



Developing Virtual Innovation and Support Networks for Foreign Language Teachers

Robert O'Dowd¹
Pilar Garcés²

University of León (Spain)¹
Regional Government of Castilla y León (Spain)²

Abstract

This presentation will report on the initial research findings of the VALIANT project (Virtual Innovation and Support Networks for Teachers) which is an Erasmus+ KA3 European Policy Experiment which will run from 2021 to 2024. The project brings together research institutions and ministries of education from 7 European countries and seeks to address problems of isolation and lack of networking opportunities for many in-service foreign language teachers around Europe. With this in mind, the project team is trialling an innovative form of Virtual Exchange called 'Virtual Innovation and Support Networks' which can be defined as Virtual Exchange programmes which bring together teachers, student teachers and experts in facilitated online collaboration around real-world educational issues. These networks will give foreign language teachers in primary and secondary education the opportunity to (1) continue their professional development, (2) learn from experts, (3), collaborate with colleagues in different countries, and (4) act as mentors for students of Initial Teacher Education. The networks will bring them into collaboration with partner-teachers in other countries, students of Initial Teacher Education and educational experts and they will be moderated by online facilitators. The presentation will report on the first set of pilot studies which are being run by the project and will present the quantitative and qualitative methods which the project team will use to evaluate the impact of the VALIANT networks on foreign language teachers and student teachers. (<https://valiantproject.eu/about/>)

Keywords: *Virtual exchange, online collaborative learning.*

References

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