The power of projection

Boosting engagement and collaboration in classrooms

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Introduction

Technology has revolutionised education. Today's learners have access to everything from online learning platforms to virtual lessons. This is undoubtedly positive.

However, there are times when the wrong technology can cause challenges. For example, when flatscreen TVs in classrooms aren't big enough for everyone to see or ensure engagement. Or when laptops and individual screens hamper collaboration.

To gain a better understanding of how often these challenges arise and how they can be addressed, Epson commissioned research among over 4,000 teachers across Europe (see methodology for full details).

Key findings

84% believe engagement and collaboration in the classroom are hindered by poor technology at least some of the time

77% say students experience screen visibility issues with standard flatscreen TVs in lessons

39% of teachers say children at the back of the class, and 35% say children at the side of the class, struggle to see as well as those at the front and middle

As a result, **40%** say they always or often 'shuffle' students into different seats when learners might not be able to see a standard flatscreen TV in lessons

Most teachers think interactive projectors can support teaching and learning, with **40%** saying they ensure every student in a room can see materials and lessons

The importance of engagement and collaboration

Student engagement is one of the most important factors in teaching. Because engaged students care about the subject, feel motivated or excited and take ownership of their own learning[1].

Collaboration is vital too. In fact, research shows educational experiences that are active, social, contextual, engaging and student-owned lead to deeper learning[2].

However, 84% of teachers believe these factors are hindered by poor technology at least some of the time. Over a third (34%) say it happens often or very often. Considering there are 93.3 million pupils and students enrolled in the EU[3], that could have a significant impact. This begs the question: what technology is causing the issue?

Visibility challenges with flatscreens

When it comes to engagement, many schools rely on flatscreen TV displays in classrooms to present learning materials. While they certainly serve a purpose, teachers are reporting issues that impact a student's ability to engage fully due to poor visibility.

Visibility issues like these are critical because, in earlier studies, 76% of teachers have said that having a poor view of the screen was linked to pupils' disengagement[4]. Because of these challenges, 46% of teachers report they always or often need to 'shuffle' students into different seats when learners might not be able to see a standard flatscreen TV in lessons. In fact, 84% of teachers say they at least sometimes have to adjust seating plans to ensure no one child always has the 'poor view'.

According to teachers:

77%
say students experience screen visibility issues with flatscreen TVs

39%
say children at the back of the class struggle to see as well as those at the front

33%
are concerned about reflection or glare on flatscreens

32%
believe flatscreen TVs are too small for the size of the classroom

Laptops can distract

However, it's not just flatscreen TVs that could be causing issues. The research also shows 56% of teachers agree that a focus on laptops or tablets in the classroom can be a distraction.

When asked to reflect on the impact laptops or tablets can have, 86% of teachers noted one or more challenges:

25%
say a reduction in engagement

28%
say reduced collaboration

33%
say they reduce in-class discussion

21%
say they reduce the ability of a teacher to lead a lesson effectively

Interactive projectors – a solution?

If flatscreen TVs and laptops are creating visibility and engagement challenges in classrooms, what might be a more suitable alternative? Interactive projectors are one promising solution, offering scalable, larger displays that ensure all students can view materials clearly, regardless of where they sit.

When asked how technologies such as interactive projectors can support teaching and learning, most teachers picked a positive outcome:

