



NETWORK OF EDUCATION POLICY CENTERS



Photo by Sharon McCutcheon from Pexels

ANNUAL REPORT
2020

Contents

1. OVERVIEW 2020.....	3
2. PROJECTS.....	4
3. EMERGENCY FUNDS	10
Summary of Activities implemented within the Emergency Fund I.....	12
4. LEARNING EVENTS.....	19
5. PUBLICATIONS.....	22
6. ADVOCACY AND NETWORKING	25
7. NETWORK.....	26
8. FUNDRAISING	27
9. SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT	29

1. OVERVIEW 2020

One of the most used syntagms in 2020 has been “challenging year”. From the Network perspective 2020 was a very intense year in which we experienced the importance of staying open in time of lockdown.

Membership wise we enlarged the Network with three more organizations: Center for Applied Education from Romania, the Community Educational Foundation 'School for All' from Kazakhstan and Education Policy Department of ISEC/NAS from Armenia. New members organizations have been already actively involved in several activities and indeed in 2020, through projects, initiatives, country and comparative research, almost all institutional members were involved in NEPC activities: this greatly contributes to the cohesion of the membership structure in the first year from NEPC establishment without the possibility to meet and gather all members.

From the project perspective, the partnership with UNESCO in the development of Regional report of the Global Education Monitoring report on inclusive education represents an incredible opportunity for the visibility of the Network and for the learning process attached to it: the data collected will represent a source of inspiration for future initiatives. In 2020, NEPC members showed impressive strength in supporting education system in their country with incredible creativity and care for educational staff and students' well-being. Their prompt response inspired the two emergency funds (one from NEPC and one supported by OSF), in which 12 members initiatives, to respond to COVID-19 crisis in education, were supported. The pandemic accelerates the discussion about the future of education and with the aim to prepare the field for 2021 Strategic process and to share Network perspective about the future of Education, we have organized an expert focus group within the UNESCO initiative Futures of Education:

Considering the rapid changes that we have experienced in the last decades, it is difficult to foresee the how, what and where of the learning process without knowing who will be recognised as a teacher in the future and who will be seen as a student. We may imagine teachers to be individuals who have something to offer the community rather than satisfying the requirements of qualification and the students to be learners regardless of their group divisions (age, abilities, and background). They interact in an education system where the learning process acknowledges the power of playing and the arts and where learning about the world is not packed in boxes of subjects but encouraged through curiosity. Such a concept requires a deep revision of the existing division between STEM and humanistic sciences, the reflection on the abilities and inclinations of learners and the rejection of the assessment as it is today. We can imagine education as a meeting point beyond walls, schools and institutions, however, the final aim must be to ensure equal access to quality education for all and this is possible only if we understand it as a public good that we all have the responsibility to support, take care of and protect.

2. PROJECTS

Global Education Monitoring Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia Regional Report – Inclusion and education: All means all

NEPC Role:	Project Partner
Duration:	January 2020 – April 2021
Partners:	n/a
Funded by:	UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM)

NEPC cooperated with Global Education Monitoring Report at UNESCO and European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education in editing the Regional report on inclusion and education in Central and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, the accompanying edition of The Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report.

NEPC collected data from 18 countries Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Turkey in cooperation with 13 NEPC members and several external experts. The country data collected covered the following thematic areas: Laws and policies; Governance and finance; Data; Curricula, learning materials and assessments; Teachers and support personnel; Schools; Communities, parents and students.

NEPC responsibilities also included drafting the papers and chapters: Curricula, learning materials and assessments; Teachers and support personnel. Moreover, as the report was designed during the COVID-19 crisis, NEPC also contributed to the data collection and drafting of additional chapter regarding the education systems responses to COVID-19 crisis.

The launch of the report is foreseen in February 2021 and NEPC will assist the GEM Report Unit in disseminating the regional report through its outreach strategy.

European Education Policy Network on Teachers and School Leaders (EEPEN)

NEPC Role:	Project Partner
Duration:	48 months from 11/2018
Partners:	27 organizations from 19 European countries
Funded by:	EU; Framework specific agreement

The European Education Policy Network on Teachers and School Leaders (EEPEN), of which NEPC is a member, aims to promote co-operation, policy development and implementation at different

governance levels, and to support the European Commission's policy work on teachers and school leaders.

In 2020 (August), the EEPN project entered in its second year, which is dedicated to the topic of skills and competences of school leaders and school teachers in the digital era. In 2020, NEPC acquired the role of dissemination coordinator. In cooperation with the project coordinator, the European School Head Association, NEPC designed the dissemination plan for the whole consortium. NEPC also started with the implementation of direct dissemination activities (a social media cycle on the state of affair of the research questions on the topic, the editing and dissemination of the first project newsletter) as consortium member.

NEPC also participated in the desk research by providing materials about recent educational research, inspirational practices and policies as well as relevant EU-funded projects regarding the skills and competences of school leaders in the digital areas in the EU countries that are part of the Network.

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
Partners:	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)
Funded by:	EU; Erasmus+

The HAND in HAND project aimed at the development of an open access systemic policy tool – EU based universal socio-emotional and intercultural 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 and segregation.

In 2020 (February), the Hand in Hand project reached its completion. As dissemination partner, NEPC had the task of organising the final project conference that took place in Zadar, Croatia, on January 28th&29th 2020. In the final stage of the project, NEPC conducted the following activities:

- Organisation and hosting of the final conference “Do we need a relational revolution in schools?” on January 28th & 29th 2020, attended by 200 participants (logistic and part of the program)
- Media outreach - NEPC released a press release for local, county, and national media and invited reporters to cover the event. It also organised and held a media corner to receive and inform journalists
- Dissemination via social media - NEPC launched the conference on its social media channels prior to the event, promoting the program and the registration through its Facebook and Twitter accounts

- Conference and project follow-up - in the last month of the project, NEPC supported the promotion of the final outputs that were shared during the final event (i.e. scientific monograph, policy recommendations), gathered the required documentation to complete the closure of the project and prepared the field for a follow-up mapping study on social emotional learning connected to the project in six NEPC countries.

Project: SIRIUS 2.0 – POLICY NETWORK ON MIGRANT EDUCATION

NEPC Role:	Project Partner
Duration:	September 2017 – September 2021
Partners:	5 networks and 23 national partners from 18 EU countries
Funded by:	EU; Erasmus+

The project promotes co-operation between different stakeholders, supports inclusive policy development and implementation at different governance levels and facilitates the integration of children and young people with migration background in education. SIRIUS 2.0 performs a knowledge brokerage function by providing evidence from research and practice for policy-making and by informing research about the unmet needs of policymakers and practitioners.

Peer learning events: due to the pandemic, the two peer learning events envisaged in 2020, usually attended by one NEPC representative, have been postponed to Spring 2021. As a network, NEPC engagement in the project is mostly related to dissemination and networking. NEPC mainly conveyed its dissemination actions on-line and in international/transnational contexts (which were strongly reduced in 2020 due to the COVID pandemic in 2020). Whenever possible, NEPC acted as a sounding board for the information and the goals of the project, relying on its branched network of members and partners.

In December, an online workshop on inclusive digital education was organised by SIRIUS network, attended by policy-makers, teachers, migrant activists/organisations, students and parents. The objective of the workshop was to issue a key learning document highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of their national contexts and areas, concerning digital education.

