

Country/Countries involved

ITALY

Code name of the initiative

(Provide a code composed from the acronym of the country name and a number –e.g., UK1—as well as a short descriptive name – i.e. 40 to 60 characters long.)

IT2 - KIDSLINK: schools on-line

Duration of the initiative

Beginning	End
1992	

KW1: Status

(Use the keywords: **Completed, Disrupted, On-going**)

On-going

KW2: Public or private push / Type of initiator -- Participation in the budget?

(**Column 2:** Use the word **Public** or **Private** to describe the initiator and the follower in the initiative. If the need arises add more rows –Follower 1, Follower 2 etc. Next to it describe the type of organization undertaking the initiative. For **Public Push** use the following keywords: **Government agency, Local authority, Ministry, Telecom, Broadcaster**. For **Private Push** use the following keywords: **Software provider, Hardware provider, Netware provider, Telecom provider, Content provider, Expert consultant, Broadcasters/producer, R&D Organization**. If private specify if **profit** or **non-profit**. Example: *Private-R&D Organization-Non Profit*)

(**Column 3:** Place the approximate amount of ECUs contributed by each partner. If the partner has contributed labour try to calculate the equivalent in ECUs. If this is impossible give a short verbal description.)

	Type	Participation in the budget (,000 ECUs)
Initiator	Private-Other (teachers) - Non profit	Volunteer work of several teachers. difficult to estimate
Follower 1	Private-Software and hardware provider (ARCI Computer Club) - Non profit	supply of hardware and software already in use (cost estimated around 10,000 ECU's)
Follower 2	Public - Local Authority (Municipality)	1,500 ECU's per year
Follower 3	Public - Government Agency- Research (CNR) -	Volunteer work of two technicians.
Follower 4	Public - Local authority (Region)	10,000 ECU's (until now)
Follower 5	Public - Schools	Volunteer work

KW3: The target of the initiative (The supply function .vs. The diffusion function) and the expected outcomes

(**Column 2:** Indicate which function is targeted by the activity. If it is Supply that is affected describe the activity produced by the PPI through one of the following keywords: **Funding, Improving Organization/Management/Linkages Diffusing market information & technology, Training the labour force, Improving access to content.** If Diffusion/Demand, describe the activity using one of the following keywords: **Raising Awareness&Interest, Qualifying EMMS, Consulting, Training, Embedding technologies.** –You may want to refer to the discussion on those concepts included in SYN1_97.DOC and SYN3_97.DOC.

Column 3: In terms of expected outputs use the following keywords: **Software usage, Software development, Hardware usage/purchase, Netware usage/purchase, Telecoms services usage/purchase, Content consumption, Content development, Skills development, Consultancy & Research services, Brand awareness and loyalty.**

Column 4: In terms of the type of audience targeted by the initiative use the following keywords: If Supply then: **Hardware providers, Software providers, Netware providers, Content providers.** If Diffusion/Demand then: **Primary education institutions, Secondary education institutions, Universities, Vocational training institutions, Regulators & Policy makers, Enterprises, Representative groups, Families)**

	Type of activity	Expected Output	Type of audience
Supply	Training the labour force	Hardware/ Software/	Content providers
	Improving access to contents	Netware usage	
Diffusion/ Demand	Raising awareness & interest	Hardware/ Software/	Primary and secondary education institutions Representative groups
	Embedding technologies	Netware usage	

KW4: Locus of origination

(Position the initiative in one of the following cells putting a +)

	Private push/Public resistance	Private push/Public response	Public push/Private resistance	Public push/Private response
National				
Regional				
Local		+		

Summary description of the case

(Provide a short description of the cases. Stress the critical facts as well as the important issues highlighted by the particular PPI and the «lessons learned» from them. Try to capture the essence of the particular case in a «nutshell»)

KIDSLINK was born in 1992 as an initiative promoted by a group of teachers wishing to understand the impact of new technologies on didactic, supported by a research entity CNR (National Research Council) - Istituto di Radioastronomia (Institute of Radioastronomy), a cultural association ARCI Computer Club, and the Department of Educational Policies of the Municipality of Bologna.

It is involving: 24 primary schools (for a total of 11 teachers); 70 lower secondary schools (54 teachers), 42 upper secondary schools (51 teachers); 42 different institutions and 8 members of the ARCI Computer Association. The project involves schools based in the city but also schools from other regions. Moreover the aim of the project is to have exchanges with foreign schools.

It is a "poor" (modestly funded) project which has been able to develop and increase the underlying telematic network and learning technology applications with a really limited amount of financial resources. It builds exclusively on volunteer work and existing technological infrastructures.

