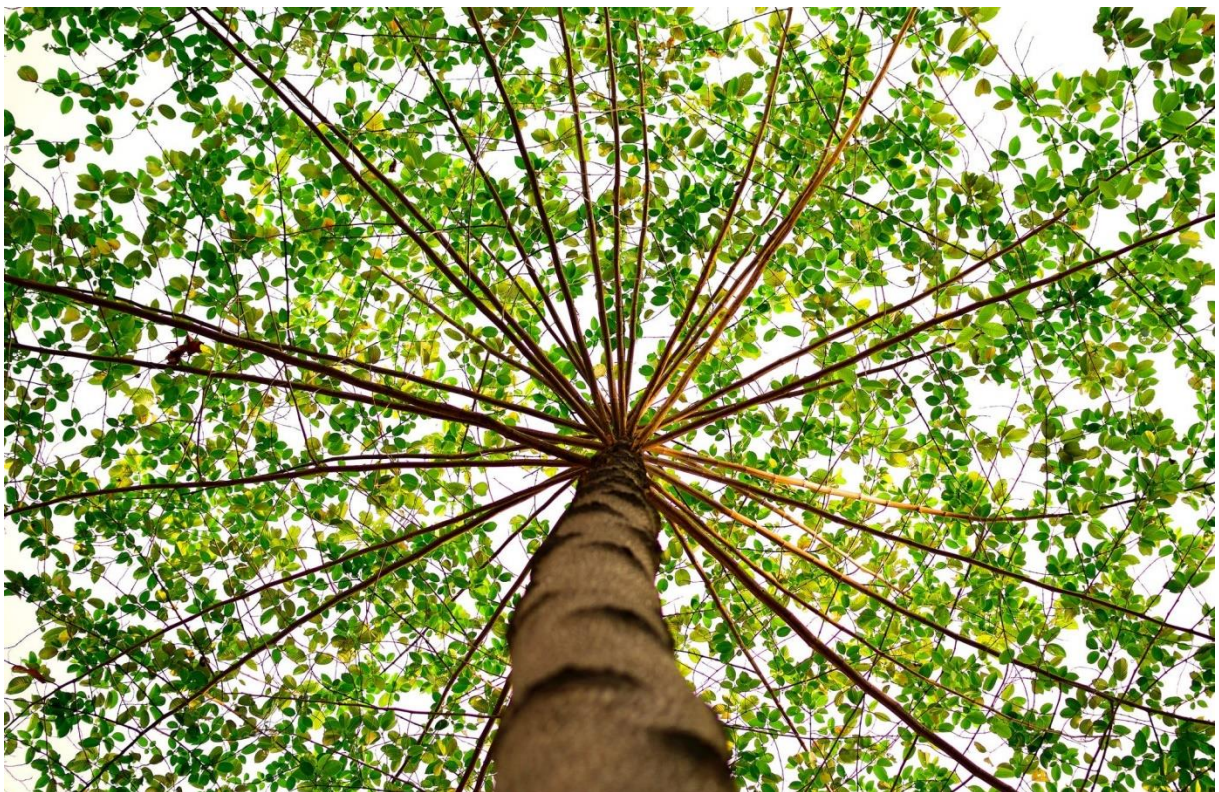




Network of Education Policy Centers

## ANNUAL REPORT 2018



# CONTENT

I. OVERVIEW OF 2018	3
II. LEARNING EVENTS	4
III. PROJECTS	10
IV. ADVOCACY & NETWORKING	15
V. NETWORK	17
VI. FUNDRAISING	23
VII. NEPC IN NUMBERS	23
VIII. SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT	24

## I. OVERVIEW OF 2018

Overall 2018 was a successful year at NEPC, all the traditional activities of the network were sustained and or enhanced, there were no major changes in membership or secretariat staff, and the funding remains stable with a reserve fund of approximately 8% of our average annual budget. The monitoring of the strategy showed how the Strategy 2016-2010 is too specific for the way the Network functions and a revision process has been initiated in 2018.

The learning among members has been enhanced through project activities (the topic of the effect of low SES has been introduced among members as per se issue relying on the successful experience of Estonia) and through so called network activities such as summer school, webinars and study visits.

In 2018, NEPC deepened relationship with international networks such as SIRIUS, ESHA – NEPC shares with them the vision of education founded on the principles of inclusive education and the strong commitment to the establishment of Network of knowledge and expertise in the field of education.

The renewed cooperation with UNESCO in the field of transparency, accountability and anti-corruption measures in education also shows how the Network enjoys good social recognition and credibility among international stakeholders.

In view of funding 2018 was an average year for NEPC in both the terms of raised funds and expenditures. There was a significant increase in self-generated funds from 3% of full budget in 2017 to 9% in 2018, while two main sources of funding remain the operational grant from Education Support Programme of the Open Society Foundations and project funds from different programmes of the European Commission. As far as expenditure goes the Administrative costs of the network remain between 35 and 40 % while network activities and projects share between 60 and 65 % of the expenditures. In 2018 due to the projects dynamics requirements the balance was tipped to the projects. As far as fundraising is concerned NEPC applied to 4 projects 2 as leader and 2 as partner organisation.

## II. LEARNING EVENTS

Creating relevant learning opportunities for its members is one of the core activities of the network. In 2018, NEPC continued with the traditional leaning events – Conference *The Primary Colours of Education* and *Summer School* – and kept the newly established ones. The study visits are particularly important as they respond to member's learning needs and contribute to establishing a sustainable relationship among members without the direct facilitation of the Secretariat. Webinars will be further monitored in 2019 to increase the number of attendees.

