

MA²ThE TE AMO

MAkING MATHematics TEACHERs Mobile

The project focuses on furthering mathematics teachers' mobility by enhancing their confidence in their foreign language competence and thereby reducing their reluctance to be mobile. It takes into account the shortage of mathematics teachers in western countries, "universality" of school mathematics curricula and standards, and the required language and communicative competences necessary for reading and discussing mathematics in a foreign language.

Background

Preliminary analysis has shown that in the partner countries, mathematics student teachers are very rarely educated to use a foreign language as the medium of instruction in mathematics.

Aim

The aim of the project is to prove, by the piloting of the same didactic units in the five partner countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France and Italy), that it is not difficult to teach mathematics abroad provided teachers acquire the necessary intercultural communicative competence.

Status

Two slightly different versions of questionnaires were administered to about 50 maths/language teacher-trainers and about 250 maths/language teachers in the partner countries. A larger part of the respondents constituted mathematics teachers. The first analysis of the answers confirmed their great interest and concern in starting and/or increasing cooperation. Moreover, the answers revealed several different types of motivation and diverse experiences. Educational advantages and perspectives were presented, thus motivating the project partners to further investigate some of the issues raised.

The central graphic features a map of Europe with a purple speech bubble in the center containing the text "MA²The Te amo". Five red speech bubbles point to different countries, each containing a photo of a classroom or teacher and a snippet of a questionnaire response in the local language:

- France:** Photo of a classroom. Text: "20. Pensez-vous qu'il serait utile de vous pour votre évolution professionnelle d'enseigner les mathématiques dans une langue étrangère? Pourquoi? Pour apprendre du vocabulaire nouveau et mieux comprendre l'origine de certains termes." (Do you think it would be useful for your professional development to teach mathematics in a foreign language? Why? To learn new vocabulary and better understand the origin of certain terms.)
- Denmark:** Photo of a teacher at a computer. Text: "Forsvarelsager 13. Hvor du der ville være mest af interesse i samarbejde på et fremmedsprog? Hvorfor ikke? Ja det var på da Mathematikk har en teknisk tilgang og alle sprog har betydning og det er på det vil..." (Defence officer 13. Where would you be most interested in cooperation in a foreign language? Why not? Yes it was when Math has a technical approach and all languages have meaning and it is in that will...)
- Italy:** Photo of a teacher at a blackboard. Text: "16. Welche mathematischen Themen lassen sich am besten in einer Fremdsprache unterrichten? Die 4 Grundrechenarten da hier nur wenige Vokabeln zu lernen sind Zahlen sind oft recht einfach zu lernen." (Which mathematical topics can be best taught in a foreign language? The 4 basic operations because here only a few words need to be learned numbers are often quite easy to learn.)
- Czech Republic:** Photo of a teacher at a blackboard. Text: "11. Kterou z výše zmíněných výhod vidíte jako nejdůležitější? Pokud je jich více, které? Pokud má být jen jedna, kterou? 12. Co považujete za největší překážku, pokud učíte a říkáte nějaký mateřský jazyk? Zkušenosti s tímto jazykem, zkušenosti s tímto jazykem, zkušenosti s tímto jazykem..." (Which of the above mentioned advantages do you see as the most important? If there are more, which? If only one, which? 12. What do you consider the biggest obstacle, if you teach and speak a non-native language? Experience with this language, experience with this language, experience with this language...)
- Austria:** Photo of a teacher at a blackboard. Text: "11. Faut-il qu'on apprenne à enseigner les mathématiques dans une langue étrangère? Pourquoi ou pas? Pourquoi? Parce que j'ai pu apprendre à enseigner les mathématiques dans une langue étrangère..." (Should one learn to teach mathematics in a foreign language? Why or why not? Why? Because I have been able to learn to teach mathematics in a foreign language...)

Members of the Project team

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