. There is strong pressure to assimilate. I help families understand the American teachers.

[Eidiko-Greece] It is easy for them to keep in touch with their home countries and roots, Petru.

[EUN-Petru] How do new technologies fit in your curriculum?

[Roman-Sc] EUN-Petru: We have optional 2 hours/week in our curriculum.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] When your staff says: GREAT, go on with all this work, but we don't have time and energy to do the same? Can it be a business of only one teacher in a school?

[Vili] I think Petru, that it depends on teachers. They are the actors of the lessons and they choose devices.

[Dubravka-Croatia] It is difficult to fit them in the curriculum because the computer lab is rarely available.

[Mihai Mecu] For example we have an optional called 'Computer - My friend'.

[Arizona] My school district put its entire curriculum by month and grade level onto an Internet 'map' for teachers and the parents to use. See: <http://lesd.k12.az.us>

[Mihai Mecu] But this is just for theory even than they discuss there about practice.

[Eidiko-Greece] Information is available through the Internet, for each country, language etc.

[Mihai Mecu] They never practice and the result is almost zero.

[Anca] This chat can be an example. By means a new technologies we can achieve several international educational projects, we can exchange opinions.

[EUN-Petru] **Are computers still motivating elements for pupils to learn more?**

[Vili] In our country each teacher has to write a year plan and there he/she can integrate ICT.

[Radu] The Internet is a dangerous place! I try to explain them how to use it in a safe and educational ways!

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] Yes, computers are a motivating force in any kind of lessons-that's why I'm sorry I have no opportunity to use it as often as I would like to.

[Dubravka-Croatia] Yes, I think they are motivating for both teachers and pupils but unfortunately not for all especially those not willing to learn new skills.

[Arizona] Radu has a point about Internet dangers. Equally important is teaching students to use technology ethically.

[Eidiko-Greece] Pupils, for the moment find computers very interesting, until the day of a new communicative tool.

[Vili] That means you have computers in your classroom?

[EUN-Petru] **Ho do you see the future of the education? With computers or not? What will change? Will it be better? Will it be worse? Will we manage?**

[Anca] With computers of course.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] I dream about a classroom where I don't have to write on a blackboard or dictate to my students but show them the scheme of the material as a PowerPoint demonstration. I've tried it and they were amazed!

[Dubravka-Croatia] Arizona, I completely agree with you - pupils should be taught to use the Internet ethically and responsibly.

[Vili] I would like to have a mobile computer lab, or a portable one for each kid at our school.

[Roman-Sc] The computer must be just a tool and not more!

[Anca] It will be better because it will change our entire mentality.

[Arizona] When paper and writing were invented, it is said that one person lamented 'No one will have a good memory any longer.' Change is inevitable. Most of us agree that books have been good. Technology can be too.

[Eidiko-Greece] Society was very much concerned about T.V use, as I can remember but we still have it and need it a lot. As long as we can use everything properly.

[Dubravka-Croatia] I think more research is needed so that we can integrate only the best activities.

[Vili] ICT is very important but useless without us, human beings.

[Tsai-Taiwan] to Roman-Sr: I highly agree with you that the computer is only a tool, and should be limited as a tool.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] Teaching will be much more effective when teachers can take their laptops and mobile projectors to any classroom, and student will have Internet access at home, too.

[Radu] In my opinion, soon we all will be cyborgs. (cyborgs = a person who depends on machines).

[Dubravka-Croatia] Laptops are still a dream but fortunately we can manage without them.

[EUN-Petru] **Are we afraid of the future of education?**

[Arizona] How many of you use the 'draw' feature of a program to teach students to create computer art? The most beautiful work I have seen was student portfolios of computer portraits, etc. taught by an art teacher.

[Vili] Our vision should be virtual classroom with the access to all important materials and people: sharing and co-operation.

[Dubravka-Croatia] No, I don't think so.

[Anca] No, but we have to establish some limits.