NEPC CONFERENCE: *The Primary Colours of Education #3 - School Leadership Matters*  
16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> April | Baška, Croatia

NEPC has been exploring school leadership through its two recent studies on school governance (Gabršček, 2016; Lenskaya, 2017). These pointed to the great power and important role school- principles have on school governance level, as well as a lack of professional support available in some countries and the tendency to confuse leadership with management - not only by school leaders and school staff but in, some cases, by policymakers. In view of this, the conference aimed to clarify some of the policies and practices as well as offer concrete example of how to better support effective and inclusive leadership in schools.

The main questions the event addressed were:

- *What is effective school leadership*
- *Who and how accredits and selects school leaders?*
- *What type of professional support are school leaders offered and need?*
- *If not a 'charismatic' school leader, then what kind of leader?*
- *Participatory (distributed) school leadership – who distributes and why participate*
- *Why and how to engage parents and communities*
- *What do data / ICT / social media have to do with school leaders?*

### Conference in numbers:

2 days

3 keynote speakers: Cathryn Magno; Mateja Brejc; Frans Grobbee

7 *The floor is yours* sessions

15 Paper sessions

2 panel sessions

2 Workshop sessions

43 speakers

60 attendees

## Evaluation overview

From 1 to 5;  
1 is the most negative,  
5 the most positive

BASED ON 46 EVALUATION  
QUESTIONNAIRES

### *Before the conference I How satisfied you are with:*

General Assistance of NEPC staff	4,98
----------------------------------	------

### *Venue I How satisfied you are with:*

venue and conference rooms	4,74
----------------------------	------

accommodation and hotel service	4,72
---------------------------------	------

arrangements and quality of the catering	4,64
--	------

### *Conference content I How satisfied you are with*

Keynotes	5,0
----------	-----

Relevance of the topic	4,61
------------------------	------

Content organization	4,57
----------------------	------

Usefulness of content	4,38
-----------------------	------

Relevant for my work	4,23
----------------------	------

Format	4,56
--------	------

## SUMMER SCHOOL 2018: **Tackling Economic Inequalities in Schools**

2<sup>nd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> July I Brela, Croatia

The 2018 NEPC Summer School was an integral part of the BRAVEdu project whose overall objective is to strengthen the capacity of schools to support low socio-economic status (SES) / disadvantage learners when it comes to active participation in school life; improving their educational experience and ultimately achieving better learning outcomes. BRAVEdu started from the premise that it is our responsibility as educators to ensure wellbeing of all learners and to tackle economic inequalities. The aim of the Summer School was to explore and further develop existing policies and practices aimed at improving the educational experience of students with low socio economic status. The approach and particular content was tailored and fine-tuned according to the findings of the BRAVEdu study on Estonia and the situation in each of the participating schools/countries.

The event ensured the exchange of experiences from participants' individual school/classroom contexts and/or the work of the organizations they come from. The workshops and lectures were combined with creative thinking and critical discussion sessions to ensure an adaptable and constructive learning process. In working group sessions participants were guided in developing activities and practices that could be implemented in their schools and through their organizations.

It brought together teachers/school staff, civil society organizations and school improvement experts with prior experience in development of school policies and practices. Full program is available [HERE](#)

## Trainers & Faculty

- Grete Arro, Researcher, Tallinn University, Estonia
- Marina Brkić, Mediation Program Manager, Forum for Freedom in Education, Croatia
- Anne Edwards, Professor Emeritus, University of Oxford, United Kingdom
- Sandra Haugas, Policy Analyst, think tank PRAXIS, Estonia
- Lana Jurko, Executive Director, Network of Education Policy Centers, Croatia
- Kristel Kubber, Leisure Time Manager, Tallinn's No. 32 Secondary School, Estonia
- Ana Mlekuž, Researcher, Education Research Institute, Slovenia
- Paul Stubbs, Researcher, Institute of Economics, Zagreb, Croatia
- Manja Veldin, Researcher, Education Research Institute, Slovenia
- Jelena Vranješević, Psychologist, University of Belgrade, Serbia

### Summer school 2018 in numbers:

**33** participants from 10 countries (23 involved in the project, 10 external)

**5** external and **5** NEPC experts

**5** days

### Evaluation overview

Course content	
Relevance/choice of general topic was appropriate	4,69
Courses met my expectations	4,59
Training packages were well organized	4,81
The course objectives were clear	4,67
Structure of the course was well planned	4,74
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>4,7</b>



## STUDY VISITS

The members have repeatedly highlighted the need for more inter-membership learning and exchange of knowledge. In its 2nd year of implementation the program has attracted the interest of members for both hosting and participating in the programme. In 2018, three members applied for hosting the Study visits and six organizations applied as visiting. Due to budget restrictions and operational capacity, two have been selected and were implemented resulting in 9 mobilities. Summary of the applications can be found in the table below:

Hosting organizations applications	Topic/Title	Visiting organizations applications (number of staff)	Dates
Centre for Education Policy Serbia	<i>Education for All: two cases from Serbia</i>	OSF Prague (4)	26.11 – 29.11
Center for Educational Initiatives Step by Step Bosnia and Herzegovina	<i>Teachers' Matter - Annual Award for teachers</i>	/	Not selected
AO Educational Centre Pro Didactica Moldova	<i>Intercultural education from primary school to university: advanced experiences</i>	Centre for Education Policy I Serbia (3) Forum for Freedom in Education I Croatia (1) Academy Step by Step I Croatia (1) Vilnius University (1)I Lithuania (1) Education Research Institute I Slovenia (1*)	19.11. – 22.11.

