



Network of Education Policy Centers

**Annual Plan 2018**

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## INTRODUCTION

Activities that were implemented in 2017, were a direct result of reflections and revision of traditional NEPC activities as well as the current trends in policy and politics in NEPC region and beyond.

The annual plan for 2018 includes many of the successful activities implemented in the previous years, that according to our annual network analysis members find most beneficial, which support the work of our members, the relationships and learning among members, as well as respect often-demanding political situation our members are working in.

Main features of the plan are:

### *Learning activities for members*

In 2018, NEPC plans to organize the traditional NEPC Summer School, but to also continue with the study visits among members programme that was started in 2017 and was enthusiastically embraced by members, more effort and focus will also be turned to the NEPC webinars which we hope to in 2018 become not only for members. 2018 will also have the third edition of the conference The Primary Colours of Education this time on the topic of School Leadership and Governance.

### *Reinforcement of cooperation with international networks*

The activities in 2017 by which we attempted to reinforce cooperation with other international networks was partially successful mainly through our active role in SIRIUS. Therefore in 2018 we will double our efforts since we strongly believe that the political trends to raise barriers of

prejudices and fears requires more active and fruitful cooperation among existing networks dealing with education. At the events organized by NEPC, representatives of organizations such as SIRIUS, ISSA, Education International, European School Heads Association (ESHA), will be invited to explore common field of action and possible cooperation among networks secretariats and members.

### *Exploring policies and practices which enable reducing the effects of low socio-economic status (SES) on student achievement*

Through its BRAVEdu project NEPC and partners are exploring the policies and practices that enabled Estonia to significantly reduce the effects of low socio-economic status on students' achievement. In 2018 NEPC will replicate the study in 10 more NEPC countries with the aim of drawing possible policy lessons from it. The explorative analyses will provide specificities on (mostly educational) policies and practices, thus providing the evidence that would allow addressing the factors influencing equity in education. The study will help to outline the policy development in the field as well as specific policies and how they affect the achievement of low SES students.

### *Reflection on the role of NEPC members in the context of their educational systems*

In 2017, NEPC conducted the mapping **Policy, politics and practices in education: perception of NEPC members**. The mapping mainly covered 3 aspects:

Policy – status of education system in NEPC region; current policy revisions and reforms;

role of NEPC members in them; social-recognition of members in their country.

Politics – how education is perceived by current government and influence of daily political agenda's on the system;

Practices – reflection of activities implemented by members in previous year; presentation of best practices.

The analyses of the findings will be published as a policy paper and will help the network in further planning of its activities as well as provide different stakeholders and donors with an overview of NEPC members and outreach.

#### *Advocacy*

NEPC will continue to promote members and their work at international conferences and events through its connection with other international stakeholders such as the SIRIUS network, European commission's policy events as well as through its international projects. The main 2018 NEPC event will be the third edition of The Primary Colours of Education conference this time on the topic of School Leadership and Governance (April 2018). Bi-annually

NEPC opens its conference to non NEPC members and invites educational experts and policy makers outside the NEPC region to both present and learn about NEPC work. It is expected the conference will attract about 80 participants and 30 speakers both NEPC and non NEPC.

#### *Fundraising*

In 2017 NEPC was much more successful in fundraising and has secured several EC grant projects and through the tender work with European Training Foundation and Council of Europe created a small reserve fund for the first time in its 12 years of operations. The support of the Education Support Programme of the Open Society Foundations has immensely helped in this regard as it continues to cover our main operational costs of the Secretariat without which this would be hard to achieve. Never the less the fundraising efforts will continue as planned in 2018 with at least 2 calls where NEPC will lead and 3 in which we will be partners.

## STRUCTURE OF THE ANNUAL PLAN 2018

SECTION	Activities	Strategy ref.
<b>Network Governance</b>	General Assembly Board Meetings Fundraising	NEPC Secretariat will become strong and financially sustainable center of expertise by strengthening the staff capacity and implementing effective fundraising strategy.
<b>Learning activities</b>	Study Visits among members Summer School Webinars TBD Conference Primary colours of education #3	NEPC will adequately and efficiently support its members by providing relevant information and resourceful knowledge in the areas of education for social and economic sustainability.
<b>Advocacy/Visibility</b>	Cooperation with networks NEPC @Conferences Dissemination through international projects	NEPC will advocate at international level for the systematic changes in education policies in the area of social and economic sustainability by emphasizing the gaps in policies and practices, presenting evidence-based recommendations and increasing its presence in NEPC region.
<b>Publication</b>	Policy and Politics in NEPC Region Web-articles Comparative study on policies and practices which enable reducing the effects of low socio-economic status on students' achievement	
<b>Projects 2018</b>	BRAVEdu – Braking the Poverty Taboo in Education SIRIUS 2.0 – Policy Network on Migrant Education Coordination of demonstration projects in the SEET region AVIOR - Open Source Multilingual Teaching Materials Forum for Migrant Pupils in Europe HAND IN HAND: Social and emotional skills for tolerant and non-discriminative societies ( a whole school approach)	
<b>Other</b>	Affiliated partnership & consultations	

## I. NETWORK GOVERNANCE

### General Assembly

18.04.2018 Baška, Island of Krk – Croatia

Topics: Report from 2017 and Plan for 2018 will be presented; members' requests (change of status and new applications) discussed and submitted to GA approval.

