



**A whole school support and  
networking  
to ensure school success for all**

**2022**



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## INTRODUCTION

This research paper - together with similar papers developed in parallel by other research teams on various subtopics - aims to offer a basis for policy development and implementation at different governance levels and inform the work of the European Commission (EC) on teachers and school leaders towards a sustainable whole school approach for quality and inclusive education in all European Union Member States. To do this, we bring together recent education research with inspiring practice and policy and the views of various education stakeholders.

It has been developed by members of the European Education Policy Network (EEPN) project partnership, based on resources and examples identified by partnership members. The paper aims to offer a policy and research framework for the analysis of practical examples of inspiring practice, especially for policy transfer and policy learning.

The current paper, together with similar research carried out in interlinked fields related to teachers and school leaders towards a sustainable whole school approach for providing quality and inclusive education for all, feeds into the work of EEPN to formulate and promote policy recommendations in the field as well as to the future work of EEPN until the end of 2023. The primary aim of this work, starting with desk research, is to promote cooperation, policy development and implementation at different governance levels. It supports the European Commission's policy work to assist teachers and school leaders by providing research evidence and evidence-based policy recommendations for European, national, regional and local levels.

In that sense, school leadership becomes a key factor to promote this school-community development, and some questions raise to guide our research:

- What practices promote a positive school culture, teamwork and collaborative atmosphere within the school community?
- What policies support school leaders to bring school actors and stakeholders together to ensure educational success?
- What are the most effective models to involve the entire school community, stakeholders, multi-professional teams, external local services, parents and families?
- What policies facilitate a continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and other school staff with a focus on a whole school approach?
- What practices are the most effective to make sure that each child and young person has an equal chance to access, participate and benefit from high quality and inclusive education under a whole school approach?



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## INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN POLICY CONTEXT

### Whole school approach in an international policy context

A whole school approach (WSA from now on) belongs to a learner-centered vision of education, within the frame of a communitarian sense of learning and development. International bodies and their declarations introduce WSA as a key factor for quality education as well as to build up an inclusive system which provides education for all.

The UNESCO defines WSA as the educational process that *“involves addressing the needs of learners, staff and the wider community, not only within the curriculum, but across the whole-school and learning environment. It implies collective and collaborative action in and by a school community to improve student learning, behaviour and wellbeing, and the conditions that support these”*. The focus of this international organization on WSA goes back to the UNESCO Guidelines on intercultural education in 2006 which recommended the use of approaches that connect the school to the community, and identified the importance of parental involvement in whole school approaches and community schooling to foster tolerance in children. The most up to date UNESCO’s reference to WSA can be found within the statements on SDG4 and the policy recommendations on how to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030.

For UNESCO, a WSA is not only a declarative statement but a strategic practice to be implemented. The UNESCO Associated Schools Programme adopted a WSA as a policy priority across its 11,700 schools in support of the UNESCO *Global Action Programme*. *Some leading countries have gone far with this: the German Commission to UNESCO supported this policy measure by prompting adoption across the 300 ASPnet schools, and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO equally embraced this approach involving its schools in the adoption of this policy. This Canadian policy recognised the transformative edge of this approach, which mobilises members of the school as well as partners and communities. This work, alongside a recent study on policy frameworks for sustainable schools, calls for a wider adoption of a WSA across Canadian schools.*

### Whole school approach in a European policy context

Europe is a context where a WSA has had a relevant impact in policy declarations and programmes. In the case of the Council of Europe, the interest raises from the will to develop *“competences for a democratic culture”*. If we strongly believe that schools are key builders for democracy, then a whole school approach must be assumed by the education systems. The Council of Europe, in a policy paper titled *“CDC and the whole-school approach”*, states that *“A whole-school approach to CDC ensures that all aspects of school life – curricula, teaching methods and resources, leadership and decision-making structures and processes, policies and codes of behaviour, staff and staff-student relationships, extracurricular activities and links with the community – reflect democratic and human rights principles. In turn, this may create a safe learning environment where these principles can be explored, experienced and even challenged in a peaceful way”*.

The European Union has also been aware of WSA in educational policies. One of the first attempts by the EU to define *“whole school approach”* can be found within the policy paper *“A whole school approach to tackling early school leaving: policy messages”*, where it is stated that *“A ‘whole school approach’ is an ecological way of viewing a school. The school is seen as a multidimensional and interactive system that can*



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*learn and change; an open learning hub which provides support to its neighbourhood and receives support from the community".* Recognizing the centrality of a relational school and classroom climate in a whole-school approach to the prevention of early school leaving, the EU treats learner-centered, welcoming and caring environments as part of inclusive education (Cefai, Downes & Cavioni, 2021).