\*pax not selected

### Education for All: two cases from Serbia

The study visit in Belgrade focused on drop-out prevention projects developed by Centre for Education Policy Serbia and on the support to education for migrant and refugee students.

The visiting partners reported that the two projects had in common the individual approach of the teachers to each child as well as building safe and positive climate in the schools. Those factors were considered to be crucial, especially for the children from the most vulnerable groups.

At the core of the project, there is an anti-dropout tool designed to assess the risks and for prevention purposes. This instrument provides teachers the risk factors which they should answer about each pupil. After answering couple of questions / risks factors which are divided into the 3 groups (family, school and local community) they get the risk index for every pupil. The risk factors which are taking into consideration are:

socioeconomic status, absenteeism, academic achievement, behaviour, using social assistance, peer acceptance, other risk factors. The school also gets suggestions for reducing dropout based on current analyses of measures.

CEP, the host, provided OSF Prague with all the information about the project and with the handbook “How to be a caring school: A Study on the effects of prevention and intervention measures for preventing the dropout of students from the education system of the republic of Serbia”. They granted their availability for consultations in case OSF Prague would like to apply it in Czech Republic.

#### Intercultural education from primary school to university: advanced experiences I Moldova

The delegation that participated in the Moldova study visit reported that the main learning point was about the importance of knowing all different groups living in ones neighbourhood as starting step toward the general understanding and future school activities in the field of intercultural education. In this program, this aspect has been made very concrete by encouraging students to study the diversity of their neighbourhood. On the other hand, it was notice that, for senior grades, the project should be able to get students much more into the topic as well as to give them opportunity to meet or work with students of different background.

*The full reports are available upon request*

#### NEPC WEBINARS

In 2018, 3 webinars were held, with approximately 7 attendees per webinar:

- ***How to make school governance effective*** I Elena Lenskaya  
Outcomes of the research performed by NEPC in Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia I 18.01.
- **Forgotten children? Poverty and education** I Radmila Rangelov Jusović  
29.01.
- **Transparency, Accountability, and Anti-corruption Measures in Education: How to Build National Capacities** I Muriel Poisson  
13.12.

*The sessions were recorded and are available upon request.*

IIEP-UNESCO & NEPC Course [Transparency, Accountability, and Anti-corruption Measures in Education](#)  
4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> October I Tbilisi, Georgia

Earlier in 2018, the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) - Unesco Office approached NEPC (Lana Jurko), to be able to approach NEPC region countries for the purposes of creating a workshop on the topic of 'Transparency, Accountability, and



Anti-corruption Measures in Education'. The course aimed at strengthening participants' skills in assessing corruption risks, selecting adequate tools, and formulating strategies to address a lack of transparency and accountability in the education sector.

The course was hosted by the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia – National Centre for Teacher Professional Development (TPDC), thanks to the invitation of Mr Giorgi Machabeli, NEPC member.

Six country teams were present at the workshop (Azerbaijan; Croatia; Estonia; Georgia; Moldova and Mongolia) - each country team included three to four professionals, working at ministries of education, public regulatory or control bodies (e.g. anti-corruption commissions, inspection agencies, offices of general auditors, quality assurance bodies), higher education institutions and non-governmental organizations concerned with improving transparency, accountability and reducing opportunities for corruption in the management of the public education sector.

The course aimed to enable participants to better assess the nature and extent of embezzlement, ghost teachers, rigged calls for tender, illegal registration fees, academic fraud, and to identify good practices and solutions to address them. It built on IIEP's long experience in the field of ethics and corruption in education, which includes the organization of many policy seminars, workshops, study tours, and courses, conducted in all regions of the world, and technical assistance activities, in several countries. Country team formulated their projects as follow, some of which might be hopefully implemented sometime in the future:

Development of a comprehensive system for fair assessment practices in the education system • Improving Transparency in Teacher Management in Government Schools • Clearer procedures about hiring invited teachers in schools • Qualitative application of the ethic code for teachers • Contributing to the reduction of corruption in basic education through regulating parental informal payments • Developing a transparent, comprehensive, fair and effective financial model in schools

### III. PROJECTS

NEPC has been involved as leader and partner in 4 projects during 2018. NEPC is recognized as a reliable partner and especially valued in dissemination and advocacy activities. From the Network perspective, Secretariat always attempts to share acquired knowledge among all members (ie. Summer school 2019 plans to be focused on socio-emotional learning, key topic in Hand in Hand project) as well as to introduce *new topics* among members.

Project: [“Breaking the Poverty Taboo: Roles and Responsibilities of Education - BRAVEdu”](#)

NEPC Role: [Project Coordinator](#)

Time frame: [September 2017- August 2019](#)

The Erasmus + co-funded project, which started in **September 2017 and lasts for 24 months**, aims at strengthening the capacity of schools to support disadvantaged/ low SES learners to a more active participation in school life and in achieving better learning outcomes in general.

In 2018, the consortium completed a policy questionnaire on the Estonian education policies and participated in the study visit in Estonia. The Slovenian and Estonian team, with the coordination and contribution of NEPC, outlined the Estonian case analytical report, first intellectual output of the project (the finalization of the document, concerning the proofreading and the editing, will be completed at the beginning of 2019). The outlining of the BRAVEdu Handbook, second intellectual output, started as well. Within the frame of the project, the NEPC Summer School 2018 was organized on the topic of equity in education.