**Participants:** Representatives of NEPC members (full members; affiliated institutional members; affiliated individual members). NEPC Secretariat & Invited Guests (30 participants)

### Board Meetings

Organization of 3 board meetings (Feb, June, Nov 2018)

Main task of the Board in 2018 will be the review of the NEPC strategic plan 2016 – 2020.

In 2018 Board members will also support Secretariat in designing and implementing Summer School 2018, the conference, webinars for members as well as support ED in advocacy actions.

### Fundraising

Preliminary fundraising plan for 2018 to be further developed by March 2018.

#### NEPC as Applicant

Funder	Program	Project	Deadline	Members
Council of Europe	DISCO	CALL – Community for ALL	02/18	CAF, AL proMENTE, BH ERI, SI
The-EEA-and-Norway-Grants-Fund-	Fund-for-Regional-Cooperation	TBD	07/2018	TBD

#### NEPC as Partner

Funder	Program/Call	Project	Deadline	Members
E+ KA3	EACEA/28/2017	Multilingualism policies in schools across EU	04/18	PRAXIS, EE SbS, HR
E+	EAC/S36/2017	Framework Partnership Agreement with a European Policy Network on Teachers and School Leaders	05/18	TBD

## II. LEARNING ACTIVITIES

### Summer School

Draft title:

*Reducing Effects of Poverty on Students' Achievement and School Experience  
School based policies and practices*

Dates:

1.7.2018 – 7.7.2018 CROATIA

NEPC started exploring the issue of poverty and education in 2014 and since has confirmed its starting belief that, in the region, poverty in connection to education is not being directly addressed. It seems that educators often put on a head blind and ignore the issue. In many cases in the belief that solving the problem of poverty is beyond education.

The five day interactive programme will provide knowledge and data about effects of poverty in education and involve participants in designing school based policies and activities that can assist in mediating the effects poverty has on students' achievement and school experience.

Main topics:

- Effects of poverty on educational experience of students and their achievement;
- Beliefs, attitudes, perspectives and subjective theories of teachers and parents about school achievements and their relations with students' achievements;
- Guidelines for development of inclusive school policies (participatory policy making at school level);
- Innovative school policies for overcoming the influence of socio-economic background on student achievement;
- Innovative school practices involving teachers and school staff
- Innovative school practices involving students
- Innovative school practices involving parents and local community.
- From piloting practices to mainstreaming.

The Summer School 2018 is the integral part of the BRVEdu project.

### NEPC Conference

16 & 17.04.2018

### The Primary Colours of Education Conference #3 School Leadership Matters

In the frame of the conference, school leadership is understood as the process of engaging and guiding the capacities and strengths of students, teachers and parents toward achieving a common educational goal. In the context of inclusion this requires:

- a) a clear vision for the school based on social justice;
- b) commitment to shared leadership and participatory school governance;

- c) *dedication to building and maintaining inclusive school culture;*
- d) *conscious effort to build meaningful partnerships with parents and communities.*

NEPC expects that the conference, covering a wide range of topics, will contribute to gathering the scientific and practical knowledge on school leadership in the NEPC region and beyond, as well as encourage further research and policy analyses on the topic.

### Study Visits & Webinars

Study visits and webinars are planned as a way of intensifying cooperation and learning between members.

Study visits: NEPC will cover the costs of 2-3 study visits among members (10 mobilities). A call for hosting the Study visits will be issued in May 2018. Members will have the opportunity to express their interest to host a study visit describing the practice or research they would like to present. Members interested in participating will send a short explanation and the requested budget. NEPC will based on available budget and the learning objectives match the hosts and visiting organisations thus enhancing the transfer of good-practices.

Webinars: in 2017 NEPC planned to organize 3 webinars based on different activities in NEPC (Policy lab, Summer School, Mapping politics and policies) however due to leaving it to the end of year November / December and unavailability of experts they had to be postponed. Therefore 3 webinars will be organized in the first trimester of the year and 3 more will be organized between September and November 2018.

