



Book of abstracts

COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP FOR RESILIENT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Rijeka, Croatia 25–28 September 2025.





This e-publication has been produced as part of the Collaborative Leadership for Resilient Educational Institutions, held on 25th -28th September 2025 in Rijeka. It contains the abstracts of presentations delivered during the event. The Book of Abstracts is available online at www.enirdelm.uniri.hr for open access and reference.

Publishers:

[Network of Education Policy Centers \(NEPC\)](#)

[Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka, Croatia](#)

[European Network for Improving Research and Development in Education Leadership and Management \(ENIRDELM\)](#)

For the publishers: Lana Jurko and Vesna Kovač

Editors: Ana Mlekuž and Sanja Brajković

Rijeka 2025



COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP FOR RESILIENT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Rijeka, Croatia 25–28 September 2025.

Book of abstracts



FORWARD



Dear Readers,

We are pleased to present this collection of abstracts from the 33rd ENIRDELM and 9th NEPC Primary Colors of Education Conference, themed ‘Collaborative Leadership for Resilient Educational Institutions.’ This conference marks a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to address the multifaceted challenges facing educational institutions globally.

Gathering nearly 100 researchers, practitioners, civil society representatives and policymakers from 24 countries, this conference embodies the spirit of collaboration and shared purpose. The abstracts compiled in this volume are a demonstration of innovative thinking and dynamic research emerging within the field of education. They reflect a diverse range of perspectives and approaches, highlighting how collaborative leadership can serve as a foundation for building resilience in our educational systems.

As the world struggles with unprecedented challenges—threat to the planet, political instability, and economic disruptions—it is crucial for educational leaders to foster environments that are not only adaptive but also inclusive and supportive. The research presented in this book captures the essence of our conference discussions, providing evidence-based strategies and insights aimed at promoting resilience in educational institutions.

We emphasize education as a powerful driver for change, and it is our hope that the findings shared in these abstracts will inspire further dialogue and action within our global education community. As you engage with this material, we encourage you to consider how these ideas can be applied within your own contexts, prompting reflective practices and transformative leadership.



This collection would not have been possible without the collaborative efforts of the partners, European Network for Improvement, Research and Development of Educational Leadership and Management (ENIRDELM), Network of Education Policy Centers (NEPC) and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Rijeka, Department for Education, and, of course, the dedicated contributors who took the time to share their research and insights. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone involved.

As you explore the pages of this book of abstracts, may you find inspiration, knowledge, and connections that empower you as leaders in education. Together, through collaborative efforts and shared commitment, we can build resilient educational institutions that not only endure challenges but also thrive in an ever-evolving world.

With warm regards,



Lana Jurko 
Executive Director NEPC



Vesna Kovač 
ENIRDELM Board member



European Network for Improving Research and Development in Education Leadership and Management (ENIRDELM) is a self-funding network promoting critical and friendly professionalism to improve the quality of educational leadership & management development and research across the Europe. It seeks to deepen and share understanding of the perspectives of multiple stakeholders in education and ultimately to make an impact on learning at all levels of education systems through the initiative and energy of its participants (researchers, trainer/developers, policy-makers and school leaders) through mutually generated collaborative activities.



The Network of Education Policy Centers is an international non-governmental membership organization that gathers members from 20 countries in Eastern and south-eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Founded in 2006, its members are public and civil society organizations dealing with education at various levels, from education research and policy analysis to teacher training and school-based activities. NEPC empowers the education ecosystem to support transition and transformation in the NEPC region towards earth-centric and inclusive education through policy, practice, research and international partnerships. The mission of the Network is to promote flexible, participatory, evidence-based, transparent education policies reflecting the values of inclusion, participation, and collective wellbeing. The geographic complexity in which it operates enhances a qualitative comparative approach as well as the attitude to explore new topics and trends in education.



PROGRAM COMITEE

Ana Mlekuž	Educational Research Institute, Slovenia
Eli Pijaca Plavšić	Edukateka, independent expert, Croatia
Jasna Kovačević	University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Lana Jurko	Network of Education Policy Centers
Mikael Risku	Institute of Educational Leadership at University of Jyväskylä, Finland
Monika Pažur,	Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb, Croatia
Mualla Aksu	Faculty of Education, Akdeniz University, Turkey
Rasa Nedzinskaitė-Mačiūnienė,	Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania
Roman Dorczak	Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland
Sanja Brajković	Network of Education Policy Centers
Snježana Dubovicki	University of Josip Juraj Strossmayer in Osijek, Croatia
Ulviya Mikailova	ADA University, Azerbaijan
Vesna Kovač	University of Rijeka, Croatia
Vlatka Domović	Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb, Croatia



ORGANIZATIONAL COMITEE

Sanja Brajković	Network of Education Policy Centers
Željka Debeljuh	University of Rijeka, Croatia
Lana Jurko	Network of Education Policy Centers
Vesna Kovač	University of Rijeka, Croatia
Nena Rončević	University of Rijeka, Croatia



TABLE OF CONTENTS

KEYNOTE LECTURES	9
PRECONFERENCE PHD WORKSHOP	18
CONFERENCE PROGRAM	20
POSTER SESSION	66



KEYNOTE LECTURES

COLLABORATIVE **LEADERSHIP** FOR
RESILIENT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

RIJEKA, CROATIA 25-28 SEPTEMBER 2025.



Ciaran Sugrue

School of Education, University College Dublin, Ireland

BUILDING SUSTAINABLE PROFESSIONALLY RESPONSIBLE COMMUNITIES—BACK TO THE FUTURE

Although the origins of the phrase ‘may you live in interesting times’ is disputed, there is considerable consensus that ‘interesting times’ will be challenging and tumultuous.

The ‘bricolage’ (Bauman, 2000/2006) required for constructing possible futures require selections from past and present. These include a combination of constraints and tools (technologies), language conspicuous among them. The word ‘crisis’ (probably overused in contemporary discourses), derived from Greek implies ‘to separate’, or ‘to decide’, to ‘draw a distinction’ or a ‘turning point’ suggests that there are pivotal moments in our personal and professional lives or are more gradual but nonetheless challenging (Diamond, 2019, p. 7). Such turning points arise in our personal lives and in a regional or national context when policy shifts are announced. Thus, the ‘perfeessional’ (personal & professional) (Sugrue, 2015) is embedded in the challenge of the moment, and the tools we deploy will have a significant shaping influence on the ‘coping’ (Hargreaves, 1984) strategies we devise to build the future, to create a praxis that enables us to move beyond such challenges. Language enables us to critically appraise our contexts, typically distinguishing between a language of accountability and a language of professional responsibility (Sugrue & Solbrekke, 2011). In opting for a language of professional responsibility, it is necessary to embrace principles that are enshrined in ‘deliberative leadership’ (Solbrekke & Sugrue, 2020; Sugrue & Solbrekke, 2024), and to deploy then when engaged in both horizontal and vertical brokering (Brew & Cahir, 2014) with a view to achieving ‘legitimate compromise’ (May, 1996). Drawing on a judicious mix of professional experiences and selected literature, and deploying the language and concepts indicated above, this presentation will construct a narrative that is challenging and hopeful, realistic, and maybe even inspiring!



Ciaran Sugrue is Emeritus Full Professor at the School of Education, UCD, where he has served since 2011. He has worked as a teacher, school inspector, teacher educator, and researcher in Ireland and internationally. Previously, he was at the University of Cambridge, where he led initiatives in educational reform across sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Egypt, collaborating with organizations such as UNESCO and the World Bank. He has held editorial and leadership roles, including General Editor of Irish Educational Studies and President of the International Study Association of Teachers and Teaching. His research spans school leadership, educational change, and teacher development, with over 100 publications. Current projects focus on music education in disadvantaged communities and leadership in higher education. He enjoys family life, hiking, and cycling. funded by the Norwegian Research Council. He is passionate about family, hiking and cycling.



Karin Doolan

Institute for Social Research in Zagreb, Croatia

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN THE AFTERMATH OF DISASTERS TRIGGERED BY NATURAL HAZARDS

Climate and weather extremes have become more frequent and intense, and schools are increasingly on their frontlines. Recent years have witnessed acute flooding across the globe, yet lack of precipitation can be as dangerous as its excess: in the Mediterranean Basin, for example, wildfires are a familiar hazard with yearly conflagrations threatening communities. Adding to these dramatic scenarios are the damaging impacts of other natural hazard-related disasters such as earthquakes. This keynote presentation critically reflects on the rapidly growing field of research on education and disasters, which spans diverse educational contexts and hazards, from fires in California and Australia, through hurricanes in Puerto Rico and Texas, to earthquakes in New Zealand and Italy. In particular, it will summarize research insights on school leadership in post-disaster contexts, including the fact that, at times, school leaders take up the role of crisis leaders not only for their schools but also for the wider community. Furthermore, the presentation will reflect on themes which emerged from the research study “Vulnerability and resilience of schools in the aftermath of natural hazard-related disasters,” which explored school life in Croatian communities affected by earthquakes and floods. One such theme, entitled “Desiring decisiveness and compassion,” encapsulates teachers’ expectations from school leaders in crisis times. The presentation concludes with recommendations on how to support school leaders in post-disaster contexts and outlines a vision for how educational research may contribute to building school resilience in the climate emergency of our times.



Karin Doolan is a Research Associate at the Centre for Educational Research and Development, a unit of the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb, Croatia. Recently she has explored the impact of floods and earthquakes on the organisational life of schools, as well as how literature is used to discuss pressing issues such as climate change with young people. She has published on a variety of topics including how class inequalities are amplified in educational settings and the biographical legacy of protest participation. Her scholarship is inseparable from her activist sensibility. She is especially committed to collaborations with the civil society sector, and serves as the head of the governing board of the Institute for Political Ecology, a CSO dedicated to fostering ecologically sustainable, just and democratic societies. She holds a PhD degree in Sociology of Education from the University of Cambridge.



Jonathan James

Centre for Education Research and Innovation, OECD

AGENCY IN ACTION: SCHOOL LEADERSHIP FOR A SUSTAINABLE TOMORROW

Environmental crises like climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution are reshaping how we live, work, and learn, posing serious risks to communities and institutions. These challenges, compounded by geopolitical tensions, rising economic inequality, and political polarisation, create a complex and uncertain landscape for school leaders. Yet, school leaders are not merely passive responders to crises—they can take proactive steps to steer the communities they serve towards sustainability and resilience. Drawing on insights from the OECD's Education Policies for a Sustainable Future project and Trends Shaping Education 2025, this keynote will explore how school leaders can leverage strategic foresight, foster collaboration, and implement adaptive strategies to build communities of learning capable of withstanding future disruptions. It will highlight practical tools and approaches to support school leaders in navigating uncertainty and leading with purpose toward a sustainable future.



