



Leadership  
Diversity *for*



# LEADERSHIP FOR DIVERSITY

# FINAL CONFERENCE

4th & 5th November, Antwerp



Prepared by L4D Consortium

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# Executive Summary



## Overview of the Leadership for Diversity Final Conference

The Leadership for Diversity Final Conference constituted a pivotal event within the context of Work Package 4 (Dissemination, outreach and exploitation) of Leadership for Diversity Project. Its objective was to consolidate and showcase the project's contributions to fostering inclusive and diverse educational environments. The conference saw the convergence of professionals, researchers, leaders and policymakers specialising in the domain of education, with the objective of conducting a thorough examination of innovative approaches to the development of inclusion and diversity, inclusive leadership and educational equity.

The objectives of this final conference were aligned with the overarching goals of the Leadership for Diversity project, which is to equip school leaders with the tools and skills to address the growing cultural diversity in schools across Europe. This encompasses the promotion of intercultural understanding, the enhancement of professional development and the implementation of practical strategies to create inclusive learning environments in a globalised society.

The Final Conference of the Leadership for Diversity project took place on November 4th and 5th, organized by ESHA in collaboration with DRAMBLYS and with the support of all project partners. Originally planned to be held in Albacete, the event was relocated to Antwerp, creating an opportunity for school leaders beyond the project partnership to participate and engage.



## INTRODUCTION

### Profile of participants

The conference brought together an heterogeneous and dynamic group of 50 school leaders and educators from all over Europe, reflecting the event's focus on leadership, diversity and intercultural skills. Attendees represented a wide range of nationalities, with a significant proportion from the Netherlands, alongside participants from Germany, Ireland, Cyprus, the UK, Belgium, Spain, Estonia, France and Ukraine.

Diversity was a cornerstone of the conference, not only in terms of geographical representation, but also in terms of gender balance.

Of the participants, 27 were women, demonstrating a commitment to promoting equal participation of women and men in leadership discussions. This gender representation highlighted the importance of inclusivity in educational leadership and set a strong example for addressing equity in school leadership.

While the participants had different professional backgrounds and levels of experience, they shared a common goal: to develop the intercultural competencies needed to lead in increasingly diverse educational settings. Their collective expertise and points of view enriched the conference discussions and reinforced the value of collaborative, intercultural learning.







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## REGISTER HERE

 4th & 5th November 2024

 **KAVA Congres Centre**  
Consciencestraat 41 | 2018 Antwerp,  
Belgium



**LINA KLEMKAITE**  
Opening speech  
Project Coordinator



**DIS VAN BERCKELAER**  
Keynote speech  
Belgian Politician



**VINCENT MERK**  
Keynote speech  
Intercultural Trainer & Consultant



**ANNA ZELNO**  
Panel discussion  
Diversity & Innovation Strategist



**MARCEL VAN DER POEL**  
Panel discussion  
Higher Education, Research, Training, Advice  
& Consultancy in Intercultural Communication



**CÉCILE COLLET**  
Panel discussion  
Schoolhead of the La Morlette  
Vocational High School in Cenon



**LOES VAN WESSUM**  
Panel discussion  
Expert in Educational Research, Change  
Management & Inclusive Practices



**PETRA VAN HAREN**  
Panel discussion  
Director of ESHA  
(European School Head Association)

## LEADING FOR DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Join us to explore the future of inclusive education!

At this conference, education leaders and experts will gather to share knowledge and experiences on how to approach diversity and inclusion in schools from a strategic perspective. The event will feature a mix of keynote speech, panel discussion, and interactive workshops.

### Program Overview:

**04**  
NOV

19:00 - 21:00

Elfde Gebod Riverside, Suikerrui 1, Antwerp (BE)

#### *Diner Pensant*

The Leadership for Diversity consortium invites you to an inspiring dinner to start conversations about diversity and inclusion in education.

**05**  
NOV

08:45

*Registrations*

09:15

*Opening speech*

Lina Klemkaite, CEO of Dramblys and Project Coordinator

09:30

*Keynote speech by Dis Van Berckelaer*

Introducing to Diversity & Inclusion in Antwerp

09:45

*Keynote speech by Vincent Merk*

The Convergence between Challenge-Based Learning and Diversity & Inclusion

10:15

*Panel discussion moderated by Lina Klemkaite*

Leadership for Diversity in Education - Challenges and Opportunities in Europe. Featuring **Anna Zelno, Marcel van der Poel, Cécile Collet, Loes van Wessum and Petra van Haren.**

*The objective of the panel* is to facilitate an exchange of experiences, and the diverse participants we have—ranging from theoretical and academic backgrounds to more practical, hands-on expertise—will provide rich insights from various viewpoints.

11:00

*Coffee Break*

11:30

*Workshops*

Leading for diverse schools.