Project partners:

- Elementary School Dr. Vinko Žganec, Zagreb
- Elementary School Tišina, Slovenia
- Elementary School Dane Krapčev, Skopje, FYR Macedonia
- Education Research Institute, Ljubljana, Slovenia
- Forum for Freedom in Education, Zagreb, Croatia
- Step by Step - Skopje, FYR Macedonia
- Praxis, Estonia

Project: [Coordination of demonstration projects in SEET region – ETF](#)

NEPC Role: [Project coordinator](#)

Duration: [January 2017 \(implementation phase\) – March 2018](#)

The project initially supported 7 small grants in SEET region that aimed to improve the quality of CPD for teachers training in VET, to improve the capability of policy makers and practitioners to develop CPD, and develop of policy and implementation strategies

for sustainable systems of CPD. In September 2017, 3 more demonstration projects were selected and the project was extended to April 2018.

The activities carried out in the frame of the project were reported and updated via an on-line platform (available at <http://bit.ly/2A1OuGB> ). The content update was curated by NEPC. NEPC provided support and capacity building to demonstration project teams and disseminated the results.

#### In 2018 Demonstration Projects were implemented by:

- Center for Competitive Skills (Albania)
- Harvest of Knowledge (Macedonia)
- Center for Education Policy (Serbia)

Project: [Open Source Multilingual Teaching Materials Forum for Migrant Pupils in Europe – AVIOR](#)

NEPC Role: [Project partner](#)

Duration: [October 2016 - September 2019](#)

The Erasmus + funded project seeks to reduce disparities in learning outcomes in basic literacy and numeracy skills between native and non-native primary school children in Europe through:

- 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.

In 2018 NEPC took part in the study visit in Thessaloniki, where project team looked at how Greek schools and education institutions are coping with the refugee crisis (report was written by NEPC and Step by Step Croatia). Also, all of the materials were translated into more than originally planned languages, through translators harvested by NEPC, in Croatia: Arabic, Chinese, Albanian, Polish and Turkish. The materials were designed by Croatian designers and language combinations are worked on by all project partners. They are open source and can be shared. In Croatia, NEPC subcontracted *Step by Step Croatia* to work with preschool and school teacher in Roma Bayash communities, to raise awareness around the importance of mother tongue use for cognitive

development of children in otherwise second-language education environment (in this case Croatian). Case studies with teachers and parents are planned for early 2019.

Project partners:

- Project leader: Risbo B.V. (Netherlands)
- Rutu Foundation for Intercultural Multilingual Education (Netherlands)
- Europaisches forum fur migrateonsstudien (Germany)
- University of Western Macedonia (Greece)
- Praxis (Estonia)
- Terremondo cooperativa sociale arl (Italy)

Project: [HAND in HAND - Social and Emotional Skills for Tolerant and Non-Discriminative Societies: A Whole-School Approach](#)

NEPC Role: [Project partner](#)

Duration: [February 2017 - February 2020](#)

The HAND in HAND project ([www.handinhand.si](http://www.handinhand.si)) develops an open access systemic policy tool – EU based universal SEI learning program (a program for students and school staff) based on multiculturalism and diversity awareness that fosters inclusion and develops more tolerant and non-discriminative learning environments for all students (including immigrant and refugee) to prevent discriminative bullying, segregation and ESL.

In the first half of 2018, the Hand in Hand project focused on finalizing the assessment and piloting the assessments across countries resulting in its final versions. Both programs (for students and for school staff) were finalized and the students program was piloted. In the second part of the year, the assessment and the field trials took place. NEPC is responsible for international dissemination of the main outputs of the project as well as for the support to the leading organization in enhancing external communication and online presence (via web pages and social media). NEPC contributed in managing the HiH Facebook [@HANDinHAND.si](#) page with an average of 2, 6 posts on the topic per month and the Twitter account [@HANDinHAND\\_si](#), with an average of 6 tweets/retweets a month. NEPC is also involved in the exploration of scientific and professional articles and materials for the HiH newsletter.

Project partners:

- Project Leader: Educational Research Institute, Slovenia
- Slovenian Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (MESS)
- Mid Sweden University (MIUN)
- Institute for Social Research in Zagreb (ISRZ)
- German Institute for International Educational Research (DIPF)
- Technical University of Munich (TUM)

- VIA University College, Denmark
- Danish Society for the Promotion of Life Wisdom in Children, Denmark

Project: [SIRIUS 2.0 - Policy Network on Migrant Education](#)

NEPC Role: [Project partner](#)

Time frame: [September 2017 – September 2021](#)

SIRIUS 2.0 feeds 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.

NEPC in 2018 was involved in the following SIRIUS 2.0 activities:

[SIRIUS Watch](#) - the flagship research initiative of the network, monitored and supported the development and effective implementation of inclusive education policies across the EU at different governance levels in the area of formal and non-formal education cooperation. Find out more [HERE](#)

[Peer Learning Events](#) - created and promoted knowledge transfer by identifying good practice and providing multi-stakeholder international feedback, thus stimulating further innovation both in the host and learning countries. Find out more about the activities in [Portugal](#) and [Germany](#)

[International advocacy](#) - dissemination and advocacy of SIRIUS recommendations for education of refugee and migrant students. The European-level policy workshop engaged policy makers in inclusive debates with practitioners and researchers and reinforced the overall structure of participation and involvement of policy makers in the action, as a whole. Find out more [HERE](#)

Lana Jurko, ED of NEPC also serves as a Project Steering Committee member responsible for network engagement, inclusive policy making and monitors the finances of the project.