But WSA is not only about inclusion. One special field where the EU identifies a WSA as a powerful strategy to develop education is sustainability, one of our subtopics. The Staff Working Document or 'handbook', that accompanies the European Commission's proposal for a Council recommendation released in January 2022 about *whole school approach* (Tilbury & Conor, 2022), acknowledges that a *whole school approach* to sustainability lies at the heart of learning for environmental sustainability but also that action is needed to mainstream and support the effective implementation of such approaches.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN, METHODS AND MATERIAL**

As mentioned in the introduction, this paper aims to explore contextual elements and examples about whole school approach within the EU.

To answer these research questions, desk research was carried out to obtain data and evidence of good practices with a WSA. This desk research focused the interest on the origins of whole school approach, what practices promote a positive school culture, what policies support school leaders to bring school actors and stakeholders together to ensure educational success and what are the most effective models to involve the entire school community academic literature was analyzed.

Besides, a wide range of policy and practice examples were sought from a variety of sources. Materials were submitted from the EEPN partners in winter-spring 2022, and from these, the examples of inspiring policies and practices were selected. In some cases, where there is a lack of existing materials as in the research area, the UAB team have made an extra search.

The selection criteria to identify inspiring practices were as follows:

- The examples of inspiring practice had to be in accordance with the definitions of WSA described in this paper
- The examples of inspiring practice had to be provided by EEPN partners through the survey

The materials include international policy documents, frameworks, guidance and evaluations from the European Union, and/or other international public/non-governmental organizations.



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## WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH: PRINCIPLES, CHALLENGES AND PARTICIPATION

### A whole school approach needs some preconditions

The WSA, as a perspective for inclusive and sustainable schools, cannot be implemented without considering some key preconditions. Without these preconditions, it is unlikely that a WSA might take place. The most remarkable precondition is to have a sense of community. Sometimes the sense of community is previous to a WSA implementation. In other occasions, the community is the outcome of a WSA process. Nevertheless, WSA and community sense go both hand in hand to achieve inclusion and sustainability.

The community is revealed as a microcontext where it is possible to spread a concrete sense of belonging, the conditions for participation can be generated on a smaller scale and processes of real stakeholders participation may take place (Essomba, 2021). Communities are a consequence of community actions. We understand community actions as the social processes that lead people to a common sense of belonging, shared values and collective practices. Community actions must be driven under four principles (Gomà, 2006):

- Existence of a human group that is the main subject of its actions and decisions, in order to promote changes in its standards of living.
- Existence, among the group members, of a sense of belonging that is extended to a certain degree of subjective integration in a shared community identity.
- Existence of mechanisms and processes, more or less formalized, for social interaction and support among the group members, to provide mutual care and reciprocity.
- Existence of a territorial background, in a shared space that articulates stakeholders, processes and goals for action.

The generation of a sense of community can be achieved through WSA that are developed simultaneously from different dimensions. Without a doubt, formal education appears as one of the most important, the school becomes an ideal framework for that. However, we must also be aware of the rigid structure of the school (timetable, curriculum, architecture) as a strong limitation.

### Whole school approach principles

Our research background (Essomba, 2021) let us know that a WSA shares the same basic principles than community education. These principles guide the essential dynamics of the school, trying to take advantage of the potential, and limiting the aforementioned rigidity. These principles are:

- *Community*. Education goes beyond the school, therefore the community becomes an essential part of what happens inside and outside the school. A WSA is somehow a “whole community approach”.
- *Horizontality*. The participation and decision-making processes, as well as the participatory dynamics run by the several stakeholders (educators, educational professionals, families, participants, and administrations) must be transformed from pyramidal to horizontal relationships framework. In a WSA your role in the community plays a secondary position.



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- *Osmosis*. The WSA participatory processes integrate both internal school processes (formal and non-formal) and external dynamics rooted within the community.
- *Belonging*. A WSA requires that schools become the meeting point of the different stakeholders engaged and it must give a sense of belonging to all of them.
- *System of relationships*. A WSA should promote both a quantitative increase of stakeholders and bonds and a qualitative improvement of their relationships.

## Some whole school approach challenges

A WSA in action regarding these principles is affected by gaps and contradictions that must be taken into account, since they might become negative barriers for a successful implementation of WSA. The more these challenges are achieved, the better a WSA will be implemented:

- a. The "*community outsiders*" challenge. Urban dynamics and territorial mobility often mean that professionals do not belong to the community where they are working, they just stay in the community during their working hours. For sure, they play an essential role for achieving successful school activities: they are competent for leading them, and they also bring fresh knowledge from other contexts, since the community itself may not have it. However, there's a risk they act as "community outsiders": they "stay" sometimes, but not they "are", and this fact might create constraints for a WSA. In order to avoid that, they should learn and make a cultural effort to understand to each other in order to prevent this risk. It is expected an accommodation process by both sides for mutual benefit.
- b. The "*social class*" challenge. A WSA seeks for equity and to improve lives of those community groups that are under social risk. But this does not exactly mean that this approach is only implemented with these social risk groups. A WSA needs to start from a pre-condition: social melting regardless the participants' standard of living, the knitting of bonds among all the community members as a guarantee that school processes can help structure social life in terms of social cohesion. This challenge is rather focused on the differences among schools than on those gaps inside the schools.
- c. The "*digital*" challenge. The use of ICT to establish the communication and socialization channels of a group may significantly transform dynamics and interpersonal relationship formats, but always in favor of a WSA? What is sure is that we have to question whether a community can be virtual, and consequently can be an active subject of a community education process. A hypothetical virtual community breaks the barriers of time and space. It allows the re-location of relationships and the de-synchronization of exchanges. It facilitates interconnections to infinite levels. We cannot dodge the question of how and when to use social networks to promote a WSA.
- d. The "*sustainability*" challenge. A WSA process may begin; resources are activated; the first results are obtained; but a minor event may block the development of the process itself and all its benefits. The social systems generated by WSA processes are hypersensitive to changes in starting conditions. Long-term WSA processes are extremely complex. The worst consequence is not so much in the process itself, which gets interrupted, but in future ones that can be given. A community that has failed in the development of a WSA only realizes short term negative effects, and a lack of trust in future similar processes get stuck among community members.



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## A whole school approach is a participatory approach

One final dimension to be pointed out regarding a WSA is participation. Participation is the essential component to make it happen. Participation promotes a democratic citizenship for all, and the school is a privileged space where these participatory dynamics may take place, but as we have already said, this participation can only be effective if it goes beyond the school structure.

A WSA requires the assumption of a more holistic approach, and implies at least the implementation of three strategies:

- To *reformulate* the sense of participation by all the school stakeholders - The need to reformulate the sense of participation should lead stakeholders to understand participation as a personal value, a significant social behaviour and valued by all citizens irrespective their personal background. Understanding participation as a personal value allows us move away from the dependency-autonomy tension, in favour of a principle of positive interdependence among others. This interdependence should be seen as the basics for living together.
- To *reconstruct* the already existing participation spaces to accommodate stakeholders' participation - The need to rebuild the spaces to participate let us understand participation as an remarkable political principle. This is revealed as a basic condition of a model which bets for "intercultural citizenship".
- To *rethink* participatory dynamization strategies that facilitate the involvement of all the stakeholders - The need to rethink the strategies to promote the participation of stakeholders pushes us to understand such participation as a social strategy of action, a method of facing the common projects beyond education. The purpose of this social strategy is to develop a network of complicities and actions that allows us to deepen the fight against exclusion and build "social cohesion".

This three-dimensional perspective can become the ground for an innovative understanding concerning participation, a new perspective that should lead to strengthening WSA at schools. We can find some examples that have been reported in our research papers (Essomba, 2021). Find below three of the most remarkable ones:

- Funds of knowledge: It refers to the historical accumulation of abilities, bodies of knowledge, assets, and cultural ways of interacting from migrant families' households , and how educators use them as a resource to enhance their students' academic progress
- Learning communities: It refers to the cultural and social transformation of a school, aimed at achieving maximum instrumental learning for all students, with respectful social interaction regarding diversity among everyone and the maximum participation of the community stakeholders (parents, organizations)
- The Shere Rom Project: It refers to the promotion of service-learning activities led by university students to work with Roma communities in their own community settings through ICT, with the aim to promote digital skills and competences among Roma communities.



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## ANALYSIS OF ELEVEN CHOSEN EXAMPLES

### Summary of examples

Type	Number of examples
RELEVANT EU-FUNDED PROGRAMMES	7
RESEARCH	1
INSPIRING PRACTICE FOR POLICY ADVICE	3

### A) RELEVANT EU-FUNDED PROGRAMMES

**Toolbox Intercultural learning at school** - Belgium, France, Germany and Italy. More information: <https://intercultural-learning.eu/toolbox/>

The toolbox is aimed at supporting school heads, teachers and educators within the secondary school system in including intercultural learning in any activity run at school. The activities are aimed at triggering reflection among the participants, i.e. the students, the teachers and the broader school community. The activities have been selected because they support the learning objective to develop the intercultural competence of participants.

The toolbox is aimed at fostering the whole school approach, including intercultural learning in all aspects of the school life. As a consequence, the Toolbox introduce activities that require an active engagement of all the stakeholders within the school and in the surrounding community, e.g. teachers and students, parents, non-formal education organizations expert in intercultural learning and mobility. The activities are meant to be implemented as an overall pedagogical project and not as one-off activities.

Intercultural learning for pupils and teachers practices can promote a positive school culture, bring school actors and stakeholders together to ensure educational success, and involve the entire school community and out-of-school educational organisations.