12:30

*Closing remarks*



## OPENING REMARKS



The project coordinator for Leadership for Diversity, **Lina Klemkaite** from Dramblys delivered the opening speech, which marked the culmination of this impactful Erasmus+ initiative. She began by presenting the project's overarching aim, which is to empower educators and school leaders to address diversity and foster intercultural understanding in their institutions. Following this, the consortium behind Leadership for Diversity was presented. It is comprised of various organisations from across Europe, each of which brings different skills, perspectives and abilities, thus reinforcing the idea of inclusion and diversity within the project.

From this collaborative journey, the coordinator reflected about the project's progression, from its inception to the current stage, by highlighting how each phase contributed to the development of solutions for the challenges inherent in intercultural education.

One particularly noteworthy aspect of her address was the introduction of the **Professional Development Program (PDP)**, which represents a flagship deliverable of the project. The PDP is a document that aims to facilitate professional development opportunities for school leaders and staff on the principles of inclusive leadership, thereby enhancing their awareness of diversity and inclusion (D&I) and their intercultural competencies. The handbook includes activities that enhance the development of competencies required to create and implement strategies that promote diversity and inclusion

The PDP has been developed in digital format and is available in all consortium languages, thereby ensuring accessibility for a broad audience of educators and leaders.

Furthermore, Lina presented the **eHub**, as part of the project outcomes. This is a digital repository of educational materials comprising instruments, training modules, and case studies that advance inclusivity and intercultural competence. The eHub can be found also in multiple languages, thereby reinforcing its usability across a range of educational settings.

To further encourage the continuation of collaborative efforts, Lina introduced the **Discord Community**, an interactive platform designed to facilitate dialogue and resource-sharing among participants. In light of the fact that Discord may be a relatively unfamiliar platform, she placed an emphasis on its potential as a professional networking space, encouraging attendees to explore its features.

Towards the conclusion of the conference, a more detailed presentation was delivered, offering in-depth insights into the eHub. This were shared by Lola Gonzalez from Momentum, highlighting its key features, objectives, and potential impact on fostering inclusive leadership practices.



## KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

### SPEAKER PROFILES

**Dis Van Berckelaer** is the Mayor of Borsbeek, a village that is joining the municipality of Antwerp. In his political career, he has been deeply committed to fostering diversity and inclusion. As a speaker, Dr. Van Berckelaer provided insights into the specific practices of both Belgium, and the diverse city of Antwerp. Indeed, Antwerp is regarded as one of the most multicultural cities in Belgium, with around 20% of the population coming from foreign backgrounds.



The city is home to a multitude of vibrant communities hailing from diverse geographical and cultural backgrounds. The city's rich cultural tapestry is shaped by this diversity to the city's dynamic social fabric. It is, therefore, **crucial to establish policies that foster and support this diversity**, ensuring that all citizens are included and represented.



**Vincent Merk** is an expert in intercultural management, and diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB). He has been a senior lecturer for the Eindhoven University of Technology for over 38 years and has over 35 years of experience as an independent trainer and consultant in intercultural business communication and management. For his keynote, dr. Merk focussed on **Challenge-based learning** and its impact on DEIB policies in education and leadership practices.

## PRESENTATION SUMMARIES

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER 1: DR. VAN BERCKELAER

*“There are challenges, but everything is not doomed. There is hope!”*

Dr. Dis Van Berckelaer, Mayor of Borsbeek, started his speech by addressing an overview of the educational system in Belgium. He proceeded to explain the distinctive structure of the **educational system**, which is divided into three linguistic communities: Flemish, French, and German-speaking. Each one enjoys autonomy over its educational policies. This constitutional framework, according to Van Berckelaer, guarantees the freedom of education, thereby enabling a variety of providers, including municipal, confessional, and private institutions, to organise education, provided that they meet the requisite national safety and certification standards.



In his remarks on Antwerp, a city with a population exceeding 550,000 and a highly diverse population, Dr. Van Berckelaer underscored the city's distinctive challenges. Approximately 21% of students in Antwerp are in non-privileged situations, lacking certification or qualifications. This is a cause for concern, which he linked to systemic issues within the educational landscape. He acknowledged the city's multicultural richness, driven by migration and a blend of linguistic and cultural traditions, while emphasising that inclusivity presents both a challenge and an opportunity.

A significant topic of discussion was the **shortage of teachers** across all levels of education, which is further compounded by the competition among schools to attract and retain qualified personnel. This situation has had a detrimental impact on the quality of education, particularly in key subjects such as mathematics, and has highlighted the necessity to re-examine strategies to prioritise both student well-being and subject mastery.