Jonathan James is a Policy Analyst on the Trends Shaping Education project at the OECD's Centre for Education Research and Innovation. He has contributed to flagship publications like Trends Shaping Education 2025, as well as policy dialogues and country-specific projects. Jonathan joined the OECD in 2020 and holds a PhD in Comparative Education at the UCL Institute of Education, where his research focused on the impact of domestic terrorism on citizenship and values education in England and France. With 12 years of teaching and leadership experience in secondary schools in London and Paris, he remains deeply engaged with issues related to the teaching profession.



Manos Antoninis

UNESCO, Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report

LEAD FOR EARNING: LEADERSHIP FOR INCLUSION LESSONS FROM CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE, CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA

Building on the theme of the 2024/5 Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report on leadership in education, the GEM Report alongside its partner the Network of Education Policy Centres (NEPCs) launched the 2025 Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia regional edition on leadership and inclusion.

Based on the approach of the 2024/5 GEM Report and the expertise of the partner organizations and contributors, the Report provides comparative analysis on leadership practices for inclusive education based on information collected across education systems including eight in-depth country studies (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Estonia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Poland, Slovenia). The Report provides evidence-based recommendations for governments and other key education stakeholders to strengthen inclusion and SDG 4 implementation in policies across the region.

School leaders from across the region are key agents for change when it comes to inclusion in education. The Report highlights examples of school leaders working outside the four walls of their classrooms to help build inclusive education systems, fostering innovative approaches to reach all learners and championing a whole-school approach towards inclusion.

The session will feature a presentation of the Lead for inclusion report and an opportunity to share practices profiled in the regional report and connect networks of key stakeholders working to overcome barriers and fulfil the right to inclusive education for all.



Manos Antoninis has been the Director of the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report since 2017, having been previously responsible for the monitoring section of the report. He coordinated the financing gap estimates for the 2030 education targets, the projections on the achievement of universal primary and secondary education completion, and the World Inequality Database on Education. He represents the report team in the Education Data and Statistics Commission, of which he is currently co-chair.

Prior to joining the team he worked for 10 years on public finance, monitoring and evaluation projects in education. He holds a DPhil in Economics for a study of technical education and the labour market in Egypt, completed at the Centre for the Study of African Economies of the University of Oxford.



PRECONFERENCE PHD WORKSHOP

**COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP FOR
RESILIENT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

RIJEKA, CROATIA 25-28 SEPTEMBER 2025.



Rasa Nedzinskaitė- Mačiūnienė

Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

DOING MORE WITH LESS: HOW AI IS SHAPING SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

In an era of information overload and rapid scientific growth, conducting systematic literature reviews (SLRs) is both more important—and more challenging—than ever. This seminar explores how traditional SLR methodologies can be enhanced through the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) tools. We begin by outlining the purpose, structure, and best practices of systematic reviews, including widely used frameworks such as PRISMA and PICO. From there, we examine the key challenges researchers face in executing SLRs manually, particularly in fast-evolving fields.

The core of the seminar focuses on how AI can support and streamline various stages of the review process—from semantic search and automatic screening to data extraction and synthesis. Participants will be introduced to a range of AI-powered tools, alongside discussions on their practical applications, limitations, and ethical implications. By the end of the session, PhD students will gain a clearer understanding of how to conduct rigorous, transparent, and AI-augmented SLRs that meet academic standards while saving time and effort.



CONFERENCE PROGRAM

COLLABORATIVE **LEADERSHIP** FOR
RESILIENT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

RIJEKA, CROATIA 25-28 SEPTEMBER 2025.

DAY 1 THURSDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2025



9:00 – 10.30

Preconference activity: PhD workshop

Rasa Nedzinskaitė-Mačiūnienė, Vytautas Magnus University.

Doing More with Less: How AI is Shaping Systematic Literature Review

12.00 – 13.30

Keynote

Ciaran Sugrue, University College Dublin:

Building Sustainable Professionally Responsible Communities-Back to the Future

15.00–16.30

Parallel sessions

Inova Lab

FabLed: Resilient Educational Institutions through Learning Community Structures

Mika Risku, Institute of Educational Leadership, University of Jyväskylä, Finland; Darshan Bhat, Creatnet Education, India; Katherine Edersheim, Impatrics, USA; Mohita Jaiswal, Creatnet Education, India; Vasudha Kapoor, Mera GaonMeri Dunia, India

FFRI 301

Collaborative Practices in Crisis: School Leaders' Experiences in Building Institutional Resilience

Rasa Nedzinskaitė-Mačiūnienė, Vytautas Magnus University, Education Academy, Lithuania; Vaida Jurgilė, Vytautas Magnus University, Education Academy, Lithuania

Support for the Protection and Integration of Children and Families in Migration in Croatia

Sanja McMurtry, Agency for Education and Training, Croatia

DAY 1 THURSDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2025



FFRI 302 Poster Session

Doing More with Less: How AI is Shaping Systematic Literature Review

Monika Simkute-Bukante, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

Leading Schools During Educational Disruptions: Past Lessons and Future Directions from Slovenia

Urška Stremfel, Educational Research Institute, Slovenia

FFRI 303

The effects of the coaching skills and tools training programme on school leadership |

Tatjana Ažman, National Education Institute, Slovenia

Building Leadership Capacity in ECE Multi professional Teams: What Do Educators Know and Need? | Ilze Ivanova, University of Latvia, Latvia; Kaspars Kiris, University of Latvia, Latvia

FabLed: Resilient Educational Institutions through Learning Community Structures

Mika Risku

*Institute of Educational Leadership, University of Jyväskylä, Finland
mika.el.risku@gmail.com*

Darshan Bhat

Creatnet Education, India

Katherine Edersheim

Impatrics, USA

Mohita Jaiswal

Creatnet Education, India

Vasudha Kapoor

Mera GaonMeri Dunia, India

This symposium continues the workshop held on the topic in the previous ENIRDELM conference. Our main argument is that to achieve resilient educational institutions we cannot focus merely on organisational structures but must complement them with structures deriving from community-centred thinking and often prioritising the latter ones.

First, we briefly introduce the concepts and theories and justify the importance of identifying effective models and then apply them in context to build robust and resilient educational institutions. Next, we look at practical examples of how organizations that have programs with proven impact are reaching out to the broader community and creating leadership cohorts and leadership communities across educational institutions. This includes establishing curriculum, community cooperation, and leadership models leading to well-being, trust, respect, diversity, and inclusion for marginalized students, as informed by top-end research and theory.

The session will close with identifying and articulating principles that form a framework for developing leadership and disseminating innovative educational approaches in a scalable and sustainable way as applied across the examples and other contexts.

Collaborative Practices in Crisis: School Leaders' Experiences in Building Institutional Resilience

Rasa Nedzinskaitė-Mačiūnienė

Vytautas Magnus University, Education Academy, Lithuania
nedzinskaite.rasa@gmail.com

Vaida Jurgilė

Vytautas Magnus University, Education Academy, Lithuania

This presentation explores how Lithuanian K-12 school principals work to build institutional resilience during crisis situations, focusing on their use of structured procedures and collaborative practices. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with ten school leaders and analysed through content analysis, the study reveals that many schools have established crisis management protocols—clearly defined action plans that guide decision-making in specific crisis scenarios.

These pre-defined procedures contribute to a sense of institutional preparedness and provide a foundation for timely, coordinated responses. However, the findings also highlight a persistent centralization of responsibility: while crisis teams are formally in place, key decisions are often made solely by the principal. Emotional regulation, fast interpretation of unfolding events, and responsibility for outcomes frequently remain individualized, placing a heavy burden on school leaders.

This asymmetry between formal collaboration structures and actual decision-making practices raises important questions about the sustainability of current leadership models. The presentation argues for deeper integration of collaborative leadership principles—not only in operational roles but in strategic, shared decision-making processes that enhance institutional resilience.

By examining how school leaders apply both structure and situational judgement, this presentation offers a nuanced understanding of leadership under pressure and contributes to international conversations on resilient and distributed educational leadership.

Support for the Protection and Integration of Children and Families in Migration in Croatia

Sanja McMurtry,
Agency for Education and Training
sanja.mcmurtry@azoo.hr

In the context of global social and economic change, this presentation discusses the challenges posed by increasingly dynamic migrations (voluntary and involuntary) and their impact on the education system and educational institutions. These challenges require educational institutions to strengthen organizational resilience, enhance leadership and develop competencies of educators. This presentation will focus on e-learning professional development programs for educators aimed at enhancing competencies in teaching and in leading the learning of children of migrant origin. Creating an inclusive, safe, and stimulating learning environment is essential for each child's personal and academic success, as well as for reducing long-term educational inequalities and social exclusion.

To address these challenges, the UNICEF Office for Croatia, in cooperation with Education and Teacher Training Agency, CARNET, and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Zagreb, is implementing the program "Support for the Protection and Integration of Children and Families in Migration in Croatia" (PREMISE). The aim of e-programs is to develop a high-quality, accessible e-learning continuous professional development programs for educators, with an emphasis on relevance, interactivity, and practical application.

The development of the e-learning programs includes: a needs assessment in the area of intercultural education; identifying examples of good practice; sharing perspectives of migrant children and their families; analysing relevant policies and research.

This presentation will outline the objectives, activities, expected outcomes, and sustainability of the e-program, as well as announce opportunities for participation in these e-learning programs.

The effects of the coaching skills and tools training programme on school leadership

Tatjana Ažman

National Education Institute, Slovenia
tatjana.azman@zrss.si

Mihaela Zavašnik

National Education Institute, Slovenia

Resilience is an essential trait for school leaders, especially in the fast-paced and ever-changing landscape of education. Personal resilience includes physical, emotional, mental, social and spiritual dimensions. Resilience is one of three competences included in personal area of one's professional development, beside wellbeing and self-regulation. It is understood as «understanding and regulating personal emotions, thoughts, and behaviour, including stress response» (Sala et al., 2020: 30). Resilient leaders are better equipped to handle the challenges that come their way, learn from their experiences, and maintain an optimistic outlook, even in difficult circumstances. Earley suggests, that »greater attention needs to be given to individual leaders' personal development– their well-being and developing the personal qualities required to operate in such demanding conditions«, because »leader development is mainly about the development of the individual and only secondarily the development of the role» (2020: 117).

