



Building Capacity for Learning Analytics

Evaluation Report: Insights from the First Project Multiplier Event in Dublin

QUALAS Project

December 2025



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

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Evaluation Report: Insights from the First Project Multiplier Event in Dublin

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PURPOSE

On 17 October, the first Multiplier Event of the project took place at Dublin City University (DCU), where the initial results of the project's research activities were presented. The purpose of the questionnaire administered after the event was to gather participants' views and feedback on both the Multiplier Event and the project outcomes presented.

The event included presentations on the following topics:

- an overview of the Erasmus+ QUALAS project;
- the results of the literature review on the use of Learning Analytics for quality assurance in secondary schools (Work Package 2);
- the findings from case studies conducted in 20 European secondary schools, with five schools participating in each partner country.

The questionnaire was conducted as part of Work Package 5 ("Quality Assurance and Evaluation") of the project and was coordinated by INVALSI, the Italian National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education and Training System.

METHOD

Participants

The event was conducted in a hybrid format, with both in-person and online participation through the Zoom platform. Participants registered through Google Forms. During the registration process, participants were asked to provide an email address, which was subsequently used to administer the survey after the event. A total of approximately 190 individuals attended the event, including researchers, school leaders, teachers, and university students. Of these, 30 participants attended in person, 160 joined the event online. The questionnaire was completed by 70 participants (37%).

Questionnaire

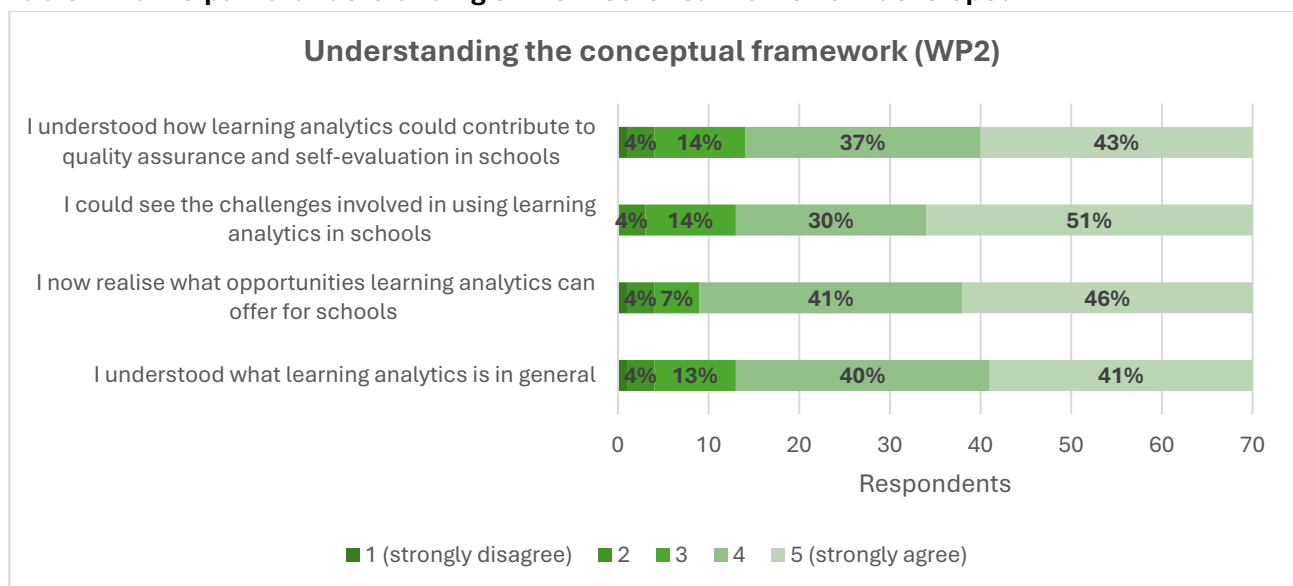
The questionnaire consisted of 9 items, for which participants expressed their agreement or disagreement on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The questionnaire was structured as follows:

- 4 items related to the meaning of Learning Analytics and their use in schools for quality assurance and self-evaluation purposes;
- 3 items addressing the opportunities and challenges arising from the use of Learning Analytics in the schools involved in the case studies;
- 2 personal items regarding what participants learned during the event and their individual interest in further exploring Learning Analytics in the future;
- 1 final open-ended question aimed at collecting suggestions and comments about the content presented.