Concluding his speech, Dr. Van Berckelaer proposed the establishment of more **collaborative relationships** between educational institutions to facilitate the provision of diverse educational services. He emphasised the necessity of adjusting initiatives to the specific context of each locality and of making use of a variety of teaching groups in order to foster inclusive environments. when we have different student's backgrounds involved

## **KEYNOTE SPEAKER 2: VINCENT MERK**

*“Diversity is being invited to the party; inclusion is being asked to dance, and belonging is feeling safe and (self)-confident to ask the DJ to play your favorite song, knowing it will also please the other dancers”*

Vicent Merk started his presentation by addressing the main topics involved in the project: **diversity and inclusion in educational contexts**. He emphasised that addressing diversity and inclusion is of paramount importance not only for individual development but also for the creation of equitable societies. To this end, he emphasised that educators bear a crucial responsibility for fostering an inclusive environment that extends beyond mere acknowledgement of differences to actively promote participation and collaboration.





Merk proceeded to distinguish between two types of diversity: visible diversity, which pertains to observable traits such as race, ethnicity, or gender; and cognitive diversity, which refers to varied thought processes, perspectives, and knowledge bases. He emphasised that the recognition of both visible and cognitive differences, coupled with the identification of shared characteristics, provides a foundation for the implementation of effective diversity and inclusion strategies.

A significant aspect of the presentation was the introduction of **Challenge-Based Learning (CBL) as a methodology** for promoting inclusion. Vincent employed the metaphor of a puzzle to elucidate the necessity of collaboration and deliberate action for the integration of diverse perspectives. He proceeded to illustrate the potential of deliberate strategies, such as the recruitment of female scientists to address gender imbalances, to effect transformative change in educational and professional fields.

Merk also investigated the **pivotal function of educators** in establishing secure and hospitable settings wherein students are enabled to participate and articulate themselves. While educators can facilitate access and provide guidance, responsibility for inclusion must be shared, with students assuming an active role in their learning and integration. The discussion then proceeded to address the challenges encountered within the educational context, such as the need to balance personal and professional responsibilities. This was referred to as the parent-professional dilemma. He highlighted the importance of fostering resilience in students, comparing it to the necessity of exercising a muscle in order for it to become effective.

The importance of emotional and social intelligence was another key topic addressed in Vincent's keynote. He posited that the development of these skills, in conjunction with traditional academic knowledge, is pivotal for the fostering of inclusion and the preparation of students for a complex, interconnected world. The appeal for a comprehensive approach that encompasses diverse disciplines and viewpoints resonated throughout the session.

## PANEL DISCUSSION

### MARCEL VAN DER POEL

Marcel van der Poel (1962) lived and worked for over 10 years in East-Africa. Inspired by his own experiences, he decided in 2002 to professionally develop his skills and understanding of cultural diversity and intercultural communication. Marcel is Sociologist by training and earned a doctorate degree in 2020 on intercultural competence development. Currently he designs and gives training in intercultural communication and DEIB, both within and outside the Hanze institute of higher education in Groningen, The Netherlands.

Marcel's expertise encompasses curriculum design, mentoring, coaching, and lecturing, with a profound dedication to the establishment of inclusive and globally engaged learning environments. His work at Hanze University of Applied Sciences exemplifies his leadership in the promotion of intercultural awareness and the fostering of equity within academic and professional settings.





## PANEL DISCUSSION

### CÉCIL COLLET

An education professional for 30 years, Cécile Collet is currently Principal of the Lycée des Métiers La MORLETTE, where she implements a collaborative management approach and coordinates initiatives such as the ZAP Rive Droite and the FOQUALE network. Previously, she worked as Principal at the Collège d'Ambarès from 2016 to 2022, where she managed the inclusive localized support center (PIAL). Holder of a DAEFLE (Department of Studies of French as a Foreign Language) and a certification in French as a Second Language, she also taught allophone students who had recently arrived in France for 13 years. As an academic trainer, she contributed to projects within the CASNAV and in the prevention of illiteracy, while being a referent for the DELF school. A Knight in the Order of Academic Palms, she trained at the Institute of Advanced Studies in Education and Training (IH2EF) and leads co-development sessions. Her commitment to education is also demonstrated by her role as the bearer of the high school's Erasmus+ accreditation and her active participation in academic projects such as ProFAN Transfert Académie de Bordeaux.



## PANEL DISCUSSION

### LOES VAN WESSUM

Loes van Wessum is a highly experienced expert in the fields of educational change management and organisational development. She is renowned for her exceptional ability to navigate and lead complex transformations within academic and professional settings. She holds a PhD in Educational Studies from Utrecht University, where her research focused on teacher collaboration in secondary education, and dual specialisations in curriculum development and educational studies from the University of Amsterdam. She is thus able to combine deep theoretical knowledge with practical application.

