School climate

Our approach in the EOL project is based on the combination of three main factors: culture (content of learning, projects, actions, events, habits, attitudes, etc), structure (framework, equipment, measures, etc.) and stakeholders (roles, functions, learning paths, involvement, etc.). But the most important factor is the school climate as it allows culture and structure to interact with the actors' and participants' needs. As to learners, a supportive learning environment can enhance learning and the development of competences of citizenship which are essential to individual development in a democratic society.

Foreign Languages can really contribute to a favourable climate if they are founded on:

• **Democratic citizenship in terms of** ➔ *respect and trust in adults* ➔ *individuality and solidarity*	Languages are at the core of "democracy" of the Council of Europe: they play a fundamental role in promoting democratic values, human rights and the rule of law. Languages provide an opportunity to work on the specific qualities of each culture as well as on common points.
• **Education for understanding "otherness" in terms of** ➔ *purpose and motivation* ➔ *empathy*	When students are faced with other languages and cultures, they learn to take distance from themselves which is essential for personal development, for an acceptance of diversity and for reflection on one's personal view of the world in an intercultural perspective.
• **Education for diversity in terms of** ➔ *justice* ➔ *equality*	Diversifying the languages on offer represents an asset in an educational system and responds to the demand for different language profiles which are essential in the professional world. The study *Languages and Employability* (Eramus+ project 2014-2015) has shown how businesses require people who can use languages and the number of languages requested is 22. Languages can also facilitate access to the labour market. They help learners to be aware of and to value diversity.
• **School inclusion in terms of** ➔ *self expression* ➔ *sense of belonging*	Language plays a fundamental role in understanding and accepting school rules in the communication between school and families and in the learning of all school subjects. Language makes a contribution to all these fields - culture, communication, cognition – both as a stand-alone subject and transversally. Learning languages and taking the plurilingual repertoire of each learner into account helps develop self- expression and the acquisition of communicative and discursive competences which are essential to learning.
• **Mobility in terms of** ➔ *Self accomplishment* ➔ *self realisation*	Mobility cannot be separated from language learning and digital skills. When starting a mobility experience, the learner becomes a protagonist of his own learning as well as an intercultural mediator. Mobility also contributes to the development of social skills: - outward mobility: it gives a European dimension to learning; - inward mobility: it creates the conditions for starting an educational project inspired by democratic values. What is essential is the integration of all activities in the field of mobility within the individual's learning pathway as well as within the learning pathway of the school staff. An important contribution is given by the development of

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digital skills in the creation of networks.

The following questions intend to support the overall effort made by a team in implementing a favourable climate within the school. The list is not intended to be complete nor binding. The process can be encouraged by using different parts of the list below. The choice depends on the history and the context of each school and institution. Questions are intended to enhance and support a collective reflection through languages.

CULTURE	STRUCTURE	STAKEHOLDERS
Representations • How can you improve the image given by the school to the staff and the people who enter the school or more generally speaking, to the neighbourhood and the local environment where the school is? Is there a communication plan? Is it implemented? • How can you develop a common culture ariound the educational project? Are the collective rules known, accepted and followed by everyone? • How can you prevent a feeling of language insecurity of learners, teachers and other staff? • How can you avoid a hierarchy among languages and encourage confidence in the use of all languages? **Openness** • Is there a culture for inward mobility? When a new learner arrives is he accompanied in a personalised way? How are new members of staff welcomed? • How do international partnerships contribute to learners' and staff's mobility? How do they contribute to the improvement of competences and skills? • How can you develop a shared culture of linguistic and intercultural challenges? How can you use languages to promote an inclusive culture?	**Architecture** • How can architecture contribute to the implementation of a favourable school climate? Are all the different spaces suitable for the learners and the staff? Are they functional and safe? • Does architecture reflect the identity of the school? How is identity made explicit to learners and staff? How can architecture be used to strengthen the school culture and identity? **Geography** • How can the geography of the school be reconsidered? Is it possible to move around easily? Are there individual spaces and spaces which can be used to meet and share? • Are common areas (library, staff rooms, etc) suitable to encourage cooperative work and informal forms of interaction? • Are all notices, public messages and signs clear? Can they be understood by everyone? Is it possible to think of plurilingual messaging and signs? • How can you develop time and spaces for breaks?	**Information** • Does ICT have a space within the school? Do all the procedures regarding access to internal and external information respond toneeds? How do learners and staff have access to information? • Does the school have a cultural agenda? Are cultural events organised in a regular way all year long? **Rules** • Are the people who are in charge of interpersonal regulations (coordination, mediation) easily recognised in their roles? • What roles and functions should be developed in order to build an ecosystem within and around the school? What can be done to have a better link between the school and its immediate environment? • How democratic are the procedures within the school? Is participation encouraged? • How can staff be encouraged to be more responsive to learners' needs? • How can management be made flexible so as to widen the range of solutions to the problems the learners might have? • How can responsibility and autonomy be enhanced within the school? What freedom of action can be left to everyone? How can single actions be taken care of and recognised by everyone?

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CULTURE	STRUCTURE	STAKEHOLDERS
Community • Are all subjects valued in the same way? Do they all contribute in an explicit way to the school educational project? Do Arts, PE and Science promote events implying the whole school community? Are all members aware of their role within the school? Are parents and other stakeholders engaged in the school educational project? • How can the school culture contribute to develop the learner's self-esteem and enhance success? • How to develop and encourage peer education. How to help each individual to take care of the educational community in terms of personal commitment.	**Offer and networks** • Is the school's learning offer dynamic? Are there enough projects to respond to all learners' needs? How can the pedagogic features specific for FL learning be used within the whole school structure? • Has the school a local and international network (school partnerships, universities, businesses, associations) which can meet its own demands and needs? How can all the members of the school community take advantage of this network? • Is the school also recognised as a centre for adult education? Are spaces and equipment used beyond school time? • How to make the overall structure of the school and its networks more flexible.	**Training** • How to boost self-confidence and avoid isolation. Are each individual's linguistic needs to access information and learning taken care of? • Is the link between individual needs and support to collective procedures adequate and coherent enough (mentoring, consulting, interview, etc.)? • Does the school have a strategy to fostering cross subject and cross category encounters? • How to help learners and staff defining their own needs of training