**Supporting Inclusive School Leadership (SISL) with the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education Agency** - Ireland in collaboration with Sweden, Hungary and Malta. More information: [https://www.european-agency.org/sites/default/files/sisl\\_policy\\_review.pdf](https://www.european-agency.org/sites/default/files/sisl_policy_review.pdf)

The aim of this project was to develop a self-reflective tool aligned to the Supporting Inclusive School Leadership (SISL) Framework to foster inclusive education for all learners in different school contexts. To this end, it provides simple questions like what is going well, what needs further development and what gaps there are in providing the very best possible education for students to support their learning and teaching needs, and those of the whole community. The policy framework is according to: setting direction, human development and organisational development and the ecosystem model of inclusive education. The vision for the framework mentions the importance of a 'meaningful, high-quality education, high expectations for student achievement, well-being and a sense of belonging within an



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equitable school environment' (European Agency, 2018:16). The self-reflection tool is aimed at school communities working together to stimulate professional dialogue around inclusive leadership and the steps that need to be taken to make individual schools as inclusive as possible.

It was felt that the tool lends itself to a working definition of inclusion that changes according to the changing needs of the school community. The strong focus on well-being was welcomed and participants felt the tool empowered the voices of all staff members. The eco-system approach is welcome and it was felt that the tool links naturally to the Looking at our School Quality Framework for Leadership and Management (2016).

**Inclusive Schools Methodology -Education Pack** - Greece, Spain, Poland, Belgium, UK. More information: <https://inclusiveschools.net/resources/>

The Inclusive Schools project was designed with the vision to inspire inclusion practice in schools around Europe. This project embraces the meaning of inclusion according to UNESCO's definition: inclusion processes are addressed to every dimension of diversity, and it aims to meet all students' needs within a frame of opportunities for active learning and a safe school environment. The Inclusive Schools team worked on a set of tools to facilitate the inclusion process of the school community and give incentives to school staff and students to adopt the methodology and adapt accordingly. These tools are primarily intended to teachers and school leaders to use for the duration of a whole school year -but it has happened that actively involved students of older age have used them as well. It is designed to guide flexibly, in ways that suit every school, through the start of a journey towards inclusion: improving personal and academic outcomes for all children and young students by prioritising their access to an insightful education. There are tips, methodology and activities to lead in the classroom or within the school community. Translated in 9 languages other than English (French, Dutch, Spanish, Italian, German, Polish, Romanian, Greek, Serbian)

**Parent'R'Us – School parent involvement to increase student achievement** - Romania, Hungary, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain; 2019-2021. More information: <https://www.parentrus.eu>

This relevant EU-funded project aims to support teachers increasing parents engagement in children's academic achievement and well-being at school by extending their competences throughout an innovative mentoring model approach integrated in a holistic approach.

The objectives of the project are: 1) to develop innovative and multidisciplinary approaches to empower parental engagement building on lessons learnt from MOMIE & MEGAN projects in the field of mentoring and the Includ-ED, FamilyEduNet & ELICIT+ projects in the field of parental engagement, student participation and their active citizenship aspects; 2) to identify the suitable profile and competences needed to support or perform mentoring programs within schools, parent associations and/or local associations; 3) to design a mentoring model to improve parental skills, namely with parents less or not engaged in their children's schooling life; 4) to design a mentoring model to improve teachers' competences in parents engagement and empowerment on their children's schooling life; 5) to deliver a Parenthood Mentoring Awareness Toolkit to parents, schools, supervisory/financing organisation of the school and community organisations.

The project also focused on building children well-being and bonds to school, since children who have close relationships with their parents and feel that they provide them with emotional support have



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better academic performance, fewer suspensions, and higher levels of social competence than do students without close parental relationships. Children's experience is carefully followed by parents and staff members through exchange information regularly and insightful approaches to socialization, child development and learning.

Some toolkits are available to train mentors and mentor managers. The purpose of this training is to create more effective parental participation – bringing together parents, teachers and community. A school parent engagement awareness toolkit was developed to provide necessary support for effective pathways for parents' school engagement.

However, due to COVID-restrictions, most partners could not organize the trainings and meetings face to face and had to switch to online meetings which was not effective enough. Most partners decided to train teachers and social workers as mentors for the parents, instead of training parents to enable peer mentoring.

**REFLECTING4CHANGE** - Greece, Portugal and Italy; 2019-2021. More information:

<https://reflecting4change.eu>

The Reflecting for Change (R4C) project provides a supportive framework and a set of policy recommendations to introduce a holistic change for a sustainable innovation. The project fosters to develop a digital strategy for schools, and facilitates the use of self-reflection guides to support innovation and systemic change in education.

In R4C, innovation is mostly understood in terms of two major challenges: digital competence (e-maturity) and its comprehensive relationship to the use of ICT; and the school's openness to key actors (external stakeholders, parents, the community as a whole, and other schools). R4C truly focuses its engagement with contemporary Responsible Research Innovation (RRI) challenges.