Her professional strength lies in guiding organisations through change processes by empowering teams to develop reflective capacities and adapt to evolving challenges. She has extensive experience in analysing and supporting educational reform, including curriculum design and organisational restructuring. Loes is equally effective at engaging stakeholders at all organisational levels, ensuring alignment and commitment to shared goals.



## PANEL DISCUSSION

### PETRA VAN HAREN

Petra Van Haren is a distinguished leader in education management, currently serving as the Director of the European School Heads Association (ESHA). With over a decade of dedicated service to educational governance, Petra has been at the forefront of initiatives that empower school leaders and strengthen education systems across Europe. Her career reflects a deep commitment to fostering collaboration among educational organizations, advocating for systemic reforms, and promoting inclusive leadership practices. As the Director of ESHA since 2022, Petra has played a pivotal role in shaping the association's strategic direction, enhancing its capacity to provide resources, professional development opportunities, and policy advocacy for school heads.

Prior to her directorship, Petra served as a General Assembly Member at ESHA for nearly eight years, contributing her expertise to the governance and strategic oversight of the organization. Her tenure as President of the Algemene Vereniging Schoolleiders (AVS), the Dutch Association for School Leaders, highlights her unwavering dedication to supporting educational leaders in primary education.





## PANEL DISCUSSION

### THEMES DISCUSSED

The panel discussion, moderated by Lina Klemkaite, comprising Petra, Loes van Wessum, Marcel van der Poel and Cécile Collet, facilitated a discourse on the challenges and opportunities inherent in fostering inclusion and diversity in educational leadership from a multiplicity of perspectives. The panelists explored a number of key topics, including the challenges of addressing the needs of refugee students, supporting students with disabilities, managing classrooms with diverse nationalities and religions, and confronting discrimination in the workforce.

#### **1: The Role of Leadership in Promoting Diversity and Inclusion: Different Approaches to Leadership for Diversity.**

The panel examined a range of leadership approaches that are crucial for the establishment of inclusive school environments. The concept of effective leadership was discussed in relation to the understanding that a one-size-fits-all approach is not applicable in all contexts. Instead, it was emphasised that leadership should be adapted to the specific context of each school. It was recommended that leaders develop shared visions that integrate diversity and inclusion as core values, with the objective of ensuring that every member of the school community feels valued and supported

## **2. Professional Development for Inclusive Leadership and Intercultural Competence:**

Professional development has been identified as a key means of developing leadership skills in the context of diversity and intercultural competence. Ongoing learning for school leaders is vital. This encompasses the recognition of biases and the adaptation of leadership strategies with a view to creating more equitable educational experiences. This includes reflecting on personal practices, seeking feedback, and engaging in collaborative learning experiences. Leaders should be knowledgeable about relevant concepts related to diversity and inclusion, such as intersectionality and microaggressions, to effectively address these issues in their schools.

## **3. Collaborative Leadership and Building Inclusive Teams**

Inclusivity starts within the team. This approach is based on exploring the importance of collaboration among school leaders and educators and how leadership can facilitate this. Fostering collaboration among staff is essential for promoting inclusion. Leaders should create opportunities for collective problem-solving and shared learning experiences.

The efficacy of strategies such as team-based lesson studies and the "Ripple Effect Strategy," which entails the involvement of small groups of motivated individuals to inspire wider participation, was discussed in terms of their potential to promote team collaboration and inclusivity.

## PANEL DISCUSSION

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1. Importance of Context in Leadership:** Effective leadership in diverse educational settings depends on understanding the specific context of the school, whether it is predominantly white, black, or international.
- 2. Building Relationships:** Establishing strong relationships among students, teachers, and leaders is crucial for fostering an inclusive environment. Trust and psychological safety are essential for open discussions about diversity.
- 3. Awareness of Biases:** Leaders must help teachers recognize their own biases and understand the impact of students' backgrounds on their educational success.
- 4. Inclusive Practices:** Inclusion involves creating a sense of belonging while also valuing individual uniqueness. Leaders should focus on practices that promote equity and support diverse student needs.
- 5. Active Listening:** Leaders need to develop strong listening skills to understand the experiences and perspectives of all stakeholders, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds. As Vincent Merk says “We often listen to reply of a question, we don’t listen to understand what is going on”
- 6. Continuous Learning and Reflection:** Ongoing professional development for school leaders is vital. This includes reflecting on personal practices, seeking feedback, and engaging in collaborative learning experiences.

**7. Collaboration and Team Inclusion:** Fostering collaboration among staff is essential for promoting inclusion. Leaders should create opportunities for collective problem-solving and shared learning experiences.

**8. Practical Application of Theory:** Theoretical knowledge should inform practice, but leaders must adapt strategies to their unique contexts and continuously reflect on their effectiveness.

**9. Cultural Competence:** Leaders should be knowledgeable about relevant concepts related to diversity and inclusion, such as intersectionality and microaggressions, to effectively address these issues in their schools.

