

German education ministers call for stronger media literacy – FOCUS project develops practical solutions for schools

The recent statement by the German Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) on strengthening media literacy and promoting responsible social media use highlights the urgent need for action within the education system. Schools are expected to foster digital competences while minimising the risks associated with digital technologies for learning, health and student development. But how can these goals be implemented in everyday school practice?

This is where the Erasmus+ project **FOCUS (FOstering Competence for Use of Smartphones)** comes in. The **University of Bayreuth** is one of the project partners. The project aims to develop practical solutions for reflective and educationally meaningful smartphone use in schools. The **sketchometry** research team based in Bayreuth plays an important role in this context.

sketchometry is a digital learning environment for mathematics developed at the University of Bayreuth. It enables students to intuitively create geometric constructions using gestures on mobile devices. In doing so, sketchometry demonstrates how smartphones or tablets can be meaningfully integrated into

learning processes and used as genuine learning tools. This approach is being further developed within the FOCUS project.

At the core of the FOCUS project is the development of the **RESUME** system (Recommendation system for Effective smartphone Use, Monitoring and Evaluation). While the KMK defines strategic guidelines, RESUME provides concrete support for schools in their day-to-day practice. The system enables schools to systematically analyse their smartphone use, further develop it based on data and track progress. Self-evaluations generate tailored recommendations that consider both pedagogical and organisational aspects. Responsible digital education is thus not only promoted as a goal, but also made practically implementable and measurable.

RESUME is complemented by two additional components. The **HEWRECA** approach (Health, Well-being, REsilienCe, and Attention package) provides a framework for balanced media use, focusing on students' attention, health, and resilience. Meanwhile, **SPARK** (Smartphone Pedagogy And Resources Kit) develops concrete didactic concepts for classroom use. The Bayreuth sketchometry team contributes its particular expertise in the effective use of mobile devices for mathematics education.

The FOCUS project runs from September 2025 to August 2028 and is carried out by a European consortium comprising partners from Germany, Slovenia, Italy, Romania, Croatia and Türkiye. Initial results from school-based implementation are expected from 2026 onwards. These will then be further developed, scientifically evaluated, and prepared for broader implementation in subsequent phases. The international collaboration also reflects the varying digital starting points of the participating education systems.

The KMK statement sets out important goals for digital education. The FOCUS project demonstrates how these goals can be achieved through a combination of scientific research, technological development and practical application in schools. The University of Bayreuth and the sketchometry team contribute in particular to

the development of sustainable didactic concepts that not only regulate the use of digital devices, but also make them pedagogically productive.

This makes it clear that responsible digital education requires more than guidelines; it necessitates concrete tools, tested concepts, and close integration of research and practice.

Summary

The KMK calls for stronger media literacy and the responsible use of digital media in schools. The Erasmus+ project FOCUS, with the participation of the University of Bayreuth, is developing practical solutions for implementation in schools.

At its core is the RESUME system, which enables schools to analyse, improve and manage their smartphone use in a data-driven way. This is complemented by health and attention approaches (HEWRECA), as well as teaching materials and pedagogical concepts (SPARK).

The Bayreuth sketchometry team contributes its expertise in the effective use of mobile devices for teaching. First results from the project, which runs from 2025 to 2028, are expected from 2026 onwards.

