

MCS Comenius Regio:**Meaningful, Creative and Secure use of ICT.****Collaborative Learning Processes within Educational Communities**

Please read this document, and write down your opinion about the main contents of the MCS Project Comenius Regio

1. A *meaningful* use of ITC

When we state that we are 'promoting the meaningful use of ICT', we refer to those technology based practices that can provide interesting tools for *personal development, learning, communication, social participation...* These are the meaningful and worthy uses we want to promote. We do not mean just a 'prolific' use of technology by itself.

We know -and we frequently experience- how TIC provides us with valuable possibilities:

. To *communicate* with others in an enriching way which improves friendships or the exchange of information, opinions, help...

. *Searching for relevant information* about a variety of topics related to free time, studying, or hobbies...

. To *build our own productions*, whether they be written works, images, videos, presentations... In a way that allows us to develop our viewpoints and knowledge about diverse topics as well as test our skills while building our own productions creatively.

. To *cooperate* with others in the production of works and in the exchange or debate of topics of interest.

. In *social participation*, receiving news and being in contact with current events, collecting different opinions and expressing our own opinion on topics we find relevant and constructive.

Initial situation:

- In which ways the current use of ICT helps you / your students / their families to improve *personal development, learning, communication, social participation...*?

Goals:

- What would you like to achieve through your participation in this project regarding to a *meaningful use of ICT?*

2. A creative use of technology

Creativity is the generation of new ideas, concepts and images... new associations that often result in original solutions or works.

Technology is specifically fitted to boost creativity since it allows us to use a variety of means and/or languages (text, hypertext, images, video and any combination of these). At the same time, they also grant us diverse possibilities for creation and expression.

Sometimes, we understand creativity as restricted to the realm of the Arts in its traditional forms: painting, sculpture, music, literature... But diverse thinking and constructive imagination feed on different means of expression and can be shown in any work we produce. ICT present us with even more possibilities to combine different languages and means.

We find this type of use much more interesting than simply copying or studying the information collected for others, without any critical filters or analysis. We understand that 'a creative use' allows us to grow as a person, being active subjects of what we do, critically analyzing and building our own thought, our learning process and our own work.

Initial situation:

- What examples have you seen, in your educational community, of a *creative use of ICT?*

Goals:

- What would you like to achieve through your participation in this project regarding to a *creative use of ICT?*

3. A safe use of ITC

The safe use of the Internet and social networks is something that worries many. Some people think the best solution to keep children online, is to install filters and establish restrictions.

As teachers, we believe that the best protection is the building of the necessary awareness: the only way to make a conscious and responsible use of technology.

Minors (and adults as well) need to be well informed about how the digital applications work, but it is even more necessary to develop critical analysis skills, and to learn to evaluate different and changing situations that we might unexpectedly face.

Given the quick development of these situations, we believe everyone can be caught off guard; we should take into consideration questions such as:

. The information about ourselves that we give away and to whom we are giving it to. Not only is it important for keeping our privacy, but also because we are creating a “digital identity”; an image we broadcast to others about ourselves. This image will impact our virtual life as well as our real life; an image with an enormous influence on our social, working and civil life.

. The way we use other people’s information, texts, pictures or other kinds of work. They should only be used when we have the author’s approval (creative commons licenses, for instance) and we should always give credit to those we are quoting (as we would expect anyone using our work to do). We need to know how to behave in this sense.

. The observation of the rules of coexistence, respect, values and good manners in communication (always making sure we receive courteous and caring treatment as well).

. The necessary precautions in exchanges with strangers, programs or companies, or facing proposals or requirements whose consequences are unknown (from a commercial, economic, friendship, or any other perspective).

Initial situation:

- What is your opinion, and your concerns, regarding to the *secure use of ICT*, within your community?

Goals:

- What would you like to achieve/improve through your participation in this project regarding to a *secure use of ICT*?

4. Collaborative learning in the educational community

This project aims to improve the use of technology by making it meaningful, creative and safe. Since the first line (the title) we state that we want to do it through collaborative learning.

Individual work is been generally promoted (at least in the past) and adults feel more at ease working alone than in a group. We don't have much experience in cooperation, and we often have not learned how to work this way.

Cooperative learning requires effort and time, but allows us to address the complexity of reality from a wider perspective; in an interdisciplinary way, integrating different sensibilities and working with different skills. It enriches us because it makes us widen our perspective and integrate others.

When we discuss ITC in education, one of the main highlights is the possibility of sharing, cooperating, building from other people's contributions and sharing our own.

There are many examples of the cooperative building of knowledge that are made possible through the use of tools provided by Web 2.0 platforms (although we know cooperation requires more than just using some tools).

We wish that the possibility of learning in a cooperative way would not be considered just “prettywords,” but that it would become a reality in our schools. It makes us more skilled and it enriches us as individuals and as a community.

Moreover, ITC is a field in which the entire teaching community is involved. Therefore launching this project is an especially enriching opportunity for families, teachers and students to learn together, exchange, cooperate and work as a network, all within the education community and the European framework. It is an opportunity to improve our skills for this every life aspect, which affects us all, and about which we all need to continue to learn (and keep on learning throughout our lives).

Initial situation:

- What is your experience regarding to the *collaborative learning using ICT*?

Goals:

- In which way would you like to promote or take part in collaborative *learning processes, within your educational community*?

Other comments (you can also use the reverse to continue):