

European Institute of Education and Social Policy
Activity Report
November 2020 – December 2021

This report presents brief summaries of the main activities in which the EIESP has been involved between November 2020 and December 2021. Following a brief overview, EIESP's work related to the policy design and implementation of lifelong learning and wellbeing are described in Sections 2 and 3. Section 4 highlights EIESP team's outreach activities. Section 5 sets out articles published in the European Journal of Education volumes 56. Section 6 briefly summarises project development activities and areas for further strategic development of the EIESP strategic priorities.

1.0 Overview

EIESP's vision is to promote access to learning throughout life to support children and adults in developing their capacities to achieve their personal and professional potential. EIESP places a high value on partnership as well as the independence and integrity we adopt towards projects and dissemination. The EIESP values highly the multicultural dialogue and exchange that comes through working across Europe and beyond.

EIESP contributes with its focus on:

- Developing the systems, approaches, tools and practices that place the learner at the centre of the learning process;
- Creating bridges between research, policy and practice;
- Evaluating the design, implementation and outcomes of policies at the different decision-making levels;
- Contributing to decision-making processes and to the exchange of good practice among countries, institutions or sectors.

EIESP is also active in networks for innovation. The Institute is part of the Learning for Wellbeing (L4WB) network, the Board of the International School Health Network and participates in consortia for two European Framework Contracts led by Ecorys UK (for policy studies and services). EIESP has also continued its work with European SchoolNet. In France, EIESP has cooperated CNESCO at the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers (CNAM).

2.0 Lifelong Learning and wellbeing strategy

Over the last year, the Institute has been engaged in several projects and activities in strategic areas that link with lifelong learning and well-being, including:

1. Digital Inclusion (October 2020 - October 2021)
2. Recognition of the outcomes of learning periods abroad (January 2020 – January 2022)
3. Key competences for all: Policy design and implementation in European school education (January 2021 – February 2022)
4. TRANSVAL-EU (2021 – 23)
5. Assess@learning (March 2017- 2022)
6. PeerAct Social Inclusion project (2019 – 2022)
7. Consultant support for the development of blended learning courses for strengthening school- and district-level planning and teaching and learning in schools in Lao-PDR (UNICEF) Council of Europe (December 2021 – April 2022)
8. Review of the implementation of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (December 2021 – April 2022)
9. Consultant staff support to Toolkit on Schools -- strategies to promote inclusive education and tackle early school leaving (ongoing since 2016)
10. Consultant staff support to Working Group Schools and Higher Education

These activities are described in more detail below.

2.1 Digital inclusion (October 2020 – October 2021)

The overall aim of the study was to gather evidence regarding the actual and potential role of digital technologies in promoting the inclusion of all learners in compulsory education (primary, secondary and VET). Over 12 months, from October 2020 to October 2021, the study drew on the best available evidence to assess how digital technologies can promote the inclusion of all learners, and to identify key messages for learners with additional needs and/or disabilities, learners living in remote areas, migrant learners, and learners from disadvantaged socio- economic backgrounds. This required a consideration of what is happening, what should be happening, and how it could be made to happen.

Based on the research conducted as part of our study – which involved a mix of desk research (secondary data collection) covering all EU27 Member States and interviews (primary research) in selected Member States – the study developed an evidence-base offering key recommendations to institutions and policy makers on the topic.

The outputs of the study are available [here](#) (compendium with good practice case study examples to be published).

This project falls under the Policy Studies Framework contract, was done in partnership with Ecorys.

From EIESP, Janet Looney participated as a senior researcher/quality assurance advisor. Associate experts Ilkka Tuomi and Kay Livingston participated on the project advisory board.

2.2 Recognition of learning outcomes of study periods abroad (January 2020 – January 2022)

In November 2018, EU Member States approved the Council recommendation on promoting automatic mutual recognition of higher education and upper secondary education and training qualifications and the outcomes of learning periods abroad by 2025, as part of the European priority for a European Education Area by 2025, which on.