40%
say they ensure every student in a room can see materials and lessons

38%
say they allow more hands-on learning and engagement

34%
say they support group learning

30%
say they create a focus for all students in a class

This suggests large-scale displays can help children learn effectively and engage in lessons.
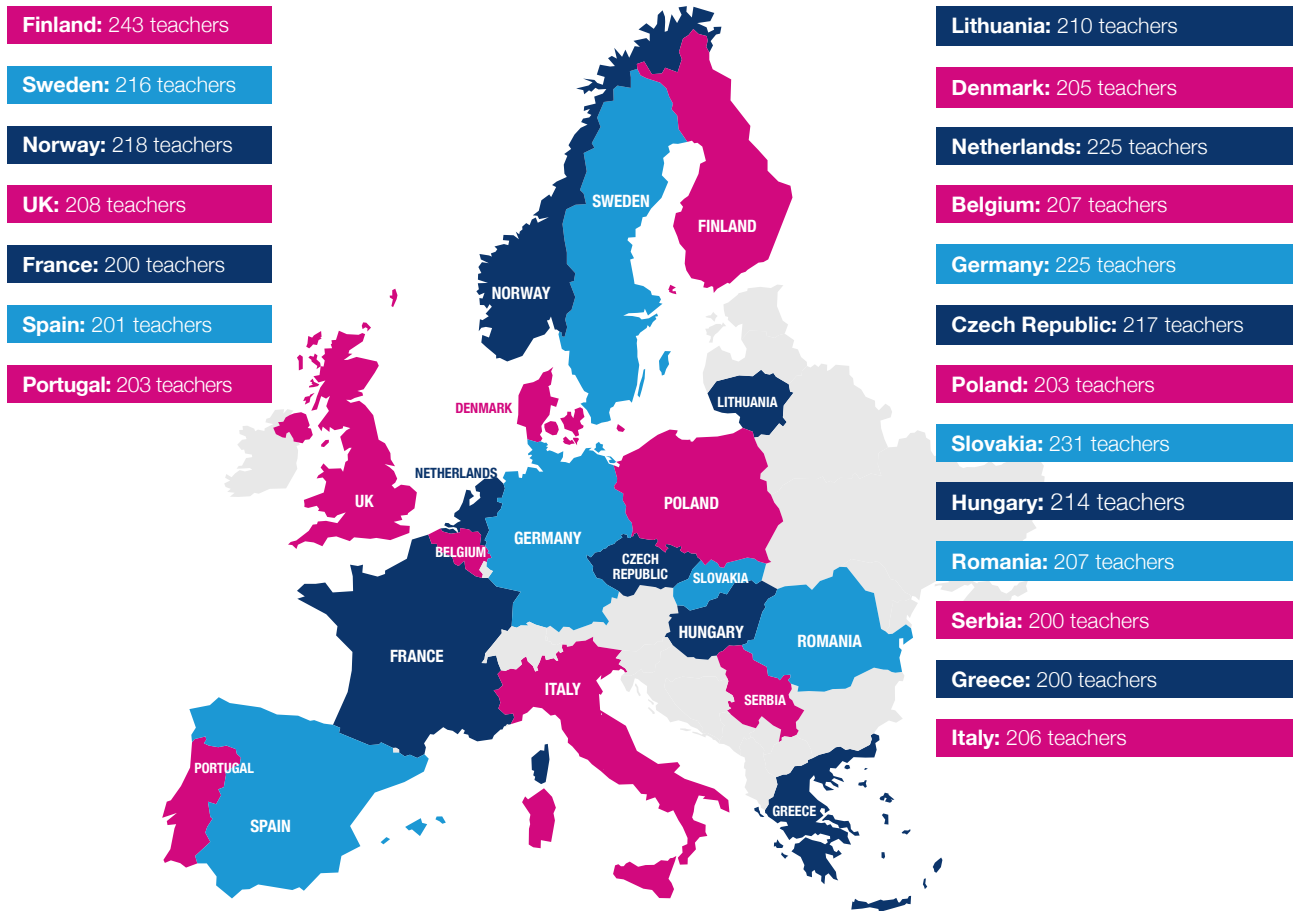
The right technology for the job

It's clear that engagement and collaboration are important elements of teaching and learning. Yet the research shows poor technology stands in the way. Flatscreen TVs can be hard to see and laptops are a distraction, according to teachers. That's why it's important to consider more suitable options such as interactive projectors where necessary.

By doing so, it's possible to get the balance right for learners, giving them the right tools for the job, when and where they need them. This isn't a matter of getting rid of one technology in favour of another. It's a question of picking the right one at the right time. Because technology has revolutionised education and Epson's keen to ensure it continues to do so.
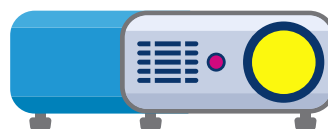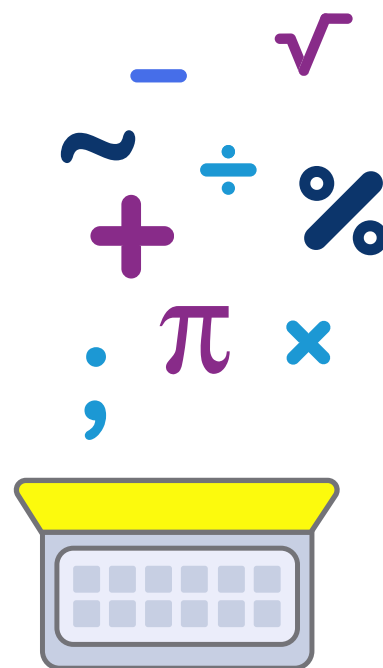
Methodology

Epson commissioned the research, with fieldwork conducted via Focaldata's in-house platform, with API integration to an online panel network. In total, 4,239 teachers (of children aged 8-16) were surveyed across 20 European countries (shown below), between August and September 2024.

Finland: 243 teachers

Sweden: 216 teachers

Norway: 218 teachers

UK: 208 teachers

France: 200 teachers

Spain: 201 teachers

Portugal: 203 teachers

Lithuania: 210 teachers

Denmark: 205 teachers

Netherlands: 225 teachers

Belgium: 207 teachers

Germany: 225 teachers

Czech Republic: 217 teachers

Poland: 203 teachers

Slovakia: 231 teachers

Hungary: 214 teachers

Romania: 207 teachers

Serbia: 200 teachers

Greece: 200 teachers

Italy: 206 teachers

Respondents provided insights into the perceived benefits and drawbacks of digital tools in education, as well as their preferences for balancing technology with traditional learning materials.

Further information

To learn more about Epson's education solutions, please visit
https://www.epson.eu/en_EU/verticals/business-solutions-for-education

1. University of Colorado, Facilitating and assessing student engagement in the classroom
2. Cornell University, Collaborative learning
3. Eurostat, 93.3 million pupils and students enrolled in the EU
4. Epson, 'Cheap seats' in UK classrooms

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