

European Institute of Education and Social Policy
Activity Report
January – December 2023

This report summarises of the main activities of the EIESP between January and December 2023. Following a brief overview, EIESP's work related to the policy design and implementation of lifelong learning and wellbeing are described in Section 2. Section 3 highlights the EIESP team's outreach activities. Section 4 provides an update on the status of the EIESP's journal. Section 5 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:

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

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 a European Framework Contract on policy evaluation led by Ecorys).

2.0 Activities in support of lifelong Learning and wellbeing

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. TRANSVAL-EU (February 2021 – September 2023)
2. Assess@Learning policy experimentation (February 2019- February 2023)
3. PeerAct Social Inclusion project (February 2019 – January 2023)
4. 2023 Review of the implementation of the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (March – December 2023)
5. Digital Education Content – EU policy studies (July 2022 – September 2023)
6. Consultant staff support to Working Group Schools and Higher Education (ongoing since 2016)
7. CEDEFOP study on the shift to learning outcomes: rhetoric or reality, led by PPMI
8. European SchoolNet case study on Portugal's digital transition
9. Mohammed VI Polytechnique University (UM6P) school-level coaching pilot
10. Erasmus+ BRIDGE Project
11. ERASMUS+ Quality for All?
12. Erasmus+ FOOTT PRINTS project

These activities are described in more detail below.

2.1 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, which concluded in September 2023, was 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 strengthened 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 concluded in September 2023. It was co-funded by Erasmus+ KA3 Policy Reform – Policy Experimentations. The project was led by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research and the Lifelong Learning Platform (LLL-P).

The EIESP hosted the final research dissemination conference for the project in Paris on 18 – 19 April 2023, in cooperation with CNAM. The conference featured panel interviews with TRANSVAL project participants as well as invited experts working in validation of transversal competences, including representatives from the OECD, from academia, and from civil society organisations. Three sets of parallel workshops were held over the course of the conference. A networking lunch and apéro were also organised. The full **Conference Agenda** can be found [here](#).

EIESP also developed a series of vodcasts with researchers working in the area of transversal skills. The vodcasts feature Andreas Schleicher (OECD); Manuel Souto-Otero (Cardiff University) and Ernesto Villaba (Cedefop); and TRANSVAL researchers. Links to the vodcasts are available on the [EIESP homepage](#).

From EIESP, Janet Looney, Barbara Santibañez, Gloria Arjomand and Laëtitia Morel participated in this project.

2.2 Assess@Learning (February 2019 - February 2023)

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

The nine project partners 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) tested the toolkit which was released as an Open Educational Resource in several languages for reuse and adaptation.

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

From EIESP, Janet Looney authored a literature review (available [here](#)) on DFA. The literature review established the state-of-the-art in international research and policy studies, and which included the typology for digital formative assessment approaches. She also played an advisory role to the A@L partnership.

A webinar in February 2023 capped the research project.

2.3 PeerAct Social Inclusion project (February 2020 – January 2023)

This project on Social Inclusion and Common Values aimed 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 were 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 provided peer training based in anti-bias education. The initial group of peers trained peers at their schools in order to further disseminate the project. In addition, a strategy to embed this model in national education agencies was developed.

The project was led by EPTO (European Peer Training Organization), a partner from the Learning for Well-being Foundation network. EIESP led an evaluation of project implementation and impact, (both formative and summative). The final evaluation report is available [here](#).

A final online webinar to disseminate the results of the project was held on 10 January 2023. The 3-hour webinar hosted over 50 participants, including European peer trainers (from the EPTO network and beyond); policy makers in the field of youth; youth workers in the field of non-discrimination and anti-bias education; teachers and educators involved in the PeerAct project; and young people in general. The following panels were part of the event:

- Discussion on anti-bias education and peer learning
- Presentation of key findings from the final evaluation report
- Discussion with peer trainers from the project
- Presentation of the “How to” Framework and AWOD model

A Keynote speaker (Rui Gomes, Head of Division Education and Training, Youth Department at the Council of Europe) concluded the webinar. More information about the event (including the recording) can be found here: <https://fb.watch/pBklB-ouRQ/>

From EIESP, Barbara Santibañez led this project, with QA support from Janet Looney, and logistical support for the final webinar by Gloria Arjomand.

