

NEST EU Policy Conference: An evidence-based approach to mentoring for novice teachers in disadvantaged schools

Brussels, March 21st

The Novice Educator Support and Training (NEST) Erasmus+ project organised an EU Policy Conference to share evidence-based recommendations to improve retention of novice teachers in disadvantaged schools

In light of TALIS 2018 revealing a significant presence of novice teachers in disadvantaged schools, the Novice Educator Support and Training (NEST) project pioneered an evidence-based mentoring model addressing the critical need for effective novice teacher support. Kicked off in 2021, this Erasmus+ project specifically targeted novice teachers in challenging school environments, providing them with support from experienced mentors. Aimed at enhancing teaching skills and job satisfaction, elevating teacher retention and cultivating peer-learning culture, the NEST mentoring model underwent a successful two-year pilot in selected disadvantaged schools across 5 EU Member States.

In parallel to the Council of the European Union's 2022 adoption of Pathways to School Success, the NEST EU Policy Conference aimed to magnify two key aspects. First, it sought to spotlight the innovative, evidence-based mentoring model tailored for novice teachers in disadvantaged schools. Second, it endeavored to present insightful recommendations to enhance educational systems across the EU, aligning with the principles of Pathways to School Success.

Drawing from the outcomes of the pilot program, the NEST EU Policy Conference offered a platform to showcase successful examples of up-scaling the NEST mentoring model. This included the presentation of various outputs and resources such as the mentor curriculum, a toolbox of best practices, and a policy roadmap. The conference was a meeting point for knowledge exchange, providing an opportunity for policymakers, educators, and staff working in school education to gain valuable insights and strategies for advancing education policy in the EU, particularly in disadvantaged contexts.

The event was composed of two specific parts:

- Part I: Panel discussions:
 - Innovative approaches to support novice teachers in disadvantaged schools-- Implications for Pathways to School Success
 - How KA3 projects have demonstrated to influence policy reform in the EU
- Part II: Participatory Workshop - Deep dive into the NEST Mentoring Model and its successful outcomes

Dissemination materials

- NEST EU policy conference (showreel): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6PaVTW6-WP8>
- NEST EU policy conference (interview): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wty4YsWQCgY&t=202s>
- Press-release: <https://projectnest.eu/index.php/2024/03/22/nest-eu-policy-conference-an-evidence-based-approach-to-mentoring-for-novice-teachers-in-disadvantaged-schools/>

Agenda

Time	Title	Speakers
9:00-9:30	Registration and welcome coffee	
9:30-9:35	Welcoming remarks	Wendy Kopp, CEO at Teach For All
PART 1: PANEL DISCUSSIONS		
9:35-9:55	Keynote speech	Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen, Director-General of Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, European Commission
9:55-11:00	Innovative approaches to support novice teachers in disadvantaged schools: Implications for Pathways to School Success	<p>Moderator: Xavier Prats-Monné, former Director-General of Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, European Commission and Special Advisor at Teach For All</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annalisa Cannoni, Policy Officer at Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, European Commission • Cecilia Iuga, Senior Advisor at the Romanian Ministry of Education • Cristina Mocanu, Mentor in the NEST Romanian pilot • Johannes Dammerer, Head of Department School Development and Head of Master Program Mentoring University College of Teacher Education Lower Austria • Neli Koleva, Chief Officer of Public Partnerships at Teach For Bulgaria
11:00-11:30	Coffee break	

11:30-12:35	Towards evidence-based policy in education: Success stories from Erasmus+ KA3 policy experimentation projects	<p>Moderator: Akis Kyriacou, Deputy Head of Unit Evidence Based Policy and Evaluation at the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, European Commission</p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carme Rodríguez Moreno, Teacher Advisor at the Department of Education of Catalonia • Chavdar Zdravchev, Head of Organization Department at the Bulgarian Directorate for Organization and Control, Ministry of Education • Ellen Daniels, Coordinator at Onderwijscentrum Brussel • Gergana Efremova, Institutional Partnerships Manager at Teach For Bulgaria • Dr. Hermann Josef Abs, Professor at the University of Duisburg-Essen and NEST evaluation lead
12:35-13:00	Results overview and policy recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Hermann Josef Abs, Professor at the University of Duisburg-Essen and NEST evaluation lead • Neli Koleva, NEST project coordinator
13:00-13:45	Lunch break	
PART 2: PARTICIPATORY WORKSHOP		
13:45-14:50	Participatory Workshop: Deep dive into the NEST Mentoring Model and its successful outcomes	<p>Co-led by the NEST consortium:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suna Orcun, Public Sector Manager at Teach For Austria • Neli Koleva, Chief Officer of Public Partnerships at Teach For Bulgaria • Oana Silion, Head of Public Projects Teach For Romania • Justo Quintanar, EU Projects Manager at Empieza Por Educar • Simon Geerinck, Head of Partnerships, Teach For Belgium
14:50-15:00	Final remarks and good-bye	Neli Koleva, NEST project coordinator