PICBA, ANDALUSIA: PROGRAMME FOR THE CURRICULAR INTEGRATION OF KEY COMPETENCES

http://keyconet.eun.org
**ABOUT KEYCONET**

KeyCoNet (2012 – 2014) is a European policy network focused on identifying and analyzing initiatives on the implementation of key competences in primary and secondary school education. It is a constantly growing network of more than 100 members from 30 countries gathering together Ministries of Education/related agencies, universities/research institutes, European organizations, and practice related partners.

On the basis of the evidence collected through literature reviews, case studies, peer learning visits, country overviews, videos and exchanges between network members, the project’s final objective is to produce recommendations for policy and practice regarding the enablers and obstacles to a holistic implementation of key competence development.
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ABOUT THIS CASE STUDY

Part of a series
This case study is part of a series of case studies being produced by KeyCoNet, to highlight various initiatives concerning key competence development, taking place across Europe. Each case study analyzes the initiative’s implementation strategies in depth, and will feed into the network’s recommendations for policy and practice on how to implement a key competence approach in schools most effectively.

How and why was this case selected?
Each year the KeyCoNet network identifies initiatives concerning key competence development across Europe, and a case note is produced providing basic information about each one. Following this, network partners participate in an online selection according to pre-established criteria, as well as an in-depth face-to-face discussion, in order to select the most interesting initiatives to develop into case studies. The PICBA initiative was chosen because it provides an in-service training programme with a holistic approach that contributes to the curricular integration of key skills. This programme promotes the active participation of schools, different educational services, students’ families and the community in general. The PICBA initiative is a continuation of the Spanish National Programme, COMBAS (which was the subject of a KeyCoNet Case Study in 2013), in Andalusia. PICBA intensifies the assessment processes with the participation of different educational establishments, and goes deeper into the evaluation of the key skills.

Which methodology has been used?
Case studies are the main tool used by the network to probe beneath the surface of each selected initiative and provide a rich context for understanding the implementation issues involved. The initiatives selected by the network differ in many ways, according to the nature of the key competences addressed, the implementation process used, the number of students and teachers directly concerned, the type and number of actors involved, and the duration and stage of development etc. A multiple-case study design, whereby each initiative generates its own case study, but uses one single prism for a common analysis, was therefore chosen. This method makes it possible to explore diversity, as well as the enablers and obstacles to the initiative’s implementation, as perceived by the initiators and stakeholders interviewed. Moreover, through a multiple-case study design it is possible to identify choices, strategies, characteristics, situations or contexts leading to success or failure in a recurrent manner. This will particularly contribute to fuelling the set of recommendations for policy and practice at institutional, local, regional, national and European level, for the effective implementation of key competences in school education.

Each case study included interviews with the initiative’s coordinators and stakeholders, as well as desk research. In some cases, where considered feasible and fruitful, focus groups were also organized. For this particular case study, interviews were carried out with the head of the Evaluation Service of the General Educational Planning and Evaluation Department (Regional Government of Andalusia); with members of the PICBA team who are responsible for the direction and pedagogical coordination of the programme; with officials in charge of its management and coordination; with the consultant for the government programme COMBAS; and with other stakeholders. To corroborate their viewpoints, these data were triangulated with those of the program users through focus groups with school coordinators and administrators. Finally, documents were reviewed such as official papers, teaching materials, the website including its communications and forum debates, lesson plans and essays developed by the participating schools and teachers. For conducting this study, the work The art of case study research (Stake, 1995) and the Case Study COMBAS (KeyCoNet, 2013) have been consulted for methodology and contents, respectively.
**BASIC INFORMATION**

**Country:** Spain

**Title of initiative:** [EN] PICBA, ANDALUSIA: Programme for the Curricular Integration of Key Competences  
[ES] PICBA, ANDALUCÍA: Programa de Integración Curricular de las Competencias Básicas

**Coordinator/Organization:** Department for Education of the Regional Government of Andalusia.

General organisational and pedagogical coordination: Antonio Benítez Herrera, Head of the Evaluation Service of the General Educational Planning and Evaluation Department.

Coordination and preparation of pedagogical support by:
1. Manuel J. Clavijo Ruiz, Consultant at the Teacher Training Centre (CEP) in Bollullos (Huelva), with the help of Juan Carlos Rico, Inspector of Education and Pilar Torres, Consultant at the CEP in Cordoba.
2. Florencio Luengo Horcajo, Consultant for the government programme COMBAS' (Ministry of Education/National Centre for Educational Innovation and Research (CNIIE), Madrid) and for the Atlantida Innovation Group.