Project partners:

- Project Leader: Migration Policy Group
- 5 networks and 23 national partners from 18 EU countries

[www.sirius-migrationeducation.org](http://www.sirius-migrationeducation.org)

Project: EU/CoE EU/CoE Horizontal Faculty for Western Balkans and Turkey  
Fostering a Democratic School Culture and Diversity in School  
NEPC Role: Provision of Intellectual Services  
Time frame: 2017 – 2018

NEPC was involved, through provision of consulting services (research, training, project monitoring) in the implementation of two projects: “Fight against bullying and extremism in the education system in Albania” and “Democratic School Culture and Diversity in Schools” Kosovo.

One of the final activities was 2 days study visit of teachers and school staff from Kosovo (final activity of CoE Priština Office Project).

The group, consisting of 20 teachers from Kosovo, two interpreters/ translators (Croatian-Albanian), project coordinator from Pristina office, representatives of Forum for freedom in education, who chose the schools in question as they were the part of their Start the Change project, and NEPC/CoE project coordinator, visited two schools in the town of Slavonski Brod (Slavonia, eastern part of Croatia)

In Tehnička škola, mission and vision were described by the school principal (Mrs Vikica Lukić). The librarian, also the person in charge of the coordination of Erasmus + projects (Jadranka Junačko), encouraged the visitors to get in touch in case they will be interested in taking part in Erasmus + projects for which Kosovo is eligible; the coordinator of the volunteering club, himself a teacher in the school as well (Ivan Bitunjac); and the school pedagogue talked about self-evaluation process the school implements on a regular basis, designing indicators for measuring progress, as well about teaching Civics education in the school (Matea Ćorluka). In the current school year, school has 617 students.

Presentations at the Matija Mesić High School were delivered by Prof Kornelija Šebalj (English teacher), Prof Emira Miščančuk (sociology teacher) and Lucija Brnić, the school pedagogue. Unlike the vocational school, the school is less active in Erasmus + projects, but takes part in domestic projects, such as the one run by the Forum for Freedom in Education from Zagreb. 679 students attend this year – in the last four year the school lost around 450 students due to the grave economic situation in this part of Croatia and emigration to Western Europe. Even in such circumstances, schools remain a constant hub of stability and progress in this area.



#### IV. ADVOCACY & NETWORKING

In 2018, NEPC worked through different channels to on one hand advocate for its members and educational policies they are trying to implement and on the other hand to establish cooperation with other stakeholders in the field to explore common field of action and possible cooperation among networks secretariat and members. The channels used were social media and web, attending and organizing conferences and events, and direct outreach to organizations and stakeholders in the field.

##### Online presence (web and social media)

NEPC continues to publish all its outputs as well as educational related news and analyses from member countries and beyond on its webpage [www.edupolicy.net](http://www.edupolicy.net) and on its FB page <https://www.facebook.com/edupolicy/?fref=ts> which, at the end of the year, counted 899 likes and, in 2018, about 160 published posts. NEPC manages also the the BRAVEdu project Facebook page (that counted 66 posts).

On the Twitter account (@\_N\_E\_P\_C), reopened in October 2017, in 2018, 282 tweets/retweets were posted. The social media presence continues to increase. In 2018, 61 more likes were gained on Facebook. Till December 31<sup>st</sup>, the Twitter page counted 39 followers. The increase can be accounted for by dedicating, from 2017 on, specific staff member's time to managing social media.

NEPC web page has also been updated with three articles about members' activities and nine articles on NEPC activities and projects.

##### Conferences and events

NEPC participated in eleven conferences organized by different stakeholders out of which five were organized by four different NEPC members. NEPC presented results of research or our other activities in six while others were used for networking and learning. NEPC supported five mobilities of members to conferences from five NEPC organizations two of which were to other member's conferences thus supporting inter-member cooperation.

- Forum for Freedom in Education 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on School Mediation, Croatia – February 2018 – Škola kao jaka zajednica – doprinos medijacije u izgradnji sretne škole
- Comparative and International Education Society Annual Conference, Mexico – April 2018 - Re-mapping Global Education
- ADA University International Education Conference, Azerbaijan – June 2018 - Strategizing Education Development: Reflections and Way Forward
- UNICEF Croatia – June 2018 – Vrtić za svako dijete
- CEI Step by Step 10th Regional Conference of Educators, Bosnia and Herzegovina - August 2018 – Nastavnici u akciji

- NECE – Networking European Citizenship Education Conference, France – September 2018 - Brave new Worlds?! The Future of Democracy and Citizenship Education
- Council of Europe, Kosovo – October 2018 - Fostering a Democratic School Culture and Diversity in School
- Institute for Social Research in Zagreb 4th Days of Educational Sciences, Croatia – October 2018 - The Educational System: a Confining and/or Stimulating Environment
- Open Society Foundations' Western Balkans Forum, Germany – November 2018 - Equity and Inclusiveness in Education
- Forum for Freedom, Croatia – November 2018 - Start the Change – embracing differences through intercultural education and volunteering
- POU Step by Step & REYN Mreža, Croatia – December 2018 - "Prakse koje pomiču granice"

Through its networking and advocacy activities NEPC has in 2018 deepened its relationships with Council of Europe, UNESCO, European School Heads Association (ESHA), Networking European Citizenship Education and several EU based academic organizations with plans to work on common projects and goals in 2019.

