

# Teachers' perceptions and needs on implementation of Inquiry-Based Learning in a World of Work context in EU countries: outcomes of a qualitative status-quo study

Katrin Engeln

Within the project *mascil* a quantitative status-quo study [1] was conducted to get information about the needs teachers have regarding the implementation of inquiry-based learning (IBL) in rich vocational contexts. For this purpose we obtained data by administering a questionnaire to teachers in *thirteen participating countries* (Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Spain, Cyprus, Norway, Romania, Czech Republic, Turkey, Lithuania, Austria, UK and Bulgaria). Altogether the questionnaire was completed by *N = 1132 teachers*. This document summarizes *main outcomes* of the study accompanied with *recommendations for policy making* purposes.

## Emerging issues for consideration

In collaboration with work-package 2 “Educational systems and policy context” the questionnaire included 5 items about the country specific political context. For each item respondents were expected to specify their agreement. The means of these items indicate that *teachers do not see their political system supportive for implementing IBL*. Looking at the specific countries it became evident that *in same countries the political support is experienced differently by the teachers*. This requires more research to clarify why the same political context is perceived in different ways.

Furthermore, the questionnaire asked the teachers about their use of inquiry-based learning (IBL) and the world of work context (WoW). *In most countries IBL and WoW are already visible but not part of daily teaching practice*. Interestingly, *IBL is better integrated in daily teaching practice than WoW* (t-test, medium size effect). The implementation of IBL and of the WoW depends significantly on the country but also on the subject in question.

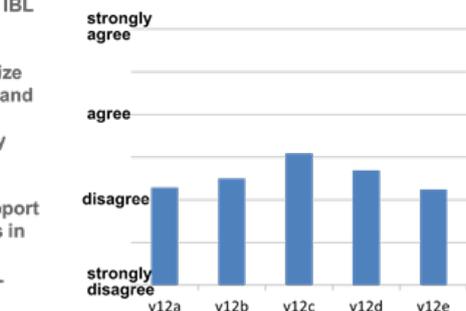
The study showed an *overall positive orientation towards IBL and towards the WoW in all mascil countries but also significant country-dependent differences*. Furthermore, the analysis of the data indicated *a strong significant correlation between IBL and WoW in the domains use, orientation and problems*.

a) Policy making prioritises IBL approaches in my country.

b) National curricula prioritize IBL approaches, in general and in specific in science and mathematics subjects in my country

c) There are curriculum support materials and certain topics in science and mathematics education that supports IBL approaches.

d) My school implements policy priorities in relation to IBL approaches.



e) Assessment of students draws on and is based on notions of IBL (i.e. IBL skills/ competences are assessed).



**Systemic restrictions** were identified as *one factor hindering the implementation of IBL and WoW*. In addition, the factors **classroom management and resources** were also identified. All three factors, classroom management, resources and system restrictions differed significantly across the thirteen countries. The analysis of the data indicated that problems related to classroom management, resources and systemic issues predict the use of IBL and the WoW in daily classroom practice, but **system restrictions have the greatest impact**. On the other hand, **classroom management has proven to be the best predictor for a positive orientation towards IBL**. The less teachers report classroom management related problems the more they are willing to implement IBL.

## Recommendations for policy

All over Europe, **there are teachers who are keen to implement IBL and the WoW into their daily teaching practice**. In most countries of the consortium, there are teachers who have had at least initial experience with IBL and the WoW. This provides **an excellent base for the implementation of a more student-oriented pedagogy and a meaningful context as intended by mascil**. The significant correlation between IBL and WoW in the domains use, orientation and problems indicate that it is reasonable to pursue the objective to implement IBL and the WoW simultaneously.

However, in all countries **teachers experience the educational system as a hindrance for implementing IBL and also the WoW**. It will be important that the political documents which support the implementation reach the schools and finally the teachers. This is equally true for the school context and its conditions that need to be enhanced so that, among others, teachers are continuously being supported by their school management and greater cooperation between colleagues is encouraged and assessment supports IBL. Making teachers experience a supportive educational system will support the widespread use of IBL and the WoW in daily teaching practice. In some cases cooperation with the local school authorities could be useful.

[1] The study has been reported on D10.2: Report on the large-scale survey about inquiry based learning and teaching in the European partner countries

For accessing the document please visit:

<http://www.mascil-project.eu/images/pdf/mascilD102FinalVersion.pdf>