The lead partners for this project, the European Federation for Intercultural Learning, (EFIL), EIESP and CESIE. The project was supported by a Network of Experts comprised of 25 governmental and civil society representatives from 15 EU countries. The Network supported a mapping of current policies on Recognition, and provided input on a Member States Analysis, Proposal for a European Framework on Recognition of Outcomes of Learning Periods Abroad in General Upper Secondary Education.

A model training programme was also developed to support schools and teachers in assessing competences of pupils after a learning period abroad providing them with t protocols/tools to assess transversal competences. The training model was translated and adapted by potential users at national level.

The outputs of this project are expected to be published online this spring.

From EIESP, Janet Looney, Gloria Arjomand, Majella O'Shea and Jerzy Wisniewski supported this project

2.3 Key competences for all: Policy design and implementation in European school education (2021 – 22)

This study aimed to gather evidence on how policy reform for broad competence development in school education, and better achievement of basic skills, can be effectively designed and implemented in the European Union (EU).

As part of the study, a Peer Learning Group was organised, and included Ministry- and stakeholder representatives of five European countries (Denmark, Ireland, Netherlands, Portugal, and Slovakia). The five countries were identified through a mapping exercise in the 27 Member States as having undertaken policy design and implementation promoting key competences at least 10 years prior. The selection included countries with diverse governance structures in order to ensure they were, collectively, broadly representative of European education systems.

The study included **four online Peer Learning Group meetings** between May and October 2021. An input paper was developed prior to each PLG meeting, along with questions for reflection. External experts were invited to contribute to each meeting, sharing insights and relevant examples from other countries. In addition, there were **two online Country Workshops – one at the beginning and end of the summer break – in each country**. Country-level experts developed case studies, which were highlighted in the final study report (to be posted online in spring 2022).

The final report, standalone Recommendations and Executive Summary have been approved and are expected to be published online this spring. The draft Policy Guidelines and Recommendations, and a recording of the online final conference are available [here](#).

EIESP led this project, and was supported by partners from Ecorys and the Danish Technological Institute

From EIESP, Janet Looney, Majella O'Shea, Jerzy Wisniewski and Barbara Santibañez supported the project. Associate experts Gábor Halász and Kay Livingston provided high level experts to the project. Alain Michel contributed the French translation of the Executive Summary for the final study report.

2.4 TRANSVAL-EU (2021 – 23)

Transversal skills are an implicit part of the existing guidance and validation of nonformal and informal learning. The aim of TRANSVAL-EU is to experiment on how to make those skills more explicit and to provide guidance on how to embed effective approaches. Innovative approaches are to be tested in five pilot countries – Austria, Belgium, Italy, Lithuania and Poland.

The project strengthens cross-sector cooperation between practitioners, policy-makers and other stakeholders in order to build coherent VNFIL systems.

EIESP led the development of the state-of-the-art and mapping of good practices for the study, and has participated in the design of an online consultation on good practices, and supported the development of descriptors (aligned with European Qualification Framework levels) of transversal competences. The report is available [here](#).

The project, began on 1 March 2021 and will last for 30 months. It is co-funded by Erasmus+ KA3 Policy Reform – Policy Experimentations. It is being led by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research through Austria's Agency for Education and Internationalisation (OeAD), and the Lifelong Learning Platform (LLL-P).

From EIESP, Janet Looney, Barbara Santibañez and Gloria Arjomand are participating in this project.

2.5 Assess@learning (March 2017.- 2022)

Assess@Learning, led by European SchoolNet, is a European policy experimentation which aims to support the systemic uptake of Digital Formative Assessment (DFA) practices in schools.

The nine project partners have co-created an online toolkit which provides guidance on DFA, including practical examples for schools, including example e-portfolios, digital diaries, classroom polling, dashboards and monitoring tools and digital games. Students, teachers, head teachers and parents from randomly selected schools in the five field trial countries (Estonia, Finland, Greece, Portugal, Spain) test the toolkit which will then be released as an Open Educational Resource in several languages for reuse and adaptation.

In parallel, qualitative research with students is underway and is intended to ensure that their voices are an integral part of the project. During two one-day 'dialogue labs', students air and discuss their views and preferences regarding learning and assessment in general and DFA in particular.