**10. Role Modeling:** Leaders should exemplify inclusive practices and demonstrate vulnerability in their learning journeys, encouraging staff to engage in similar reflective practices.





# WORKSHOPS SESSIONS

## ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Workshops were delivered by Andrianna Georgiou and Marcel H. van der Poel, focusing on showcasing selected activities from the Professional Development Program (PDP). These sessions provided practical demonstrations and engaged participants in exploring the methodologies and tools emphasized in the program.

Participants were divided into two groups, A and B, for parallel sessions that promoted active engagement and reflection on identity and diversity. The workshop began with a 15-minute icebreaker or energizer, chosen from the PDP handbook like *"Blobs & Lines,"* or *"This or That."* These activities not only energized participants but also illustrated the value of icebreakers in creating an engaging atmosphere and exemplified the Learning for Development (L4D) materials available. The responsible partners for each group ensured the necessary materials were provided or coordinated with the organizing team.

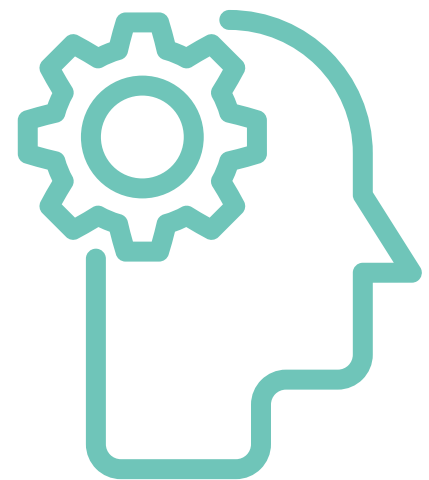
Following the icebreaker, participants explored the *Diversity Wheel* in a 20-minute session that introduced the concept developed in 1990 and discussed the evolving understanding of identities, such as gender and sexual orientation, which some experts now consider less permanent or visible. Participants reflected on their identities using the Diversity Wheel in small groups discussing questions about the advantages or disadvantages associated with their identities and their roles in society. The exercise prompted participants to consider its relevance and potential application in their workplace contexts.



## PARTICIPANTS REFLECTIONS

During the sessions, participant feedback highlighted several key points. Many participants expressed their appreciation for the icebreaker activities, which were designed to establish an energetic and engaging tone for the workshop. Participants found the exercises to be useful examples of how L4D materials could be implemented in various settings. The **Diversity Wheel** session prompted introspective reflections, with numerous participants expressing that it deepened their **awareness of identity** complexities and the evolving nature of concepts like gender and sexual orientation. Furthermore, the discussion provoked introspection regarding societal roles and the advantages or disadvantages associated with personal identities.

Additionally, several attendees emphasized the **relevance of the Diversity Wheel exercise** to workplace settings, with mixed opinions on whether it could be easily integrated into their work environments. While some felt confident about initiating similar conversations at work, others pointed out potential challenges, such as the sensitivity of identity-related topics. Overall, the sessions were viewed as **thought-provoking and valuable** for promoting discussions on identity and diversity.



## LEARNING POINTS

Key insights shared during the group activities included a deeper understanding of how identity influences both personal experiences and social dynamics. Participants noted that the Diversity Wheel exercise provided a **comprehensive framework** for reflecting on the visible and invisible aspects of identity, emphasizing how these layers impact interactions and opportunities. Many highlighted that **identity-related privileges and challenges** are context-dependent, sparking conversations about how workplace cultures can either support or hinder inclusivity.

Another significant learning point was the realization that **discussing diversity openly** can be both powerful and challenging. Participants recognized the need for creating safe spaces where people feel comfortable sharing personal experiences and perspectives. Furthermore, it was acknowledged that approaches to diversity and inclusion must be adaptable, given the evolving nature of societal norms and language around identity. Several groups emphasised the significance of continuous learning and self-awareness in cultivating more inclusive and understanding environments, both in professional and personal contexts.



# Project Deliverables and Tools

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (PDP):

The programme's primary objective, as derived from an extensive research and literature review, is to enhance awareness of the principles of diversity and inclusion (D&I) and to fortify the competencies of educators and school leaders in the domain of intercultural competence.

The PDP emphasises the integration of students' cultural backgrounds into curriculum design, with the objective of fostering connections between cultural insights and educational content. Consequently, educators are furnished with efficacious instruments to address the requirements of heterogeneous student populations in an optimal manner. The PDP is designed for **school leaders and professionals with leadership responsibilities**, acknowledging their pivotal role in fostering inclusive learning environments.

The programme is based on the principles of **Design-Based Education (DBE)**, a methodology that encourages the collaborative study of real-life challenges through the use of tools and frameworks derived from design science. This innovative approach guarantees that the PDP provides genuine and enduring learning experiences. The programme is adaptable, designed to accommodate varying national contexts and educational settings, thereby ensuring its relevance across diverse environments.