## V. NETWORK

### Human resources

#### ○ NEPC Secretariat team

Executive Director (100% working hours) Lana Jurko

Administrative Officer (100% working hours) Raffaella d'Apolito, (returned from maternity leave November 2018)

Financial Manager (25% working hours) Nikolina Turčinović Dupor

Project coordinator (100% working hours) Petra Jurlina

Communication officer (100% working hours) Pietro Santilli

#### ○ NEPC Experts in 2018

- Grete Arro, Summer School
- Anne Edwards, Summer School
- Paul Stubbs, Summer School
- Jelena Vranješević, Summer School & BRAVEdu Handbook
- Muriel Poisson, UNESCO Workshop and Webinar
- Ana Mlekuž, Sandra Haugas, BRAVEdu Analytical Report
- Vanja Kožić Komar; Majda Joševski, BRAVEdu Handbook
- Elena Lenskaya; Radmila Rangelov Jusović; webinar

#### ○ Board Members

Mario Bajkuša, President – Representative of members-at-large

Elmina Kazimzade – Representative of region C

Suzana Geržina - Representative of region A

Elena Lenskaya - Representative of members-at-large

Radmila Rangelov-Jusović - Representative of region B

### Organizational Development

#### ○ Members

In 2018, there were no changes in membership, NEPC still counts 24 organizational and 4 individual members from 21 countries. Although several attempts were made to attract new members to the Network they have not been successful. Network still seeks to involve new organizational members from several key countries in the region such as Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Belarus, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Armenia.

## ○ Network Analysis

The network analysis (NA) helps us monitor the health of the network and looks into the following aspects of the network functioning:

- a) How many of the activities organized by NEPC are accessible to its members
- b) How many members take part in NEPC-organized activities
- c) What the open activities rate is and is there any regional bias in the offered activities
- d) which conclusions can be drawn and what actions can be taken to improve it, especially by the GA and the Board?

The network operates in 3 regions: Region A: EU countries; Region B: IPA countries; Region C: Euro east, Central Asian countries and Mongolia.

In 2018:

- there were eight (8) activities that were accessible to all members these included participating in the GA, at NEPC conference, hosting or visiting Study visits and hosting or participating in the webinars as well as our flagship Learning event Summer School. Out of all full and associate members (24) only one did not participate in any open activities while one participated in 6 of them. 7 members participated in more than 50% of all open activities while the average participation is 37,5 %.
- If we look at all the seventeen activities that NEPC offered in 2018, some restricted due to different reasons, the most active organization participated in eleven of them. The 3 most active members all come from Region A, however closely followed in the 4<sup>th</sup> place by a member from region C and one from region B. The 4 least active members include 3 associate members, 2 from region C and one from region B and one full member from region A.
- Not surprisingly, full members are in general more active in NEPC activities with average rate of participation of 42,76 % compared to 17,5% among associate members while looking at all activities average rate of participation was 30,65% among full members compared to 10,59 % among associate members.
- The analyses indicates that members are fully participating in in the governance of the network with 21 member present and only one full member not attending. Learning activities opened to all members and covered by Secretariat (conference (22), summer school (10), study visits (7)) registered good rate of response (Max 22 – Min 7). Workshop on Corruption co-organized with UNESCO was offered only to 6 members and had a full response.

- there was a higher rate of fundraising cooperation initiated by NEPC in comparison to 2017 (involving 11 members compared to 7 in 2017).
- The analysis also indicated a regional 'bias' in all activities of NEPC, towards Region C there are several possible reasons for this that should be further explored. Less fundraising opportunities for that region therefore low rate of participation in the projects, geographical displacement and difficulties in getting visas and more days spent on travel, language issues for not senior staff to participate in online activities.

In 2018 Secretariat took several steps to improve this situation: it supported members to participate in an International conference in Azerbaijan; supported members from region C in attending CIES and the conference in Azerbaijan and organized one event (corruption WS) in the region. However, it is clear that more needs to be done in the cooperation between the Board, Secretariat and the members from region C in order to improve the situation, encourage members for common effort in fundraising and for participation in NEPC activities.

#### ○ Strategy 2016-2020

Although the network analyses as well as 2017 mapping study indicates good health of the network, the indicators of the current 2016-2020 Strategy paint a slightly different picture.

The third year of strategy implementation has shown how most of the activities planned within the objective 1 and considerable number of the activities planned in objective 2 are improbable to be realized. The attempt to fundraise for the continuation of previous projects has not been successful.

The challenges of the Strategy implementation have already been discussed with the Board meetings in 2017 and with the Network at the GA in 2018. Following the decisions of the GA to review the current strategy the Secretariat initiated a strategy workshop that was attended by Board members, secretariat staff, the representative of our long-term funder OSF ESP and moderated by Aleesha Taylor.

The intention was to first review the status of the current objectives and planned activities, to discuss the implications of the unplanned activities that have been undertaken, and finally to decide if a new or revised strategy should be undertaken before the current strategic period ends in 2020. The following questions framed the engagement:

- Do we need a completely new strategy or are we revising the current one?
- Indicators: What are they for and why we are not reaching them?

- How come indicators do not reflect NEPC successes? What indicators we need for that?
- How to balance in NEPC the role of supporting members & advocacy?
- How to define advocacy in the context of international network?