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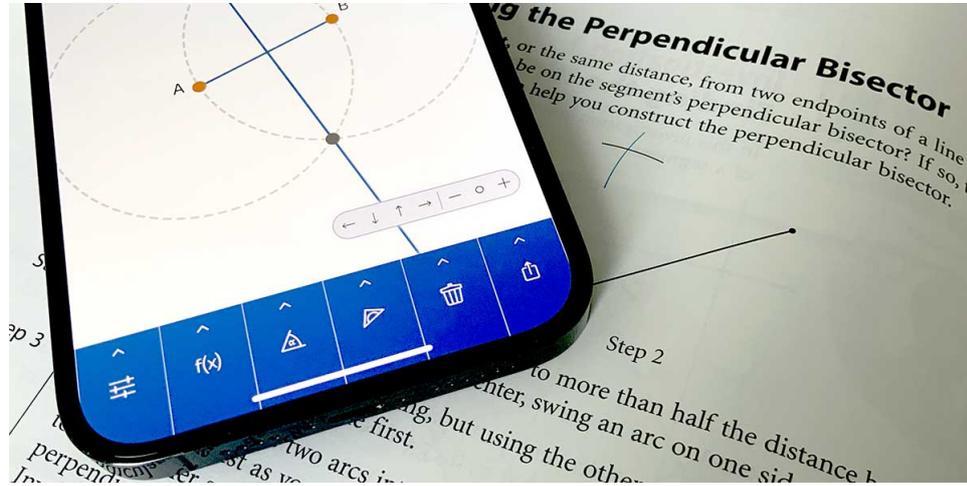
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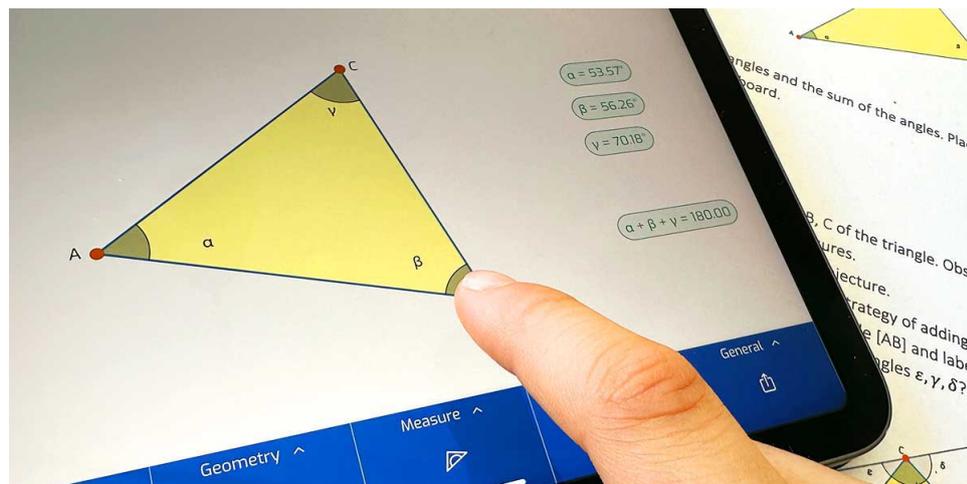
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Visuals

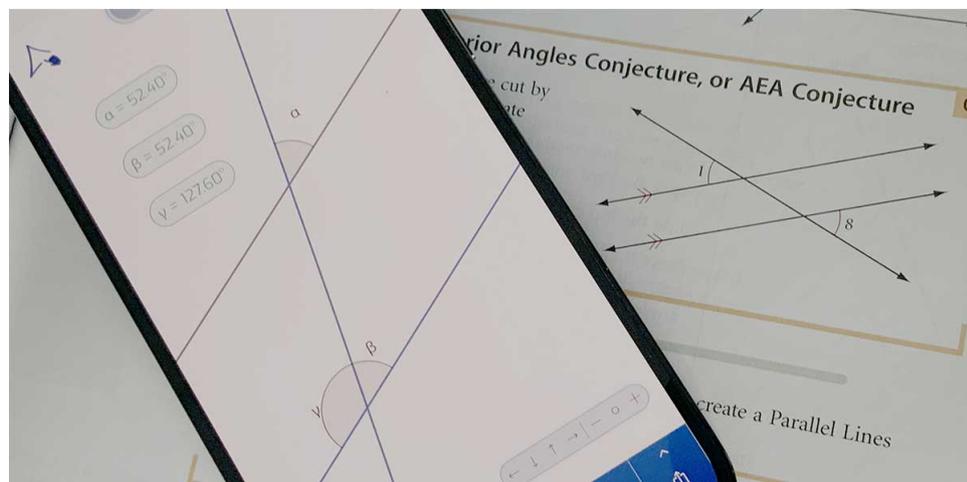
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