The project proposes a telematic collaboration and exchanges among schools, teachers and students at national and international level. It has permitted the development of new didactic activities such as: - mailing exchange between students of different countries, in different languages (English, German, French, Latin), about personal interests, friends, direct mailing among students; message exchanges among students inside the context of projects coordinated by the teachers, intended as a collaboration among classes from different countries; researches and surveys, at national and international level, conducted through the exchange of data and programme analysis (about use of free time of youths in different countries, analysis of pollution in waters and air, study of animals' behaviour, gastronomic curiosities); scholar newspapers; development of ipertexts; games on writing with competitions between Italian and French schools; books' reviews written by primary and lower secondary school students; conventions about didactic themes, telematic conventions; training courses for teachers.

Linked with the development of the project is the creation of a software to facilitate the use of the Internet services and the electronic mail to teachers and pupils.

The scope

(Discuss the goals of the initiative, the areas of intended impact. Do make use of the frameworks we have developed – if you find them useful -- and the list of nine recommendations listed at Annex 12 of the report of the Task Force/Appendix 6 here. What was the broader context within which the initiative was developed? How the particular PPI fitted within the broader context? What have been the quantitative objectives of the PPI?)

The desire of experimenting the impact of telematics and new technology on didactic by a group of teachers brought about the development of KIDSLINK, by creating a virtual dedicated room where the exchange of opinions, new experimentations and the pupils' direct involvement in technology applications applied to didactics may occur.

It consists of a volunteer work-based project, through which the "volunteer" component represented by teachers, mainly grouped in a private cultural association (ARCI Computer Club), was able to integrate in partnership with the CNR - Istituto di Radioastronomia and the Municipality of Bologna, which provided them especially with technological infrastructure and facilities, in addition to limited financial aid.

Such a positive combination has enhanced a bottom-up renewal of pedagogical methods and environments in institutions and an increase of awareness of teachers and families to benefits from educational multimedia as foreseen respectively by Recommendations 1 and 2 by the "Task Force Educational Software and Multimedia".

Looking at the broader context which this initiative originated from, KIDSLINK was no doubt encouraged by the fast development of the international telematic networks which has been taking place since early 80's and by the international project "KIDS 91" aimed at linking lower secondary schools all-over the world.

If the impact was successful as well as the prolongation of "KIDS91" in "KIDSLINK" (namely the city-wide consolidation of an international experience), this depended on the presence and work of pro-active grass-roots. But, probably, this condition as such would have not been sufficient to the survival of this initiative still ongoing and increasing, if the different partners involved had not made synergically available their own resources and equipment along with teachers' will of experiencing a new challenge.

The timetable of the initiative

(What has been the timetable of the initiative? Compare baseline and actual.)

The starting event is represented by the above mentioned project "KIDS91", the life-span of which was the school year 1990/91. After the conclusion of it in order to go on with what already experienced, KIDSLINK as such was launched in 1992 and is still in operation. Since 1994 has been activated a direct access to Internet and has been created a Web site dedicated to the project. Since 1994 the project has been connected with other national experiences, from these collaborations is born the "Rete Nicole" project for the experimentation of a package of services for supporting the didactics.

Since 1997 new didactic activities have been foreseen such as: utilisation of new technologies for stimulating disabled students (Marconi project); utilisation of tele-didactic for children who have to spend long periods in the hospital.

The resources / cost

(Describe the resources employed in the initiative. What resources were brought in by the Public sector and what resources were brought in by the private? Assign monetary values. What has been the cost of the initiative? Compare baseline with actual costs)

Because of the spontaneous origin of the project there is not available a real budget plan on the basis of which a comparison between actual and baseline costs can be done. Generally speaking we can affirm that the distribution of resources among the different actors concerned was the following.

ARCI Computer Club has offered its centre with a multi-user server, a telephone line with modem and a training place for teachers and operators, the resources dedicated to this project can be estimated around 10,000 ECU but it is to take into consideration that this was a sum already invested for the private activities of the association so no specific investment were devoted expressly to the project.

CNR - Istituto di Radioastronomia: has contributed to the implementation of the information system and is in charge of the management of the link between ARCI and a server plugged into the international network.

Municipality: has offered its 9 Computer laboratories, necessary equipment for schools and limited financial aid estimated around 5,000 ECU until now and it will continue with a sum of 1,500 ECU for paying telephone expenses.

Region: has offered 10,000 ECU for the leased line which allows the direct connection between the Kidslink server and Internet.

The group of teachers made available their own work free of charge, allowing the initiative to start and be dynamic.