Coaching is «a process that enables people to find solutions consistent with their personality and values» (Wilson, 2007). Coaching and equipping headteachers with coaching skills and tools has proven to be one of the most beneficial ways of support in several levels: strengthen their own resilience, the resilience of school teams, teachers and school as an organization. Research proves that the greatest benefits and effects of coaching to support head teachers in their work can be summarized in five categories: a) improved knowledge and skills for management; b) increased self-confidence; c) supportive (favourable) emotions that reduce stress, anxiety and tension; d) strengthening of reflection; e) solving challenges from practice.

We evaluated a pilot program for 32 headteachers entitled Peer support through coaching skills and tools, implemented in the school year 2024/2025. The data gathered indicates that they improved listening and posing questions skills, conflict resolution skills, setting boundaries, self-confidence, ability to use coaching tools in everyday school situations.

Building Leadership Capacity in ECE Multiprofessional Teams: What Do Educators Know and Need?

Ilze Ivanova

University of Latvia, Latvia
ilze.ivanova31@gmail.com

Kaspars Kiris

University of Latvia, Latvia

In today's complex early childhood education (ECE) landscape, the effectiveness and resilience of institutions increasingly depend on the capacity of multiprofessional teams to lead collaboratively. This article provides a brief overview of the theory behind multiprofessional teams in ECE and their respective roles. It presents research-based insights into the knowledge, skills, and development needs of diverse professionals working in ECE settings—including teachers, assistants, specialists, and support staff.

Data were collected through document analysis and both quantitative and qualitative research conducted in Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia, within the framework of the EU ERASMUS+ project “Socially Sustainable Early Childhood Education Future” (SoSECE) 2024-1-FI01-KA220-SCH-000254061. Drawing on empirical data, the presentation illustrates how team members perceive leadership, how roles and responsibilities are distributed, and where critical gaps in understanding and confidence remain.

The findings highlight a pressing need for clearer role definitions, stronger interprofessional communication, and skill development in areas such as shared decision-making, collaboration with parents, the practical use of technology, and supporting children with developmental delays. Based on the identified needs of ECE staff, a developmental plan was created to enhance institutional resilience by building the collective leadership capacity of multiprofessional teams.

DAY 2 FRIDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER 2025



12.00–13.00

Keynote

Karin Doolan, Institute for Social Research in Zagreb

School leadership in the aftermath of disasters triggered by natural hazards

14.30 – 16.00

Parallel sessions

Inova Lab

School-Community Collaboration In The Protection Of Latmos: A School's Contribution To The Process Of Environmental Resilience

Isa Cüneyt Bozkurt, Ege University / Republic of Türkiye Ministry of National Education, Turkey;
Nedim Özdemir, Ege University Turkey

Emotions, Power, and Resistance: Navigating Emotional Expression in Leadership and Education | Monika Pažur, Faculty for Teacher Education, University of Zagreb, Croatia

Desirable Futures vs. Present Realities: Readiness for the Whole Institution Approach to Education for Sustainable Development in Secondary Education

Nena Vukelić, University of Rijeka, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Education, Croatia; Nena Rončević, University of Rijeka, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Education, Croatia

FFRI 301

From Reactive to Adaptive Teaching: Rethinking Pedagogical Practice in Times of Crisis in Higher Education

Wioleta Joanna Karna, Institute of Public Affairs, Jagiellonian University, Poland

Beyond Leadership: Unpacking Trust and Psychological Climate in Teachers' Knowledge Sharing Practices

Nedim Özdemir, Ege University, Turkey; Esen Altunay, Ege University, İzmir, Turkey; Ali Çağatay Kılınç, Karabük University, Turkey

Empowering School Leaders for Crisis and Emergency Response: Approaching a Professional Development Framework for Resilient Schools

Antonios Kafa, Open University of Cyprus, Cyprus

FFRI 302

Compassionate leadership supporting educational professionals' resilience

Eija Hanhimäki, University of Jyväskylä, Finland; Hanna-Kaisa Pekkarinen, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Focusing Educational Leadership on human potential: principals between encouragement and administrative virtuosity

Ulrich Hammerschmidt

eTwinning as a Tool for Developing Sustainability and Global Awareness in Early and Preschool Education

Linda Podrug Krstulović, Kindergarten Marjan, Split, Croatia



FFRI 303

Restorative Educational Leadership for Peace: Conceptualizing Restorative Authority as Relational Power in School Governance

Kjersti Lien, Østfold University College, Norway

Between Engagement and Civic Burnout. Diagnosis of social competence and civic attitudes of schoolteachers in Poland

Izabela Cytlak, Joanna Jarmużek Adam Mickiewicz University od Poznań, Poland, Laboratory od Educational Policy and Civic EducationJoanna Jarmużek, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland; Izabela Cytlak, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland

Collaborative Dimension of Local Education Policy Design

Vesna Kovač, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Rijeka, Croatia; Marko Kovačić, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Rijeka, Croatia; Monika Pažur, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Rijeka, Croatia; Eli Pijaca Plavšić, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Rijeka, Croatia

16.30 – 18.00

Parallel sessions

Inova Lab

Leadership competency in K-12 education: Scoping review | Elina Fonsén, University of Jyväskylä, Institution of Educational Leadership, Finland; Janni Alho, Tiina Lindfors, Monika Haanpää, Raisa Carpelan, Lauri Heikonen, Arto Kallioniemi, Eija Hanhimäki, Hannele Roponen

Fostering teacher resilience through fairness, power sharing, and people-oriented leadership in schools | Ana Mlekuž, Educational Research Institute, Slovenia; Ana Kozina, Educational Research Institute, Slovenia; Tina Pivec, Educational Research Institute, Slovenia; Tina Vršnik Perše, Educational Research Institute, Slovenia

Resilient leaders – resilient schools

Roman Dorczak, Jagiellonian University Poland

FFRI 301

Educational Leadership Network Europe supporting collaborative leadership and resilience | Eija Hanhimäki Institute of Educational Leadership, University of Jyväskylä, Finland; Mika Risku, Institute of Educational Leadership, University of Jyväskylä, Finland (90 min.)



FFRI 302

State-of-the-art of school self-evaluation capacity building support measures in Slovenia

Mihaela Zavašnik National Education Institute Slovenia

Strengthening Educational Leadership: The GROWTH (KASVU) Project's National and International Impact

Hanna-Kaisa Pekkarinen; Eija Hanhimäki, Havela-Jokinen Jenni, University of Jyväskylä, Institute of Educational Leadership, Finland; Jenni Havela-Jokinen, University of Jyväskylä, Institute of Educational Leadership, Finland

FFRI 303

Building Resilient Schools: Collaborative Leadership Practices in Resource-Disadvantaged Schools

Nedim Ozdemir, Ege University, Turkey

Collaborative Leadership in Post-Disaster School Recovery: Insights from Earthquake-Affected Schools in Türkiye and Global Reflections

Miray Özer, Ege University, Turkey; Dilek Erdoğan

Enhancing Students' Tacit Knowledge for Institutional Resilience through Collaborative Leadership

Esen Altunay, Faculty of Education, Ege University, Turkey; Hale Karataş, National Education Director, Bornova, Turkey

School–Community Collaboration in the Protection of Latmos: A School’s Contribution To The Process Of Environmental Resilience

Hasan Cüneyt Bozkurt

Ege University / Republic of Türkiye Ministry of National Education
bozkurthasancuneyt@gmail.com

Nedim Özdemir

Ege University / Republic of Türkiye Ministry of National Education

The aim of this study is to explore how a primary school participated—together with its teachers, parents, and students—in the environmental struggle in the Beşparmak Mountains of Aydın, historically known as Latmos; how this process took shape within the framework of school-community collaboration; and how the educational institution contributed to environmental resilience. The research was conducted using a qualitative research design and employed the case study method. It serves as a model case study. The study group consists of 3 teachers, 3 parents, 3 representatives of environmental organizations, and 1 school administrator who were involved at various levels in the environmental resistance process in the Latmos region, located in the Söke district of Aydın, Türkiye. Participants were selected through purposive sampling methods, specifically criterion sampling and convenience sampling techniques. Semi-structured interview forms, document analysis, and observation notes were used as data collection tools. In addition, visual materials from an art exhibition held at the school, media reports, publicly available legal documents related to the litigation process, and the researcher’s observation notes were also evaluated through document analysis. The collected data were analyzed using content analysis, one of the qualitative data analysis techniques. To increase the reliability of the data, the codes were reviewed by the researcher and compared with themes from similar studies. The findings show that an educational institution can act as an agent of social transformation not only in academic terms but also in terms of cultural and environmental awareness. Based on these findings, it is recommended that educational administrators and policymakers promote practices that support schools’ involvement in addressing local environmental issues in collaboration with their communities in order to enhance environmental resilience.

Emotions, Power, and Resistance: Navigating Emotional Expression in Leadership and Education

Monika Pažur

Faculty for Teacher Education, University of Zagreb

monika.pazur@ufzg.hr

This presentation explores the dynamic role of emotions within various power relations and their potential for fostering resistance, with a focus on leadership and emotional expression in educational contexts. Drawing on Megan Boler's framework of emotional expression and its regulation in power dynamics, we examine how emotions are selectively allowed to be displayed depending on the role of the individual as a leader or a follower. By investigating emotional experiences in two distinct contexts—parental behaviors in relation to authority and democratic engagement in education—we uncover the role of emotions as a foundation for resistance and transformation.

The first study, conducted with 750 parents, explores how emotional expressions are influenced by societal expectations of parental roles, focusing on how parents navigate emotional responses to authority, discipline, and control in their interactions with children. The second research is a participatory action study conducted with preschool and primary school teachers, alongside students, exploring how aesthetic and embodied methods in democratic education can enable emotional expression, challenge hierarchical power structures, and cultivate democratic sensibilities.

The results suggest that in both educational and workplace settings, certain emotions are often viewed as private, individual possessions that should not be visible to others. These emotions are typically regarded as inappropriate for public display, especially in hierarchical relationships where the leader must maintain composure and emotional control. In this context, there is a prevailing notion that emotions, particularly those linked to vulnerability, uncertainty, or frustration, have no place in professional environments. This view reinforces the notion that emotions should remain hidden, potentially limiting the scope for authentic human connection, and leaving little room for the role emotions can play in fostering resistance or transformational change. The results from participatory action study also reveal that creating spaces for authentic emotional expression through embodied pedagogy can empower both educators and students to resist oppressive power structures. These findings highlight the transformative potential of

emotions in educational settings, where emotions are not merely reactions, but powerful tools for developing democratic resistance and fostering ethical leadership.

