

*Платформа 6. ТЕХНОЛОГІЇ ВІРТУАЛЬНОГО ОБМІНУ ЯК ДІЄВИЙ ІНСТРУМЕНТ ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ ДОСТУПУ ДО СУЧАСНОЇ ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОЇ БІЗНЕС-ОСВІТИ У ПРОЄКТИ ERASMUS+ VEHUB4YOU*

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## **THE ROLE OF VEHUB4YOU PROJECT IN ACCELERATING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN BUSINESS EDUCATION**

### **RESEARCH POSITIONING AND RESEARCH QUESTION DEVELOPMENT**

Educational institutions at all levels are experiencing epochal environmental changes, beginning with the rise of digital technologies and the implementation of new learning spaces and methods (Fey, 2022; Petrolo et al., 2023). Several research studies have been conducted on the impact of COVID-19 on educational institutions and on possible forecasts of post- COVID-19 educational trends (Sintema, 2020). The emphasis has been on how and what changes the introduction of digital technologies to the education sector will bring over time (Bogomolova et al., 2022). The potential benefits and drawbacks for both instructors and students have been analysed, and the only conclusion that can be reached with certainty is that COVID-19 has profoundly transformed the educational sector (Arcelay et al., 2021; Khan, 2021). These changes will also affect business education. According to Schobel et al. (2022), the learning of this discipline in an online context would be more straightforward and attractive than traditional educational approaches.

The VIRTUAL YOUTH BUSINESS HUBS INTERNATIONAL NETWORK -

VEHUB4YOU project uses digital technologies to transfer business knowledge from the European Union to young people from eastern partner countries. The goal of the VEHUB4YOU project will be to enhance the quality of business training by facilitating access to contemporary European education. This will be accomplished both at the organisational level, through the promotion of entrepreneurial learning, and at the level of the individual project participants through acquiring skills to plan a business, market products, and obtain the resources necessary to start a business. The ultimate objective will be to update the educational programmes of schools, colleges, and universities following the latest trends in virtual learning, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of virtual education.

This literature review is based on three research questions:

RQ1: How does the literature address the development of soft skills (the goal of the VEHUB4YOU project) to boost youth employment?

RQ2: How can the different types of virtual exchanges be promoted and managed (objective of the VEHUB4YOU project), to allow younger people to benefit from intercultural and international experiences?

RQ3: What are the main gaps in research and the potential directions to advance this domain of literature?

### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

In response to the question regarding advanced research, this review employs thematic analysis to identify the major issues examined in previous studies and their potential to support the implementation of the VEHUB4YOU project's objectives. Web of Science and Scopus by Clarivate Analytics are the most frequently used databases for literature reviews. According to Bargoni et al. (2023), the authors gathered data from the Scopus database due to its extensive coverage within the business management domain.

First, the authors advanced a keyword search on papers' title, abstract and keywords recurring to the following search string: ( TITLE-ABS-KEY ( "digital technolog\*" ) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ( "digital transformation" ) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ( "digitalisation" ) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ( "business education " ) ). Fifty-eight documents were identified, which has been further reduced by language. As a result, 56 articles were assessed for eligibility. Title, abstract, and keywords were analysed until the authors manually selected 53 papers for review.

### **PRELIMINARY FINDINGS**

Through the identification of two main thematic areas, our SLR aims to promote the activities that form the basis of the VEHUB4YOU project, namely to promote intercultural dialogue and the development of soft skills among the various stakeholders and, as a result, to provide students with a high-quality international, intercultural, formal, and non-formal education in an online setting. The first cluster emphasises the significance of developing soft skills to increase youth employment in virtual exchange through effective case study methodology (García et al., 2021; Tham et al., 2023). The second cluster focuses on promoting and managing various types of virtual exchanges that will enable an increasing number of young people to benefit from intercultural and global experiences. Overcoming physical limitations, the various virtual educational activities promote theoretical and

experiential learning and intercultural exchanges, enhancing students' intercultural competencies (Zwerg-Villegas & Martnez-Daz, 2016; O'Connor et al., 2021). Based on Adinolfi and Giancotti (2021), and Ngoasong et al. (2021), students become co-producers of teaching sessions due to the increased flexibility of educational activities and expanded opportunities for interactive learning.

#### DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study will provide valuable information to researchers and professionals interested in the development of the VEHUB4YOU project, as well as to the promotion of various types of virtual exchange and the development of soft skills within the educational sector. By providing an overview of existing knowledge, this review contributes to a deeper understanding of the crucial virtual exchange mechanisms for access to modern European education. In addition, it will identify potential research avenues and practical implications for schools, colleges, and universities seeking to improve virtual education initiatives.

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