HEAD: Empowering School Principals for Inclusive School Culture

NEPC Role:	Project Leader
Duration:	1.12.2019 - 30.11.2022
Partners:	Croatia: Forum for freedom in Education; Open Academy Step by Step North Macedonia: Foundation for Education and Cultural Initiatives Step by Step; Macedonian Civic Education Centre Slovenia: Educational Research Institute; National School of Leadership in Education The Netherlands: NSO – CNA Leadership academy <i>Associate partners</i> European School Head Association Association of Croatian Secondary School Principals Association of Croatian Primary School Principals
Funded by:	EU; Erasmus+

The project aims to address the professionalisation of school principals in Croatia and North Macedonia. It focuses on inclusive education, exploiting best practices from Slovenia and the Netherlands and piloting five modules of professional development (PD) in 60 schools, building their capacities in establishing inclusive school culture creating inclusive school policies and practices through participatory decision-making.

Through the PD program, school principals involved will strengthen their capacity to support democratic school governance, cooperation with stakeholders and inclusiveness in general. By streamlining the professionalization of school leaders, the project will provide professional development for school leaders to create an inclusive school culture in their schools, resulting in better management, in both the academic and non-academic aspects, leading towards a more inclusive community and society.

The impact of the project will be measured by an impact study that will show the effectiveness of the intervention and a policy roadmap defining the major steps and milestones for mainstreaming the professional development programs in the piloting countries will be outlined.

In 2020, despite the challenges faced by project partners due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the project implementation included:

- development of Training Syllabus Empowering school principals for inclusive school cultures, submitted to consultation to policy coalition for North Macedonia and Croatia (25 reviews received)
- baseline for the impact study instruments involving, at the time of this report, more than 2000 school principals, teachers and students.
- organization of the 2 online project meetings
- publishing Principals' needs for professional development in the field of creating an inclusive school culture - Report for Croatia and Republic of North Macedonia (available [here](#))

- White board animation VIDEO 1 – KEY concepts in HEAD projects (subtitled in AL, MK and HR) (available [here](#))

Integrity of Education System

NEPC Role:	Project coordinator
Duration:	18.4.2019 - 18.12.2020 (extended until June 30 th due to COVID-19 crisis)
Partners:	Center for Applied Policy and Integrity, Bulgaria; International Institute for Education Policy, Planning and Management – Georgia; Association Educational Centre PRO DIDACTICA, Moldova; Mongolian Education Alliance, Mongolia; Foundation Education Initiatives Support, Kyrgyzstan
Funded by:	EU; Erasmus+

The aim of the project is to explore integrity selected areas and reform priorities in education in 4 countries from NEPC region: Georgia, Mongolia, Moldova and Kyrgyzstan.

The project is implemented through 3 phases:

Educations | Evidence collection | Dissemination activities.

In 2020, the second capacity building training *Integrity of education systems (INTES): second capacity-building and coordination meeting* has been held in Zagreb (Feb 4th & 5th 2020). The meeting gathered representatives of the project partners, the expert team from CAPI as well as NEPC representatives with the aims to present and discuss the national reports and their findings; provide feedback on the research methodology and its application; present an initial selection of cross-country findings and discuss and design national dissemination actions. The meeting also provided an opportunity for bilateral exchanges with project partners on the project implementation.

The national reports have been finalized and published in English and local languages:

- Integrity violations in the employment and promotion of teachers in the Republic of Moldova
- Recruitment of schoolteachers in Georgia: an integrity assessment
- The case of Kyrgyzstan: Parental Contributions and Integrity Violations within School Education System
- Integrity Violations and Parental Contributions in Mongolia

The pandemic has affected the dissemination of national reports in Mongolia and Kirgizstan and to provide better dissemination at national and international level, the project extension to June 2021, has been required and approved by OSF.

The comparative report has also been published: Integrity in the use of human and financial resources in education – A cross-country synthesis of findings from locally-led INTES assessments in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, and Mongolia (available [here](#)) and presented at vCIES on April 27th (recording available [here](#)) and in a webinar hosted by NEPC on Dev 4th (recording available [here](#)).

ARISE – Action for Reducing Inequalities in Education

NEPC Role:	Project partner
Duration:	April 2020 – April 2024
Partners:	Kosova Education Center (Lead); Sabancı University - Egitim Reformu Girisimi; Children are the Future; Centre for Education Policy; proMENTE social research; Centre for Educational Initiatives Step by Step; Foundation for Education and Cultural Initiatives "Step by Step"
Funded by:	EU, EuropAid

The ARISE – Action for Reducing Inequalities in Education – project is a platform created by a pool of NEPC members NGOs and research institutes from Western Balkans and Turkey (IPA countries) that will support schools, grassroots organisations and policy makers in developing actions and policies aimed at mitigating the effect of low socio-economic status on students' achievement, reducing inequalities in education. 25 schools will receive support to implement a two-year school development programme, based on whole school approach and mentoring, to reduce disparities of poverty. Consortium members will support schools to develop sustainable practices in that direction, including school staff training, school projects, school policies, community involvement.

In the first phase of the project, as dissemination and policy partner, NEPC outlined the dissemination plan for the first year and took care of the realisation of the project website (in cooperation with an external provider) and its preliminary content, as well as the creation of project social network accounts (Facebook and Twitter). As a consortium member, NEPC started communicating and disseminating information regarding the project, relying mostly on the mentioned channels (ARISE website and social media) and NEPC newsletter.

NEPC was also responsible for issuing a Call for the Grassroots organizations (GROs) that are selected as partners in the project. In collaboration with the Consortium members, Call for participation was issued with the specific objective of empowering GROs to address the issues of low SES children and raise awareness among local stakeholders about the effects of lower SES in children educational and personal development. Six GROs that will closely cooperate with the Consortium in the ARISE project activities were selected, one in each IPA beneficiary country.

In addition, NEPC also participated in the consultation and development of the methodology and instruments used for collecting data on social mechanisms and institutional effects related to inequality for policy research in the participating countries.

Start the Change – creating a generation of change makers through intercultural education and volunteering

NEPC Role:	Project partner
Duration:	January 2020 – January 2023
Partners:	Forum for Freedom in Education; Elementary School Ivan Meštrović; INOVA+ Innovation Services; José Estêvão Secondary School; Macedonian Civic Education Center; State Municipal School “Nikola Karev”; SIRIUS
Funded by:	EU, Erasmus +

The Start the Change project aims at preventing and combating radicalization and extremism among young people by promoting democratic and EU common values, fundamental rights, social inclusion, media literacy, intercultural understanding and active citizenship. It will empower teachers, students' and parents in understanding and recognition of the complexity and challenges of the contemporary society by strengthening their personal, social and civic competencies through a whole-school approach.

In 2020, as dissemination and policy partner, NEPC outlined the dissemination plan for the first year and started to share information about the first project outputs and training and about the schools involved in the project (newsletters, social media). Together with project partner SIRIUS, it also authored and edited one preliminary analysis on school voices, the desk research report "[Students' participation: Policy and Practice to Start the Change](#)". The report will be used as one of the theoretical bases for the upcoming Policy Lab "Policy and Practice to Start the Change" that will be organized by NEPC in 2021.