Desirable Futures vs. Present Realities: Readiness for the Whole Institution Approach to Education for Sustainable Development in Secondary Education

Nena Vukelić

*University of Rijeka, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Department of Education, Croatia
nena.vukelic3@gmail.com*

Nena Rončević

*University of Rijeka, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Department of Education, Croatia*

Against the backdrop of pervasive crises in contemporary society, increasing efforts are being directed toward developing frameworks that support the creation of resilient and adaptable educational institutions. Within this context, the Whole Institution Approach (WIA), as conceptualized in the framework of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), is emerging as an effective model that promotes collaborative engagement among all stakeholders of educational institutions, underpinned by strong and visionary leadership, in pursuit of a sustainable future. To initiate a transition toward the implementation of this comprehensive approach, it is essential to understand how educational leaders perceive both the current state of their institutions and the potential for transformative change. Accordingly, the aim of this study was to analyze various dimensions of the WIA to ESD in secondary schools. Data were collected from a sample of 186 principals of secondary schools, 54.65% of whom were women. Participants were presented with a series of statements outlining a WIA to ESD model. They were asked to evaluate each statement on a 5-point Likert scale (1 – strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree), assessing the extent to which each statement reflected both the current state of their institution and the desired future state. The findings indicate that respondents perceived the envisioned future state, aligned with the principles of the WIA to ESD, as highly desirable. However, their assessments of the current state revealed a significant discrepancy, with substantially lower ratings. Based on these findings, the study discusses the present capacities and opportunities for implementing the WIA to ESD model within the context of secondary education.

From Reactive to Adaptive Teaching: Rethinking Pedagogical Practice in Times of Crisis in Higher Education

Wioleta Joanna Karna

Institute of Public Affairs Jagiellonian University, Poland

w.karna@uj.edu.pl

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed that in times of crisis universities are forced to act immediately, often implementing temporary solutions aimed merely at „getting through the semester“. At the same time, these experiences exposed the limitations of traditional teaching models and therefore addresses a timely and significant question: how can crisis be understood not only as a threat, but also as an opportunity for lasting change in academic culture?

The methodology adopted was qualitative and exploratory. The analysis drew on institutional documents, self-reflection from personal teaching practice, as well as informal conversations with colleagues within the institute, conducted both individually and during staff meetings. This approach made it possible to capture the dynamics of everyday academic work in rapidly changing conditions.

The findings indicate three key areas of change: 1) the development of new forms of collaboration and peer support among academic staff, 2) increased sensitivity to relationships and student well-being, and 3) the gradual institutional recognition of grassroots initiatives. These results show that even ad hoc solutions, if nurtured, can become the foundation for sustainable teaching strategies.

The main contribution of the study is to demonstrate that crisis can serve as a catalyst for transformation-triggering processes that shift teaching practice from reactive to adaptive and more community-oriented approaches. This points to new directions for the future of higher education pedagogy, grounded in resilience, collaboration and collective learning.

Beyond Leadership: Unpacking Trust and Psychological Climate in Teachers' Knowledge Sharing Practices

Nedim Özdemir

nedim.ozdemir@ege.edu.tr

Faculty of Education, Ege University, İzmir, Turkey

Esen Altunay

esenaltunay@yahoo.com; esen.altunay@ege.edu.tr

Ege University, İzmir, Turkey

Ali Çağatay Kılınç

cagataykilinc@karabuk.edu.tr

Karabük University, Karabük, Turkey

The pivotal role of teachers in achieving higher-level student learning outcomes has prompted society and educational systems to impose increasingly diverse expectations upon them. In response to these challenges, some scholars advocate for a collaborative approach, where teachers collectively share and advance pedagogical knowledge, skills, and methodologies to improve classroom practices (Zhang et al., 2023). Evidence suggests that school leaders can foster knowledge sharing among teachers by mitigating professional isolation from colleagues and promoting a school culture that nurtures collaborative sharing (Zeinabadi, 2023).

This study investigates how transformational leadership (TL) influences teacher knowledge sharing (TKS) through two key mechanisms: teacher trust (TT) as a mediator, and psychological climate (PC) as a moderator. TT captures the willingness of teachers to be vulnerable to one another based on perceived benevolence, competence, and reliability (Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 2000). PC refers to teachers' perceptions of their school environment in meeting their psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. A higher level of PC in a school is likely to empower teachers by instilling a sense of control over their work. This empowerment is crucial for enhancing TT as well as their engagement and willingness to share knowledge. Conversely, in schools where the PC is lacking, the positive impacts of TL on TT and TKS may not materialize.

This study developed and tested a multilevel moderated mediation model where transformational leadership was posited as the independent variable, teacher knowledge sharing as the outcome variable, psychological climate as the moderator, and teacher trust as the mediator. This study employed a hierarchical sampling methodology to collect data from 962 teachers across 71 lower-upper secondary schools in 12 regions of Türkiye. We obtained ethical approval from the university's ethics committee and legal permission from MoNE to conduct the study.

Our findings confirm that higher PC ratings among teachers amplified the positive indirect effects of TL on TKS, while lower PC perceptions diminished this influence. These insights highlight the importance of cultivating a positive PC to support principals' efforts in promoting TKS. Practically, we recommend that school principals focus on enhancing PC by fostering teacher autonomy and encouraging innovation.

To cultivate a positive PC, principals should adopt behaviors such as participative decision-making, regular staff recognition, and creating spaces for open dialogue and innovation. Supporting trust and collaboration through these practices can strengthen schools' adaptive capacity, positioning them as resilient institutions in the face of ongoing global and local challenges.

Empowering School Leaders for Crisis and Emergency Response: Approaching a Professional Development Framework for Resilient Schools

Antonios Kafa

Open University of Cyprus , Cyprus
antonios.kafa@ouc.ac.cy

In an era marked by unprecedented disruptions, school leaders are increasingly confronted with crises that defy conventional management approaches and challenge the boundaries of existing leadership paradigms. As we all know, during the pandemic crisis it has become clear that traditional notions of 'good leadership' are insufficient during crises and emergency situations. Particularly, the pandemic crisis has drawn a collective glare at schools in how they respond to crisis and illustrated the vulnerability of schools to crises, since the field of school leadership has traditionally paid scant attention to the topic of crisis and emergency response to support more resilient school organizations. Yet, the increasing number of crises and the response to emergency, from health crises to school shootings, natural disasters, etc. has resulted to the important aspect of supporting school leaders. Therefore, is import to empower school leaders with the skills and knowledge to lead effectively during crises and emergency situations. Having said that, this presentation, drawing on recent conceptual and empirical advancements in the field of school leadership, will provide an evolving professional development framework to support school leaders to navigate crisis and emergency situations with resilience and adaptability.

Compassionate leadership supporting educational professionals' resilience

Eija Hanhimäki

University of Jyväskylä, Finland

eija.h.hanhimaki@jyu.fi

Hanna-Kaisa Pekkarinen

University of Jyväskylä, Finland

In successful educational leadership, it has been recognised that vision and distributed leadership have been accompanied by strong core values and beliefs, agency, identity, moral purpose, trust, and resilience (Day, 2005). When it comes to compassionate leadership, it is not just recognising and feeling empathy but also real presence and concrete actions (Hakanen, Kuusela & Pessi, 2017).

Our investigation is based on training processes in compassionate and coaching leadership in one Finnish university. The participants were educational leaders and teachers. We gathered research material from the participants through initial and final surveys which we examined through content analysis. We explored how the participants described compassionate leadership in their daily work and how they experienced the support of this training for their resilience. Based on the initial results, the participants described compassionate leadership prior to the start of the training mainly through the traits of a compassionate leader. At the end of the training, the participants described that they were more aware of compassionate leadership and had included it in their own leadership, for example in development discussions. From the point of view of resilience, the participants said that compassion supports them in encountering challenging situations but compassion for others also burdens.

Focusing Educational Leadership on human potential: principals between encouragement and administrative virtuosity

Ulrich Hammerschmidt

hammerschmidt.ulrich1960@gmail.com

School principals are (in German schools) official part of the school supervisory system (on their lowest level) and the head of their own school with more or less teachers and hundreds of students. They are leaders of a hypercomplex social system on one hand and representatives of a strictly organized administrative system on the other hand. Both of them follow different logics, cultures and mental models of their collaborators. The mental model of the principal is essentially both for staff and students: will the school become a place of humanity and self-efficacy or will it look like a correctional facility? The lesson will be held at the background of 30 years of educational leadership experience and leadership training, connected with basics of the theory of social systems.

eTwinning as a Tool for Developing Sustainability and Global Awareness in Early and Preschool Education

Linda Podrug Krstulović,
Kindergarten Marjan, Split, Croatia
lpkrstulovic@gmail.com

This paper explores the potential of the eTwinning platform in promoting sustainable education and fostering resilience, global awareness, and a culture of peace among early and preschool-aged children through interactive, interdisciplinary, and multicultural collaboration. Children are introduced to developmentally appropriate topics such as renewable energy, water conservation, biodiversity, biomimicry, and recycling, which stimulate their curiosity, creativity, and active participation. Emphasis is placed on developing divergent thinking and problem-solving skills, while teamwork and collaboration in a safe environment contribute to the development of personal and social resilience, as well as adaptability. The research is based on qualitative content analysis of documentation and reflective practice notes from five eTwinning projects implemented over two years at Marjan Kindergarten in Split, in partnership with educators from 11 countries. Children's responses and developmental progress were observed through their active involvement in collaborative STEM, ecological and artistic activities, creative processes, storytelling, and daily peer interactions. These indicators were supplemented by feedback from parents and professional staff, along with project materials shared on the TwinSpace platform. These sources served as relevant evidence supporting the effectiveness of this approach in early and preschool education. Through interactions with children and customs from other countries, the eTwinning projects provided children with a tangible and understandable experience of global diversity, fostering the development of tolerance, empathy, and a sense of belonging to a global community. Participation in teamwork and collaboration within a safe and stimulating digital environment contributed to the development of children's personal and social resilience, as well as their ability to adapt to new and diverse contexts. A key factor in the success of these projects was the proactive role of the kindergarten principal and the pedagogical coordinator, who fostered an inclusive organizational culture, encouraged international collaboration, and integrated global citizenship and sustainability into the curriculum. Their leadership was crucial in creating the conditions for innovation, supporting the professional development of educators, and embedding digital and environmental literacy into everyday early childhood education practice. The integration of interdisciplinary content into early and preschool education supports the formation of responsible, compassionate, and resilient young citizens, ready to actively participate in a just and sustainable future.