**Key competences addressed:**

The key competences included in the 17/2007 Education Act of Andalusia, implementing the national Law 2/2006 (LOE – Organic Law of Education) are addressed:

[ES] competencias en comunicación lingüística  
[EN] competence in linguistic communication  
[ES] c. en razonamiento matemático  
[EN] c. in mathematical reasoning  
[ES] c. en el conocimiento y la interacción con el mundo físico y natural  
[EN] awareness of and interaction with the physical and natural world  
[ES] c. digital y tratamiento de la información, social y ciudadana  
[EN] digital competence and information processing, social competence and citizenship  
[ES] c. cultural y artística  
[EN] cultural and artistic competence  
[ES] c. y actitudes para seguir aprendiendo de forma autónoma a lo largo de la vida  
[EN] attitudes for lifelong learning  
[ES] c. para la autonomía e iniciativa personal (esta última incluye la capacidad emprendedora)  
[EN] autonomy and personal initiative (the final competence includes entrepreneurial spirit).

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1. The Programme for the Curricular Integration of Key Competences, COMBAS, is organised by the Spanish Ministry of Education within the framework of the Regional Cooperation Programme with autonomous communities.

Furthermore, this Programme integrates the set of initiatives that KeyCoNet has presented in 2103 as Case Study.
Once Organic Law 2/2006 on Education incorporated key competences into educational curriculums, defining them as an integral part of the curriculum, the Department for Education of the Regional Government of Andalusia decided upon a holistic approach of partnership (human resources and curriculum elements) between all the educational agents of the government. The competences were also established as a reference for the evaluation of students at the relevant times for the promotion and recognition of key competences through qualifications after their integration into the relevant curriculums in compulsory education. Diagnostic evaluation tests for the 4th year of primary education and the 2nd year of secondary education (in which Andalusia is a pioneer in Spain by applying them across the region since the 2006-2007 academic year) were also used as a measuring instrument, as well as the ANDALUSIA SCALE test, which is used in the Autonomous Community in the 2nd year of primary education. The diagnostic tests were later integrated into the minimum teaching requirements across Spain and were suitably included by some autonomous communities in the definition of their own curriculums. Therefore it became necessary to carry out initiatives aimed at schools for the consolidation of key competences and consequently, help teachers with the task of transforming the teaching and learning dynamic by helping them overcome possible problems. With this objective, the Department for Education of the Regional Government of Andalusia decided to participate, with 25 Andalusian and a further 125 schools from other regions in Spain, in the Programme for the Curricular Integration of Key Competences, COMBAS, organised by the Ministry of Education within the framework of the Regional Cooperation Programme with autonomous communities.

At the same time, the General Educational Planning and Evaluation Department of Andalusia, through the Evaluation Service, set up, by virtue of the duties assigned to it, the Programme for the Curricular Integration of Key Competences, PICBA, in Andalusia, based on the COMBAS Programme, although it soon gained its own identity, becoming an ambitious, innovative holistic initiative dealing with curriculum organisation, evaluation, supervision/inspection, training, respect for diversity, family participation, curriculum materials etc., in which around 4,000 teachers have participated. There is also a computer program specifically designed to prepare integrated teaching units and evaluate key competences, following the approach of the COMBAS digital tool and putting it into the context of Andalusia, as has been done with other materials produced by COMBAS. This new, innovative tool helps nursery, primary and secondary teachers with the tasks of integration, evaluation and marking of key competences in line with the guidelines proposed by COMBAS/PICBA.

Partners:

The PICBA Programme is special in that it has a holistic focus, distinguishing it from other Andalusian and national educational initiatives, giving it its own identity. Although the General Department responsible for the programme is the Educational Planning and Evaluation Department, through the Evaluation Service, numerous sectors in the educational community are actively participating in it through its inclusive structure, including: the General Department for Innovation and Teacher Training, the Participation and Equality Department, the Central Inspection Agency, the Educational Evaluation Agency of Andalusia and the Inspection and Educational Planning Departments of Regional Ministries. There has also been significant work carried out by the Information Technology Department of the Regional Government of Andalusia and the Inspection and Educational Planning Departments of Regional Ministries. There has also been significant work carried out by the Information Technology Department of the Regional Government of Andalusia and the Inspection and Educational Planning Departments of Regional Ministries. There has also been significant work carried out by the Information Technology Department of the Regional Government of Andalusia and the Inspection and Educational Planning Departments of Regional Ministries.