RESULTS

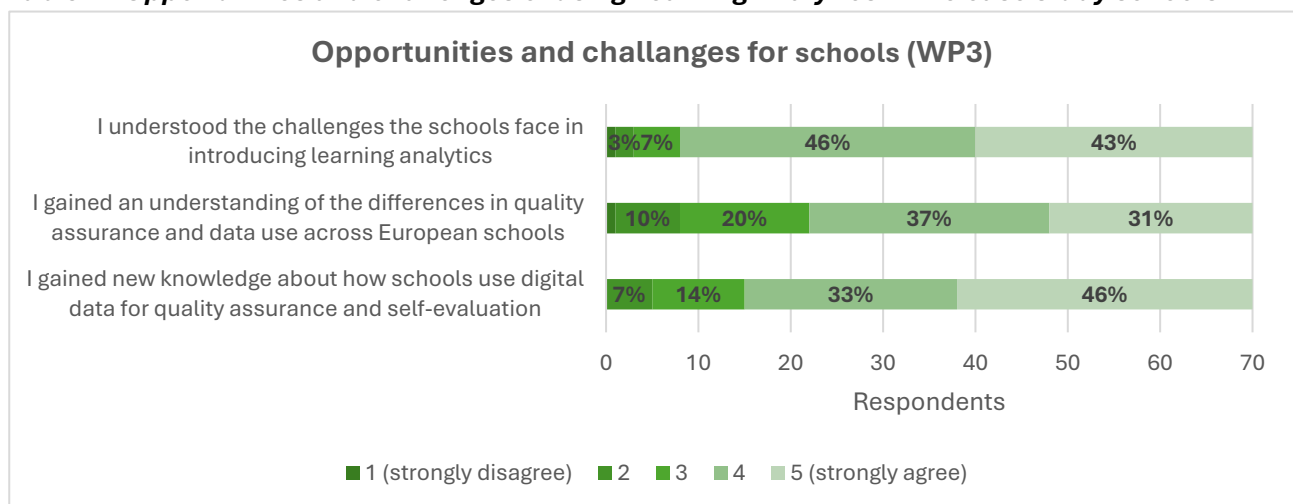
Participants' understanding of the theoretical framework developed in WP2. Four items of the questionnaire investigated the meaning attributed to Learning Analytics (LA) and participants' understanding of the theoretical framework developed in WP2 and presented during the event. With regard to this section of the questionnaire (Table 1), most of participants (on average 82% of respondents) reported a high level of agreement, assigning scores of 4 or 5 to each item. Specifically, respondents stated that *they understood what Learning Analytics are in general* (81%), *were aware of the opportunities that the use of LA can offer to schools* (87%), *were able to identify the potential challenges associated with the use of LA* (81%), and *understood the role that LA can play in school self-evaluation and quality assurance processes* (80%). The percentage of respondents expressing disagreement (scores of 1 or 2) was limited, ranging from 4% to 14%, while only a small percentage of participants (4–5%) provided a neutral response, assigning a score of 3 to the items. Overall, the results indicate that participants developed a good understanding of Learning Analytics and their use in schools for self-evaluation, recognizing both the opportunities and challenges associated with their implementation and gaining awareness of the role that LA can play in self-evaluation and quality assurance processes.

Table1 - Participants' understanding of the theoretical framework developed in WP2



Opportunities and challenges of using Learning Analytics in the case study schools. Three questionnaire items were designed to examine the opportunities and challenges associated with the use of Learning Analytics (LA) in the schools involved in the case studies (Table 2). The results show a high level of agreement among participants regarding *the acquisition of new knowledge and the understanding of how digital data are used in school contexts*. In particular, 79% of respondents assigned a score of 4 or 5 to the item related to their understanding of how schools use digital data in self-evaluation and quality assurance processes. Only a minority reported not having gained new knowledge (14%, scores of 1 or 2), while a small percentage expressed a neutral position (7%, score of 3). An even higher level of agreement was found in relation to *the understanding of the challenges linked to the introduction of Learning Analytics in schools*: 89% of participants assigned a score of 4 or 5 to this item. Neutral responses accounted for 7% (score of 3), while negative evaluations were marginal (4.3%, scores of 1 or 2). By contrast, the level of agreement was lower when the analysis focused on comparing data use and quality assurance processes across the four countries involved. In this case, about 70% of participants reported that they understood the differences between the national contexts (scores of 4 or 5), while a significant percentage of respondents expressed a neutral (20%) or negative evaluation (11.4%, scores of 1 or 2). Overall, the data indicate that participants developed a good understanding of the opportunities and challenges associated with the use of Learning Analytics in the schools involved in the case studies, while also highlighting the need for further exploration of the differences between national contexts to fully grasp their practical implications. This aspect is discussed more extensively in the Cross Cases report, which is forthcoming.