The dynamics of R4C organises large-scale pilots with schools to evaluate the effects of the programme, in Greece, Portugal and Italy. The project is implemented in 300 primary and secondary schools, meeting their real needs, and it has a direct impact on 1,500 teachers and 15,000 students in both rural and urban areas.

**MULTINCLUDE – Ideas for Inclusive Education.** Netherlands, Malta, Italy, Sweden, Austria; 2017-2019.

More information: <https://multininclude.eu>

According to the information included in its webpage, this project is conceived to elicit, promote and disseminate some of the good ideas that were developed in different parts of the world, in particular in Europe. The aim of MULTINCLUDE is to promote the dissemination of inclusive practices, in order to find inspiring ideas and strategies that are easy to implement with low cost and large impact, in a pathway for building up a inclusive school system. MULTINCLUDE looks for concrete practices that truly enhance the school environment according to the needs and identities of a diverse educational community. An evidence-based curriculum development is underneath this initiative, that seeks those guidelines and recommendations that are easy to translate and adapt to other contexts.

Once these ideas have been identified, the project intends to operationalise the lessons learned by incorporating them into the inclusion strategies of schools, as well as through teaching and learning training by teachers around Europe to better work with communities on inclusion issues.



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It has a useful database of evidence-based strategies for inclusion with detailed analyses and methods of multiplication.

**NEMESIS New Educational Model Enabling Social Innovation Skills development** - France, Greece, Neatherlands, Portugal, Serbia, Spain, UK; 2017-2021. More information: [www.NEMESIS-edu.eu](http://www.NEMESIS-edu.eu)

The Nemesis project aims to implementing Social Innovation Education (SIE) in primary and secondary schools. SIE is a learning approach focused on enabling students to explore and find creative solutions to social and sustainability challenges. It is about encouraging young people to re-imagine the world and empowering them to bring their vision to life. The Nemesis project has enriched the change management approach by involving the external stakeholders and introducing co-creation as a method of cooperation and creation.

Co-creation labs are the basis of the NEMESIS educational model, an open environment where different stakeholders gather together with a common goal: collaborate towards the identification of local community based challenges with the potential to be transformed in a project based learning opportunity.

The activities are based on participatory design techniques. They are implemented by teachers with the support of the consortium partners. Participants consist of students, parents, teachers and social innovation practitioners.

The objectives are: 1) To develop a framework for teaching social innovation skills by combining innovative pedagogies and learning models, the philosophy of open technology, and participatory relations and processes; 2) To design a methodology that brings together students, teachers, parents and education experts with social innovators to collaboratively design educational projects and collaborate to solve real community and sustainability challenges; 3) To create an European community of social innovators willing to engage with the students, building bridges between education and innovation communities; 4) To develop an open learning platform with useful resources to educators interested in testing/adopting the model; 5) 5. To give useful resources and tips to break down organizational barriers and facilitate the adoption of the model.

The participation of various stakeholders and partners made the projects truly community-based.

## B) RESEARCH

**ChildUP – Children Hybrid Integration: Learning Dialogue as a way of upgrading policies of Participation** (Italy, Germany, Sweden, Poland, Belgium, UK, Finland; 2019-2022. More information: <http://www.child-up.eu/>

CHILD-UP aims to propose an innovative approach to better understand and improve the integrating, life and social conditions of migrant children. CHILD-UP wishes to provide chances for children's active participation and analyse the ways through which they can better integrate. Therefore, the programme focuses on the social conditions of migrant children, and the opportunities for them to boost their agency. A special attention to gender differences, legal status and age groups is devoted.



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This project puts children self-determination at the center: children selecting cultural elements of originating country and hosting country, of generational discourse, of local and global perspectives to combine them in original and unique personal synthesis. CHILD-UP stays far from assimilationist schemes, and it goes more for hybrid frameworks, where diversity is a richness and not an obstacle. Children are supposed to be the main actors to draw their own future according to their needs, the ones who shape their authentic inclusion strategy at school and in the local and virtual community of reference.

### C) INSPIRING PRACTICE FOR POLICY ADVICE

#### **Programa TEIP - Territórios Educativos de Intervenção Prioritária (educational territories of priority intervention) - Portugal.** More information: <http://www.dge.mec.pt/teip>

The TEIP Programme is a government Portuguese initiative, that began in 1996 with the main objective of supporting schools that are located in economically and socially disadvantaged areas, marked by poverty and social exclusion, where violence, indiscipline, dropout and school failure are more prevalent. The central objectives of the programme are the prevention and reduction of early school leaving and absenteeism, the reduction of indiscipline and the promotion of educational success for all students. Since its beginning the programme have had several phases, being the last one TEIP3 (2012). The TEIP3 Programme includes schools that accept the invitation of the Direção -Geral de Educação (DGE), formulated based on the analysis of performance indicators and social characteristics of the school's environment. There is a contract signed between the school and the Ministry of Education in order to ensure the necessary pedagogical and financial support, and positive differentiation mechanisms in access to resources (Law n.º 20/2012). The TEIP programme thus supports schools in the challenges they face, making it possible to reinforce material and human resources.