The process began with a discussion about the ongoing strategic value, contributions, and importance of NEPC to its members to the field of education and within the geographies of its membership. This discussion highlighted the continued importance of and need for NEPC in each of these domains. Participants, particularly those representing member organizations, reported benefits of the Network that were consistent with findings from a recent network mapping analysis. First, the opportunity to participate in research projects increases the credibility and exposure of members and provides comparative data and international reference points that are taken up in subsequent country-level research. Further, membership provides valuable and unique opportunities for networking and dissemination of information.

There was a significant discussion about the ‘soft skills’ and relationships that NEPC cultivates in its membership, qualities that are difficult to quantify and relay to wider audiences. What was certainly clear is the vacuum that would be left in ‘a world without NEPC’. In addition to the void this would leave for the membership, the conversation also helped to identify the gaps that would emerge in the field and therefore further highlighted the value of the organization to the education sector, its partners, and the geographies in which its members operate. The identified gaps included the lack of nuanced attention to under-explored topics such as poverty and sustainability and the incorporation of civil society actors and school-level insights in education policy debates and processes.

Following discussions on the added value of the network, which were largely backward looking, the conversations turned to a more forward-facing review of how the organization and its strategies may (or may not) need to be ‘re-visioned’. This dialogue focused on the nexus between NEPC’s policy-research-and practice foci, with significant attention to the Network’s role and strategy for ‘advocacy’. We pinpointed the need to distinguish between internal advocacy (between the Secretariat and its membership) and external advocacy (with strategic partners and the field in general). This discussion of advocacy also centred on the value of ‘strategic communications’, the skills and capacities of the Secretariat, and the extent to which the members could be more engaged and accountable for successful implementation of the strategic plan.

These deliberations provided a solid foundation for the review of the stated objectives and indicators in the current 2016-2020 Strategic Plan.<sup>1</sup> We reviewed the Secretariat’s analysis of the indicators, several of which have seen no progress, and the unplanned



activities that took precedence in order to better understand the causes of underperformance on planned outcomes and to decide how to proceed. It was overwhelmingly clear that the activities with the least progress were related to publications, further stressing the need for NEPC to find more practical ways to disseminate information and articulate its policy positions.

While there was unanimous consensus of the participants that an annotation of the current strategy, rather than a full revision, would be the most appropriate way forward at this time, there were several points to keep in mind for the development of the next strategy. Moving forward the participants agreed that NEPC should better articulate its benefits, tasks and outcomes for its members and to develop an impact narrative for the education sector and the geographies in which it operates. Participants also stressed the need to be more strategic and creative, particularly in relation to publications and outreach. Finally, the goal should be to develop a strategy that reflects the real world and the ways in which expertise from the region can inform the development of the sector, while differentiating between the responsibilities of the Secretariat and those of the membership.

The annotated strategy will be presented to the members at the 2019 GA for their approval.

Together with the detailed plan for development of the next strategy 2020 – 2025 that will be I and considering the activities implemented are in line with Strategy objectives, the review of the Strategy is planned for 2018. The review of strategy will be based on the learnings from the interviews conducted with members as well as from the Network analyses.

*Full report on the strategy workshop and annotated strategy available at request.*

#### ○ Board Meetings

In 2018, three Board meetings were organized:

28<sup>th</sup> February, Zagreb – Croatia

17<sup>th</sup> April, Baška - Croatia

18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> September, Samobor – Croatia

Board members were involved in planning of the programmes of the conference and other NEPC learning events, monitoring of the network activities and financial reporting, while their main activity in 2018 has been the review of the strategy and planning the process for the next strategy period. In 2018 the Board was not changed while at the

upcoming GA, in May 2019, new board members will be elected as the ongoing ones will have served their full terms.

- General Assembly – GA I 18.04. Baška I Croatia

The report from 2017 and Plan for 2018 were presented.

Aleesha Taylor presented the findings of the mapping study on politics, policies and practices and education perception in the network. The Governing Board initiated the mapping in order to get acquainted with education trends in the network countries and regions, as this is considered as a helpful tool for the strategic planning process that the Governing Board is conducting. In order to protect the organizations operating in countries characterized by a critical political situation, some direct references to countries have been avoided and the study assumed the setting of a more general overview.

Members met in three regional groups in order to facilitate easier discussion. Group discussions were led by the respective regional Governing Board Representative and tried to answer same questions. After the discussion, reports from the sub-meetings were presented to the whole Assembly.

23 representatives of NEPC members (19 full members; 4 affiliated members) were present. NEPC Secretariat was represented by Lana Jurko, Pietro Santilli and Petra Jurlina.