3. EMERGENCY FUNDS

During the COVID-19 crisis, NEPC members promptly reacted to support education systems in facing the unprecedented challenges, proposing wide range of activities for teachers, students and parents. NEPC, inspired by the prompt and creative responses of our members, issued a call for proposal with the aim to contribute to the support that NEPC members provide to national education system and in particular to teachers and school staff in managing this crisis and/or any other innovative educational response to the current situation. In the first round of emergency fund, NEPC supported six initiatives:

1. Strengthening our Support and Solidarity Action to Albanian Schools and Education, *Children are the Future - Albania*
2. FORUM ONLINE – Building creative online learning community of teachers, students and school management, *Forum for Freedom in Education - Croatia*
3. Debates Club for school teachers PAIDEIA - new challenges in on-line learning space, *Educational Center Prodidactica – Republic of Moldova*.
4. SHARING IS CARING, *Foundation for Education and Cultural Initiatives Step by Step - North Macedonia*
5. Bridge the gap, *Open Academy Step by Step – Croatia*
6. Provide quality online education through peer learning and exchange, mobilizing and organizing network of teachers and experts, *Center for Education Initiative Step by Step – Bosnia and Herzegovina*

With the support of Open Society Foundations, a second round of emergency fund was launched with the aim to support members responses to the pandemic emergency addressing the following priorities: counter authoritarianism, ensure economic justice and promote information democracy. Within the second emergency fund six initiatives were supported, one being multi-country:

7. Let's talk about education – informed dialogue for better education, Center for Education Initiative Step by Step – Bosnia and Herzegovina
8. "Student journalism" program, Mongolian Education Alliance - Mongolia
9. Research on Schools Response to Public Health Crisis in Serbia, Kazakhstan and Romania: comparative study, Centre for Education Policy – Serbia; Foundation Center for Applied Education – Romania; School for All - Kazakhstan
10. Bridge the gap 2, Open Academy Step by Step – Croatia
11. Contact Grabber: Keep on Studying, Praxis Centre for Policy Studies – Estonia
12. The Education Base. Remedial education and innovation mentorship hubs for restoring and empowering learning-deprived communities during and post-Covid-19 pandemic - Foundation Center for Applied Education – Romania

Summary of Activities implemented within the Emergency Fund I

(all initiatives have been completed by the end of 2020 save for the Debates Club for school teachers PAIDEIA - new challenges in on-line learning space, Educational Center Prodidactica – Republic of Moldova)

Strengthening our Support and Solidarity Action to Albanian Schools and Education, Children are the Future – Albania

Children are the future, during the pandemic, focused their activities on providing support to educational stakeholders – parents, teachers, school leaders and children. The activities were planned around three field: provide platform for support, exchange and sharing; conduct situational analysis; planning next school year.

- *Provide platform for support, exchange and sharing:* the organization organized 10 meetings with teachers, school leaders, parents to reflect on challenges, possible mitigation measures, exchange practices, communication with children, provide platform for open dialogue and active listening among different educational stakeholders to understand each other positions; CAF maintained regular communication with all actors through WhatsApp groups and similar to provide technical and professional support to teachers and supported the activities of the parents network encouraging them to organize meetings with other parents and provide guiding and support. In the second phase of lockdown, 2 meetings on site with two schools were organized with high participation of teachers as well as 2 meetings with representatives of regional education directorate to discuss education access of vulnerable groups.
- *Peer learning and exchanges:* Peer learning and exchange was developed at different levels among members of the same group of beneficiaries, as well as members of different groups, including school leaders, teachers, parents, students and inner school structures, where challenges, fears and lessons learned were exchanged and positive practices were shared, what helped increasing learning, improving communication and cooperation among them and generating ideas on steps forward.
- *Conduct situational analysis:* instruments for teachers, parents and students were developed; 1300 questionnaires from students; 200 from parents and 200 from teachers were collected (the lower number of participation of teachers and parents is due to lower digital competencies). The preliminary results and main findings showed high need for professional support for teachers in 2 main areas: raising capacity in digital competences; improving teaching methods (in terms of interactive and collaborative learning). The high need for provision with direct support to children coming from vulnerable families was another finding that was incorporated into the report and policy recommendations for future actions toward a more inclusive and equitable education. A comprehensive report was produced and published through CAF social media with extended information and main findings divided into four main groups: a) the situation of teachers, students and parents during the Pandemic and on-line teaching; b) Communication among all the stakeholders; c) the teaching process (including the platforms and methods used as well as difficulties and challenges faced); and d) the needs for changes and improvements, followed by suggestions and recommendations at national policy, school and community level.
- *Planning next school year: priorities for the next academic year.* A comprehensive on-line consultation process was implemented to help schools review their SDP programs, identify priorities for the next academic year and develop the Annual Plan in line with the identified needs and priorities. Mentoring and support was provided during the whole Annual Plan development process paying specific attention to the challenges caused by COVID-19

pandemic and exploring effective ways of increasing active participation of all students and increasing cooperation with families and the whole school community.

FORUM ONLINE – Building creative online learning community of teachers, students and school management Forum for Freedom in Education – Croatia

FFE during the pandemic, as leading organization for professional development in Croatia, implemented several activities to support education staff. The emergency fund contributed to further support the activities they had already started and to design new ones. The project with the aim to support teachers in building the school community that cares about everyone and that provides space for all students to feel safe, supported and accepted in the time of Covid-19 crisis has been implemented around 4 types of activities.

- *Resources for extracurricular activities:* The campaign 'Everything will be all right!' encouraged students from all over Croatia to send their art pieces inspired by the messages 'Everything will be all right!'. A total of 1500 art pieces were collected (500 during the emergency fund) with the participation of 85 schools. The 10 schools involved in the project *Happy school* were furtherly support during the pandemic with learning materials focusing on students' well-being and mental health. On July 16th a presentation regarding the school re-opening was held with representatives of the 10 schools to present them measures for ensuring healthy learning environment to students in the next school year. The measures concerned the assessment, the students' well-being and the recovery curriculum.
- *Resources for implementation of cross curricular topics:* 9 cross-curricular learning materials were developed, each containing several activities (TOPICS: Humour, Solidarity, Identity, Elections, Innovation, Conflict, Diversity, Honesty; <https://fso.hr/forumove-medupredmetne teme-prijedlozi-nastavnih-aktivnosti/>) the learning materials were downloaded more than 15000 times (by July 17th) and shared by several media and educational institutions (Education and Teachers Training Agency, Ministry of Education, National Center for External Evaluation in Education, different local and regional units, NGOs etc.).
- *Resources for classroom and school management:* Evaluation tool for schools was developed for schools to collect data about the satisfaction of distance learning among teachers, students and parents. The surveys were downloaded more than 1000 times.