2. The Programme for the Curricular Integration of Key Competences (COMBAS) constitutes, in its 2010/11 version, the case study that Spain presents to KeyCoNet through its partner the Spanish Open University (UNED), in collaboration with the Atlántida Project.
**Scope:**
In Andalusia, over 130 schools have participated in PICBA over the last three years. This has meant the involvement of over 4,000 teaching professionals, mainly nursery, primary and secondary teachers from Andalusia and professionals responsible for the development of educational policies in this region. The people involved in PICBA are represented in the core team of this programme, composed of around 30 people from different fields and sectors of the Andalusian educational system from various provinces. Families and the associations officially designated to represent them are also involved in this initiative.

**Learning context:**
The PICBA key practices directly reach teaching staff through teacher-coordinators of the programme. Their work is essential to disseminate PICBA approaches by overcoming theoretical boundaries in order to reach real classroom situations through the educational projects of schools. To carry out this work, they have the support of the educational administration in the figure of the Inspection Agency, of training consultants and coordinators and, to a greater degree, of the managers of the programme in the Evaluation Service, which is the central hub between the sectors involved. There are several Andalusian PICBA/COMBAS schools that have given priority to the participation of families during the implementation of these programmes through the relevant organisations: the school council and the parents’ associations (AMPAS). This access has not been limited to sharing experiences at an informative level, but in some cases has led to active participation in the educational programme, by attending training meetings and collaborating in the setting up of some of the activities carried out. In short, it is about promoting the involvement of families for the development of learning also outside of the educational context. Associations for primary and secondary education managers, parents’ associations and schools that, although they may not have participated in this programme, have taken innovative actions for the integration of key competences into the curriculum, have all been part of the key practices, the achievements and advances made in the integration of key competences attained through the PICBA/COMBAS Programme. Informative meetings have also been held with publishers that publish textbooks for Andalusia, who have shown great interest in adding curriculum focuses that facilitate the integration of key competences into their publications.

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<tr>
<th>School education levels:</th>
<th>Nursery, primary and secondary (students between 3 and 16 years old).</th>
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<td>Target groups:</td>
<td>In the first instance the recipients of the face-to-face sessions are the teacher-coordinators of the PICBA/COMBAS Programme in the respective schools. The teachers of each school receive information and monitoring of PICBA/COMBAS initiatives through the coordinator.</td>
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<td>Time frame:</td>
<td>Start: October 2010 until now</td>
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The Programme Integration of Key Competences (PICBA) was conceived in Andalusia as an instrument for cooperation between education administrations, including the national administration by accepting the COMBAS Programme (presented in the Spanish case study) as a reference for action, with the objective of improving the results of the entire school population through the development of key competences. This context, which called for the participation of over 100 schools, is characterised by seeing curricular integration as a holistic act in which all departments of the educational system cooperate (training consultants of teacher training centres, the inspection agency, educational orientation, innovation programmes, managers and teachers of schools and training coordinators). This proposal has led to the curricular acceptance of the officially established curriculum by connecting all its elements and facilitating a student evaluation process that will recognise their competence performance level.

The future perspectives of PICBA lead to the analysis of new challenges, such as: a curriculum model in view of the change in educational law that Spain is undergoing, professional competences, academic texts and the preparation of integrated teaching units, the inclusion of families and the community in the entire competence proposal, the evaluation of student performance and improvement plans for schools etc.

To find out more:
Support information and material related to the integration of key competences can be found on the various platforms used by people and institutions participating in the PICBA-COMBAS Programme, including:

- General organisational and pedagogical coordination: Antonio Benitez Herrera, Head of the Evaluation Service of the General Educational Planning and Evaluation Department.
  Email: antonioj-benitez@juntadeandalucia.es
- Coordination and preparation of pedagogical support by:
  - Manuel J. Clavijo Ruiz, Consultant at the Teacher Training Centre (CEP) in Bollullos (Huelva), with the help of Juan Carlos Rico, Inspector of Education and Pilar Torres, Consultant at the CEP in Cordoba.
    Email: manuelj.clavijo.ext@juntadeandalucia.es
  - Florencio Luengo Horcajo, Consultant for the government programme COMBAS3 (Ministry of Education/National Centre for Educational Innovation and Research (CNIIE), Madrid) and for the Atlantida Innovation Group.
    Email: atlantida.luengo@gmail.com
- Enter the Colabor@ platform
- ANDALUSIA AUTONOMOUS GOVERNMENT. (WITH ASSOCIATES COLLABORATORS)
  http://www.ced.junta-andalucia.es/educacion/nav/navegacion.jsp?perfil=&delegacion=&lista_canales=1374&vis-menu=0,0,1,1,1,1,0,0,0

3. The Programme for the Curricular Integration of Key Competences, COMBAS, is organised by the Spanish Ministry of Education within the framework of the Regional Cooperation Programme with autonomous communities. Furthermore, this Programme integrates the set of initiatives that KeyCoNet has presented in 2013 as Case Study.
INTRODUCTION

The Programme for the Integration of Key Competences (PICBA) arose, firstly, because of the enthusiastic response of teachers in the Spanish region of Andalusia to the training processes for the implementation of a model of core competencies; and secondly, because of the willingness of the Andalusian Regional Government to contextualise proposals included in the Curricular Integration and Key Competences Programme (COMBAS). The PICBA initiative acquired its own identity by encouraging the committed participation of various sectors of the administration and school-family orientated community institutions; as well as the diversification of the process of evaluating student competences.

1. CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCE

Which contextual factors have been perceived as enablers to the implementation of the initiative, and why?

Several factors contributed to the PICBA initiative achieving over the last three years a widespread application in the field of teacher training and demonstrating that the development of key competences is the responsibility of the community (given that the process is enhanced by integrating formal and informal learning situations, and resolving tasks in various contexts). The informants consulted in this study indicate that the following contextual factors facilitated the holistic and systemic advance of the PICBA initiative:

Enabling factors in the legal context:

The National Education Act (LOE, 2006) describes the basic curriculum for compulsory education in Spain and this legislation raised the need for new curriculum guidelines and methods for applying this model. The regional legislative application of the LOE was the Andalusian Education Act 17/2007, which states that the education system must facilitate as a priority: ‘conditions enabling students to reach the key competencies established for compulsory education.’ The Andalusian Education Act introduced key competences in the curriculum and determined that the promotion and certification of students should take into account the level of competence displayed by each student.
Enabling factors in the institutional context:

The aforementioned legislative approach created the need to implement educational processes that include key competences in the development of curricula, as well as generating materials to accompany this process. Proposals designed and coordinated in various other Spanish regions were used as references: the Innovación Atlántida Group had already created collaborative spaces between the educational activities of a number of schools and expert proposals for curricular integration in key competences with constant revisions made on the basis of the results obtained. The Atlántida group coordinated the first experience for the region of Andalusia in 120 schools in the province of Huelva. The significant achievements of this experience proved a reference for other Spanish groups and regions (including the current team responsible for PICBA).

As reported in the COMBAS case study, the successful consolidation achieved by the Atlántida initiative in various regions meant that in 2010/11 the Spanish Ministry of Education used the initiative as a pilot experience in collaboration with 15 regional governments and the Spanish cities of Ceuta and Melilla in Africa. The Andalusian educational authority then made an open call and approved the inclusion in the programme of a group of primary and secondary schools. Demand was so great that the regional government generated a parallel plan, which became known as PICBA.

Enabling factors in the school context:

Inquiries about the needs of Andalusian teachers conducted by the educational authority of the regional government in collaboration with the University of Seville, highlighted the need for training and evaluation for the development of key competences in obligatory education. In response to these results, the Andalusian government prepared a plan for addressing key competences that would strengthen the implementation of the PICBA programme.

Enabling factors at the community level:

In accordance with the framework that supports the COMBAS program, PICBA assumes that the development of a competency model requires collaboration between schools and other institutions in the educational community (especially the family) to generate a comprehensive curriculum. This collaboration took place in some schools spontaneously during the early stages of PICBA, and this experience was the basis for designing a new plan for the curricular integration of key competences. The plan counts on the support of families and associations that represent families.

Which contextual factors have been perceived as obstacles to the implementation of the initiative, and why?

The contextual factors listed below proved to be small obstacles. Although these obstacles have not prevented the PICBA programme from progressing towards its objectives, they have required changes in various processes and rhythms of work:
• The presence of an individualistic culture in schools required teaching teams to be offered help in converting personal initiatives into shared projects.

• In official documents relating to curriculum development there are few indications of the relationships to be established between the elements (objectives, content, competences, evaluation criteria, etc.); and few methodological guidelines for creating and applying comprehensive curricula. Therefore, it was necessary to organise specific counselling sessions for teaching teams to analyse the curricula proposed by the programme.

• Published textbooks do not usually present learning situations based on the resolution of projects, tasks, etc., that facilitate the development of competences. Consequently, contacts have been initiated with publishers to encourage the publication of books and other materials that facilitate the implementation of the competence model in the classroom.

• The lack of experience in education in addressing holistic curriculum development required coordination and collaboration between all the professionals involved in curriculum management and evaluation, supervision and inspection, teacher training, family involvement, the organisation of teaching materials and resources, etc.