*Minutes available upon request*

## VI. FUNDRAISING

FUNDER	NEPC ROLE	ACRONYM/TITLE	RESULTS
EC – E+	Partner	AVIOR 2.0	REJECTED
CoE	Applicant	DISCO	REJECTED
EC – E+	Partner	EEPN	APPROVED
EEA	Applicant	ARISE	PENDING

## VII. NEPC IN NUMBERS

- 28 full and affiliated members
- 145 participants in learning events (NEPC Conference; Summer school; Study visits; Webinars; UNESCO WS)
- 4 project proposals, 1 approved, 2 rejected, 1 pending
- 899 Facebook followers (overall number of 257 posts\*); 39 Twitter followers (\*\*overall number of 279 tweets and retweets)
- 11 international conferences and events attended
- 4 NEPC events organized and 3 webinars
- 18 mobilities (study visits; conferences)

(\*BRAVEdu and Hand in Hand Facebook pages are considered in the calculation; \*\*the Hand in Hand account is considered in the calculation)

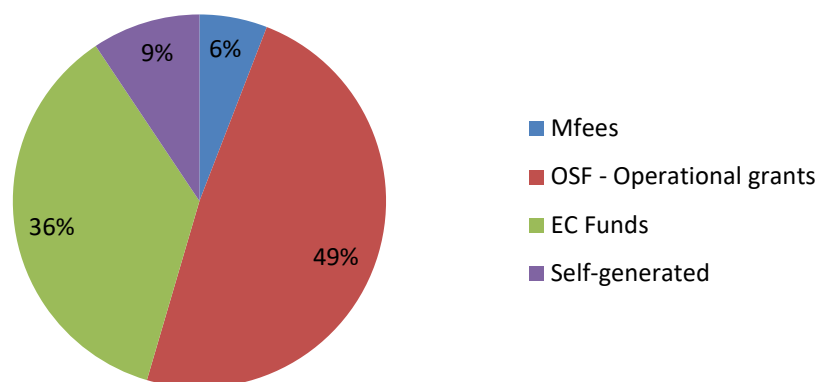
## VIII. SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT

Incoming Funds	Planned EUR	Received in 2018 EUR
I Memeberhsip Fees	21.200,00	15.306,26
II OSF admin grant	128.000,00	126.603,65
III ETF	29.660,00	30.110,00
IV AVIOR	7.700,00	17.322,15
V Hand in Hand	34.000,00	34.926,00
VI Self generated	12.000,00	24.415,42
VII SIRIUS	5.500,00	8.600,31
VIII Other		2.884,79
Balance 1.1.2018.	102.552,50	
TOTAL	343.497,29	260.168,58

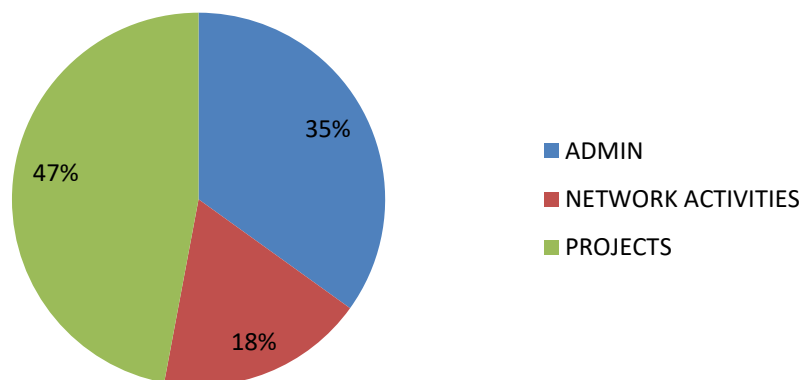
Expenditure	in EUR
I. Administration costs	
1.1. Staff costs	92.430,34
1.2. Office costs	21.172,71
1.3. Bank costs	2.137,62
TOTAL Administration costs	115.740,67
II. Activities	
1. Board	6.507,79
2. General assembly/conference	20.936,52
3. Summer school	3.166,99
4. Policy Lab	8.840,45
Learning among members	8.994,39
5. Visibility & Publication	11.337,80
TOTAL	175.524,62
SPENDING ACCORDING TO PROJECTS	EUR
SIRIUS	4.164,90
ETF	29.794,35
AVIOR	15.893,96
HAND IN HAND	1.699,94
CoE	13.495,06
BRAVEDU	90.900,91
TOTAL SPENDING ACCORDING TO PROJECTS	155.949,13

BALANCE INCOME/SPENT	
	EUR
INCOMING FUNDS 2018	260.198,58
Balance 1.1.2018.	102.552,50
Total Operational Costs	175.524,62
TOTAL SPENDING ACCORDING TO PROJECTS	155.949,13
TOTAL SPENT 2018	331.473,75
BALANCE INCOME/SPENT	31.247,33

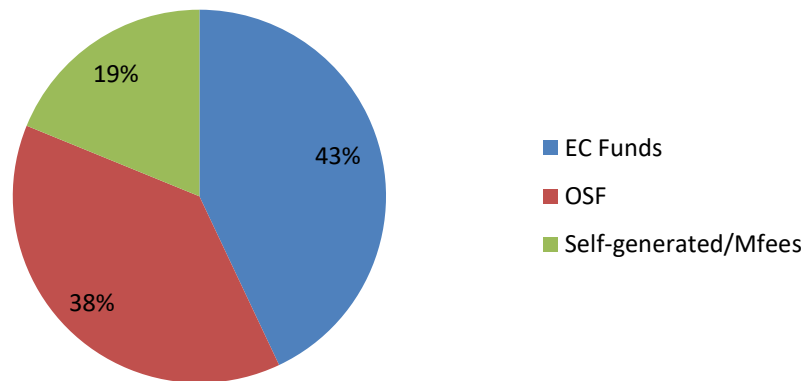
## Incoming funds per source



## Expenditures per activity type



## Expenditures per source





# Explore | Participate | Change

NETWORK OF EDUCATION POLICY CENTERS

AMRUŠEVA 8, 10 000 ZAGREB

[www.edupolicy.net](http://www.edupolicy.net)

[nepc@edupolicy.net](mailto:nepc@edupolicy.net)

00 385 1 558 7975