2.4 2023 Review of the implementation of the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) (March – December 2023).

This report presents the main findings from the first review of the implementation of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC). The review process took place between March – December 2023.

The main aim of this study was to understand the extent to which the RFCDC has been used in formal education systems of Member States since 2016, including its influence on policies and practices. Moreover, this review was intended as an opportunity for policy learning among Member States. The results supported the preparation of the upcoming Education Strategy 2024-2030 and were fed into the 26th session of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education of the Council of Europe on 28-29 September 2023. The preliminary results of the review were presented at the Pre-Ministerial Conference, held on September 28, 2023. More information can be found [here](#).

The final report will be published in the first semester of 2024.

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

2.5 Digital Education Content (July 2022 – September 2023)

The aims of this policy study were to gather new evidence to support the European Commission in development of a new EU Digital Education Content Framework, as foreseen within the Digital Education Action Plan (2021-27). The study established key definitions and guiding principles regarding digital education content, examined the factors influencing supply and demand, and explored how bottlenecks might be addressed. Relevant policy actions that fall within the competence of the EU were considered.

The work was carried out in a collaborative way, with a diverse and representative range of stakeholders from Europe's digital education ecosystem. Proposed solutions came directly from those involved with the production, acquisition, and use of digital education content, balancing common elements with those that are specific to different sectors, countries, and key stakeholders. The study, which was led by Ecorys, is part of the policy studies framework contract.

From EIESP, Janet Looney participated as a senior expert in this study.

The executive summary is available [here](#), and the final report is available [here](#).

2.6 2018 – 20 Working Groups, staff support to groups on Schools and Higher Education (August 2018 – ongoing)

EIESP provided 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 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 has been part of the EC framework contract for services awarded to the consortium led by Ecorys.

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

In 2023, the Working Group Schools held a series of online seminars and a peer learning activity in Portugal on assessment of learner competences, with a focus on inclusive education. The final report is available [here](#).

The Working Group on higher education organised three working group meetings – one in Brussels and the rest online – that focused on /and facilitated the progress of the higher education systems towards the European Education Area. Two peer learning activities were also organized on topics such as Quality Assurance and Recognition (online) and National financing of European Universities Alliances in Paris.

2.7 CEDEFOP study on the Shift to Learning Outcomes (January 2023 – December 2025)

This study maps and analyses the transformation of intended learning outcomes into achieved learning outcomes. The research is focused on initial vocational education and training, in schools and apprenticeships, and seeks to map and better understand the features and factors influencing the transformation of intentions into changes in teaching learning and assessment.

The study is being led by PPMI, in cooperation with 3S (AT) and Ockham (NL).

From EIESP, Jerzy Wísniowski is leading field work in Poland, Barbara Santibanez is leading field work in France, and Janet Looney is contributing to the overall analysis.

2.8 European SchoolNet case study on Portugal's digital transition

European SchoolNet has initiated a series of study visits focusing on country-level digital education action plans/initiatives to support peer learning among countries. The first of study visit was conducted in Portugal in October 2023. A case study report will be finalised in the first part of 2024.

From EIESP, Janet Looney is participating in this project.

2.9 Mohammed VI Polytechnique University (UM6P) school-level coaching pilot (June 2023 --)

In cooperation with the Africa Business School and UM6P, the European Institute of Education and Social Policy and its associated experts are supporting the development and implementation of an action research study in support of the Ministry of National Education, Preschool and Sports.

The study is supporting the implementation and monitoring of a pilot project aimed at introducing coaches to support school development in a number of pilot schools.