The Assess@Learning literature review establishes the state-of-the-art in international research and policy studies on digital formative assessment (DFA).

From EIESP, Janet Looney authored the literature review (available [here](#)), which included the typology for digital formative assessment approaches, and is playing an advisory role to the A@L partnership.

2.6 PeerAct Social Inclusion project (February 2019 – October 2022) (extended timeline due to COVID)

This project on Social Inclusion and Common Values aims to support the acquisition of social competences that foster ownership of the fundamental values of non-discrimination, tolerance, solidarity and equality through scale-up of the "A world of difference" programme (within the EPTO peer training and certification process). The project aims are to: 1) equip 1300 young people from 6 European countries with necessary social and civic competences and understanding of the values of non-discrimination, tolerance, solidarity and equality; 2) provide 70 young people from 6 European countries with the competences and certification necessary to facilitate the process that leads to these acquisitions; 3) develop a framework for cooperation that will allow this non-formal learning process to be included in the European formal learning system as a complementary mean to facilitate the acquisition of the above competencies in the schools.

Partners in Romania, Portugal, Slovenia, Macedonia, Serbia and Spain are providing peer training based in anti-bias education. The initial group of peers will train peers at their schools in order to further disseminate the project. In addition, a strategy to embed this model in national education agencies will be developed.



The project is being led by EPTO (European Peer Training Organization), a partner from the Learning for Well-being Foundation network. EIESP is providing a formative evaluation of project implementation and impact.

Due to COVID-19 progress, initial train-the-trainer sessions were postponed. Following the initial hiatus, training sessions have been offered in a mixed online and face-to-face format.

From EIESP, Barbara Santibañez, is leading this project, with QA support from Janet Looney

2.7 Institutional consultancy for the development of blended learning courses for strengthening school- and district-level planning and teaching and learning in Lao-PDR (UNICEF) (June 2021 – December 2022/TBD)

The overall aim of this consultancy is to support UNICEF and the Lao-PDR Ministry of Education with the development of blended learning courses aimed at different target groups. This includes the development of course content and a training manual on school self-evaluation and development and on formative for staff at school and district-level staff.

The project is being led by H2 learning in Ireland.

From EIESP, Janet Looney and associate expert Melanie Ehren (VUB Amsterdam) are leading this project.

2.8 Review of the implementation of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (December 2021 – April 2022)

The third review cycle of the implementation of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education - CM/Rec(2010)7 is underway. This review seeks to identify the main issues and trends on EDC/HRE observed in the last five years across Member States. It focuses on the evaluation of the Charter implementation and on the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) application as an operational tool based on the Charter.

The purposes of this review cycle are to further strengthen the Charter implementation, support the development of strategic goals for the next five years, and facilitate the development of national indicators/benchmarks/priorities that can allow assessing progress achieved and guiding further action at national and international level.

More information can be found [here](#).

From EIESP, Barbara Santibañez, is leading this project, with QA support from Janet Looney

2.9 Editorial Board for the Toolkit on Schools strategies to promote inclusive education and tackle early school leaving (ongoing since 2016)

EIESP coordinates the EC European Toolkit for Schools Editorial Board. The EC European Toolkit for Schools which is hosted on the School Education Gateway, is structured around five main areas: school governance; support to learners; teachers; parental involvement; and stakeholder involvement. The Editorial Board assists DG EAC with gathering and selecting relevant resources for the Toolkit as well as drafting and editing its new content.

This project is part of the Framework services contract led by Ecorys.

The Toolkit is available [here](#).

From EIESP, Janet Looney, Gloria Arjomand and Laëtitia Morel support this project.

2.10 2018 – 20 Working Groups, staff support to groups on Schools and Higher Education - August 2018 – December 2020

EIESP provides staff support to two Working Groups: the WG on Schools and the WG on Higher Education within the European Education Area Strategic Framework.