2. SUBSTANCE RELATED ISSUES

The PICBA programme encourages various processes of reflection and action that facilitate decisions regarding the curricular integration of key competences within the regulatory framework. This has been successfully achieved using the general approach of the COMBAS programme for developing proposals and investigating new possibilities in the educational context of Andalusia. From the collaborative synthesis between the two programs, the following actions have arisen:

• Development of professional competence through training in which school coordinators are the common thread between the proposals received in class training sessions and the dynamics of school teaching teams.

• Coordinated participation of all sectors of education involved in the integration of key competences in curricular development: the core team and PICBA provincial teams, schools, Andalusian Agency for Educational Evaluation (AGAEVE), and educational inspectors.

• Criteria evaluation model that responds to official indications: weighting process for each of the evaluation criteria, as well as disaggregated indicators in the areas of knowledge and/or key competences for student qualifications.

• Consultation and feedback from various integrated teaching units (ITUs) produced by teaching teams: a) curricular development (definition of educational objectives through objectives for areas of knowledge, content, and evaluation criteria); b) teaching conversion (conversion of academic knowledge to teaching knowledge through tasks and activities in various scenarios or contexts during a set period); and c) learning evaluation using evaluation indicators and technical and evaluation/information tools.

• Computer applications with databases so that each teacher can, in conjunction with the teaching team, prepare useful curriculum maps, integrated teaching units, and track student progress.
• Collaborative work between families and schools in strengthening the development of key competences (comprehensive curriculum).

Which substance related issues have been the most difficult ones to fix when deciding on the content of the initiative, and why?

Given the important methodological changes in teaching and learning evaluation that require the development of a comprehensive curriculum, it was difficult to specify from the beginning a plan to include families and the community in the resolution of social tasks by students. At present, there is progress in the preparation of an ad hoc plan.

3. Partnership Related Issues

Which key aspects should be taken into consideration when defining the partnership?

The PICBA initiative provides teaching teams with support from the PICBA training commission, as well as help from various educational and family sectors. The interrelated participation of the following teams is crucial:

Teaching team training in their respective schools

An annual call by the Andalusian educational authority for participation in the PICBA programme enables schools to indicate their intention to participate with the support of teachers (a basic condition as the training programme requires that teachers work in integrated teams). Once a school is accepted, a PICBA coordinator is chosen to specify the cascaded training sessions. All school coordinators receive classroom training (including specific advice, information, proposed tasks, materials, and an activities schedule), and this information is then shared with the teaching teams in each school (horizontal expansion). This process implies that each coordinator is responsible for monitoring the actions and practices performed by the school team and then relaying local achievements to the PICBA training team (for subsequent feedback as part of the training process).

PICBA core team

A core team for the PICBA programme is formed by a group of departments and services responsible for aspects of the regional government education authority programme and its delegations in the eight Andalusian provinces. This team is responsible for analysing the various actions undertaken within the programme and making decisions with respect to:

- Curricular planning and organisation of schools
- Evaluation of teaching material
- Supervision of schools (educational inspection)
- Preparation of curricular material and textbooks (state administration and educational book publishers)
- Teacher training (training network)
- Family participation
- Attention to diversity

Standing committee on PICBA training

This commission is responsible for developing, selecting, and or-
ganising materials for the programme. This committee includes teachers and training advisors with experience in the development of COMBAS and PICBA programmes and is advised by a group of specialists.

4. STRATEGY RELATED ISSUES

Which aspects of the strategy implemented for the initiative have proved to be particularly effective, and why?

The field study identified a set of strategies that proved effective:

In the context of educational administration:

- An awareness and motivation campaign to explain to schools the PICBA objectives and the potential for improvement in student academic performance and the professional experience of teachers.
- Initial introductory meetings in schools to explain the PICBA initiative.
- Recommendations that schools developing other initiatives for the integration of key competences in isolation join the programme.
- Contacts with the various departments and administrative bodies to explain the scope of the PICBA initiative and propose that its members participate in the holistic synergy of actions.
- Certification of teacher participants in PICBA for 30 hours of training per year, and 50 hours per year for school coordinators. These merits are to be taken into account in the awarding of salary incentives and certifications.
- Organisation and maintenance of digital platforms for communication and interaction regarding the PICBA programme.
- Collaborative framework between the COMBAS and PICBA programmes.

In the context of interaction between the core team and the standing committee on PICBA training:

- Definition of the characteristics of schools in relation to their experience in the development of a competency model so that the schools can be allocated to the most appropriate PICBA training phase (initial, advanced, or in-depth).
- Consideration of school coordinators as cornerstones in the PICBA formation model and, consequently, development of their ability to lead with creativity and innovation in the task of training the teaching team.
- Interpretation of the evaluation results with a view to addressing changes during the training process.
- Facilitation of the process for accepting and tracking tasks resolved by the school teaching teams and assessment of the involvement of coordinators.