The organization - structure

(Who were involved in this PPI? Who initiated it? What has been their corresponding motivations/expected rewards? What have been the formal and informal relationships among the actors?)

The proposal to join KIDS91 was first addressed to CNR - Istituto di Radioastronomia, coordinator of the CNR telematic networks in Bologna. This entity, thank to consolidated relations with the city-wide school world, was able to involve a number of teachers already experienced in the use of telematics and skilled enough to counsel their pupils in this new venture.

After the completion of this experience, teachers' high motivation was the drive to give rise to KIDSLINK through the involvement of public or private entities with a defined institutional profile and able to supply support, equipment, technological infrastructure and funds.

There's no real "institutionalised" structure of this project which was created by favourable circumstances and opportunities readily exploited by technicians and teachers who, for chance were members of the same Association, the ARCI Computer Club. Two technicians of the CNR offered their collaboration in order to create a software to facilitate the access to Internet to teachers and pupils and give their help to the technological updating; the teachers members of the ARCI Computer Club disseminated this idea of project in their schools and spend their time to the initiative. So the project was born which, up to now, has not developed a precise structure.

The organization - strategy/systems

(What has been the strategy selected by the partners to achieve their objectives? What have been the critical underlying assumptions that led to their choice of the particular strategy? What organisational, MISS/TIC, etc. systems have been instrumental in the implementation of the strategy?)

There has not been any particular strategy by the partners to achieve their objectives. to the same extent no detailed objective has been fixed since the beginning, but rather general aims. This was probably due to the spontaneous origin of the project and the conjuncture of positive factors allowing the development of the initiative itself.

We can consider it as a completely bottom-up initiative, without any particular strategy of development. It is a spontaneous way of solving problems: when a problem is proposed there's the mobilisation of human and technological resources needed for solving it.

Performance evaluation of the initiative

(Access the performance of the PPI on the basis of initial objectives –including scope and quantitative targets, budgeted costs and timetable. Ultimately evaluate the «value for money» performance of the PPI. Link the performance evaluation to the nine recommendations of the task force – Appendix 6 here)

KIDSLINK is no doubt a high performance initiative, considering the ratio between financial resources deployed, pace of growth of the network, city-wide impact and connections with other external or international initiatives. All this makes it a very cost-effective initiative, even though for the reasons explained above it is difficult to calculate precisely its "value for money". Taking into consideration the Recommendations 1 and 2 by the "Task Force Educational Software and Multimedia" we can consider that the initiative has fulfilled positive result.

In particular for R1 we must consider: the high level of awareness which the initiative has created and the correspondent rise of the demand from teachers and schools for participating in the project; the project has also created new opportunities of training for teachers, through updating courses for software usage which have been recognised by the local education office.

Regarding R2 there has been, as already said before, a high motivation and awareness of teachers stressed by the sharing of the same issues with their children attending the school; it has also been created a new local project, born in a secondary school (Belluzzi), managed by upper secondary school teachers and devoted to: - experimentation and development of telematics with the direct involvement of students.

SWOT analysis of the specific PPI

(Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the PPI. What have been the main opportunities it should take advantage of? What were the main risks that characterized the initiative?)

Strengths

Teachers' volunteer work and high degree of motivation.

Weaknesses

KIDSLINK is an initiative not integrated into the ministerial related policies, such as i.e. "The programme for the development of learning technologies in schools". In this regard, it is worth mentioning that in October 1995 (Direttiva 318 n.318 4/10/1995) the Ministry of Education launched a programme for the development of learning technologies in the Italian school system. The main goal of the programme is to support and integrate the traditional learning methods with technological tools (with special attention to Pcs, Multimedia, and Network/Collaborative Work) and to familiarise young people with new technologies and new information and communication models.

Being not related to this kind of project, so not supported by any institutional program, KIDSLINK may risk being bypassed by other similar initiatives pursued within the national policy framework.

In addition to this, the lack of basic equipment (e.g. the availability of a special telephone line) of several schools and the economic uncertainty affect negatively the development of the project.

Opportunities

The integration of KIDLINKS into the national policy framework, as the one named in the weaknesses, may provide it with new opportunities of development and an institutional visibility nation-wide.

Threats

It is to take into consideration, being a project mostly based on volunteers' work, the risk of a decreasing of motivation in long terms, which could have a negative impact on the development of some of the most important drives of the initiative.

Sources/Contact persons

(Present your sources of information —either primary or secondary—and provide sufficient detail to enable independent access to them)

- Internet address: <http://kidslink.bo.cnr.it>
- Kidslink: scuole in rete (1994).
- Contact person: Prof. Giuliano Ortolani at local education office - +39-51-232301.