[Vili] We have an electronic Art gallery.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] ICT can never be equal to books! Everything must have its own place and value in education and our lives-that's what we have to explain to our students!

[EUN-Petru] I did it in my school, Arizona. I preferred to combine classic with modern, no extreme ways!

[Anca] Of course Petru.

[Eidiko-Greece] We are always afraid of something but we are still humans and nothing can replace human approach, Petru.

[Arizona] I am glad that you are incorporating art. I fear we will become a generation of clerks doing word-processing and spreadsheets.

[Dubravka-Croatia] I agree that both the books and ICT have their advantages and disadvantages.

[Roman-Sc] To Arizona: WEB-design means a kind of art...

[Arizona] Yes, it does!

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] If you take your students to a real library and theatre, they will never forget the difference!

[Radu] The eBooks is a step in our evolution!

[Arizona] Zsuzsa-Hungary is right. We must keep education real, not virtual, for our students. Humans, not computers, have relationships.

[Eidiko-Greece] I can only see computers as an additional tool and support.

[Vili] Yes, but traditional books will be always the ones to read, I'm sure.

[Anca] The computer will never be able to replace nature.

[Dubravka-Croatia] I think that people don't like reading ebooks, they just consult them because they are always available on line.

[EUN-Petru] This is the main idea, to keep a balance, am I right?

[Eidiko-Greece] Balance is important in everything!

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] Yes, computers are optimal for demonstration, but not instead of teacher's personal influence and explanations

[Dubravka-Croatia] Yes, Petru you are right

[Arizona] Petru, you are so right. Life is a balancing act! Thank you for the invitation. Now I must leave for work. Goodbye everyone!

[Anca] No computer will never replace the charm and the talent of a real good teacher.

[EUN-Petru] There is no machine for replacing a teacher.

[Vili] I think that in some cases ICT is good for students with difficulties, as they can be on their own with computer and they can repeat things on their own peace.

[Roman-Sc] The teacher is essential, to develop the interest for study.

[Vili] Yes, Petru, that's the most important issue.

[Dubravka-Croatia] Computers can't replace teachers but can help them teach better

[Eidiko-Greece] We used to live without computers too and unfortunately we only found another way to have more exciting wars, so where is the balance in our computerised world?

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] Still, it would be so good to have better technical background for innovating in education. Without it is a really exhausting trial.

[Dubravka-Croatia] ICT should be used more in teacher professional development so that teachers get used to it.

[Vili] Our profession forces us to follow all the forthcoming inventions to make our work easier or more interesting. This should be our main philosophy, don't you think?

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] I agree, Vili, absolutely!

[Vili] We have organised teacher training courses, close to schools and not only in centres.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] Till pupils use to write programs on ICT lessons, and not how to USE them - it's useless!

[Ef-Nord] Our teacher participated also in teacher training courses for learning how to work with computers.

[Vili] Yes, I have a some sites: <http://www2.arnes.si/~osngso3s/>, <http://www2.arnes.si/~osngso3s/>

[Vili] <http://ro.zrsss.si/~Viljenka/>

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] I edit my and school web-site as a teacher of Literature. And it is still so unique in Hungary!

[AlexM] Our web address it's www.scoala7tm.go.ro

[Vili] <http://www2.arnes.si/~osngso4s/>, this is about art.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] www.bajabela.sulinet.hu/tubi/tubi.htm You all are welcome!

[Eidiko-Greece] Computer as a science is really interesting!

[Dubravka-Croatia] I think you should be glad to be among the first who do it in Hungary today.

[EUN-Petru] Time runs out, thank you very much for your participation. It is great to have your opinions about the computers in our lives.

[Dubravka-Croatia] Petru, we would like to thank you for being with us today. It was our pleasure.

[Tsai-Taiwan] And bye for everyone. My pleasure to be with you.

[Zsuzsa-Hungary] By all, it was really useful to share my problems and successes with you!

[EUN-Petru] Thank you again and see you next time!