Publication about school re-opening (possible translation/adaptation in English) –

Croatian version – available [here](#);

English version – available [here](#)

Debates Club for school teachers PAIDEIA - new challenges in on-line learning space, Educational Center Prodidactica – Republic of Moldova

Started in September 2020, the Project *Debates Club for school teachers PAIDEIA - new challenges in on-line learning space* aims to improve teachers professional and personal development by on-line debates and teacher training. Relaunching the Club in on-line format has increased the chance for more teachers to participate and benefit from training and also to share the good and advanced practices in education. After the Launch conference in October and the needs assessment conducted (by online questionnaire), 9 topics were elaborated for professional development of teachers. 6 online sessions were conducted in 2020. In sum, around 350 participants, from more 30 different regions of the republic had the possibility to be involved and develop their skills – digital skills, functional literacy, covering different dimensions of professional development: online assessment: tools and methods; anti-corruption education; burn-out syndrome: prevention and intervention techniques; functional literacy; transdisciplinary approach to terminology; emotional management from the perspective of personal development; elements of interactivity in distance

learning; educational partnership; motivating students and teachers. The participants gained knowledge, tools, and methods to address the issues of everyday didactical and practical activities. Each online session was recorded and posted as an online educational resource on the elaborated webpage dedicated to Debate Club PAIDEIA (<http://red.prodidactica.md/clubul-paideia-altfel/>). Also, other learning and didactic materials elaborated by trainers are published on the webpage and are freely accessed. The information about project events was published on the website ¹ and social media.

SHARING IS CARING, Foundation for Education and Cultural Initiatives Step by Step - North Macedonia

FECIM SbS focused their efforts during the pandemic on providing support to education stakeholders by mapping examples of good practices and developing/adapting learning materials for teachers, parents and children.

Sharing of resources: the organization collected and shared the activities designed by other NEPC members (Open Academy Step by Step Croatia; Forum for Freedom in Education Croatia and Center for education initiatives Step by Step Bosnia and Herzegovina) but also from NEPC, ISSA, UNICEF, OECD, George Mason University, and other relevant organizations to support teachers and parents in the distance learning and updated the online library.

- *Translation of materials:* the organization translated the statement of early childhood workforce initiative about supporting parents and teachers and reflecting on how we can rethink our societies and economies.
- *Adaptation of existing learning materials:* on daily basis the organization published activities for teachers and parents adapted to distance learning focusing on literacy and numeracy materials for 1-4 grades learners; 12 picture books were adapted in the form of small theatre of shadow and translated in 5 languages – Turkish, Serbian, Bosnian, Roma languages.
- *Organization of the training how to cope with the crisis* – psycho social support for teachers. - Three-day seminar was conducted for 121 participants from 10 primary schools in the country.

Bridge the gap, Open Academy Step by Step – Croatia

The project activities were focused on the quality of kindergarten and primary school support to children and parents in the situations when kindergartens are lockdown; Professional and public awareness of the reasons why children who live in poverty and/or do not speak the Croatian language are exposed to the additional, risks of the exclusion from the educational process, both in preschool and primary school; providing support for low SES families. OA step by Step published a special edition of magazine 'Child, Kindergarten, Family' with numerous of articles with examples of good practices for kindergarten educators. Special edition of magazine was published during lock down at mid-April 2020. Most kindergartens at that time were operating online. [Magazine is available online.](#) The special issue of magazine was presented on international webinar organized by ISSA 'International Step by Step Association' as an example of good practice of supporting preschool educators during pandemic COVID-19. During the April 2020 OA step by Step within the activities of REYN-Croatia and with cooperation with Ministry of Education organized collecting the information about children who remained at an educational distance by introducing distance learning. The questionnaires were filled in by 65 primary schools. The results of the following questionnaire are available [here](#). The summary of the results as well as recommendations and examples

of good practices were published online on [REYN-C Facebook page](#), REYN-C web site and through newsletter for REYN-C members. Tablets for families living in poverty were also provided.

[Provide quality online education through peer learning and exchange, mobilizing and organizing network of teachers and experts, Center for Education Initiative Step by Step – Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

SBS BiH during the emergency created an impressive number of materials and organized several activities with the aim to support all education stakeholders (principals; teachers; children; parents) keeping the focus on quality education and empowering the community of teachers to be supportive and innovative to ensure quality education and care about children well-being.

The emergency fund supported the following activities:

- *Support for teacher's community:* Preparation and collection of more than 200 learning resources that were shared on the web platform www.inskola.com (27 for preschool education; 160 for elementary school and 29 for all educational age groups); Initiative postcards from the world to share support messages with educational stakeholders for all over the world; Sharing video, books and films recommendation; design of weekly recap newsletter.
- *Organization of 46 'Talk about education'* with 50 education stakeholders (education researchers; university professor; teachers; students and representatives of CSOs) broadcasted on Facebook on daily basis.

Summary of project proposals within Emergency Fund II (Sept 2020-Sept 2021)

[Let's talk about education – informed dialogue for better education, Center for Education Initiative Step by Step – Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

(co-financing initiative)

Education in general, but especially issues of quality and equity, are rarely in the focus of governments, decision and policy makers in BiH (outside of education sector). Reforms are slow, inconsistent, while last education strategy expired in 2015. Shortly, we might say that education is neither priority, nor perceived as public good and important investment for the future of the country.

Although there is general dissatisfaction, at least declaratively, with current education systems in all parts of BH, supported by data from international testing such as recent PISA, there are no consensus or common understanding about key issues, obstacles and goals for the future. Dialogue or discussions about education are very rarely part of public discourse other than unfounded criticism or praise and shallow analysis on social and other media. Experts from other fields, academia, parents, youth, even CSO are rarely involved in conversation about education, but they also have no opportunities to gain knowledge necessary for informed dialogue.

This initiative aims to create public space for dialogue between educators, researchers, CSO, GO and public, for information sharing and exchange, but also for educating wider audience about existing practices, needs and possibilities. It should raise awareness about importance of further investment in education by making information available and understandable, and by providing arguments and different perspectives.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES:

- 16 episodes of the serial Words on education on key issues in education with diverse stakeholders (*topics: Curriculum change; Quality Teaching and Learning, including ICT; Formative assessment and evaluation; Learning environment and socio-emotional development; Partnership with family and community; High quality teachers and professionalization; Participation in the*

development of the school and the educational system - the role of teachers and all other stakeholders)

- promotion of the serials through Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, but also through public media.

["Student journalism" program, Mongolian Education Alliance – Mongolia](#)

In the 21st century, especially due to technological development, there are many information resources. People, especially young people need a set of skills such as analysing information, recognizing fake news, expressing their views ethically, and having a basic media information literacy knowledge, so that they are enabled to make informed decisions to become active citizens of a democratic society.

School is a first place where democracy and democratic processes are exercised. With this in mind, MEA's youth program supports schools in promoting children's rights to expression and participation through creation and facilitation of extracurricular activities such as "Student debate", "Journalism clubs" and "Film clubs".

The "Student Journalism" program is based on basic rights to freedom of information and education are also included in the United Nations' "Convention on the Rights of the Child" (UNCRC) which Mongolia has signed and ratified. The Convention recognizes the importance of children's and young people's development. It will have a significant impact on the real implementation of children's right to freedom expression also based on the Article 2.2.9 of order A/528 of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science on organizing extracurricular activities.

The project aims to develop students' journalism, expression & participation skills and promote principles of free press as well as democratic citizenship among school students.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES:

The program will involve high school students and facilitators from 24 secondary schools in Orkhon province. The "Student journalism" club activities run independently without the supervision of school administration or teachers.

"Student journalism" is usually in the form of after-school clubs, with a facilitator assigned from each school. The facilitator will play a key role in providing the club's students with media information literacy knowledge and skills, the club content, methodology and organizational management in the form of an after-school programs. The facilitator and students who join with club on voluntary basis, will also have a basic knowledge about media information literacy activities and disseminate it to others.