The elements of the study include:

- Definition of the overall objectives and study methodology, including research frameworks, data collection methods.
- At an operational level, direct support for field research, contribution to the production of written material
- Dissemination of study results

From EIESP, Barbara Santibanez and Janet Looney are participating in this project.

2.10 Erasmus+ BRIDGE Project (September 2023 – August 2025)

The BRIDGE Project supports the European Union aim to bridge the gap between research and policy. To be effective, education policy research and development needs to be supported by collaboration and critical reflection. The project will address existing gaps between the knowledge and expertise of Higher Education institution-based researchers, practitioners in civil society organisations, and policy-makers, that prevent the effective connection of evidence with policy-making.

The project design includes development of 'intra-' and 'inter-' professional learning communities, which will promote interconnected HE systems, as well as offer opportunities for participation in democratic, social and civic engagement through formal and non-formal learning.

The project brings together a collaborative pan-European professional learning community to support development of competences for policy research. It includes six university-based partners, an umbrella organisation bringing together 48 European networks working in education (LLL), training and youth, and an international education policy think tank (EIESP)

The partners are:

Education Academy, Vytautas Magnus University/VMU) Lithuania (lead partner)
European Institute of Education and Social Policy/EIESP, France (lead content partner)
Lifelong Learning Platform, Belgium
The University of Education, *Freiburg* (*Pädagogische Hochschule Freiburg/PHFR*), Germany
Faculty of Education and Psychology (PPK), Eötvös Loránd University/ELTE, Hungary
Doctoral School of Human Sciences, Free University Brussels (Vrije Universiteit Brussel/VUB), Belgium
Institute of Education, University of Lisbon (Universidade De Lisboa/UL), Portugal
Centre for European Regional and Local Studies (EUROREG) University of Warsaw (Uniwersytet Warszawski /UW)

2.11 ERASMUS+ Quality for All? (September 2023 – August 2025)

This Erasmus+ KA2 project aims to develop quality assurance for youth sector activities, using an intersectional perspective and upholding common EU values such as human dignity, inclusion, solidarity, and equality, in non-formal education and youth work. The project objectives are:

- To explore the key features of existing quality frameworks

- Through active participation in developmental processes, to cultivate competences among young people, trainers, and youth workers to design and implement a quality assurance model tailored to non-formal education activities that promote an intersectional approach, human rights, and common EU values.
- Foster the promotion of an intersectional approach, human rights, and common EU values within the framework of quality assurance for youth work

The project includes a research phase throughout the first year, aiming at developing a QA model to be tested by our partner organisations during the second year.

2.12 Erasmus+ FOOTT PRINTS project (September 2023 – August 2026)

This Erasmus+ project aims to develop practical guidelines on quality factors for international in-service teacher training. The project will draw on evidence from research as well as practical examples from regional, national, public and private training institutions in the seven project countries (Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Poland and Portugal). This project is led by Bezirksregierung Arnsberg in Germany.

From EIESP, Janet Looney and Barbara Santibanez are participating in this project, with research support from Gloria Arjomand.

3.0 EIESP Outreach and Cooperation

Highlights from

- PeerAct Final conference (online) (10 January 2023)
- TRANSVAL Research conference, Paris (18 – 19 April 2023)
- TRANSVAL Partner meeting, Paris (19 – 20 April 2023)
- The Working Group Schools seminars and peer learning activity:
 - Working Group (WG) plenary (online participation), 23 January 2023
 - WG seminar on assessment for inclusion, online 7– 8 March 2023
 - WG PLA on assessment for inclusion, Lisbon, 24 - 26 May 2023
- Assessment of learning and competences for sustainability, online (9 March 2023)
- The Working Group Higher Education meetings and peer learning activities:
 - WG meeting, online, 28 Feb 2023
 - WG PLA on Quality Assurance and Recognition, online, 22-23 May 2023
 - WG meeting in Paris, 29-30 June 2023
 - WG PLA on National financing of European Universities Alliances, Paris, 17-18 October 2023
 - WG meeting, online 13-14 November 2023
- [Consultative meeting evaluation and follow-up to the 2022 Turin Forum on Citizenship and Human Rights Education, Strasbourg \(23-24 May 2023\)](#)
- Project meeting to develop school coach pilot, Rabat, Morocco (5 – 7 June 2023)
- Project meeting on Cedefop Shift Learning Outcomes project, Thessaloniki (4 July 2023)