The last phase of the programme – TEIP3 – started in 2012 and has four main objectives: i) Improving the quality of learning through the educational success of students; ii) Fighting against early school dropout and educational underachievement; iii) creating conditions that favour educational guidance and the qualified transition from school to active life; and iv) Promoting the progressive articulation between school's action and the partners of the educational territories of priority intervention\_(Law n.º 20/2012). There are currently 137 schools involved in the programme.

#### **Pla de millora d'oportunitats educatives-PMOE / Educational Opportunity Improvement Plan-PMOE - Catalonia (Spain); since 2020.** More information:

<https://educacio.gencat.cat/ca/departament/linies-estrategiques/pla-millora-oportunitats-educatives/>

The Plan for the Improvement of Educational Opportunities (PMOE) is an extraordinary measure launched in 2020 to fight against the negative effects of the school lockdown due to the pandemic, and it is implemented in the Catalan school system, with a special focus on those school located in socioeconomic disadvantaged areas.

The PMOE is based on the principle of autonomy of schools and on a community dimension of education. That is why it is planned to provide resources to schools through a co-responsibility



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agreement, signed between the schools and the Catalan Ministry of Education, together with the key participation of local authorities.

Currently, the PMOE is being implemented in 516 schools, and many of the actions prove important advances in guaranteeing the principle of free public education and fighting against school segregation. There is a strong focus on supporting children's equal access and equal opportunities to join school activities (outings and school camps). Parental engagement is a main part of the PMOE, and continuous professional development is required from the staff.

**Educació 360 /Education 360** – Catalonia (Spain); since 2018. More information: [www.educacio360.cat](http://www.educacio360.cat)

Education 360 is a holistic educational programme in Catalonia (Spain) that aims to integrate all the learning that happens at all times in all places. It promotes the meeting among schools, families and community stakeholders in order to increase equal opportunities for all. Beyond the classical division between formal, non-formal and informal education, this programme assumes the principle that education must be watched through a 360-degree overview, where the school system takes advantage from learning opportunities that now lie outside, such as out of school activities, outings to nature and clubs, and other initiatives related to arts and crafts, sports, leisure time or ICT. In Education 360, the community and the municipality become central stakeholders of an educational ethos.

Education 360 aims to connect all the professionals and civil society stakeholders concerned with education: public bodies, schools, colleges, families, cultural hubs, sports clubs, and others. By working together, learning opportunities can be multiplied and available for all. This collaborative work is structured in four levels: Alliance among all stakeholders; Link between the different resources, both in and out of school; Cooperation in terms of planning and resources provision; Principles of equity, universality, and inclusivity.

Education 360 is implemented through 4 basic strategies: (1) Promoting 360 experiences: The programme promotes and pilots projects all over Catalonia. Dozens of local authorities, organisations, schools, cultural and sports institutions are already working, planning common goals and sharing resources. (2) Systematising knowledge, methodology and research: Education 360 provides knowledge by systematising experiences, developing models and tools and supporting training to improve and extend initiatives. Research is also conducted in order to validate the steps ahead. (3) Innovating in public policy: Education 360 has created a catalogue of 36 policy strategies to be assumed by local authorities. (4) Building a permanent and long-term alliance: Education 360 focuses its joint initiative in both local and regional levels since it requires a multilevel engagement to achieve the goals.



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## REVIEW AND CONCLUSIONS

In order to analyse the chosen experiences, we have created a 3-degree assessment process that indicates to what extent each experience reflects the aforementioned WSA principles, faces the main challenges and integrates new participatory frames within the school community. The assessment outputs are described in the following table by using a scale in three tones of blue according to the intensity of each factor in every experience.

If we have a look at the whole, we realise that participation is the strongest dimension of all, with a special focus on rethinking the participatory dynamics. It seems clear that an implementation of a WSA requires a new participatory ethos, and this ethos comes from innovative perspectives.

In second term, we state that the experiences mostly reflect the WSA principles. Our sample appears to be strongly focused on systemic issues – a remarkable tendency to set action that includes all the school stakeholders, and beyond. The introduction of a community sense of belonging also becomes relevant. Finally, the described experiences aim to face the WSA challenges. We highlight the key role that sustainable processes take place, as well as the need that professionals develop a sense of community and learn new competences in order to create a WSA atmosphere.