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PDP):

The PDP is built on a set of **guiding principles** essential for its successful implementation:

- Evidence-informed practices.
- Focus on improving student outcomes.
- Integration of subject-specific content knowledge.
- Collaborative and job-embedded learning experiences.
- Support and sustainability through active leadership.
- Active, ongoing learning opportunities.
- Provision of resources and structured learning activities.

The programme is **structured around activities**, thereby allowing for flexibility in terms of interpretation and application. Each activity within the PDP is meticulously organised in order to ensure clarity and ease of implementation. The activities are structured with clearly defined objectives, step-by-step instructions, and adaptable components, allowing for the specific needs of educators and schools to be met.

In conclusion, the Professional Development Program (PDP) serves as a vital **resource for advancing inclusive leadership in education**. The PDP offers educators a flexible, research-driven, and activity-based framework that enables them to meet the demands of increasingly diverse learning environments. The adaptability of the programme across different contexts and its focus on practical, sustainable solutions serve to underscore its value as a cornerstone for fostering inclusive education. In essence, the PDP is not merely a vehicle for individual professional advancement; rather, it serves as a driving force for transformative, systemic change within educational institutions.

## LEADERSHIP FOR DIVERSITY EHUB

The eHub is together with the PDP another of the **main takeaways** of this project. It is a digital tool designed to expand knowledge about diversity, equity, and inclusive leadership and intercultural communication. It is a **space** where didactic and educational materials dealing with these issues are collected. It serves as a valuable tool for school leaders, administration staff, teachers, educators, trainers, and consultants to find best practices and programs relevant to the design and delivery of inclusive leadership workshops, promoting equitable and diverse learning environments for all teachers, staff, and students. It includes readings, videos, courses and educational programmes that address these issues. It is available in English and in all the languages of the consortium partners (Spanish, French, Greek and Dutch).

It is intuitive to use and easy to navigate. It is divided into several categories, 7 in total, which can be **filtered by topic of interest**. Users can also filter the languages in which they want to visualise the content and the resource type (video, book, podcast etc)



## DISCORD COMMUNITY

The Discord channel was created with the idea of establishing a space, in which school leaders can **share ideas and practices** as well as experiences from their leadership journey in creating more diverse educational settings. In it, participants can learn more about diversity in a variety of ways. Among these ways, there is interaction with peers who share the same vision for creating more inclusive educational environments. It is also possible to access the resources and tools developed by the project, which ultimately aim to improve the professional profiles of school leaders. Active interaction using tools such as video conferences is also encouraged through the platform. This allows them to participate in **dynamic conversations** by recording and sharing video replies.

This feature brings your ideas to life and allows **meaningful exchanges** with others in the group. In short, the Discord channel serves as a **virtual meeting point** where school leaders can contribute to discussions that focus on applying project learnings to your school context, equipping you with actionable strategies to promote intercultural understanding and inclusion.



# PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION



## SUMMARY OF PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK COLLECTED VIA MENTIMETER

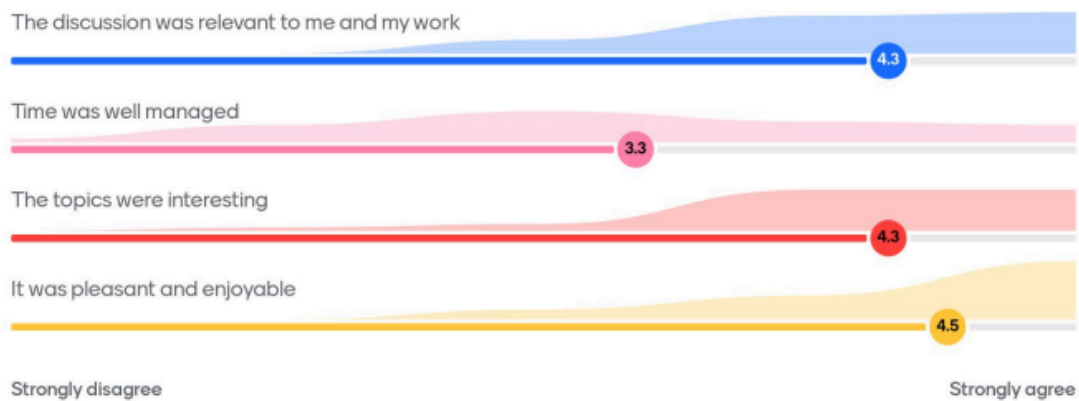
It is of the utmost importance to gather feedback from participants for a number of reasons. Firstly, it provides **invaluable insights** into the efficacy and efficiency of the event, thereby enabling organisers to evaluate the success of the conference and identify areas for potential improvement. Such feedback can inform future event planning and facilitate the adaptation of content to better align with participants' needs. Additionally, it provides a **real-time perspective on the participants'** comprehension and engagement levels, allowing presenters to modify their delivery and content as needed.