In the context of interaction between the standing committee on PICBA training, school coordinators, and
school teaching teams.

• The adoption of a training model that operates in vertical and horizontal dimensions has enabled the direct training of a large number of teachers: the training standing committee coordinates meetings of school training coordinators (vertical) and these coordinators, in turn, offer training in their respective schools (horizontal).

• Reflection by teacher teams on the various issues related to the competence model; stimulation of the search for solutions to problems and activities that accept differentiated responses that may suppose restructuring; and the incorporation of various approaches in the central axis of programme development.

• Recommendation that school coordinators study the materials and resources provided in the formative phase; and adapt, reorganise, modify, and redesign the material according to the needs and possibilities of the teaching teams.

• Sharing with families and other community institutions the activities and tasks that foster competence development.

Which aspects of the strategy implemented for the initiative have proved to be most problematic, and why?

The field study identified several strategies that created difficulties:

In the context of the educational authority:

• Achieving a collaborative, systematic, and continuous performance by the administrative bodies involved in the development of PICBA was a complex task. An initial lack of awareness of the aims and objectives of this initiative and a lack of experience in collaborative work between various bodies could be among the causes of this difficulty because more efficient support was obtained from all services as the programme progressed.

In the context of the school teaching staff:

• In the first PICBA programme, more time than expected was required for the technical preparation of this committee and so the start of the programme was delayed. This difficulty was later overcome.

In the context of the standing committee on training:

• A reflection on the different teaching paradigms that guide teaching practice was not addressed by all the teams and some teachers reported not having time to do tasks requiring deep analysis.

• The process of weighing the various indicators for each learning area/subject or competence, and producing evaluations based on the corresponding headings for competence evaluation, presented difficulties as this process requires teaching staff to share a relational framework and common minimums for each indicator, and this was an objective that was not always easy to reach.

5. MAINSTREAMING RELATED ISSUES
As noted in previous sections, the PICBA programme is a continuation of the COMBAS programme (a nationwide pilot programme that produced various regional versions). These initiatives involve teachers from most areas of knowledge in the compulsory education structure.

Acceptance of the PICBA initiative by Andalusian schools increased as implementation enabled the sharing of results and each school managed to involve most of the teaching staff. The educational administration is considering progressively extending the PICBA programme to all schools in the region.

If the key competence initiative aims/aimed at mainstreaming, what are/have been the major obstacles encountered to generalise it?

The following situations, represent breaks with previous teaching traditions, and were (or remain) obstacles for the PICBA programme:

• In the educational administration: the inexperience of various services in coordinating collaborative projects, with the organisation sometimes generating excessive workloads for the limited human and material resources available.
• In schools: departmental structuring by areas of knowledge, in which a model of individualistic work focused on learning content still predominates.
• In the educational environment in general: the lack of specific training for teachers and the scarcity of reference models for developing models for teaching competence.

6. Systemic Aspects

To which extent has the initiative been designed as a systemic one from the starting point, i.e. introducing changes in several areas related to the student curriculum [such as teacher training, assessment, school organisation, etc.]?

The PICBA initiative arose from the need for teaching teams to share experiences and curricular proposals to facilitate implementation in the classrooms of a competence model covering the official compulsory curriculum. Obviously, this type of response requires coordinating a sequence of actions by various actors so that a coherent and synchronised unit is formed that is capable of performing the necessary adjustments. The PICBA programme coordinates actions in various domains (teacher training, curriculum alignment, monitoring, evaluation, etc.) and functions as an efficient interconnected system through synchronisation of the actions of the core team with the training commission, and synchronisation of coordinators with their respective schools (vertical training extending to horizontal training of teaching teams). PICBA also generates various processes of coordinated evaluation and analysis of the results from a comprehensive perspective; and includes teachers and training consultants with experience in programme development in the training commission. All of this
is achieved in a context that maintains the COMBAS programme (nationally) and the PICBA programme (at a regional level).

What have been the enablers encountered during the implementation because of the systemic aspect of the initiative?

The design of the PICBA programme has enabled the following:

• various services and institutions feel involved in the programme;
• a large number of schools began making independent decisions and went on to develop (in a contextualised manner) curricular maps showing the programming of the school, departments, years, and classes; as well as the profile of the competences and areas – and the interrelation between them.

What have been the obstacles and/or challenges encountered during the implementation because of the systemic aspect of the initiative?

Given that a change in any of the sectors in the curricular integration of key competences influences other sectors, the PICBA core team undertook to inform all the sectors (in a coordinated manner and with a vision of the programme systemic model) of any changes introduced in the PICBA programme. This task is made easier because all the educational sectors are represented in the core team.