EXPERIENCES	IT ASSUMES THE WSA PRINCIPLES					IT FACES THE WSA CHALLENGES				IT PROMOTES PARTICIPATION		
	Com	Hor	Osm	Bel	Sys	Set	Cla	Dig	Sus	For	Con	Thi
ChildUP – Children Hybrid Integration: Learning Dialogue as a way of upgrading policies of Participation	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue	Light blue	Dark blue	Blue	Blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Dark blue
Education 360	Dark blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue	Light blue	Blue	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue
Inclusive Schools Methodology -Education Pack	Light blue	Blue	Light blue	Blue	Light blue	Light blue	Light blue	Light blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Blue
MULTINCLUDE – Ideas for Inclusive Education	Blue	Blue	Blue	Light blue	Dark blue	Light blue	Blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue	Dark blue
NEMESIS New Educational Model Enabling Social Innovation Skills development	Dark blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue	Blue	Blue	Dark blue	Dark blue
Parent'R'Us – School parent involvement to increase student achievement	Dark blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Light blue	Light blue	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue
Pla de millora d'oportunitats educatives-PMOE / Educational Opportunity Improvement Plan-PMOE	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue	Light blue	Blue	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue
Programa TEIP - Territórios Educativos de Intervenção Prioritária (educational territories of priority intervention)	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue	Light blue	Dark blue	Blue	Light blue	Dark blue
REFLECTING4CHANGE	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Dark blue	Blue	Light blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Dark blue
Supporting Inclusive School Leadership (SISL) with the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education	Blue	Blue	Dark blue	Light blue	Dark blue	Blue	Light blue	Light blue	Blue	Dark blue	Light blue	Dark blue
Toolbox Intercultural learning at school	Blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue	Dark blue	Blue	Light blue	Dark blue	Blue	Dark blue	Blue

	Light blue: low relevance		Blue: average relevance		Dark blue: high relevance
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Going to the research questions, the collected evidence helps us the following conclusions.

***What practices promote a positive school culture, teamwork and collaborative atmosphere within the school community?***

All the analyzed practices promote a positive school culture, teamwork and a collaborative atmosphere within the school. The evidence shows that these dynamics are not pre-conditions for a WSA implementation but the outcomes of a process, and this process has to be focused on a topic related to a human rights approach: the SISL facilitates a positive school culture through building a inclusive school project, the Toolbox emphasizes the intercultural view, both the Inclusive Schools Project and Multinlude give attention to the emotional development, ChildUp is strong in democratic participation, and Reflecting4Change embraces open sciences and free access to knowledge.

The experiences are also inspiring to change our minds in some key issues. For a successful WSA, the relationships between teachers and parents have to be bidirectional – not only from parents to teachers (Parent'R'Us), and equity measures are a requirement (TEIP). A positive culture and a collaborative atmosphere also implies the construction of a shared framework between the formal education (inside the school) and the non formal education (outside the school) (PMOE, Education 360).

***What policies support school leaders to bring school actors and stakeholders together to ensure educational success?***

The evidence suggests that a policy that supports school leaders to bring actors and stakeholders together in a WSA have to:

- Promote actions for curriculum development as a participatory process (Toolbox, Reflecting4Change)
- Introduce mechanisms for self-assessment through qualitative methods (SISL, Inclusive Schools, Reflectng4Change)
- Facilitate global communities of learners beyond the local (Multinlude)
- Links school innovation to social innovation (Nemesis)
- Acknowledges not only the students' diversity but also the schools' diversity (TEIP, PMOE)

***What are the most effective models to involve the entire school community, stakeholders, multi-professional teams, external local services, parents and families?***

We have learnt about how to implement effective models to involve the entire school community. Our sample provides evidence that helps us suggest:

- The most effective models are those that set a clear educational goal, and a WSA is a mean/ framework to achieve it (not the goal) (Toolbox)
- The models that foster horizontal participation between school leaders and decision makers are powerful (SISL, Education 360)
- The models must combine reflection and action as a whole (Inclusive Schools)
- We cannot expect that stakeholders meet, we need to create formal and informal chances for them to meet (Nemesis, Parent'R'Us)
- The effective models are those that move from the current status to new scenarios, by facilitating children's agency (ChildUp), enlarging the scope of a WSA from the school to the community (TEP), and valuing non formal education as an essential part of it (PMOE, Education 360)



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- The models combine face-to-face and online activities, especially after the pandemic (Reflecting4Change)

***What policies facilitate a continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and other school staff with a focus on a whole school approach?***

The continuous professional development is revealed as a key factor for implementing a WSA. If we have a look at our chosen experiences, we realize that this continuous professional development is more effective when the learning experiences are open and they propose an ongoing process of creation and re-creation of teaching materials (Toolbox, Multinlude). There is also a strong accent in increasing staff competences on diagnosis and initial assessment (SISL, Inclusive Education, Education 360), as well as in improving the knowledge of relevant stakeholders – families – beyond the academic (Parent'R'Us).