Furthermore, participant feedback is advantageous to the Leadership for Diversity project, as it contributes to the project's dedication to **continuous improvement and adaptability**. By collating and analysing data from attendees, the project team can identify recurring themes and issues that participants encounter, which can then be addressed in future workshops or training sessions. This process enables the reinforcement of project's outcomes while also guaranteeing that the tools and strategies being advocated are pertinent, pragmatic, and efficacious for educators and school leaders across diverse contexts.

According to the results of **Mentimeter** we can clarify and draw some conclusions about how the conference went. In terms of satisfaction questions, we can say that the conference was a positive experience for the attendees. In the graph below we can see that the questions are generally close to 5, which is the highest satisfaction score.



## How would you rate today's event on following topics?



Despite not having a bad score either, time management was the lowest topic with 3.3. However, it is worth noting that time management received the lowest score, averaging 3.3. While this is not a poor rating, it suggests there is room for improvement in this area. Proper time allocation and smoother transitions between sessions could enhance the overall experience and ensure that all aspects of the conference run efficiently and meet the high expectations set by the content quality.

The graphic presents the results of a survey of event attendees, inquiring as to the relevance of various sections of the event to their interests. The data is presented in the form of average ratings, indicating the perceived importance of each section. The scores range from 1 (indicating that the section was not relevant) to 5 (indicating that the section was highly relevant).

The Dinner Pensant was rated as moderately relevant with an average score of 4.0. The keynote speeches and the challenge-based learning method were rated slightly higher, with an average score of 4.2, indicating that these were particularly engaging and meaningful for participants. The panel discussion was rated with an average score of 4.1, which suggests that it was regarded as highly relevant and of significant importance to attendees. Similarly, the coffee breaks were rated 4.2, indicating that these interstitial moments were perceived as valuable, potentially for networking and informal discussions. The average score for the workshops was 4.1, which reflects their considerable appeal and the value that attendees placed on these interactive sessions.

The data collectively indicates a persistently **high level of satisfaction** across a range of activities, with scores situated closely around 4.0 or above. This indicates that the event was well-balanced and that the majority of its components were well-received by attendees.

### This part was relevant for me...



In light of the preceding statistics, wherein the ratings for assorted event components were proximate to or in excess of an average score of 4.0, a discernible correlation emerges between satisfaction and the perceived utility of specific elements of the conference. The participants identified the panel discussion, workshops and networking as the most valuable aspects of the event.

This is consistent with the satisfaction ratings, as the panel discussion was rated 4.1 on average and the workshops were also rated 4.1, indicating high relevance and engagement. Furthermore, the coffee breaks were rated 4.2, indicating that attendees perceived these **networking opportunities** to be beneficial and important.

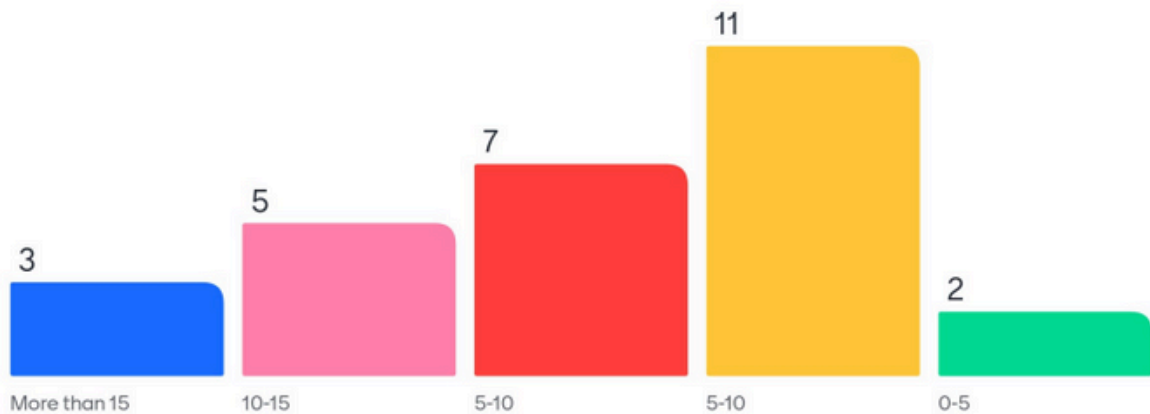
These findings indicate that the elements of the event considered as most beneficial by participants were also among the most highly rated in terms of satisfaction. This lends further support to the notion that interactive, hands-on sessions, such as workshops and discussions, in addition to opportunities for informal networking, are highly valued by attendees and contribute considerably to their overall positive experience at the conference.