How have the obstacles and/or challenges encountered been overcome?

The following situations were challenges for the PICBA programme that were overcome because of the programme structure:

• Communication with those educational sectors that did not entirely agree with the model: it was necessary to move slowly by clearly and accurately presenting the foundations and principles of the PICBA programme.
• Finding consensus through meetings with various sectors responsible for organising the changes necessary to implement PICBA.
• Development of standards and instructions that create frameworks and scenarios for developing the programme.

Have some parts of the original design of the initiative (from the systemic point of view) been abandoned and why?

The information in this study shows that the PICBA initiative has not abandoned the original design; however, adjustments and improvements suggested in the evaluation processes undertaken in parallel with the programme were accepted (as discussed in other sections of this report).

7. EVALUATION RELATED ISSUES

In case a simultaneous/real time evaluation process has been part of the initiative:

The PICBA programme has taken on an evaluation model in which responsibility is shared between the sectors and organisations involved in its development – as described below.

The core team prepares the outline of the research and evaluation plan (objectives, actions, completion times, and evaluation
tools) so that the various sectors and evaluation and research bodies (base team, provincial teams, schools, Andalusian Agency for Educational Evaluation, and school inspectors) can develop their own evaluation designs for application during and after the PICBA training process:

- The initial evaluations made by the provincial technical teams identify the most appropriate PICBA training modality (initial, advanced, or in-depth) and evaluate the starting points (willingness to participate, support for the management and teacher representatives).

- PICBA evaluation processes by the core team, provincial teams, and schools (self-evaluation) enable a reorientation of activities and scheduled processes and are based on results. For example, the portfolio used in schools facilitates collective reflection and offers teachers an interrelated vision of the processes followed during the school year.

- Final evaluation by the Andalusian Agency for Educational Evaluation (AGAEVE) and school inspectors analyses the results of the PICBA curricular integration in key competences and measures the level of impact on lesson design and classroom practice, as well as the influence on academic performance.

- An evaluation/research process made by the University of Seville analysed the evaluation culture of schools, the most common difficulties in evaluation practice, and the conditions that must be met in schools for the evaluation of curriculum and evaluation practices of teachers.

The various evaluation reports are analysed by the core team with the aim of identifying proposals and improvements that should be introduced in subsequent phases and PICBA training calls. In addition to these adjustments, a Final Day is organised in which the participating schools, educational services, and educational authority managers are presented with evaluation reports that offer the most relevant conclusions, proposals, and recommendations for improvements in the PICBA programme.

What have been the obstacles to implement it, and why?

The informants consulted indicate that the PICBA evaluation process suffered some difficulties such as:

- The regulations governing the evaluation focus on content, and this focus has caused problems in designing a framework consistent with the competence evaluation proposed by PICBA (systematic observation of work in process, registration protocols, portfolios, peer evaluation to facilitate learning from reflection, and self-evaluation of difficulties, etc.).

- Self-evaluation of teachers and the development of techniques for evaluating the competence development of students required an effort from all involved. However, the training offered for designing and using procedures, techniques, and competence evaluation instruments is insufficient and it is believed that substantial change will require more work and time.
What have been the difficulties or risks that have been solved/avoided thanks to the simultaneous evaluation process, and why?

The evaluation process conducted during the first year of the programme identified the need to make adjustments in several areas, and consequently, to take decisions that do not risk the success of the initiative as a whole:

• The PICBA organisation does not precisely determine the conditions that schools should satisfy in terms of competence training in order to join one of the three training phases (initial, advanced, or in-depth). Therefore, each school chooses its formative phase in light of the resources available, as well as its knowledge and experience. This situation causes difficulties in monitoring the training and work developed by schools. From now onwards, the starting characteristics required for each phase will be defined more precisely.

• The lack of definition of the role and functions of school coordinators means that the coordinator, central to the development of this initiative, is alone in the task of adapting the specific needs of his or her school to the recommendations and material received in general sessions. This means that the workload can be excessive and, in some cases, impossible to assume. When this situation becomes apparent, the PICBA core team organises external support (training consultants, platforms and forums, etc.) to help synthesise the supporting material so that it is more easily and quickly understood.

• Sessions for coordinators presented the contents and processes of the programme with a certain lack of continuity, and this impeded a correct perception of the meaning and usefulness. After this problem was detected in the evaluation process, an overview of purpose and content was added to the beginning of the programme phases. These additions help balance the training sessions and define with precision the theoretical and practical dimensions and statement of good practices.

8. ACHIEVEMENT OF INITIATIVE’S AIMS

Have the original aims of the initiative been achieved?