Country:

ITALY

National profile/frame of reference

Three are the main aspects characterising the Italian situation in multimedia education and training, which involve delicate political problems.

Firstly we must say that Italy has a significant tradition of collaboration between public and private sectors in a number of fields, among which education and training.

Nevertheless these collaborations have suffered from serious problems starting from the eighties because of the political corruption which affected this kind of partnerships, as well as formal contracts of private companies with the Public Administration.

So if at the beginning the public-private collaborations were considered as useful and effective for the development and the innovation of the Italian learning system, they are now looked at with much greater concern in order to guarantee the maximum of transparency of aims of involved actors.

Secondly the difference of "ownership" of educational training institution has to be considered: the Italian education system is mostly public and dependent on public centralised policies. During the last years is born the debate on the reform of the Italian school system, fostered by the Ministry of Education and aimed at giving more autonomy to school institutes, has also focused on new relationship between the so called private schools (mainly managed by religious institutions) and the Ministry of Education.

In the vocational training area, on the contrary, private centres are by far more important than publicly owned centres. Nevertheless private training bodies have a peculiarity: the most part of them belong to social, cultural or religious associations and trade unions, and most of their funding comes from public institutions such as the Regional Governments.

The third element to be considered is that when "private" is mentioned in public-private partnership, seldom it really means individual companies that are not public-owned (RAI, Telecom Italia, etc.): it usually refers to industrial associations, teachers associations, cultural associations.

With such a peculiar situation it is difficult to present the Italian profile, mostly because of the public policies still in progress, which are dividing the political scene on basic principles. According to this we have chosen the two most representative cases in the field in terms of "top-down" vs. "bottom-up" approach.

SWOT – Strengths

(Attempt some generalizations of the strengths of PPIs in this country)

- Well accepted principle of PPI
- Good development and positive trends of volunteer organisations
- Substantial political role of social partners

SWOT – Weaknesses

(Attempt some generalizations of the weaknesses of PPIs in this country)

- Dominance of public funding in most PPI
- "Discontinuity" of national government initiative on the issue
- Political instability and largely diffused bureaucratic attitudes in the P.A.
- Much of enterprise investment in this area in Italy comes from public enterprises

SWOT – Opportunities

(Attempt some generalizations of the opportunities facing PPIs in this country)

- European priorities and programmes are mobilising many actors
- Cultural heritage as a key resource for MM industry

SWOT – Threats/Risks

(Attempt some generalizations of the threats/risks facing PPIs in this country)

- "Committee syndrome" may kill innovative ideas
- Unawareness of market dynamics may bring PPI to develop negative perturbation of spontaneous market dynamics

Key success factors and other success contingencies

(Describe what you perceive as being the main key success factors of PPIs in this country. What are the appropriate strategies and under what contingencies should each strategy be preferred?)

Existence of long-term strategy by PA officers, availability to share investment and responsibility by private actors. Many bottom-up initiatives are extremely responsive to priorities defined at European level

Recommendations for policy actions by the EEC

(in which ways the EEC could support PPIs in the particular country for the overall good of the development of the EMMS industry and usage?)

It is important to consider the variety and richness of bottom-up initiatives in the country: keeping the central public administration as the only reference point to define, implement and assess European ODL and MM policies in Italy may bring to serious risks.

APPENDIX 4: Summarizing - all inclusive table

Country	Name of the initiative Code name & Descriptive name	Budget (,000 ECU)	Impact by area									Overall performance of the PPI	Overall complexity/risk of the PPI			
			Developing the use of multimedia in educational systems			Improving the quality of products and services			Strengthening the European industry							
			R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9					
IT	IT 1 Emilia Romagna ODL production and distribution system	5 MECU's (for 10 years)	H	M	M										5	2
IT	IT 2 KIDSLINK	n.a.	H	M											6	4

Instructions:

- Country:** Use the acronyms of the country
- PPI code:** Use the code you have assigned to the particular case
- Budget:** Set a number, the estimated budget of the PPI initiative in ECUs
- Impact by area:** Assess the impact of the PPI on each of the nine recommendation areas see Appendix 6) (For a list of the nine recommendation areas see Appendix 6)
- Overall performance of the PPI:** Assess the overall performance of the PPI given its role and objectives with a number from 1 meaning very low to 6 meaning very high. You may add some comments as seen fit.
- Overall complexity/risk of the PPI:** Assess the overall complexity/risk of the PPI given its role and objectives with a number from 1 meaning very low to 6 meaning very high. You may add some comments as seen fit. Factors increasing the risk of the project may be the cultural diversity among the actors, the inherent complexity of the tasks, the inadequate resourcing of the project team etc.