Restorative Educational Leadership for Peace: Conceptualizing Restorative Authority as Relational Power in School Governance

Kjersti Lien

Østfold University College Norway

kjersti.e.lien@hiof.no

Despite growing interest in restorative justice (RJ) and restorative practices (RP) in schools, educational leadership theory has yet to fully engage with the epistemological and ethical shifts that a restorative approach entails. In particular, current leadership paradigms remain largely rooted in managerial, instructional, or transformational models that emphasize individual agency, hierarchical accountability, and performance outcomes—often at the expense of relational integrity, community well-being, and justice. This article addresses a significant research gap by proposing a new theoretical framework for restorative educational leadership for peace, grounded in a critical and relational understanding of power.

Drawing on theories of restorative justice, peace education, relational leadership, and care ethics, this paper introduces the concept of restorative authority—a form of leadership power that is exercised with and through relationships, rather than over others. Restorative authority is defined by its commitment to dialogue, mutual accountability, and community repair, positioning school leaders as stewards of relational trust and systemic inclusion. This concept challenges conventional notions of authority in school governance by emphasizing co-agency, relational responsiveness, and structural justice as foundational principles of leadership.

The paper maps out four interrelated dimensions of restorative educational leadership: (1) Relational Governance, where decision-making processes are participatory and dialogic; (2) Justice-Oriented Leadership, which confronts structural inequalities through restorative principles; (3) Peacebuilding School Culture, where conflict is transformed rather than managed; and (4) Restorative Professional Identity, reflecting leaders' ethical orientation toward healing, inclusion, and collective flourishing.

Between Engagement and Civic Burnout. Diagnosis of social competence and civic attitudes of school teachers in Poland

Izabela Cytlak

Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland

izabela.cytlak@amu.edu.pl

Joanna Jarmużek

Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland

Adam Mickiewicz

Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland

The purpose of the speech is to reflect on the results of research on civic burnout among teachers. The research was conducted in Poland among public and private school teachers at the primary and secondary levels. Teachers were surveyed with two psychometric and psychological tools, diagnosing the level of social competence, the level of civic engagement. The tool also diagnosed the level of civic burnout.

The purpose of the study was to diagnose the extent of civic burnout and reflect on the support needed for teachers. A high level of social competence helps counteract the symptoms of burnout. Competencies such as:

- assertive competence,
- cooperative competence,
- social competence,
- social resourcefulness and
- social competence were diagnosed.

Regarding civic engagement It is used to study civic attitudes understood as citizens' attitudes toward the socio-political system in which they live. It takes into account three dimensions, which are the sense of control and trust towards the system, identification with one's own country and civic involvement in various social actions and activities. These dimensions correspond to three subscales of the SOP:

1. Trust and Control – Distrust and Helplessness,
2. Civic Identity – Lack of Civic Identity, and
3. Civic Involvement – Civic Disengagement.

Negative attitudes can be interpreted as “civic burnout” syndrome.

Through analysis of the data, a high correlation was found between civic engagement and some aspects of social competence. The obtained results were also influenced by the age of the respondents and the length of service, which clearly indicates how important it is to support teachers in their role as educators and educators, and the support should be tailor-made. Detailed correlations will be discussed at the conference. The research also indicated a high correlation between the various dimensions of civic attitudes and the level of social competences.

Collaborative Dimension of Local Education Policy Design

Vesna Kovač, Full Professor

University of Rijeka, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

vesna.kovac@ffri.uniri.hr

Marko Kovačić, Associate Professor

University of Rijeka, Center for peace and Conflicts Studies

Monika Pažur, Assistant Professor

University of Zagreb, Faculty of Teacher Education

Eli Pijaca Plavšić, mag. soc.

Edukateka, independend educational consultant

The purpose of this paper is to present a theoretical framework of the research titled Analysis of local education policy design. The research is focused at analyzing local educational policies in Croatia, with the term "local educational policy" initially defined as the focused actions of a network of actors at the level of local self-government (cities, municipalities), responsible and/or interested in education, with the goal of creating and implementing initiatives (programs, projects, practices) that can ensure better functioning of local schools and the successful realization of students' educational achievements. It starts from the assumption that the local level of educational policy (also referred to as the middle tier/layer structure in the context of school leadership literature) plays a crucial role in communication between schools and national educational policy, identifying specific needs and/or problems of local schools, providing targeted and individual support to schools, and fostering collaboration among schools. Special focus of the presentation will be given to introducing the concept of local education policy design and its collaborative dimension.

The most widely used conceptualization of policy design refers to the connection between policy goals and the instruments aimed at achieving them. Traditionally, policy design has been understood as a process dominated by experts and government officials—public servants acting as the primary decision-makers—while citizens and other stakeholders (e.g., the academic community) were largely excluded. A distinguishing feature of contemporary understandings of public policy design, compared to the traditional approach, is the inclusion of a broader range of actors, such as civil society organizations, the private sector, and other local stakeholders. This participatory and inclusive approach to policy design is crucial for developing (local education) policies that more accurately reflect the real needs and interests of stakeholders. Such an approach enables the examination of several key elements: which actors are involved in the design of local policy; whether the rationale for including these particular actors is known—and if so, what that rationale is; whether there are established protocols for selecting actors; and whether non-institutional actors have only access or also actual influence.

The presentation will offer arguments that integrating collaborative dimensions into the design of local education policies contributes to the development of more inclusive and effective policy initiatives that are better equipped to respond to the complex challenges of contemporary societies.

Leadership competency in K-12 education: Scoping review

Elina Fonsén

elina.fonsen@gmail.com

Janni Alho

Tiina Lindfors

Monika Haanpää

Raisa Carpelan

Lauri Heikonen

Arto Kallioniemi

Eija Hanhimäki

Hannele Roponen

University of Jyväskylä, Institution of Educational Leadership, Finland

This day's educational organisations operate in complex operational environments in which highly competent leadership and effective leadership development support are needed. Our scoping review explored the recent research literature (2019–2024) on leadership competencies in K-12 education and, subsequently, aims at building an understanding of what comprises leadership competency in the K-12 education context. We conducted the database search in ERIC and applied the PRISMA statement extended for scoping reviews in the selection process of the studies. In total 51 studies were included in the review.

We identified nine main leadership competency themes, including leadership competency as a whole as well as competency in: 1) pedagogical leadership, 2) emotional and social aspects, 3) leading digitalisation, 4) leading diversity and social justice, 5) leading in the 21st century operational environment, 6) leading data-driven decision-making, 7) leading school turnaround and 8) crisis leadership.

Our scoping review contributes to the existing literature of the field by offering insights into the recent research literature on leadership competency, helping to build an understanding of those leadership competency aspects that are particularly relevant today and in the near future. Findings can be applied in designing effective professional development support for K-12 leaders internationally.

Fostering teacher resilience through fairness, power sharing and people-oriented leadership in schools

Ana Mlekuž

Educational Research Institute, Slovenia

ana.mlekuz@pei.si

Ana Kozina

Educational Research Institute, Slovenia

Tina Pivec

Educational Research Institute, Slovenia

Tina Vršnik Perše

Educational Research Institute, Slovenia

As stress and demands in schools grow, teacher well-being has become central to the resilience of educational institutions (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017; Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). Research highlights the importance of leadership, characterized by fairness, power sharing, and a people-oriented approach, in supporting teachers and strengthening schools (Leithwood et al., 2008; Collie et al., 2012).

This study examines how these leadership dimensions relate to teacher self-efficacy, burnout, and job satisfaction, both directly and when controlling for workplace stressors such as time pressure, student misbehaviour, and low student motivation (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). The data come from a cross-sectional survey of 1.179 Slovenian teachers (73% primary, 26% secondary, 1% other).

Validated scales measured leadership (Kalshoven et al., 2011), self-efficacy (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008), burnout (Shirom & Melamed, 2006), and job satisfaction (OECD, 2018). Linear and hierarchical regressions showed that leadership, especially fairness and people orientation, was positively linked to self-efficacy and job satisfaction, and negatively to burnout. Even after controlling for stressors, leadership explained additional variance in all outcomes.

These findings highlight the importance of fostering fair, inclusive, and people-focused leadership to build more supportive and resilient school environments.

Resilient leaders – resilient schools

Roman Dorczak,

Jagiellonian University Poland

roman.dorczak@interia.pl

The role of school leader brings a lot of challenges and exposes to professional stress coming from different sources. Among key competencies of contemporary leaders, building personal resilience and coping with stress and its consequences seem to be one of most important. Preventing stress and applying adequate strategies to cope with it are vital to act successfully as leader helping to develop healthy personalities that can lead schools with healthy organizational cultures.

In this paper small research will be presented. Author tried to answer the question of how school leaders (headteachers) deal with professional stress. Author invited all school leaders in Poland using database of Polish Association of School Leaders. The group of approximately 500 leaders answered. They are leaders of all types of schools from primary to upper secondary.

The research consisted of two parts. Firstly subjects were asked to assess how different sources of stress affect them. Secondly they were asked to tell what methods of dealing with stress and its consequences they apply. The list of sources of stress and methods of dealing was constructed using results of pilot study with participation of a small group of leaders from different schools.

Paper will present results of the study and try to give some recommendations.

Educational Leadership Network Europe supporting collaborative leadership and resilience

Eija Hanhimäki

Institute of Educational Leadership, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

eija.h.hanhimäki@jyu.fi

Mika Risku

Institute of Educational Leadership, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

In this workshop, we present the aims and findings of the Educational Leadership Network Europe ELNE project and work around the third-year theme of the project, especially from the perspective of the ELNE research committee. The main goal of this project is promoting collaborative leadership in Europe. The ELNE is a 4-year project funded by the European Commission and working with 60 member organisations from 34 countries at the European, national, regional, and local levels. These organisations represent education employers, teachers, school heads, parents, students, researchers, and policymakers.