The digital dimension appears to be an emerging framework to foster continuous professional development. Online training is consolidated as a practical and powerful model to facilitate an effective training of trainers (Reflecting4Change, Multinlude, Nemesis). Training is also rich when materials come from evidence-based policies and connects with real cases to be explored (ChildUp).

***What practices are the most effective to make sure that each child and young person has an equal chance to access, participate and benefit from high quality and inclusive education under a whole school approach?***

The practices that are most effective to make sure that each child enjoys the right to an inclusive education are those that:

- Are student-centered (Toolbox)
- Run a socio-emotional methods: we experience/we reflect on the experience/we act according the reflection (Inclusive Schools)
- create a sense of a team and work in the same direction among all the stakeholders (Parent'R'Us, Education 360)
- facilitate the access to high quality learning contents, scientific and/or cultural (Reflecting4Change, Nemesis)
- foster the agency of those that are in clear disadvantage (ChildUp)
- introduce the access to non formal education as an essential part of the right to education (PMOE)
- monitor the coordination processes and the resources (TEIP, Education 360)



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## RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE CONCLUSIONS

The evidence-based recommendations have been designed regarding the main conclusions, and they reflect some strategic dimensions to be covered.

- Teamwork and a collaborative atmosphere are both pre-conditions and outcomes of a whole school approach. Governments should promote mechanisms to place this collaboration beyond the schools as a unit of action, and facilitate the interaction among several schools from the same community.
- A whole school approach reflects a communitarian perspective of education. National curricula should prioritise the implementation of school methods that require a whole school approach.
- The relationship between parents and teachers is a key issue for implementing a whole school approach. Governments should facilitate conditions for parents to participate at school and build up a shared ethos with teachers in terms of school project.
- A whole school approach requires the engagement of all the stakeholders. Formal participation bodies should integrate those stakeholders that are not joining them, such as non-formal education institutions, cultural entities and social clubs.
- There is still little evidence and knowledge about how to implement successful whole school approach frames in local communities. More research and diagnoses should be done in order to increase the scientific and cultural background on whole school approach in Europe.
- The school leaders are the key actors to articulate the implementation of a whole school approach in a local community. More continuous training on whole school approach should be offered to these leaders, together with a normative acknowledgement of their role as whole school approach promoters.
- School leaders, teachers and policy makers do not share spaces for a joint work. Governments should encourage school leaders, teachers and policy makers to meet regularly and set common goals and targets for their National/local communities, by implementing multilateral, horizontal and collaborative processes .
- A whole school approach exists to give the students the chance to be at the core of the curriculum development processes. A more inclusive orientation and relevance should be promoted.
- A whole school approach is not new in Europe, we count on numerous experiences on that across the countries. However, these experiences are not acknowledged enough. More visibility and acknowledgement should be given to those who already implement whole school processes.
- Teacher mobility should be fostered to enrich whole school approach backgrounds.
- A whole school approach requires teachers' intercultural and inclusive awareness, as a way to strengthen their sense of belonging to their schools. More training and more mentoring processes should be implemented by educational administrations to foster this dimension.



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Finally, in accordance to these policy recommendations, we wish to remark that some National and local action plans could be designed and implemented. Please find below an illustrative example of what an action plan could be.

STRATEGIC DIMENSION	NATIONAL	LOCAL
Teamwork and collaborative atmosphere	To introduce regulations that promote curriculum development processes by involving several schools together	To foster schools' cooperation by facilitating rooms to meet and access to local resources
Communitarian action	To promote service learning experiences as a method that meets the WSA needs	To introduce collaborative platforms to facilitate the contact and the exchange among different stakeholders
Parents and teachers relationships	To set legal acknowledgement for parents to participate at school: reform of labour legislation to introduce a 10 days/year permit to get engaged in school projects	To reinforce the parents' associations training programmes
Formal participation	To modify National regulations to facilitate the access of non-formal education stakeholders in National Education Councils	To modify local regulations to facilitate the access of non-formal education stakeholders in Local Education Councils
Diagnosis and knowledge	To launch a National WSA Watch within the frame of the regular assessment structures	To provide data and facilitate data collection for diagnosis and evidence-based decision-making
School leaders	To adapt school leaders' training structures to introduce WSA as a content and a school leader's function	To launch a local WSA award for school leaders who promote it locally
School leaders and policy-makers relationships	To organise an Annual Conference for both school leaders and policy makers to set operational targets and plan joint strategies on WSA	
Students		To launch annual campaigns for students to get involved in local challenges such as the fight against climate change or social inclusion
Acknowledgement	To launch a WSA School Label which distinguishes those centres that are more active in promoting a WSA	
Mobility	To introduce a specific track in mobility programmes to fund staff mobility between initiated and experts in WSA (inside and outside the country)	



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