2 rounds of training will be organized and small grants to start their newspaper will be granted to clubs. Students will divide into teams such as marketing, photographer, journalists, editor, and designer all these could also be developed as entrepreneurial and other relevant skills.

[Research on Schools Response to Public Health Crisis in Serbia, Kazakhstan and Romania: comparative study, Centre for Education Policy – Serbia; Foundation Center for Applied Education – Romania; School for All - Kazakhstan](#)

The objectives of the initiative are to provide reliable data on the schools' experiences related to change of school work and implementation of distance/online teaching due to the Covid19 situation and to share findings, conclusions and recommendations with decision makers and different other stakeholders. In this way, the initiative will contribute to the information sharing, to the evidence-based decision making and to the improvement of the quality of the reaction of schools on the possible replication of the Covid19 situation in the following period.

The project will contribute to information sharing and information democracy by developing recommendations after data collection about the experiences related to adaptation and

successfulness of the teaching processes during the public health crisis caused by Covid19 disease. Namely, the research will put the light on the activities and processes that are implemented by schools in, for them as well as for students, new context. In terms of its contribution to information democracy, the project will also tackle the issue of how and how well were schools informed on their roles and responsibilities during the Covid19 caused state of emergency, and how this information process influenced school work and teaching and learning activities.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES:

- Collect Comprehensive data on the experiences of schools in 3 countries related to their organisation and management and implementation of distance/online teaching is collected
- Analysis of data and design of recommendations
- Design of 3 national reports
- Design of comparative study
- Presentation of report to schools and other stakeholders via three online conferences
- Promotion and dissemination of report

Bridge the gap 2, Open Academy Step by Step – Croatia

In times of pandemic and global health crisis, it is important to remember that the most vulnerable and often invisible – Roma children and their families living on the margins of society in extremely adverse conditions. REYN-C, the community of education professionals and practitioners promoting the wellbeing and holistic development and learning of Roma children feels the urgency to put in the spotlight those children and families who stayed behind in the situation of COVID-19 pandemic.

Schools educators play a key role in bridging the gaps in order to overcome those discrimination and social injustice. Even the fact is that holistic, intersectoral, and integrated approaches must be adopted when addressing the multi-faceted problems Roma children and families are facing, we strongly believe that those transformation can start in the situation of crises and from educator's side.

The action aims to provide support to vulnerable Roma children and educational staff in circumstances of pandemic.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES:

- networking of school leaders and teachers in order to give better support Roma children and their families who live in poverty in learning in circumstances of pandemic through two online discussions/groups reflections/webinars for primary school leaders and teachers. (the event for school leaders will be focused on exchanges observations regarding position of the pupils from vulnerable groups in education system during COVID-19 pandemic and exchange their practices for overcoming education gap of Roma pupils; the event for teachers will be focused on presenting learning techniques for stress relief)
- support to vulnerable Roma: through Call for Proposals for institutional REYN-C members (primary schools and kindergartens) we will provide humanitarian assistance for families who live in poverty, buying additional technical equipment for school and/or Roma families, implementation of new programs, etc. (5 actions)

Contact Grabber: Keep on Studying, Praxis Centre for Policy Studies – Estonia (co-financing initiative)

Up to 17-18% (corresponding to 3,000 students each year) of Estonian youth does not reach secondary education and is dropping out of studies or is forced into class repetition. A high rate of

people with low educational background increases the risk of poverty and social exclusion, threatens competitiveness of the workforce, and thus leads to higher inequalities in societies.

The COVID-19 crisis has forced students and teachers into remote learning, with no time to adjust teaching methods or study materials. This combined with a varying availability of technology for households and differing digital competences has already significantly increased both dropout risk and social inequality, while most affecting those already at risk. The pandemic era trends tend to sharpen already existing patterns which means that for those students and families who were already in a disadvantaged position, the situation will most likely be even more challenging. Additionally, new student groups may be at risk of becoming disconnected in the remote learning process and greater efforts are needed to identify and target them as these groups may not fall into so-called traditionally at-risk perceived student groups. To balance this, experience shows that education and social policy solutions alone might not be effective and private-public partnership and civil organization cooperation have added benefit.

Praxis is developing early warning system solutions for teachers and support agents. The current crisis has pointed out the need to focus on various target groups and highlighted the value of an individualized approach with specific guidelines of action in cooperation with private and public sector actors. It is against the foregoing that Praxis is applying for the second emergency grant to co-finance an on-going initiative. The initiative consists of providing a solution within the current early warning system to specifically empower students from low socio-economic background at risk for drop-out and strengthen the design of sustainable public-private partnerships.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES:

- Designing intervention aimed at individual students with low social-economic background with guidelines of action in public-private partnerships.
- Piloting the nudge and implementing feedback.
- Measuring the impact of interventions.

[The Education Base. Remedial education and innovation mentorship hubs for restoring and empowering learning-deprived communities during and post-Covid-19 pandemic - Foundation Center for Applied Education – Romania](#)

(co-financing initiative)

Troubled times and discontinued education are always synchronous with distrust for education, low sentiment of cohesion, economic disruptions and growing social gaps between various segments of society, out of which the most vulnerable are always the families that inherited the legacy and poor status of their own respective families and communities. The threat of hunger is as damaging as that of the learning deprivation as both cascade in different ways to development gaps inwards new generations. It is a matter of fact that COVID-19 related emergency situation and isolation declared by Romanian authorities has hit hard a number of almost 30% of the families without further repairs from the government: no food given, no jobs provided, no actual access to online education for almost 50.000 families from deprived communities.

The general objective of our initiative is to support an innovation-focused remedial approach by providing resources for students and teachers in 50 rural schools of Romania to feel empowered, creative and proactive in the time of COVID-19 crisis, in order to compensate, recover and recharge the learning disruption occurred in the last months of COVID-19 pandemic.

The „Education Base“ initiative will aim at providing online and offline innovation resources for teachers and students from marginalized communities forgotten by authorities and where children are at risk because of limited access to education during COVID-19 pandemic continued with the holidays months.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES:

- School-based activities: Establishing students' innovation hub (1 or 2 teachers) in each of the schools, by agreement with the school directors and local administration; conduct creative tasks with students with the support of project coordinator and teachers (writing articles, collaboratively writing a novel, drawing or making animations...)
- Research-based policy advocacy: The group of teachers and students will be included in a survey that we will use to base further actions in innovation-focused education policy space a policy advocacy campaign will be dedicated to innovation for disadvantaged communities and digital innovation applied in education as a long-term investment meant to secure the free right of access to information
- Teachers' professional development/ skills' base: design of the web platform dedicated for empowering innovation-based activities - consisting in learning resources and practical authoring tools to exchange with their peers and students

4. LEARNING EVENTS

Summer School 2020: And, yet it moves - we need new education for new normality
July 6th – July 10th 2020

NEPC Summer School 2020 intended to open platform for dialogue where analysis of the current situation and future endeavours are meaningfully connected. The virtual event aimed to reflect on current world situation and inspire the imagination of new societal paradigm based on inclusion, sustainability and participation.

The Summer School gathered wide recognized experts in different fields and 28 participants.

Ece Temelkuran, awarded political analyst from Turkey, helped us in deconstructing the new forms of authoritarian systems and the role of civil society in the process fostering democracy. The discussion about the status of democracy has also been enriched by the contribution from **Nikolina Rajković** about the democratization of public services whose importance we suddenly became aware during the emergency.