The first year of ELNE (2023–24) focused on collaborative school and education leadership from the perspective of learning communities and evidence-informed policymaking and practice. During the second year (2024–25), we worked mainly around the definition for collaborative leadership. The third project year (2025–26) has just started and now our aim is to explore practices and expressions of collaborative leadership. We would like to gather and analyse these practices and expressions from the different levels of educational systems in European countries. At the same time, we can test and specify the definition of collaborative leadership as a multidimensional process where three foundational dimensions support this model: culture, structure, and resources.

State-of-the-art of school self-evaluation capacity building support measures in Slovenia

Mihaela Zavašnik

National Education Institute, Slovenia

mihaela.zavasnik@zrss.si

In Slovenia, institutional self-evaluation has been formally recognised as a fundamental mechanism for identifying and ensuring quality in schools since 2007. National evaluation studies, individual (albeit rare) Slovenian research, and practice show that schools face many challenges in implementing self-evaluation. This paper focuses on the state of the art analysis of system support measures for capacity building of school self-evaluation. The analysis is based on a collection of data gathered through document analysis (yearly plans and reports by the main governmental educational support institutions), an analysis of the Slovenian Catalogue of Continuing Education and Training Programmes for Educational Professionals in Education (KATIS) and selected data from the PISA 2022 international survey. The document and catalogue analysis show the system provides all key types of support measures for school self-evaluation capacity building. At the same time, the information and data indicate there are many pitfalls, drawbacks and gaps regarding different forms of support measures. Additionally, the PISA 2022 data reveal there is a divergence of opinion among the principals surveyed as to which of the support measures are systemically offered. The paper also provides some concrete examples of school self-evaluation support measures, which include collaborative (leadership) forms of work, e.g. establishing school self-evaluation teams, engaging all school staff in establishing priorities for self-evaluation, leading school networks, peer assessment of self-evaluation reports etc., which clearly show that collaborative leadership at all levels help build trust, enhance shared responsibility and strengthen staff capacities for self-evaluation. The paper concludes with a proposal of systemic indicators and measures for the implementation of support measures to strengthen the capacity to implement school self-evaluation.

Strengthening Educational Leadership: The GROWTH (KASVU) Project's National and International Impact

Hanna-Kaisa Pekkarinen

University of Jyväskylä, Finland
hanna-kaisa.hk.pekkarinen@jyu.fi

Eija Hanhimäki

University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Havela-Jokinen Jenni

University of Jyväskylä, Finland

The GROWTH project, funded by ESF+, aims to establish a unified national foundation for continuous learning in educational leadership in Finland. By developing sustainable structures, models, and strategic collaboration, the project addresses the fragmented and often uncertain funding landscape that has characterized leadership training—previously reliant on project-based funding and participant fees.

GROWTH supports both current and aspiring leaders in enhancing their competencies by recognizing the continuous need for leadership development across all educational levels and sectors. The project also seeks to expand national and international networks, influence policy, and strengthen the strategic position of educational leadership within the broader educational system. In addition to the four Finnish core project partners, GROWTH actively promotes broad national and international networking and collaboration.

The project's main objective is divided into three sub-objectives:

The first goal is to establish a common national forum for providers of educational leadership education, researchers and working life organisations. The second aim is to create a national expertise cluster to support future development work and education by recognizing working life needs and addressing overlaps and gaps. The third goal is to develop a shared pedagogical foundation for the education in leadership across all levels and forms of education, enabling flexible learning paths and processes for continuing learning.

Collaborative Leadership in Post-Disaster School Recovery: Insights from Earthquake-Affected Schools in Türkiye and Global Reflections

Miray Özer

Ege University, Turkey
mirayozzer23@outlook.com

Dilek Erdoğan

Ege University, Turkey

In recent years, educational institutions around the world have faced increasing challenges due to natural disasters, pandemics, and political instability. These disruptions have highlighted the need for resilient leadership structures that are not centralized but distributed and collaborative. This study investigates the role of collaborative leadership in the recovery of schools affected by the 2023 earthquakes in Türkiye, while drawing parallels with international practices in post-disaster school management. Using a qualitative case study approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with school principals and teachers from public schools located in heavily impacted regions. The findings reveal that school leaders who engaged in shared decision-making, built strong internal support networks, and empowered teachers through participatory processes were more effective in fostering institutional resilience and reducing teacher burnout. Moreover, teacher resilience emerged as a crucial factor between leadership practices and organizational recovery. By situating the Türkiye case within a broader global discourse, this study also draws on comparative insights from Japan, the United States, and Haiti to underscore the universal relevance of collaborative leadership in crisis contexts. The study contributes to the growing body of research on distributed leadership and educational resilience, offering actionable strategies for policymakers, educational leaders, and international organizations operating in disaster-prone regions.

Keywords: collaborative leadership, school recovery, resilience, post-disaster education.

The courage to lead. Resilient Leadership in Schools – Building Capacity for Change and Continuity

Isabelle Truyen

GO! scholengroep20, Belgium

isabelle.truyen@scholengroep20.be

In an age of increasing complexity, educational leaders are called not only to manage change, but to lead their schools through it with coherence, care, and courage. This presentation explores the essential elements of resilient leadership in the school context, grounded in the case of GO! Scholengroep 20 (SGR20), a Belgian school group that systematically embeds vision-driven, adaptive, and inclusive leadership into its structures.

We highlight how resilient leadership connects strategic vision with operational systems, resulting in stronger instructional quality, improved learning outcomes, and a sustainable professional culture. Through initiatives like the Impetus Academy, professional learning communities, teacher design teams, and a centralized data dashboard, SGR20 demonstrates how leadership can drive collective ownership, inclusive practices, and data-informed decision-making at every level of the school system.

The results are tangible: from improved student performance (e.g. spelling proficiency rising from 53% to 84%) to empowered middle leadership and strengthened care systems. Participants will gain insight into how resilient school leaders foster equity, trust, and innovation by building robust processes, prioritizing well-being, and creating conditions for continuous learning and shared responsibility.

This session offers a compelling vision of leadership that not only withstands disruption but transforms it into opportunity.

Enhancing Students' Tacit Knowledge for Institutional Resilience through Collaborative Leadership

Esen Altunay,

Faculty of Education, Ege University, Turkey
esenaltunay@yahoo.com; esen.altunay@ege.edu.tr

Hale Karataş,

National Education Director, Bornova, İzmir, Turkey

There are growing challenges that schools, educational institutions, and systems worldwide face. These challenges have impacted the physical safety of students and staff, their emotional well-being, and the continuity of learning. To achieve this role of educational institutions must go beyond academic instruction and contribute to society by fostering knowledge transfer, cultivating responsible citizenship, and enhancing students' adaptive capacities.

A key aspect of this is supporting students' resilience. One of the foundational elements that contributes to such resilience is the development of tacit knowledge—knowledge that is personal, context-specific, and often difficult to articulate or formalize. However, structuring and transferring both explicit and tacit knowledge within educational programs presents challenges for many students (Wasonga & Murphy, 2006). Tacit knowledge, as conceptualized by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995), is formed through social interactions and shared experiences within organizational contexts. These interactions are influenced by the school's cultural and relational dynamics, which can, in turn, lead to conflicts and disagreements when shared understanding is lacking.

Schools that cultivate reflective, inclusive, and supportive environments enable teachers to more effectively engage with the broader institutional goals. Collaborative leadership can promote shared values, increase cohesion, and ultimately contribute to institutional resilience. This study proposes recommendations for researchers, school leaders, and policymakers to strengthen the resilience of educational institutions through collaborative leadership and the development of tacit knowledge.

This study used a phenomenological design, a qualitative research method, to facilitate an in-depth understanding of how teachers' behaviours influence the development of students' tacit knowledge and to identify the role of collaborative leadership in enhancing the resilience of schools. The participants were selected using maximum variation sampling. To this end, an attempt was made to ensure diversity concerning teachers' gender, branch, education level, and school level. Research data were collected from 30 teachers working in public educational institutions in İzmir province in the 2023–2024 academic year.

DAY 3 SATURDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER 2025



9.00 – 10.30

Keynote

Jonathan James, OECD

Agency in action: School leadership for a sustainable tomorrow

11.00–12.30

Keynote session UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report #LeadforLearning

Leadership for inclusion lessons from Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia
Manos Antoninis, UNESCO, Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report

When Commitment Collides with Constraints: The Moderating Role of Inclusive Attitudes and
Job Satisfaction on School Leaders' Mandate for Inclusion
Jasna Kovačević, University of Sarajevo

Country Cases

Study on Leadership for Inclusive Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina
Lamija Spahić, proMENTE Social Research, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Inclusive Education Initiative in Two Azerbaijani Schools

Ulviyya Mikayilova, ADA University Azerbaijan; Dr. Zorka Karanxha, University of South Florida
USA; Lalakhanim Orujova, Creative Times Academy LLC, USA

14.30 – 16.00

Parallel sessions

Inova Lab

Croatian focused Symposium – #Lead for Inclusion

Manos Antoninis, UNESCO GEM Report; Sanja Brajković, Network of Education Policy Centers
Vesna Kovač, University of Rijeka; Jane Sclaunich, Prva riječka hrvatska gimnazija, Rijeka;
Željka Štampar Zamuda, Primary School Tomaša Goričanca, Mala Subotica

FFRI 301

Leadership for Inclusion: The Principal's Role in Addressing Diversity in Educational Institutions
Marko Strle, National Education Institute, Slovenia

School Management Support to Teachers of Minority education Institutions in Latvia a during
the transition to Education in Latvian Language

Darja Pallo, University of Latvia, Latvia; Antra Ozola, University of Latvia, Latvia

Gender-Based Academic Mobbing in Turkish Universities: A Meta-Analysis from a Feminist
Perspective I Evrim Erol, Kutahya Dumlupinar University, Turkey

The Principal Profession in the Context of Different Levels of the Education System

Matilda Karamatić Brčić, Department of Pedagogy, University of Zadar, Croatia; Višnja Perin,
Development and Consulting Ltd., Zadar, Croatia; Igor Radeka, Department of Pedagogy,
University of Zadar



FFRI 302

School Development Program: Resource Manual

Adna Sokolović, Center for Educational Initiatives Step by Step, Bosnia and Herzegovina

What teachers value in the selection of primary school principals

Vlatka Kovač, Primary school Grigor Vitez Zagreb, Croatia

The role and perspective of the school pedagogue: Experiences from Kosovo

Osman Buleshkaj, Kosovo Pedagogical Institute, Kosovo

FFRI 303

Resilient Systems, Resilient Students: The Role of Leadership, Autonomy, and School Closures in Shaping Academic Resilience

Rasa Nedzinskaitė-Mačiūnienė, Vytautas Magnus University, Education Academy Lithuania;
Egle Stasiunaitiene, Vytautas Magnus University, Education Academy Lithuania

Competence-based curriculum: How transnational bureaucracy created a behaviouristic outcome-based school system in Norway

Knut Ove Aesøy, Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway

When Commitment Collides with Constraints: The Moderating Role of Inclusive Attitudes and Job Satisfaction on School Leaders' Mandate for Inclusion

Jasna Kovačević

University of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

jasna.kovacevic@efsa.unsa.ba

This paper explores how school leaders' perceived mandate to support inclusive education is influenced by their beliefs, professional experiences, and workplace conditions. Using UNESCO's GEM 2024 survey data from leaders across Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, two regression models examined factors shaping perceived mandate in (1) human resources (HR) and (2) infrastructure for inclusion.