The objectives that guided the PICBA programme from the beginning have been kept in sight throughout the process, although not all the participating schools have reached the same level at the same speed. We can confirm that the PICBA programme is being successfully implemented, as well as being constantly reviewed and improved. This is reflected in the various processes of evaluation incorporated in the programme, including the external evaluation that took place after the first two versions of the programme (including 130 schools with about 4,000 teachers) that was conducted jointly by the University of Seville, the Andalusian Agency for Educational Evaluation, and the school inspection service. The evaluation concluded: “The PICBA programme is recognised in general as a suitable instrument for facilitating processes linked to teacher training with respect to including key competences in the curriculum as required in the current regulations.”

Meanwhile, the various sources consulted during this study agree that those teachers who made most progress in contextualising the curriculum while addressing the priority needs of their students achieved higher levels of performance and motivation in their students – as well as achieving greater levels of professional development and improved internal cohesion in the school.

Moreover, the PICBA programme in interaction with the COMBAS programme has produced a set of materials and resources for the curricular integration of key competences, as well as producing
validated and reliable reference models of innovative teaching practices that encourage the development of competence. These resources have facilitated the transfer of experiences to other educational contexts:

- ‘Guide to good practices for the integration of key competences in the curriculum’ (Andalusian Regional Government)
- COMBAS Guide (2013), published by the Ministry of Education, CNIIE, in cooperation the 15 regional governments. It provides material for the development of a valid alternative curriculum that integrates competences (modules) as practical experiences in schools (many of which are in Andalusia).
- Methodological strategy for the development of Integrated Teaching Units (ITUs), as well as the computerised evaluation of their development.
- Final report on the most recent leavers in schools participating in the PICBA programme (year 2012-2013).
- Report on a pilot PICBA computer application being developed with the participation of 150 schools (including some 1700 teachers, 350 consultants from the teacher training network, and 50 school inspectors).

9. NEXT STEPS

What is planned next for the initiative?

The information obtained indicates the future actions of the PICBA programme:

a. Continue developing teaching practices aimed at generating competences that serve to widen usage in the Andalusian educational landscape. The aim is to: a) progressively extend the initiative and not limit it to exceptional or isolated cases; b) ensure that PICBA proposals continue to represent innovative activism within (rather than outside) the official curriculum; c) facilitate the structuring of the regional educational system to meet the demands of modern society.

b. Relate the contributions of the PICBA initiative with the new Education Act (under implementation) regarding the integration of key competences in the curriculum.

c. Regulate student evaluation in an appropriate framework that follows the competence model approach.

d. Widen the participation of families, and associations that represent families, in the framework of a school-based plan that enhances the development of competences in children and adolescents from the perspective of a comprehensive curriculum (formal and non-formal learning). It is understood that this plan meets the needs of families regarding information and training on how to participate in the educational change proposed by the competence model. It is also intended to produce a guide that reflects experiences that can serve as a reference for the community.

10. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

SPANISH KEYCONET ASSOCIATES PARTNERS IN SPAIN:

UNED University: http://portal.uned.es/portal/page?_pageid=93,1&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

ATLÁNTIDA project: http://www.proyectoatlantida.net/
National Centre for Educational Innovation a Research (CNIIE) of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport:
http://blog.educalab.es/cniie/2014/03/12/competencias-basicas-en-la-practica/

Andalusio Autonomous Government: http://www.ced.junta-andalucia.es/educacion/nav/navegacion.jsp?perfil=&delegacion=&lista_canales=1374&vismenu=0,0,1,1,1,0,0,0

SPANISH KEYCONET ASSOCIATES

Extremadura Autonomous Government: http://ccbb.educarex.es/

La Rioja Autonomous Government: http://competenciasbasicas.edurioja.org/


Galicia Autonomous Government: http://www.edu.xunta.es/web/node/12038


Attitudes Association: http://www.grupoactitudes.com/#!asociacion/c1a7a

Spain Literacy Association (AELE): http://www.asociacion-aele.org/
We are happy to hear whether you are interested in receiving further information or providing us with suggestions. Contact us at: keyconet-info@eun.org

ABOUT EUROPEAN SCHOOLNET

European Schoolnet is the coordinator of the KeyCoNet project.

European Schoolnet is a network of 30 Ministries of Education from across the European member states, leading educational innovation at European level. As a major international think tank, European Schoolnet operates key European services in education on behalf of the European Commission, member Ministries of Education and industry partners.

European Schoolnet’s activities are divided among three areas of work:

- Policy, research and innovation: information sharing and evidence building.
- Schools services: enhancing cooperation between schools across Europe.
- Advocacy: how ICT and digital media contribute to transforming teaching and learning processes.

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