26 European Teaching and Learning Forum
Lisbon, Portugal
12-13 February 2026

Global Collaboration: Lessons from COIL-Based Staff Development in Ukrainian Universities

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OUTLINE

COIL-Based Staff Development in the Ukrainian Context: Theoretical Framework and Challenges

Lessons Learned from the Implementation of COIL-Based Staff Development

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COIL in the Scholarly Landscape

Definition

COIL: 'a new teaching and learning paradigm that promotes the development of intercultural competence across shared multicultural learning environments' (Rubin, 2006, p.4)

Terminology

- Online intercultural exchange, Telecollaboration *(O'Dowd, 2016)*
- Globally networked learning *(Squire, 2010)*
- Internet-mediated intercultural FL education *(Belz & Thorne, 2006)*
- Teletandem *(Telles & Leone, 2016)*
- E-Tandem *(O'Rourke, 2007)*

COIL Within Professional Development Theory

Desimone's Core Conceptual Framework for Professional Development (2009)

- *Content Focus* → Digital pedagogy & intercultural communication
- *Active Learning* → Hands-on collaborative projects
- *Coherence* → Aligned with internationalization goals
- *Sustained Duration* → Multi-phase programs
- **Collective Participation** → International teams

Ukrainian Educator PD System – From Rigid to Flexible

Pre-Reformed

- ❖ Centralised

- ❖ 180hours/5 years (mandatory)

- ❖ Limited provider choice (Institutes for PD/universities)

- ❖ Rigid monitoring

Reformed (2025-26)

- ❖ Decentralised

- ❖ 120 hours/5 years

- ❖ Multiple licensed providers (universities, NGOs, online platforms)

- ❖ Educator choice and flexibility

- ❖ *Priorities*: overcoming learning losses, providing psychosocial support, and building digital competencies.

(Ministry of Education & Science of Ukraine (2025))

Professional Development Under Fire

4,000+ educational institutions damaged/destroyed (229 schools & 97 universities)

5.3 million students face educational barriers

672,000 secondary school students and 115.000 university students left the country

22,000 secondary school teachers and 4,000 university teachers left the country

(UNESCO (2025)).
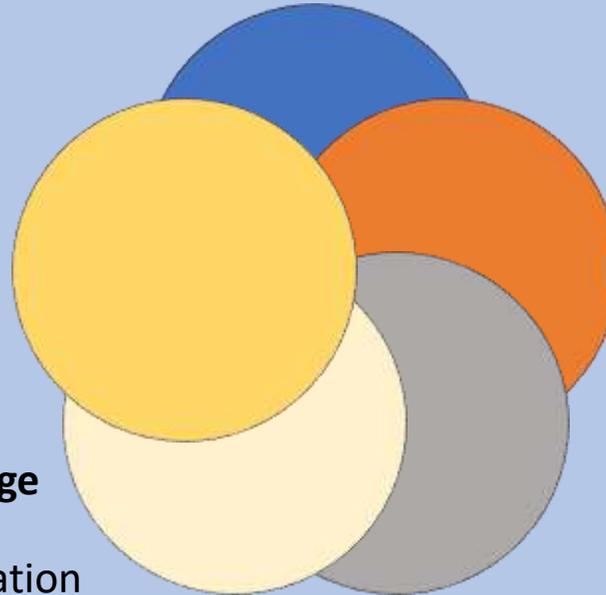
Five Critical Challenges

Crisis of Continuity
(power blackouts, air raid sirens, and displacement)

Digital Infrastructure Gap
(digital divide due to power outages)

Resource Constraints
(budgetary limitations)

Isolation Challenge
(physically and psychologically isolation from international networks)

Motivation Paradox
(commitment vs burnout)

COIL Adoption: Global vs Ukrainian Context

Global Context

- Beyond innovative classroom practice
- Focus on scaling & institutionalisation
- Development of regional/national support policies
- Systematic integration across institutions

Garces, P. & O'Dowd, R. (2020). Upscaling Virtual Exchange in University Education: Moving From Innovative Classroom Practice to Regional Governmental Policy. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 25(3).*

Ukrainian Context

Ukraine

- Relatively unknown
- Often misunderstood
- Little recognition and support
- Bottom-up initiative

The Alliance of Ukrainian Universities

Alliance of Ukrainian Universities

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

Sumy State University

Dnipro University of Technology

Kyiv School of Economics

Ukrainian Catholic University

National University of Water and Environmental Engineering

Why COIL Staff Development?

Enhances collaboration

Builds digital and intercultural skills

Addresses mobility and resource constraints

Supports internalization at home

Overview of Two Programmes

Programme 1 (2024)
Global Synergy through COIL
UKU, Lviv | 29 Jan – 02 Feb
30 speakers; 34 participants
Focus: COIL principles, pilot projects

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Programme 2 (2025)
Global Synergy through COIL 2.0
KNU, Kyiv | 28 Apr – 02 May
37 speakers; 30 participants
Focus: Course integration, sustainability

Challenges in Implementing COIL

- Limited familiarity with COIL pedagogy
- Low confidence in digital collaboration tools
- Sustaining motivation in crisis
- Technological and infrastructure barriers
- Time constraints and little institutional support

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Effective Strategies

Step-by-step hands-on workshops

Mentorship from experienced COIL educators

Pilot projects before full course integration

Follow-up sessions and online communities

Shared resources and peer support

Accomplishments

🌐 COIL Project "War and Economy" 🇺🇦🤝🇪🇸
Last Monday, 29.09.2025, a new Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) project was launched between Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv and Universitat Jaume I, Castellón, Spain.
This Monday, 06.10.2025, we held our... Більше

Staff Development & Capacity Building

- 64 faculty members trained in COIL methodologies

- 40 teaching profiles created for international partner matching

- Mentorship (international/national)

Programme Development

- 46 COIL Action Plans designed for international collaboration

- 3 COUL projects established within the Alliance

Accomplishments

Diverse Models Implemented

- Classical COIL formats across disciplines
- COUL (Collaborative Online Ukrainian Learning) - context-specific innovation
- Bilateral and multilateral university partnerships
- Mandatory, elective, and project-based course integration

Disciplines Engaged

Language learning • Programming • Finance • Economic simulation • Sustainability studies

Looking Ahead

Establishment of a National COIL Centre

Why COIL Matters in Crisis: Conclusion

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- COIL transforms teaching, learning, and collaboration.

- It addresses multiple crisis needs simultaneously.

- It requires minimal infrastructure. It costs little.

- It combats isolation by building international networks.

- It provides meaningful, engaging work that addresses the motivation issue.

- It develops exactly the digital and intercultural competencies the reformed system prioritizes.

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THANK YOU!

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