The HR model showed no direct impact of HR challenges, job satisfaction, or inclusive attitudes on mandate. However, inclusive beliefs intensified the negative effect of HR obstacles, while job satisfaction mitigated it. Leaders with strong inclusive values felt more discouraged when facing HR barriers, whereas those with higher job satisfaction remained more resilient.

The infrastructure model revealed that inclusive leadership training and professional networks positively predicted perceived mandate, while formal qualification programs had a surprising negative effect. Again, inclusive attitudes heightened the discouraging effect of infrastructural obstacles, pointing to a "values frustration" dynamic - where strong beliefs in inclusion lead to greater disillusionment when systemic support is lacking. Findings suggest that building inclusive leadership requires more than training and resources; it also involves nurturing leaders' morale, addressing workplace barriers, and aligning systemic conditions with their professional values.

Country Case Study on Leadership for Inclusive Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Lamija Spahić

proMENTE, Bosnia and Herzegovina

lamija.spahic@promente.net

This case study examines how school leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) understand and apply inclusive education principles, which recognize the unique needs, characteristics, interests, and abilities of every child. Special focus is placed on the role of principals in fostering an inclusive school culture, as well as on their practices, challenges, and attitudes toward ensuring quality, equitable education for all. The research, conducted from March to May 2024, included a multi-method approach: an online survey (N=54 school leaders), 21 interviews with primary and secondary school leaders, and one focus group with policymakers. BiH's education system reflects its complex administrative structure—comprising the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska, and the Brčko District. Each administrative unit has its own educational policies. While laws guarantee equal education regardless of gender, nationality, religion, ability, or socio-economic status, they do not explicitly define inclusive leadership or specify vulnerable groups. In practice, inclusion relies on individualized approaches and adapted teaching, supported by professional staff. The employment of assistants depends on school budgets, and children with severe developmental difficulties may attend specialized institutions. National minorities have the right to education in their mother tongue, but implementation depends on the availability of staff and teaching materials. The results show that meeting the diverse needs of students is limited by a lack of resources. Leaders express motivation and positive attitudes toward inclusion but feel uncertain about its implementation, citing insufficient professional development, lack of qualified staff, financial constraints, inadequate materials, and infrastructure. Despite this, many schools apply inclusive practices like individualized education plans, assistive technologies, peer support, and socio-emotional skills development. Most believe inclusion is “good in theory but difficult in practice,” yet view it as beneficial for academic, emotional, and social growth.

Inclusive Education Initiative in Two Azerbaijani Schools

Ulvyja Mikayilova,

ADA University, Azerbaijan

umikailova@ada.edu.az

Zorka Karanxha

University of South Florida, USA

Lalakhanim Orujova

CREATIVE TIMES ACADEMY LLC, USA

Inclusive education in Azerbaijan is a relatively recent development. Following the conclusion of the country's first inclusive education pilot project, most participating schools returned to traditional, non-inclusive teaching practices. However, two pilot schools sustained inclusive approaches and continued accepting and educating children with disabilities without any external support. This study investigates how these two schools cultivated and maintained an inclusive culture, and explores the factors and actors that influenced this process.

Using a basic qualitative research design, the study focused on two feeder public schools that had begun including children with disabilities during the pilot. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with a total of 18 participants who had been involved in the project from the outset. Participants included school principals, teachers, parents of students in the inclusive program, and members of the non-governmental organization that supported the schools during the pilot phase. A comprehensive sampling strategy was used to capture perspectives from all key stakeholder groups.

Data analysis was conducted in two phases—deductive coding followed by inductive coding—allowing for both the systematic organization of information and the emergence of deeper meanings from participants' accounts. Findings revealed that school leaders played a central role in shaping an inclusive culture by fostering collaborative communities of practice. These communities engaged in joint meaning-making around the concept of inclusion, learned through practice, and embedded inclusive values in daily school life.

The study offers valuable insights into the cultural dimensions of change, emphasizing that sustained inclusion requires leadership, collaboration, and shared learning within the school community.

Croatian focused Symposium – #Lead for Inclusion

Manos Antoninis

UNESCO GEM Report

m.antoninis@unesco.org

Sanja Brajković

Network of Education Policy Centers

Vesna Kovač

University of Rijeka

Jane Sclaunich

Prva riječka hrvatska gimnazija, Rijeka

Željka Štampar Zamuda

Primary School Tomaša Goričanca, Mala Subotica

The Lead4Inclusion Symposium focused on Croatia will create a platform to explore the recommendations from the UNESCO GEM Regional Report Leadership for Inclusion, focusing on the enhancement of leadership in education as a means of fostering inclusivity. The Symposium will analyse Croatia's progress in key areas outlined in the report, including the autonomy of school leaders, the preparation and training of educational leaders, and the importance of intersectoral cooperation. The symposium will delve into how current legislation supports these initiatives, aiming to create a more inclusive educational framework. Through critical dialogue and shared experiences, the panellists will assess the state of leadership in Croatian schools, emphasizing the need for empowered leaders who can navigate the complexities of diverse learning environments. The discussion will highlight successful practices that align with the UNESCO GEM recommendations, showcasing real-world applications that promote inclusion. Additionally, the symposium will feature testimonials from two exemplary school leaders—a primary school leader and a secondary school leader—who have implemented innovative strategies within their institutions. These case studies will serve as inspiration, demonstrating practical approaches to overcoming barriers and enhancing educational opportunities for all students, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds. By fostering an inclusive dialogue among stakeholders in the educational landscape, the Lead4Inclusion symposium aims to create a space for future leadership initiatives in Croatia that support the diverse needs of all learners.

Leadership for Inclusion: The Principal's Role in Addressing Diversity in Educational Institutions

Marko Strle

National Education Institute, Slovenia

marko.strle@zrss.si

Addressing diversity for the realisation of inclusive education is a specific task of the Institute of Education of the Republic of Slovenia, which was created as a three-year active cooperation of a group of principals of educational institutions, where we develop and upgrade our knowledge and strengthen our leadership capacities for the realisation of inclusion in our institutions. The programme opens up opportunities for professional and career development and provides a better chance to pursue quality leadership.

The key purpose of the training is to support headteachers in the implementation of inclusive education. In the first year of the programme, we pursued key objectives such as to learn and understand the theory of structural cognitive modification and vicarious learning experiences to develop learning potential; to experience confronting one's own prejudices and encounter stereotypes in the flesh; to raise awareness of diversity for leaders; to understand and address areas of diversity in an educational institution (multilingualism, interculturality, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, race, ethnicity); to get to know, analyse and evaluate a selected example of an inclusive institution; to watch a selected cultural event highlighting the area of diversity, inclusiveness (theatre performance, film, etc.) and to actively participate in a conversation with its creators and evaluate the implementation of the action in the first year of the programme. The ongoing evaluation after the first year of the assignment evaluated the effects of the training of the participants in the programme and identified how to improve it.

Qualitative methods of data collection and processing were used to evaluate the programme, and the results are presented below according to the levels indicated.

Participants' feedback on their satisfaction with the programme was obtained through their written answers at the end of the programme (opportunities and possibilities for cooperation and exchange during the programme, overall satisfaction, relevance of the methods and forms of work used, usefulness of the knowledge acquired). All participants felt that they had had sufficient opportunities and possibilities for cooperation and exchange during the programme. They were all very satisfied with the programme and considered that the methods and forms of work used were appropriate, being very varied, active and new to them. The knowledge they gained is very helpful as they see its potential for further application and the opportunity to look at inclusion from different perspectives.

School Management Support to Teachers of Minority education Institutions in Latvia a during the transition to Education in Latvian Language

Darja Pallo

University of Latvia, Latvia

daria.pallo@gmail.com

Antra Ozola

University of Latvia, Latvia

The study “School Management Support to Teachers of Minority Education Institutions in Latvia during the Transition to Education in Latvian Language” investigates the role of school leadership in facilitating the ongoing language transition process in minority education institutions. The aim of the research is to examine how school management supports teaching staff in adapting to the national policy of transitioning to Latvian as the primary language of instruction. This study is particularly topical, as it takes place during the second year of the transition process, a critical period for assessing changes in institutional practices and professional support mechanisms. By employing a mixed-methods approach, the research combines analytical and empirical methods, including expert interviews with educational management professionals and surveys conducted with administrative and teaching staff in schools where Latvian is not the native language for the majority of students. In addition to qualitative and quantitative data collection, the study incorporates a comprehensive review of relevant organizational and methodological documents. Special emphasis is placed on comparing findings from the first and second years of the transition to identify evolving challenges and shifting support needs. The study provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of current management strategies and offers recommendations for strengthening institutional capacity in multilingual education settings.

The Principal Profession In The Context Of Different Levels Of The Education System

Matilda Karamatić Brčić,

Department of Pedagogy, University of Zadar, Croatia
mkarama@unizd.hr

Višnja Perin,

Development and Consulting Ltd., Zadar, Croatia

Igor Radeka

Department of Pedagogy, University of Zadar

The general democratization of society should be accompanied by the improvement of the quality of work of each educational institution: from its structure, through the way of working to decision-making. In this context, the focus of attention is shifting from independent principal management to distributed participatory leadership, which implies strengthening the competencies of all stakeholders in the education system.

The position of principal implies numerous competencies necessary for modern leadership. The question arises whether different levels within the education system may require different degrees of development of pedagogical, psychological and economic-legal competencies of principals?