The pandemic has accelerated the discussion about the future, in the time when was often present in the media the syntagma **new normality**, **Mladen Domazet** reported from a precarious, but climate-stabilised year 2100, presenting the DEGROWTH philosophy supported by the insights about deconstructing the belief systems that underpin the undesired physical and institutional structures presented by **Oxana Lopatni**.

The role of youth in discussion about the future was discussed in a conversation with **Olzhas Abdukhamitov** and **Jelena Vranješević**.

While the above sessions opened the discussion about societal challenges within and beyond the pandemic, the sessions below dealt more directly with the immense impact of the pandemic on the education systems across the globe. The pandemic containment measures closed down schools in most countries of the world. The immediate needs were to support teachers to virtual adaptation and provide a learning continuity to students. Rushing into online teaching/learning without properly prepared teachers, materials or the technology required and available to all while at the same time expecting that all learning outcomes will be achieved and the school year will be completed as normal might have severe consequences on students' well-being. The rapid changes surely impacted the quality of learning but at the same time it impacted the home lives of teachers, students and their parents.

The panel discussion ***Digitization: learned lessons from lockdown*** collected experiences and learned lessons from education stakeholders, sharing what we want to bring with us to the new normality and what we would like to shake off. The panel was moderated by the **Center for Education Initiatives - Step by Step from Bosnia and Herzegovina**.

The crisis once again confirmed the gap between policies and practices and the education system showed in many cases unpreparedness to provide adequate support to vulnerable groups. **James Drummond** presented the **Behavioural Insight toolkit** as a tool to design effective policy solutions, needs oriented, taking in consideration context and behavioural biases to predict human behaviour. Representative of **proMENTE Social Research** showed how the behavioural insight approach was applied in the context of education system.

The average rate of the sessions is 4,7/5

Some of comments of the participants:

I enjoyed very much and would like to share with my colleagues soon. Thank you.

Thank you for the interesting sessions! I liked very much that variety of topics were covered and that you had found very interesting experts to talk about their fields of interest. It seems that the summer school can be carried out via the digital solutions very well!

The sessions were well organized, the subjects were interesting and useful for my professional development. Thanks to NEPC for the opportunity and organization.

Keep on with excellent work!

WEBINARS

In 2020, NEPC organized and hosted four webinars, on the topics of online and emergency teaching, professional communities, professional development of teachers and teacher candidates, and integrity in education, for an overall real-time participation of 40 attendees.

TITLE	TOPIC	DATE
Back to school: learning and thinking about the new school year!	Online teaching and teaching in emergency	25.09.2020
Why community matters?	Professional and learning communities	27.10.2020
Good practices and policies on teachers and school leaders training in EU	Professional development	27.11.2020
Integrity in the use of human and financial resources in education: a cross-country synthesis of findings from Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, and Mongolia	Integrity in education	02.12.2020

The webinar recordings are available on NEPC website dedicated [section](#) and on NEPC YouTube [channel](#).

5. PUBLICATIONS

[Mekluž A., Veldin M \(2020\) Principals' needs for professional development in the field of creating an inclusive school culture – Report for Croatia and Republic of North Macedonia.](#)

Principal's pedagogical vision, goals, and leadership practices influence the way diversity and inclusive school culture are reflected at the school level (Hajisoteriou & Angelides, 2013; Keung & Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2013; McGlynn, 2008). Since achieving inclusive school culture is a complex process, the principals need to be suitably trained (Davila, 2009; Young, et al., 2010). In order to develop a professional development programme for principals in Croatia and The Republic of North Macedonia, where such professional development activities are scarce, the EU KA3 project HEAD: Empowering School Principals for Inclusive School Culture addresses these topics. The present report thus provides the basis for the development of said professional development programme and presents the needs for professional development of primary and secondary school principals in this field.

The needs study included 273 principals (187 from the Republic of North Macedonia and 86 from Croatia).

The results showed that there are no statistically significant differences in principals' overall needs for professional development in the area of creating inclusive school culture between the countries, nor according to educational level, which means that principals from both countries can undergo the same professional development programme. More specifically, principals reported a high need for professional development in the areas of supporting collaboration with other stakeholders connected to school, preparing school staff to respond to students' diversity, supporting the active participation of parents in school life and supporting inclusive student learning experience, which means that the newly developed professional development programme should focus on these areas.

[Štremfel U. \(2020\) Policies of Social, Emotional and Intercultural Education in Six Countries: A comparative study](#)

The mapping study originates from the HAND in HAND: Social and Emotional Skills for Tolerant and Non-discriminative Societies (A Whole School Approach) project (<http://handinhand.si/aboutthe-project/>), in which NEPC actively participated in the years 2017-2020. The project among other important policy experimentation results revealed a lack of integrated and coherent policies supporting the realisation of SEI education in participating European Union member states (Štremfel, 2020). Taking into consideration the cultural conditionality of SEI education it confirmed the need for further research in the field. Social, emotional and intercultural education contributes significantly to inclusive education, one of the strategic priorities of the NEPC Network. The positive impact of social, emotional and intercultural education on an open and safe environment, based on a set of principles, values and practices that ensure equal rights and opportunities, respect and nutrition of individual differences in a climate that embraces diversity and principles of social justice and the promotion of the interest of each child by an entire school community and thus contributing to social cohesion, belonging and active participation in learning is evident in scientific research.

The study explores the current state of policies, issues and practices in social, emotional and intercultural education in the NEPC region in selected NEPC member countries (Azerbaijan, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Moldova, Russia and Slovenia). The study contributes to the

exploring and producing of several important grounds for the NEPC network and its members to take further steps in the field of SEI education: the participating in international debates and the advocating of effective and sustainable changes in the educational systems in the field.

[Milovanovitch, M., & Jovanovic, O. \(2020\). Integrity in the use of human and financial resources in education: Across-country synthesis of findings from locally-led INTES assessments in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, and Mongolia. Zagreb: Center for Applied Policy and Integrity and Network of Education Policy Centers.](#)

This synthesis report was prepared in the framework of the project Integrity of education systems (INTES): training for civil society organisations. The project was carried out by the Center for Applied Policy and Integrity and the Network of Education Policy Centres (NEPC) in 2019-2020 in partnership with civil society organisations – members of NEPC from Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, and Mongolia, with the support of the Open Society Foundations (Education Support Program).

The report summarises key findings from locally-led integrity assessments, which were guided by two questions: do participants in school education in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, and Mongolia engage in practices that lead to the abuse of human and financial resources in education and if yes, what are the mechanisms and systemic weaknesses that facilitate and motivate such conduct?

In Georgia and Moldova, the integrity assessments focused on the management of human resources in education, while in Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia the reports analysed the integrity of using funds from private sources in the form of parental donations to public education providers. Specifically, we focused on two of the nine integrity violations described in the 2019 update of the INTES typology of integrity violations in education: favouritism in staffing decisions in Georgia and Moldova, and misappropriation of funds in education) in Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia. Favouritism was thereby understood to be the redistribution of public resources in education in the form of employment contracts, employment-related promotions, and benefits in favour of relations, friends, colleagues, or people who are otherwise close to those in charge of the staffing decisions. Misappropriation of resources on the other hand was defined as the embezzlement of assets in education by individuals who do not own them but are entrusted with their management and/or control.