- Digital Education Content – Stakeholder consultation meetings (31 March 2023; 12 – 13 April 2023; 12 June 2023); Presentation of final report (27 September 2023)
- Portugal digital transition case study visit (10 – 19 October 2023)
- European SchoolNet Eminent conference, Rome (5- 6 December 2023)
- FOOTT PRINTTS kick-off meeting, Brussels (16 – 18 October 2023)
- BRiDGE Project kick-off meeting, online (4 October 2023)
- Quality Assurance for All? Kick-off meeting, Torino (16 – 17 November 2023)

4.0 EIESP's Journal

The EIESP affiliation with Wiley as publisher of the European Journal of Education ended in November 2023. As agreed with the EIESP Board during the April 2022 ad hoc meeting, the chair of the EIESP Board officially declined to sign Wiley's proposed new affiliation agreement, which would have reversed the role of the Institute and the publisher, with the publisher asserting itself as the de facto editor of the journal. The EIESP decision is based on the principle that Wiley's approach blurs lines between the roles of a for-profit publisher and of the editorial board, which has traditionally been based on the principle of the board's academic and intellectual freedom.

EIESP will re-launch its journal on an Open Access platform under a new title – European Journal of Education Policy and Practice. The peer-reviewed journal will be thematic and will continue to focus on international and comparative education policy for lifelong learning in Europe and beyond. In line with the principles of Open Science, it will bring together contributors with a high level of expertise in policy, research, and practice.

Following a registration search, our next steps will be to file for registration of the TM. We have also submitted a proposal to an Open Access platform with an international reach.

In 2023, our final year with Wiley, the following EJE special issues were published:

Volume 58

No. 1 March 2023

Special Issue: Trust in standardised assessments

Guest Editor: Melanie Ehren

Volume 58

No. 2 June 2023

Special Issue: Inclusive education policy and experiences: Global and local perspectives

Guest Editors: Marie-Christine Deyrich, Magdalena Kohout-Diaz

Volume 58

No. 3 September 2023

Special Issue: Understanding and fostering the development of critical thinking education and competences

Guest Editor: Jean-Claude Ruano-Borbalan

Volume 58

No. 4 December 2021

Special Issue: Wartime and postwar education in Ukraine

Guest Editors: Mikołaj Herbst, Liliia Hrynevych

5.0 Workplan: January - December 2024

The ongoing Erasmus+ BRIDGE Project will pilot a model for Early Career Researcher training in policy research as well as a model for policy learning within a learning community bringing together academic and civil society professionals. Over the longer-term, EIESP will further develop these activities as it establishes new directions for the Institute's work and expand its engagement with higher education institutions and civil society organisations. A major part of the year's work will involve re-launch of the journal on an Open Access platform under a new name, and strengthening its Open Science approach.

The 2024 workplan will include efforts to ensure sustainability and impact of EIESP work.

PUBLICATIONS & REPORTS:

European Commission (2023). Digital education content. (Main authors: Flavia Colonese, Laurie Day, Michael Hallisy, Janet Looney, et al.)

Working Group Pathways to School Success (2023). Policies and practices to support successful and inclusive education : thematic report. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. (Main authors: Janet Looney, Gillian Kelly, Annalisa Cannoni, Working Group PSS)

TRANSVAL Vodcasts with Andreas Schleicher, Manuel Souto-Otero and Ernesto Villaba-García, TRANSVAL research partners, <https://www.eiesp.org/ne-01>

EIESP Governance and Management Board 2023

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