The paper presents the results of empirical research selected characteristics of distributed leadership among participants of all five generations of the first Croatian postgraduate specialist study "Management and Management of Educational Institutions" at the University of Zadar. The "Questionnaire on the Characteristics of School Management", which was constructed and used by Iva Buchberger in her doctoral dissertation, was applied. The questionnaire was adapted to a lesser extent for this research. The aim of the paper is to examine whether there are statistically significant differences in the use of selected dimensions of distributed leadership by an educational institution at different levels of the educational system.

The results showed that there are statistically significant differences on all composite variables between respondents operating at different levels of the educational system, except for the composite variable of material and organizational resources. The results obtained indicate the need to consider the development of different levels competencies required for leadership at different levels of the educational system, depending on the structure of stakeholders, expectations from the principal and the role of the principal.

Action for Reducing Inequalities in Education School Development Program – SDP: Resource Manual

Adna Sokolović,

Center for Educational Initiatives Step by Step, Bosnia and Herzegovina
adna@coi-stepbystep.ba

Belma Čutura

Center for Educational Initiatives Step by Step, Bosnia and Herzegovina

The school community consists of teachers, school staff, parents, and the broader social community in which children and families reside. Every member of the community needs the same sense of belonging, a sense of being respected, of being an important and valuable member of that community. All these components refer to what we call school climate and culture. They are important for addressing the needs of all children and especially those coming from weaker socio-economic backgrounds. Addressing the needs requires strong educational leadership that takes planned and systemic action. School leadership, administration, and those taking leadership roles in schools play one of the central roles in shaping climate and culture, coordinating the contributions of teachers, parents, students, and the wider community. This workshop will focus on presenting the leadership dimension of the School Development Program (SDP) and showcasing its role in creating a safe environment where every child feels accepted and develops the competencies necessary for living in and creating a society based on universal human values, mutual respect, and support. Participants will get an overview of key elements of the SDP Manual with selected parts that illustrate how educational leadership can shape inclusive school climate and culture, and they will have the opportunity to review some of the sample forms included in the manual, which they can later use as practical tools in their own school context.

The role and perspective of the school pedagogue: Experiences from Kosovo

Osman Buleshkaj

Kosovo Pedagogical Institute

Osman.Buleshkaj@rks-gov.net

In recent decades, Kosovo has implemented numerous reforms aimed at improving its education system, with the role of the school pedagogue gaining particular status. The school pedagogue has evolved into a central figure in driving instructional leadership, supporting teacher development, and contributing to the overall quality of teaching and learning. Positioned as a key component of the school's middle-management structure, pedagogues are increasingly expected to exercise strategic leadership in school improvement, guiding pedagogical practices, and fostering inclusion.

This study explores the professional and leadership dimensions of the school pedagogue in Kosovo, with a focus on both systemic challenges and developmental opportunities. Employing a mixed-methods approach, combining literature review and interviews with policymakers from the Ministry of Education, municipal education officials, representatives from Faculties of Education, and national education experts, the study identifies critical factors that influence and strengthen this profession within the education system.

Findings highlight the need for a clear vision for pedagogues as instructional leaders who operate as connecting point between policy, practice, and professional learning. Despite key challenges, including limited financial resources, inconsistent recruitment procedures, and insufficient leadership preparation, there are also numerous opportunities. These include the integration of leadership development into university programs for pedagogues, investment in advanced in-service training modules, and the strategic use of technology to expand the reach and impact of pedagogical leadership practice. The study concludes by recommending the development of a sustainable national policy framework that clarifies and promotes the role of school pedagogues. It calls for the creation of a comprehensive, career-long professional learning pathway that emphasizes both pedagogical excellence and transformational leadership, empowering pedagogues to act as change agents in the continuous improvement of schools across Kosovo.

Resilient Systems, Resilient Students: Examining the Influence of Leadership, Autonomy, and School Closures on Academic Resilience

Rasa Nedzinskaitė-Mačiūnienė

Vytautas Magnus University, Education Academy, Lithuania

Eglė Stasiūnaitienė

Vytautas Magnus University, Education Academy, Lithuania

In the context of enduring global challenges, the notion of resilience—encompassing both institutional frameworks and individual capacities—has assumed heightened importance within education systems. This study utilizes recent data from the OECD’s PISA 2022 assessment alongside UNESCO’s global monitoring of COVID-19-related school closures to investigate how various countries have supported socioeconomically disadvantaged students and sustained learning continuity amid adverse conditions.

The research methodology synthesizes system-level indicators derived from OECD PISA 2022, particularly indices related to school leadership and school autonomy, with national-level data on the duration of school closures obtained from UNESCO’s Global Monitoring of School Closures. Additionally, student-level PISA microdata are employed to operationalize academic resilience, defined as the proportion of socioeconomically disadvantaged students attaining high academic achievement.

Analytical techniques encompass descriptive statistics, bivariate correlation analyses, and multiple linear regression models to explore the relationships among school leadership, autonomy, the severity of school closures, and resilience outcomes.

The study’s findings and their statistical associations will be presented and deliberated at the conference, highlighting implications for educational policy and leadership development in contexts characterized by uncertainty.

Competence-based curriculum: How transnational bureaucracy created a behaviouristic outcome-based school system in Norway

Knut Ove Aesøy

Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway

koas@oslomet.no

This presentation consists of two parts. First, I will provide a historical overview of how international policy and bureaucracy have influenced Norwegian educational mindset and the current curricula. In the second part, I will examine the pedagogical validity of the curriculum's origins within the context of an international policy mindset.

Since the mid-2000s, Norway's school system has been governed by the Norwegian Directorate of Education (UDIR), which oversees examinations, tests, and assessments within the National Quality Assessment System (NKVS). This system emerged from an ideological shift in the 1990s, particularly influenced by the OECD's vision of "competences" in the "knowledge society." This international perspective resonated with Norwegian educational policy, leading to a cross-political consensus on the future direction of schools (Helsvig 2025).

This development has turned the school system more behaviouristic, emphasizing activity skills, outcomes, efficiency, formative assessment, reinforcement, and teaching aligned with curriculum objectives (jf. Tanggaard 2018). This shift towards behaviouristic pedagogy created a need for and possibility of external revision. External measurement directed teaching towards the students' outcome from the learning process, which accelerated the behaviouristic goal-based mindset, and transforms the teacher's role into that of a facilitator. The curriculum outlines what students should be able to achieve upon completing their education, and the teacher's responsibility is to organize the development and assessment of student competencies.

Despite the implementation of this international policy mindset, students' basic skills have not improved (Wagner et al. 2023), inequalities among students are increasing, school well-being is declining (Wendelborg & Utmo 2022), and teachers have experienced a reduction in their formal authority and professional autonomy over time. While it is not possible to establish a direct causal link between the policy and developments in schools, the decline correlates with previous experimental research on behaviorism (Deci & Flaste, 2017).



POSTER SESSION

**COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP FOR
RESILIENT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

RIJEKA, CROATIA 25-28 SEPTEMBER 2025.

The GROWTH project: Mapping the target groups' expectations and needs for the strategic collaboration

Jenni Havela-Jokinen

University of Jyväskylä, Finland

jenni.havela-jokinen@jyu.fi

Hanna-Kaisa Pekkarinen

University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Eija Hanhimäki

University of Jyväskylä, Finland

The GROWTH project aims to establish a unified national foundation for continuous learning in educational leadership in Finland. The project seeks to expand national and international networks, influence policy, and strengthen the strategic position of educational leadership within the broader educational system.

At the moment the positioning work focuses on preparing a status report on actors providing continuing learning education in educational leadership. The positioning work also acknowledges all levels and forms of education as well as the foresight information and needs of working life.

The project utilizes the information pool and foresight information of previous and present research-based development projects and working life networks including the expectations and needs of the target groups.

The GROWTH project is a step toward a more resilient, coherent, sustainable, and impactful leadership education ecosystem. Hence, with in the presentation we are looking for participants' impact for building a shared contextual awareness: How is the qualification of educational leaders defined in different countries, and how are the competencies of educational leaders developed and supported? What are the best networks and practices, recommendations, and possible legislative requirements for the development of continuous learning in education leadership?

Support for Teachers' Professional Well-Being: The Perspective of School Administration

Monika Simkute-Bukante

Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

mo.simkute@gmail.com

Empirical studies indicate that school principals' behavior, the support they provide, the autonomy they grant and the opportunities for professional development they offer have a positive and significant influence on teacher professional well-being. Given the lack of empirical research on school administration support for teachers' professional well-being, the aim of this research was to explore school administration perspectives on how they support teachers' professional well-being. The quantitative pilot research questionnaire consists of five thematic sections. Each section consists of four statements evaluated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". After data collection, the SPSS program was used for analysis. The pilot research participants were school principals (n=31) and deputy principals (n=27) from general education schools in Lithuania (grades 1-12). The research results revealed that school administration most effectively supports teachers through communication and challenge management (91%), followed by workload management (75%).

A total of 72% of respondents indicated that they provide opportunities for professional development, while 64% reported support for mental health and assistance. Finally, 64% stated that the administration promotes a positive school culture. Overall, the quantitative research highlighted that school administration supports teacher professional well-being in various ways; however, not all forms of support are applied equally or consistently.

Future research should incorporate not only quantitative designs but also diverse methodologies, including qualitative approaches, to further explore these forms and underlying motives.

Leading Schools During Educational Disruptions: Past Lessons and Future Directions from Slovenia

Urška Stremfel

Educational Research Institute, Slovenia

urska.stremfel@pei.si

The COVID-19 pandemic caused one of the most significant disruptions to education in recent decades, including in Slovenia. While much research has focused on the immediate experiences of educational stakeholders, less attention has been paid to the lessons learned by school leaders and their preparedness for potential future disruptions (e.g. Chatzipanagiotou, & Katsarou, 2023). This paper explores school leaders' perceptions of their roles during the pandemic, the most stressful aspects of their work, the (systemic) support they received, their perceived preparedness for potential future disruptions, and the (systemic) support they would need for successful school leadership. Grounded in the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), the paper employs a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative data are drawn from descriptive analyses of responses from 135 school leaders and 1,422 teachers from Slovenia in the Responses to Educational Disruption Survey (REDS) (Meinck et al., 2022). Qualitative insights were gathered through two teachers' focus groups (8 participants) and three semi-structured interviews with school leaders. Preliminary findings highlight the central role of school leaders in sustaining educational processes amid challenging conditions and limited systemic support. Strengthening school autonomy, digital competencies of students, and well-being support for all stakeholders emerged as key priorities for enhancing school leadership resilience in potential future disruptions.