[Vranješević, J. & Dermish, M. \(2020\) Students' participation: Policy and Practice to Start the Change. Network for Education Policy Centers \(ed.\). Zagreb: Forum for Freedom in Education.](#)

This paper is a result of the background desk analysis and literature overview on the topic of students' participation as a preparation for the 1st Policy event in the Start the Change project that will take place in 2021. The project started in January 2020 and is led by Forum for Freedom in Education while NEPC is co-leading the work package dedicated to dissemination and policy. As the aim of the event is to influence policy changes in improving the students' voice and participation in schools, goal of the paper was to explore questions like: Why is students' participation important? What are common obstacles for students' participation? To what extent can students participate in policy making on educational level? What are the main challenges they are facing?

First part of the paper, written by external expert Jelena Vranješević, explored the connection of the students' participation and their well-being, starting from the shift in how the adults perceive children that is necessary for students' participation to be possible and also the legal foundation on which

students' participation is based to the importance of overcoming the misconceptions regarding the students' participation and its significant benefits and transformative power.

Second part of the paper, written by Mialy Dermish from SIRIUS, is focused on the students' participation in education at the policy level. Author explores whether and how children and students are involved in participation at the educational policy-making level across Europe, what the main challenges are to true participation at this higher level and gives a short overview of the youth participation in Estonia, one of the most progressive countries in Europe in terms of involving young people in all policy-making including within the education sphere. In the end, authors provided main conclusions and recommendations for further actions in the field of students' participation.

6. ADVOCACY AND NETWORKING

ON LINE 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](#) and its [Facebook page](#) which, at the end of 2020, counted 1078 likes (1076 followers) and about 165 published posts. On the [Twitter account](#), 106 tweets/retweets were posted until December 31st, with an average of about 2300 impressions per month. Since the re-opening, the social media presence continues to increase. In 2020, 66 more likes were gained on Facebook. Until December 31st, the Twitter page counted 119 followers (+ 48 compared to 2019).
- NEPC web page has also been updated with nine articles on NEPC activities and projects, moreover in 2020, NEPC hosted a series of information, reflections, and updates regarding members' activities, focusing on the COVID19 emergency from different angles, resulting in 18 articles published on NEPC website. Several NEPC experts and partners contributed to the series: Mario Bajkuša (FFE), Radmila Rangelov Jusović (COI Step by Step), Iris Marušić (ISRZ), Eve Mägi and Meeli Murasov (PRAXIS), Mladen Domazet (IPE), and Mihaylo Milovanovitch (CAPI). The cycle that was divide in two main sections, "what can we learn from Corona virus situation" (6 interviews) covering the topic of online-teaching implications, traits and potential, socioemotional aspects, sustainability, and integrity considerations, and "what do we do to respond to COVID education emergencies" (12 articles), featuring NEPC members' responses to the emergency.
- In May 2020, a YouTube channels was opened. It features 17 videos and clips, with 645 views overall.
- Newsletters: 4 issues (April – June – October – December); 325 recipients; average opening rate = 47%; average click rate = 4,9%

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

INTERNATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

- (1) Panel discussion at CIES ON April 27th: Integrity in the use of human and financial resources in education – A cross-country synthesis of findings from locally-led INTES assessments in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, and Mongolia (available [here](#))

Presenters:

- Nina Bagdasarova, Foundation for Education Initiatives Support
- Maia Gelashvili, International Institute for Education Policy, Planning and Management (EPPM)
- Mihaylo Milovanovitch, Center for Applied Policy and Integrity
- Olja Jovanović, University of Belgrade and Center for Applied Policy and Integrity

Moderator: Lana Jurko, Network of Education Policy Centers

Discussants:

- Kate Lapham, Open Society Foundations
- Tinde Kovač Cerović, independent expert

- (2) Within the UNESCO initiative Futures of Education, NEPC organised a focus group with educational experts from all over the vast NEPC region to discuss the role and features of education in the future considering the unprecedented global challenges.

Experts group:

Batuhan Aydagul, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Mario Bajkuša, Forum for Freedom in Education

Maria Golubeva, Latvian Parliament

Dženana Husremović, University of Sarajevo

Elena Lenskaya, Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences

Radmila Rangelov-Jusović, Center for Educational Initiatives Step by Step

Facilitator:

Nedim Krajišnik, Center for Educational Initiatives Step by Step

7. NETWORK

NEPC Secretariat team

Executive Director (100% working hours) Lana Jurko

Network Director (100% working hours) Raffaella d'Apolito

Financial Manager (25% working hours) Nikolina Turčinović Dupor. until May 2020

Financial Manager (75% working hours) Igor Hrustić, from June 2020.

Project coordinator (100% working hours) Petra Jurlina, until March 2020

Project coordinator (100% working hours) Iva Perković, from March 2020

Communication officer (100% working hours) Pietro Santilli

Board Members

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

Urška Štremfel – Representative of region A

Burcu Meltem Arik Akyuz – Representative of region B

Ulviyya Mikayilova – Representative of region C

Andrey Samoylov – Representative of members-at-large

Board meetings

In 2020, 3 board meetings were organized (online). The meeting topics were mainly focused on the Strategy process and revision of Network activities during the COVID-19 crisis as well as on supporting Secretariat in all 2020 activities.

The Strategy process has been frozen, the plan revised and moved to 2021 while the adaptation of activities was focusing on supporting members in time of crisis.

General Assembly

2020 being the first year in NEPC history without the opportunity to meet with members, two General Assembly were organized online to nurture the strong connection among the membership:

- 19.5.2020 – 19 out of 21 full members present; the 2020 plan was presented as well as the highlights from 2019; members were also introduced with the results of the networking analysis (2016-2020) as preparation for the Network Strategy. The membership applications from 2 new organizations were approved: Center for Applied Education from Romania, NGO School for All from Kazakhstan
- 23.12.2020 – 20 out of 23 full members present; the plan for 2021 and the highlights from 2020 were presented; members were also introduced with the plan for the Strategy process in 2021.

The membership application from Education Policy Department of ISEEC/NAS from Armenia has been approved as well as the membership status of Foundation Education Initiative support from Kirgizstan (status from affiliated to full).

Membership

In 2020, 3 organizations became NEPC full members: Center for Applied Education from Romania, NGO School for All from Kazakhstan and Education Policy Department of ISEEC/NAS from Armenia, while Foundation Education Initiative support changed its membership status from affiliated to full.

Network analysis

The Network analysis collects information about members involvement in activities initiated by the Secretariat, distinguishing open rate activities (meaning activities open to all members) and partly open activities (meaning activities that are limited to certain regions).

In 2020, NEPC has initiated 5 type of activities open to all members involving 24/26 members. In fundraising activities (in which NEPC was lead or partner) 11 members have been involved. 22 members have been involved in project led by NEPC and 12 in projects in which NEPC is also partner. The overall average for members participation in open activities is 46% and 24% for partly open activities: these percentages does not differ among the regions showing balanced participation of the NEPC regions: EU, IPA, Euroeast, CA and Mongolia.

