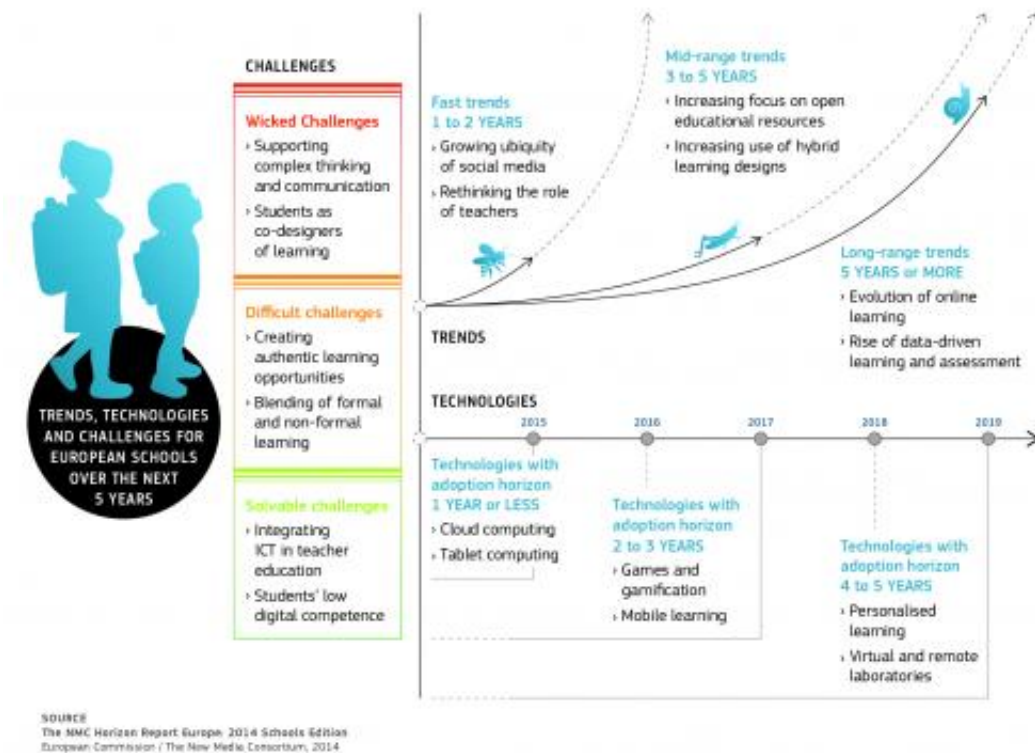# Horizon Report urges schools to tackle 'wicked' digital skills challenge

October 2 2014

This image shows trends, technologies and challenges for European schools over the next 5 years. Credit: European Union, 2014

Low digital skills and competences among school pupils and the need to integrate effective use of information and communication technologies into teacher training are among the most pressing challenges faced by European school education today, according to a report published by the European Commission and the New Media Consortium, a US-based not-for-profit body bringing together experts in education technology. The first-ever Horizon Report Europe: 2014 Schools edition outlines the trends and technological developments that are likely to have an impact on education over the next five years.

It grades the challenges faced by European schools in three categories: 'Solvable', 'Difficult' and 'Wicked'.

The report echoes the objectives of the Commission's Opening up Education initiative and is based on input from more than 50 experts from 22 European countries, the Commission's Joint Research Centre, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). It says action is urgently needed to promote innovation in the classroom to take advantage of increased use of social media, open educational resources and the rise of data-driven learning and assessment.

"This report provides valuable insights and guidance for policy-makers and school leaders about the need to embrace digital and open resources. Europe needs to raise its game if we are to ensure our young generation are prepared for their future careers," said Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth. "Improved digital skills and access to digital and open resources are crucial, not just for better teaching, but also for creating flexible education models that make life-long learning easier."

The report states that integrating ICT in teacher education and

addressing students' low digital competence are solvable challenges. Creating 'authentic' learning opportunities, based on real-life experience, and blending formal and non-formal education, will be more difficult to implement in the short-term. The toughest, 'wicked' challenges include the need to improve the teaching of complex thinking and ensuring students are 'co-designers' of learning.

The panel predicts that cloud and tablet computing will be commonplace in many European schools within a year, while learning through computer games and a combination of physical and virtual environments will be an integral part of teaching in the next two to three years. The experts suggest that it may take up to five years to develop remote and virtual laboratories and to develop strategies that encourage students to take an active role in co-designing their learning.

More information: ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publicatio … 2014-schools-edition

Provided by European Commission Joint Research Centre

Citation: Horizon Report urges schools to tackle 'wicked' digital skills challenge (2014, October 2) retrieved 2 May 2024 from
https://phys.org/news/2014-10-horizon-urges-schools-tackle-wicked.html