The European Commission first established Working Groups under the Education and Training 2010 work programme to implement the Open Method of Coordination in education and training. Under the new EEA Strategic Framework, the work continued in 2021. The first Working Group meeting in Higher Education was organised in December 2021

The Working Groups bring together experts from Member States with the aim of exchanging on key education and training topics. The Working Groups identify and analyse pertinent examples of policies within the EU in order to highlight common principles and barriers and enablers to adapting good practices in other Member States. This work is part of the EC framework contract for services awarded to the consortium led by Ecorys and which includes EIESP, the London Institute of Education (IoE), the Danish Technological Institute, EFMD and KEA European Affairs.

From the EIESP, Janet Looney and Jaana Puukka provided, respectively, support to the working groups on schools and on higher education.

3.0 EIESP Outreach and Cooperation

EIESP has participated in the Organisation Committee for UNESCO International Comparison Conferences.

From 2020 – through 2021, the significant majority of EIESP meetings, including peer learning groups and workshops, peer trainings and partner meetings have been held online.

4.0 The European Journal of Education (EJE)

Volume 56

No. 1 March 2021

Special Issue: Higher education access, participation and progression: Inequalities of opportunity

Guest Editors: Erna Nairz-Wirth, Sarah O'Shea, Franziska Lessky

Volume 56

No. 2 June 2021

Special Issue: Expansion and retrenchment of internationalisation in higher education: Theories, methods and data

Guest Editor: Tatiana Fumasoli

Volume 56

No. 3 September 2021

Special Issue: Validation of non-formal and informal learning: A next stage of development in Europe

Guest Editor: Ernesto Villaba-García

Volume 56

No. 4 December 2021

Special Issue: Perspectives on school inequalities through the lens of the COVID-19 pandemic

Guest Editors: Romain Delès, Filippo Pirone

5.0 Workplan: January - December 2022

Framework contracts for Policy studies, Services have been renewed for the consortium led by Ecorys (consortium partners include: EIESP, DTI, Technopolis, 3S, Keanet)

EIESP will continue work on studies currently underway (and described above) including:

1. TRANSVAL-EU (2021 – 23)
2. Assess@learning (March 2017- 2022)
3. PeerAct Social Inclusion project (2019 – 2022)
4. Consultant support for the development of blended learning courses for strengthening school- and district-level planning and teaching and learning in schools in Lao-PDR (UNICEF Council of Europe (December 2021 – April 2022)
5. Review of the implementation of the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (December 2021 – April 2022)
6. Consultant staff support to Toolkit on Schools -- strategies to promote inclusive education and tackle early school leaving (ongoing since 2016)
7. Consultant staff support to Working Group Schools and Higher Education

EIESP is also participating in European-wide calls.

PUBLICATIONS & REPORTS:

Briga, E. and Looney, J. (2021). Expert Network on Recognition of outcomes of learning periods abroad in general secondary education: Member States Analysis (waiting for Commission approval

Looney, J. and Briga, E. (2021). Proposal for a European framework on recognition of outcomes of learning periods abroad in general upper secondary education

Looney, J. and Santibañez, B. (2021). Validation of Transversal Skills across Europe: Europea State of the Art Report, TRANSVAL-EU, <https://www.transvalproject.eu>

Looney, J., O'Shea, M., Staring, F., Vincentini, L., Wiśniewski, J., Frølich Hougaard, K. and Laurie Day (forthcoming) Key competences for all: Policy design and implementation in European school education: Final Report

Looney, J., O'Shea, M., Staring, F., Vincentini, L., Wiśniewski, J., Frølich Hougaard, K. and Laurie Day (forthcoming) Key competences for all: Policy design and implementation in European school education: Executive Summary

Looney, J., O'Shea, M., Staring, F., Vincentini, L., Wiśniewski, J., Frølich Hougaard, K. and Laurie Day (forthcoming) Key competences for all: Policy design and implementation in European school education: Recommendations and guidelines for poiicy makers

Melstveit Roseme, M., Day, L, Fellows, T., Staring, F., Vincentini, L. and Looney, J. (2021). Enhancing Learning Through Digital Tools and Practices: How Digital Technology in Compulsory Education Can Help Promote Inclusion, <https://op.europa.eu/fr/publication-detail/-/publication/b12644c4-315c-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-236693548>

EIESP Governance and Management Board 2019 - 2020



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