Only 2 members (whose membership status is pending) have not participated in any of the NEPC activities. Despite the challenges caused by pandemic, the rate of involvement is stable as the table below show in comparison with the data form 2019:

Number of activities in which members are involved	Number of members in 2019	Number of members in 2020
0	2	2
1-2	3	1
3-4	6	12
5-6	8	6
7+	7	5

A major disbalance in comparison to 2019 can be noticed in the number of open activities vs the number of partly opened activities: in 2019 the relation was 6-11 in 2020 5-12. On the other hand, the open activities in 2020 have more long-term character as for example the GEM project, the emergency funds. Considering the vast geographic area NEPC covers, it is advisable to intensify the relationship with international organizations, such as UNESCO, interested in the region.

8. FUNDRAISING

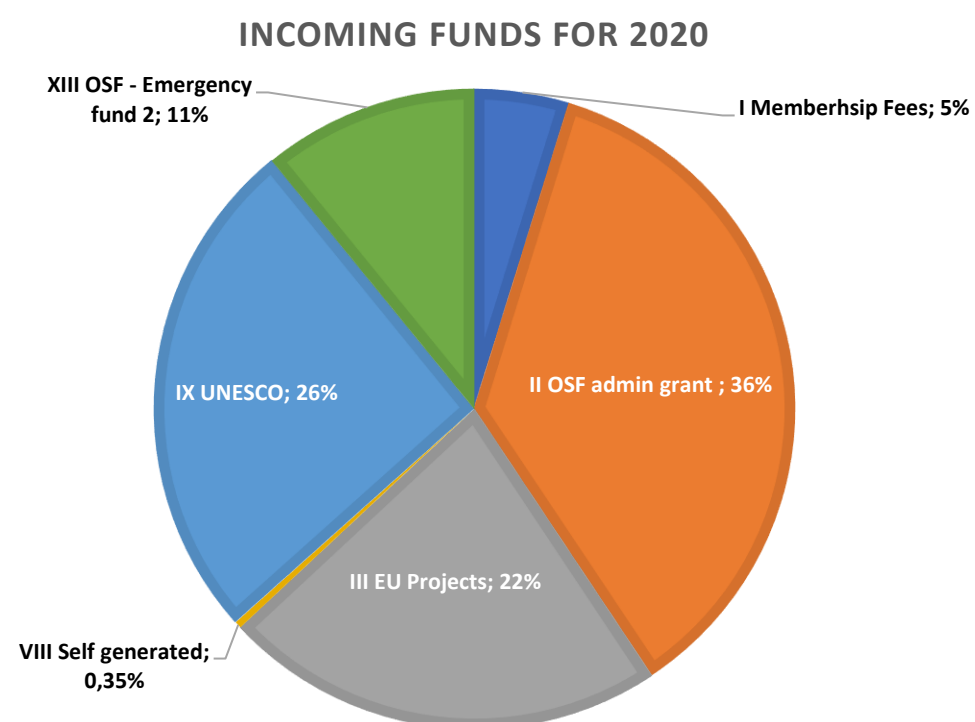
Recap of project proposals:

FUNDER	NEPC ROLE	ACRONYM/TITLE	RESULTS
EC – E+	Partner	HAND: Empowering Teachers	APPROVED

KIX Europe, Asia and the Pacific Region	Partner	Improving Teaching and Learning at a Distance through Innovative Personalized Assessment Tool (PAT)	WAITING FOR RESPONSE
EC – E+	Partner	ALCOR: Building Teacher Parent Connections Through Digital Multilingual Learning	Waiting list
EC – E+	Partner	SEL-T: Social-emotional Learning for Teacher	REJECTED
EC – E+	Lead	GREAT – Gender Equity in Education	REJECTED

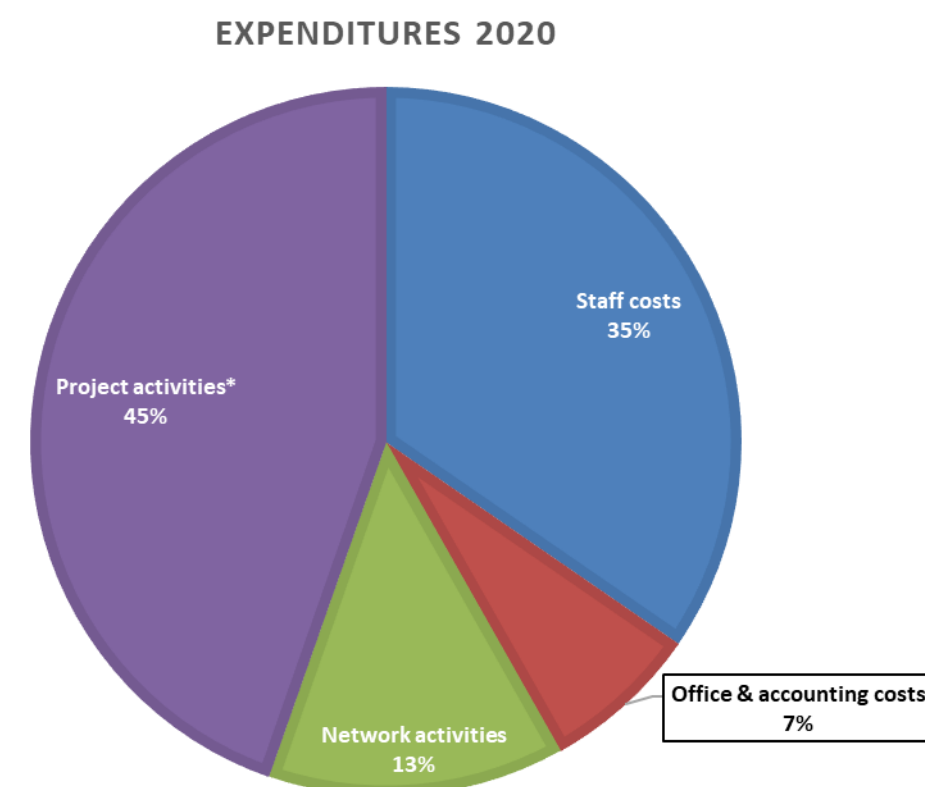
9. SUMMARY FINANCIAL REPORT

Incoming Funds for 2020	EUR
I Membership Fees	19.302,96
II OSF admin grant (recieved in 2019)	145.220,91
III EU projects	90.596,69
VIII Self generated	1.420,22
IX UNESCO	104.065,31
XIII OSF - Emergency fund 2	44.006,34
TOTAL	404.612,42



	Expenditures	Total Spent EUR
Network activities	Staff costs	123.149,15
	Office & accounting costs	25.607,99
	Admin network (GA & BM)	4.766,19
	Learning activities	4.173,24
	Publications	2.485,85
	Emergency fund	31.500,00
	International presentation & meetings	5.161,91
	Project activities*	158.763,66
	Total	355.607,98

*SPENDING ACCORDING TO PROJECTS	TOTAL EUR
HEAD	3.297,13
HAND IN HAND	12.162,80
UNESCO	84.152,66
ARISE	4.996,47
Integrity	13.999,35
Start the Change (STC)	1.497,27
OSF - Emergency fund 2	36.960,04
CoE	1.697,94
TOTAL PROJECTS' COSTS	158.763,66



2020 in numbers

8 on-going projects implemented in
cooperation with
more than **40 partners**
12 members initiatives supported
through 2 emergency funds
68 attendees at **4 learning events**
4 webinars
4 publications