## III. ADVOCACY/VISIBILITY

### Cooperation with networks

NEPC will invite representatives of international networks to the conference *The primary colours of education* to present their activities. Side meeting will be organized with representatives of international networks and board members to identify possible field of cooperation.

NEPC is active in the SIRIUS network that has provided NEPC access to different organisations in the EU as well as stakeholders associations across Europe. NEPC will also use this channel to promote network cooperation.

In 2018 we hope to also partner with European School Heads Association in a project application for EU policy network on teachers and school leaders.

### Conferences

In 2018, NEPC will participate in at least 2 international conference to present NEPC work, as well as 2 conferences organized by members. The full calendar of conferences will be defined by the end of March 2018. Thus far the following are confirmed:

Panel *Who Rules the Schools in the Post-Soviet Countries?* @CIES 2018, Mexico, March 2018

Panel *School Governance in NEPC Region* @ADA 2018 Education conference, Azerbaijan, June 2018

### Dissemination projects related

NEPC as lead and partner in several projects (further described below) will in 2018 implement dissemination activities related to following topics:

- Policies and practices for reducing the effects of low socio-economic status on students' achievement
- Bi-lingual educational materials for children with migrant background
- Social and emotional skills for tolerant and non-discriminative societies
- Migrant and Refugee Education

### NEPC web & social media

NEPC will continue to publish all its outputs as well as educational related news and analyses from member countries on its webpage [www.edupolicy.net](http://www.edupolicy.net) on its FB page <https://www.facebook.com/edupolicy/?fref=ts> which currently has 842 followers and through its tweeter account @N.E.P.C.

In September 2017 the Secretariat dedicated half of working time of one staff member for communication and dissemination activities. This strategy proved to be effective and in 2018 the position of communication officer will be established as a full time position and it will include NEPCs continuous presence in social media.

## IV. PUBLICATIONS

### Position Paper: Education Policy and Politics in NEPC Region -

In 2017 NEPC conducted mapping of **Policy, politics and practices in education: perception of NEPC members**. The position paper will focus on NEPC position as a support member to its members and on the role of NEPC members in their educational systems as well as on the strategies organizations are using to impact social change in unfavourable political circumstances.

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Follow-up activities (1) Presentation of comparative analysis in at least one international conference, (2) Organization of a webinar to present the analyses



### Report - Policies and practices that reduce the negative effect of low SES on students' achievement and school experience – case of Estonia

Within the BRAVEdu project we will conduct a policy analyses and a series of interviews and focus groups in order to explore the policies and practices for low SES students. Based on the findings an analytical report and policy brief will be prepared.

### Comparative policy analyses in ten NEPC countries

In 2018 a study in 10 NEPC countries will be conducted based on the methodology used in Estonia within the BRAVEdu project, resulting in a comparative policy report and possible country policy briefs.

### Innovative School policies and Practices Handbook for supporting low SES students

A Handbook for teachers and school staff for supporting low SES students will be developed within the BRAVEdu project inspired by the Estonian experience and based on project and good practices of NEPC members. It will be fine-tuned in the summer school with the contributions from teachers and other practioners.

**Web article** will be written based on each publication and proposed to educational portals and blogs.

## V. PROJECTS 2018

### BRAVEdu - Breaking the Poverty Taboo: Roles and Responsibilities of Education

NEPC Role: Project leader

Duration: 24 months, September 2017 – August 2019

Partners: Forum for Freedom in Education, Croatia; Elementary School dr. Vinka Žganca, Croatia; Praxis, Estonia; Foundation for education and cultural initiatives Step by Step, Macedonia; Elementary school Dane Krapčev, Macedonia; Educational Research Institute, Slovenia; Elementary school Tišina, Slovenia.

Funded by: EC – Erasmus+

The overall objective of BRAVEdu project is to strengthen the capacity of schools to support disadvantage learners from low SES in active participation in school life and in achieving better learning outcomes thus contributing to their positive school experience and general wellbeing. The project will explore and analyse policies and practices implemented in Estonia that enabled it to severely reduce the effect of low SES on student achievement and drawing lessons from it. As well as develop Handbook for teachers and school staff with concrete activities and school based policies for supporting low SES students.

### SIRIUS 2.0 - Policy Network on Migrant Education

NEPC Role: Project Network Partner

Duration: 48 months, September 2017 – August 2021

Partners: Project Leader: Migration Policy Group partnered with 5 networks and 23 national partners from 18 EU countries including three NEPC members Forum for Freedom in Education, Croatia; Praxis, Estonia; Educational Research Institute, Slovenia.