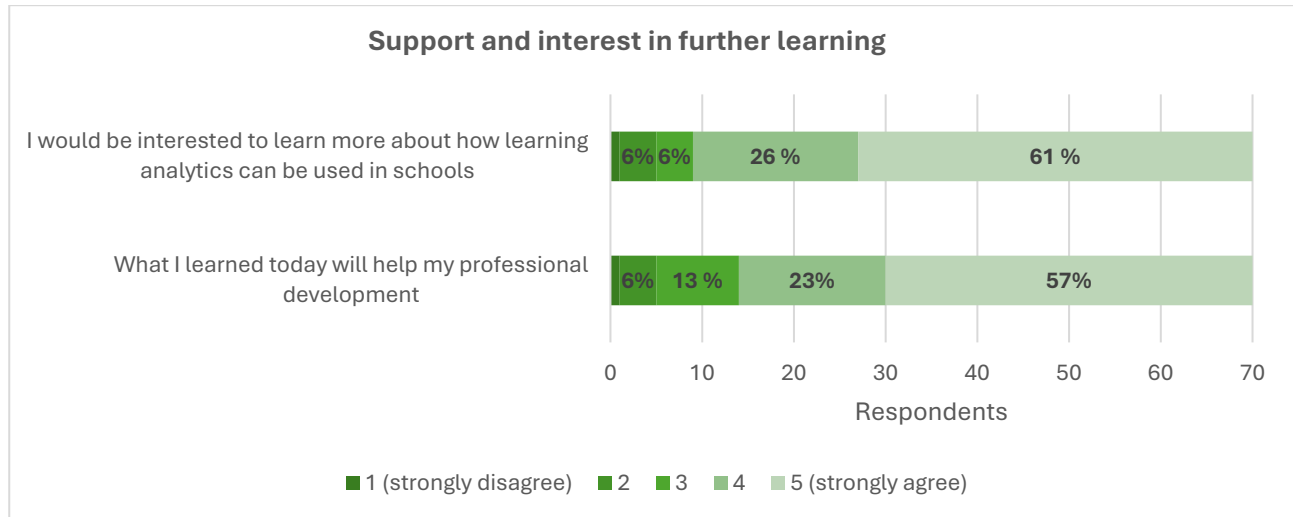
Table 2 - Opportunities and challenges of using Learning Analytics in the case study schools.



Perceived relevance for professional development and interest in further learning. The questionnaire included two items aimed at exploring participants' perceptions of the relevance of the event for their professional development and their interest in further learning about the use of Learning Analytics in school contexts. The results indicate a very positive evaluation. Specifically, 80% of participants assigned high scores (4 or 5) to the usefulness of the content for their professional practice. Similarly, 87% expressed an interest in further learning about

the use of Learning Analytics (LA) in school settings. Levels of disagreement (scores of 1 or 2) were low and limited, accounting for 7% for both items. Overall, the findings suggest that the event was perceived as highly relevant for participants' professional development and stimulated interest in further learning about the use of Learning Analytics in school contexts.

Table 3 – Perceived relevance for professional development and interest in further learning.



Participants' feedback on the content presented at the event. An open-ended question was included in the questionnaire to collect participants' opinions on the content presented during the event. A total of 67% of respondents (N = 47) provided feedback by answering this question. The responses were analysed and classified into three main categories: *expressions of appreciation, comments, and suggestions* (Table 4).

The majority of participants (41 respondents, 58%) expressed appreciation for both the project and the event, describing the topic as “*interesting*”, “*useful*”, and “*informative*”, and the event itself as “*stimulating*”, “*engaging*”, and “*eye-opening*”.

Five respondents (7%) provided more detailed comments, including one critical remark. In particular, one participant stated that “*the project misunderstands what Learning Analytics is. The focus seems to be more on academic analytics or assessment analytics, rather than Learning Analytics.... the event spoke about LA applications in theory, less in practice*” (ID_46). Another participant expressed concerns regarding “*the applicability of LA in Learning environments. I hope that this topic will be further explored in developing countries, where analytics remains an unfamiliar subject for most high school teachers and students*” (ID_56). Finally, one participant suggested that initiatives and events of this kind should be organised on a more regular basis.

Overall, the feedback indicates a predominantly appreciative evaluation of the event, accompanied by observations that provide useful insights for improving future initiatives, particularly with regard to clarifying the conceptual framework of Learning Analytics and strengthening its practical dimension.

Table 4 – Participants’ feedback on the content presented at the event.

