

e-InFo-TED - Electronic International Forum for Teacher Educator Development

Teacher educators are key players in education, impacting directly on the quality of teaching, as the European Commission (2013) emphasises: 'if teachers are the most important in-school factor influencing the quality of students' learning, the competences of those who educate and support teachers (teacher educators) must be of the highest order'. Yet, it is surprising that, across Europe, teacher educators are, typically, not formally prepared for their jobs, not supported formally while entering their jobs, and not provided with professional learning opportunities in the job. This Erasmus+ project e-InFo-TED has the ambitious goal of fulfilling this need by strengthening European teacher educators' professional development.

The e-InFo-TED project is designed to build and strengthen learning and cooperation between teacher educators in Europe by enhancing their professional development. The e-InFo-TED project has three specific aims:

1. Build an interactive network of European teacher educators to learn from each other via a virtual learning platform and face to face meetings;
2. Create resources to support the professional development of teacher educators, and
3. Foster knowledge creation and a shared European vision for teacher educator development and teacher educator leadership.

Our evidence suggests that:

- beginning teacher educators seek knowledge resources, professional development activities and opportunities to exchange practices;
- experienced teacher educators need international collaboration to promote professional learning;
- teacher educators at all levels need a language to conceptualise their practices; and
- teacher education institutions struggle to organize induction and in-service development programmes for their teacher educators, as they lack necessary concepts and pedagogical tools.

These challenges will be addressed directly by e-InFo-TED, and will be tackled through two major activities.

These are:

1. The development of a VIRTUAL LEARNING PLATFORM FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS (VLP). This platform will support interaction, debate, criticality, collaborative learning and the sharing of practices amongst European teacher educators, through a web-based knowledge building and learning environment. It will include a wiki-driven resource portal with short encyclopaedic articles, video examples of good practice, literature abstracts and reviews, links to national and European policy-documents, a You-Tube channel, blogs, discussion forum and events for teacher educators' professional development. The platform will offer blended learning opportunities to local, national and European teacher educators' communities of practice responsible for integrated university- and school based teacher educator development.
2. The organisation of a EUROPEAN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS (EDPD). This programme will bring groups of experienced teacher educators together, from across Europe, to learn from each other and to form communities of practice who will support and create conditions for teacher educator learning at institutional, regional and national levels.

In the longer term, e-InFo-TED will evolve into a 'EUROPEAN TEACHER EDUCATOR ACADEMY' organising education and development courses and bringing together European research, pedagogy, and professional learning on teacher educators' professional development. To sustain this project, we will create a MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses) for European teacher educators. The evolution of this project into a European Teacher Educator Academy is forecast in the business plan supported by all partners via letters of intent.

E-InFo-TED consists of EIGHT PARTNERS from eight high-profile teacher education institutions in EU member states. The Mofet Institute in Israel is an advisory expert. This institute is unique in the world as being a Teacher

Education Academy, combining research, creation and dissemination of knowledge on teacher education, and professional development of teacher educators. Knowledge and expertise from outside Europe is brought in.

e-Info-TED will have a wide range of RESULTS and consequently a substantial impact on the professional development of teacher educators, achieved through the following INTELLECTUAL OUTPUTS:

- O.1. Design principles for teacher educators' ICT-based professional development and community learning, plus an overview of their learning needs;
- O.2. Detailed description of a Virtual Learning Platform;
- O.3. The VLP itself, with an OPEN RESOURCE PORTAL and digital work spaces, supporting teacher educator development, online knowledge building and collaborative learning;
- O.4. The EUROPEAN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (EPDP) and TRAINING ACTIVITY C.1, which will increase participating teacher educators' competence and knowledge and will position them as future leaders in teacher education. A blended learning programme to support this process will be developed, piloted and evaluated and participants will contribute to the VLP;
- O.5. A plan to develop a MOOC, and a business plan for a European Teacher Educator Academy;
- O.6. Four policy documents, addressing national and European policymakers respectively, concerning (the conditions for) quality professional learning for teacher educators;
- O.7. Two summative evaluation reports, one on the EPDP and its impact on the development of teacher educators, and the other on the overall process, outputs and reach of e-Info-TED.

Next to these seven intellectual outputs, several MULTIPLIER EVENTS will be organised to increase:

- a) connections between national teacher educator activities and e-Info-TED;
- b) engagement by national and international stakeholders in teacher educator quality and development;
- c) institutional and professional knowledge and competence in promoting teacher educator development; and
- d) participation of teacher educators in professional development.

E-Info-TED will therefore support all those involved in teacher education at institutional, national and European levels to enhance teacher educator quality through professional development, and thus will enhance the quality of European education generally.

Participants

<i>Name of the Organisation</i>	<i>Country of the Organisation</i>
NORGES TEKNISK-NATURVITENSKAPELIGE UNIVERSITET NTNU	Norway
UNIVERSITEIT GENT	Belgium - Flanders
UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON	UK - England
VU-VUMC VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM	The Netherlands
UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK	Ireland
RADBOUD UNIVERSITEIT NIJMEGEN	The Netherlands
THE UNIVERSITY COURT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN	UK - Scotland
KATHOLIEKE UNIVERSITEIT LEUVEN	Belgium - Flanders