Funded by: EC – Erasmus+

SIRIUS 2.0 will feed the best evidence and practice into the major education policy debates by mobilising mainstream migration and education activities and building the capacity of migrant and grassroots education initiatives. SIRIUS will feed this inclusive evidence-based policy-making and collaboration by:

- Analysing and co-creating knowledge on the main challenges and policy approaches for inclusive education for children and young people with a migrant background, with special attention to refugees, unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable learners;
- Identifying, sharing and promoting good policy practice and stimulating innovation and mainstreaming in policy development, experimentation and implementation;
- Disseminating results more widely and in more policy-friendly formats such as recommendations, guidance and tools.

### Coordination of demonstration projects in the SEET region

NEPC Role: Coordination of demonstration projects in SEET Region

Duration: 3 months, January – March 2018

Partners: Albania, Irisoft Education; Macedonia, Harvest of Knowledge; Serbia, Centre for Education Policy.

Funded by: European Training Foundations (ETF)

The project supports 3 small grants in SEET region that aim to improve the quality of CPD for teachers training in VET; improve the capability of policy makers and practitioners to develop CPD; develop of policy and implementation strategies for sustainable systems of CPD.

### Open Source Multilingual Teaching Materials Forum for Migrant Pupils in Europe – AVIOR

NEPC Role: Project partner

Duration: 36 months November 2016- October 2019

Partners: Risbo B.V. (The Netherlands), Rutu Foundation for Intercultural Multilingual Education (The Netherlands), Europaisches forum fuer migrationsstudien ev (Germany), University of Western Macedonia (Greece), Praxis (Estonia), Terremondo cooperativa sociale arl (Italy)

Funded by: EC – Erasmus+

This project seeks to reduce disparities in learning outcomes in basic literacy and numeracy skills between native and non-native primary school children in Europe by

- developing cost-effective approaches to produce multilingual literacy and numeracy learning resources for migrant children;
- building teacher professional competence to create inclusive multilingual classrooms;

- creating informal local teacher/parent collaborative networks to enhance the participation of migrant parents in strengthening their children's basic numeracy and literacy skills and
- broadening the awareness of teacher trainers, school leaders and policy makers about the benefits of mother tongue and multilingual education for migrant children.

**HAND IN HAND: Social and emotional skills for tolerant and non-discriminative societies ( a whole school approach)**

NEPC Role: Project partner for dissemination and visibility

Duration: 36 months March 2017- February 2020

Partners: Educational Reserach Institute (ERI), Slovenia – leading partner; Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (MESS), Slovenia; Mittuniversitetet - Mid Sweden University (MIUN), Sweden; Institute for Social Research in Zagreb (ISRZ), Croatia; German Institute for International Educational Research (DIPF) & Technical University of Munich (TUM), Germany; Via University College (with collaboration of The Danish Society for the Promotion of Life Wisdom in Children), Denmark.

Funded by: EC – Erasmus+ KA3

The HAND in HAND project will create and apply an innovative HAND in HAND program for SEI skills development (while building on partners' proven experiences) for students and school staff. The project will therefore test the policy measure in the form of innovative HAND in HAND program to be implemented in schools, which has potential to produce effective results. The project addresses the theme Promoting fundamental values through Education and Training addressing diversity in the learning environment with the development of universal SEI learning program for the development of SEI skills (HAND in HAND program ) as a whole school approach. The whole school approach engages the entire school community (school leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff, students...) in a cohesive, collective and collaborative action, with strong cooperation with external stakeholders and the community at large in building their own and students SEI skills.

## VI. OTHER

NEPC is affiliated member of the project *Start the Change – Embracing differences through intercultural education and volunteering*, led by Forum for Freedom in Education.

NEPC ED is consultant in projects:

### **EU/CoE Horizontal Facility for Western Balkans and Turkey**

- "Fight against bullying and extremism in the education system in Albania"
- „Democratic School Culture and Diversity in Schools“ Kosovo

Both projects are supported by Council of Europe, in these projects Kosovo Education Center (Kosovo) and Children are the future (Albania) are involved.

## VII. EXPECTED RESULTS AND OUTPUTS

### *Results*

- at least 5 project proposals submitted (2 as lead)
- 6 webinars held with at least 60 participants
- 25 participants @NEPC Summer School
- 3 Study visits involving 6 members and 10 mobilities
- 6 mobilities to members' conferences
- At least 60 participants @NEPC conference
- 10 countries participate in Mapping Study
- Present NEPC projects/results in at least 3 International conferences
- Increase the social media NEPC followers (1000 on FB, 100 on tweeter)

### *Outputs*

- Summer school report
- Conference Report
- Analytical Report on Policies for low SES students – Estonia
- Comparative Policy Report on Policies for low SES students – 10 NEPC countries
- Handbook for teachers and school staff for supporting low SES students
- 5 web-articles based on news from members
- 3 web-articles based on projects
- 2 web-articles based on NEPC publications
- 100 Fb post, 30 tweets /60 retweets /20 web articles



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