

The Initiative Updated (Nov 2010)



In September 2009 the students of the 6th grade of the 2nd primary school in Florina and those of the 3rd grade of the junior high school of Sminthi, in region of Xanthi began using XO-1 laptops on a daily basis in their classrooms. Since then 500 more XO-1 laptops were distributed to a further 26 schools and kinder-gardens throughout Greece at various points in the 2009/10 academic.

Towards the second half of that academic year we began regularly visiting some of the schools using the XO-1's and have continued to do so in the current academic year as well. From our observations as well as conversations with the various teachers and students using the XO-1's we have so far come across the following patterns of XO use:

1. In some schools the students have been **visiting periodically some sugar activities** (ex. games, writer, chat, camera) few hours per week. *Schools involved: Vathis, Kerameikos, Pallini, Nea Ionia, Evosmos, Alexandraia, Pyrgos, Ano Kastritsi, Rhodes, Mammari, St Germanos, Ioannina.*
2. Students **using systematically** with their teachers, and privately (ex. home), **most of the sugar activities or focusing on certain platforms** that allow them to produce new activities, games and other projects (these platforms are mainly scratch <http://scratch.mit.edu/> and turtle http://wiki.sugarlabs.org/go/Activities/Turtle_Art). *Schools involved: Acharnes, Kallithea, Munting Nayon, Thessaloniki, Loutro, Florina, Meliti.*
3. Students **following part of the school curriculum** through the use of specific sugar activities. In the following schools teachers are preparing activities following all or a part of the school curriculum and try to follow them through the use of the XOs. *Schools involved: Corfu, Kalyvia, Argos, Voula, Patras, Sminthi.*

Various teachers have also explored using the **XO's in environments outside the traditional school setting**. Weekly workshops open to all children in community social centres take place in Acharnes at the Botaniko social centre in Petroupoli. The XO's of Kerameikos are also used for workshops at Migrants Centre in Exarchia. The XO's of Kelli have also served as an educational example in a teachers training initiative. Finally, the NGO Arsis is organising weekly activities for children, unaccompanied foreign minors, that are already live in Arsis shelters.

In a few schools where other teachers have expressed interest in using the XO's, they have been, or will be, shared amongst different classrooms during various days of the week. *Schools involved: Vathis, Ioannina.*

What we've been doing

We have been reaching out for further funding to help us acquire more OLPC's, and participating in various educational or conferences (ex. EL/LAK (FOSS) 2010 Conference http://conf.ellak.gr/2010/?page_id=21, University of Aegean, Students laptops in Education <http://my.aegean.gr/web/ftopic-1534.html>). Furthermore, towards the end of the last academic year and continuing throughout the current one we have been holding regular workshops in the various schools using the XO-1's.

These have been an opportunity to both get feedback from students and teachers on their XO use, as well as opportunities to explore all together certain applications in more depth. We have been exploring the use of Scratch as a platform for children to make their own interactive stories and computer games as well using Picoboards (<http://www.picocricket.com/picoboard.html>) for students to make scratch projects that can sense and respond to the outside environment.

Our goals till the end of the year

Secure enough funding in order to set up 2 groups of people and activities:

1. One visiting schools throughout Greece, on a weekly basis, and holding workshops based on Sugar and the various Sugar applications. This is an activity that already takes place in various occasions and need to be further supported
2. Another with mainly programming skills to work on better localisation of Sugar and Sugar activities (spell checking facilities all around the platform, sugar-wide dictionary, new pedagogical activities), using sensors and based on existing platforms and repackaging wikipedia, in order to include various Balkan language resources with further material (ex. index of Internet archive and Gutenberg project).

For more info, please have a look

The initial description of our initiative (http://www.re-public.gr/en/olpc/?page_id=4)
Mapping of schools (<http://www.re-public.gr/en/olpc>)