## In general, what was the most useful part of this meeting?

90 responses



How many NEW contacts did you make during this conference (dinner + conference)



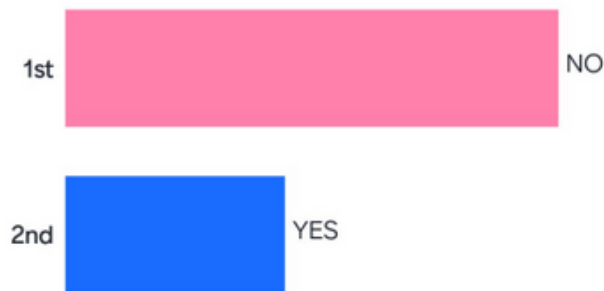
Regarding the **networking topic**, we can highlight this as an important part for attendees. A total of 23% of people mentioned that this was the most useful part of these meetings. As we can see in the graph below, the vast majority of people have greatly expanded their network of contacts. As the graph shows, 18 of the 28 people who participated in this question made between 5 and 10 contacts, which is 64.29%. Only 2 persons made between 0 and 5 contacts. This is an important indicator for the sustainability of the programme as networking can guarantee the continuity of the project after its completion.

To better understand the impact of **Challenge Based Learning (CBL)** on participants and to assess its success, it is important to look at data on their initial knowledge, likelihood of future use and overall satisfaction. The survey responses provide insight into these areas.

Prior to the conference, 16 participants indicated that they were familiar with CBL, while 10 participants indicated that they were not familiar with it. This suggests that almost half of the participants were new to the concept before the event.

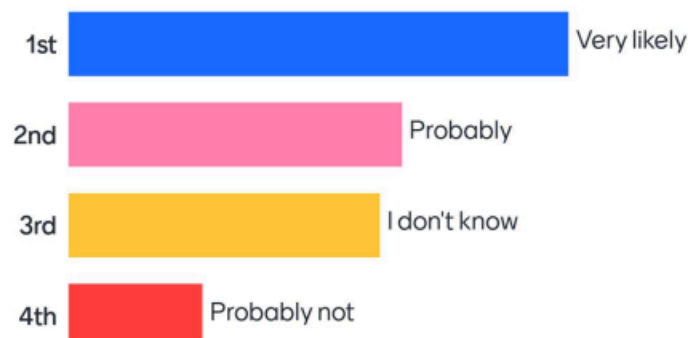


### Did you know Discord?



After the event, 11 participants indicated that they were **very likely to use CBL** and 6 participants indicated that they would probably use it. In addition, 6 participants were unsure and 3 participants said they were unlikely to use it. This shows that the majority of participants were inclined to use what they had learned, with around 65% expressing a strong or moderate interest in using CBL. From the data it appears that the conference was successful in introducing CBL as a valuable pedagogical approach. The relevance score and interest in using CBL after the conference indicate that participants found it useful and were motivated to incorporate it into their work or teaching practice. The fact that a significant proportion of participants (17 out of 26) indicated that they were likely or very likely to use CBL suggests that the conference had a significant impact on their perception and potential use of this method.

### How likely are you to use Challenge Based Learning?





# Outcomes and Recommendations

## KEY OUTCOMES AND TAKEAWAY FROM THE CONFERENCE

The conference concluded with Maud Gary from La Loba summarizing the key insights and takeaways from the event, and reflecting on the collective impact and future potential of the Leadership for Diversity project. The Leadership for Diversity conference provided a comprehensive examination of strategies and practices for fostering diversity and inclusion in educational settings. A series of engaging keynotes, panel discussions, and interactive workshops enabled participants to gain valuable insights into the pivotal role of leadership, the application of innovative methodologies, and the importance of cultural competence in addressing the complexities of diverse learning environments.

This section offers a summary of the key themes and outcomes of the conference, providing an overview of the foundational topics discussed.

### **The Role of Inclusive Leadership**

The conference demonstrated the pivotal function of inclusive leadership in the establishment of equitable and diverse educational settings. Those in leadership positions who promote a shared vision and equity-focused practices are able to address disparities in student outcomes and staff engagement. In her keynote address, Dr. Van Berckelaer emphasized the importance of reflective leadership and collaboration among educational institutions in addressing systemic challenges, including teacher shortages and diversity gaps.

## Addressing teacher shortages

A significant concern that was discussed was the shortage of teachers across all levels of education and in all regions, which was highlighted during Dr. Van Berckelaer's presentation. He underscored the significance of cultivating collaborative relationships between educational institutions to facilitate resource and support sharing, thereby attenuating the ramifications of this crisis on educational quality.

## The development of emotional and social intelligence

In his keynote address, Vincent Merk emphasised the significance of cultivating emotional and social intelligence, both for educators and students alike. These competencies are of the utmost importance for the cultivation of inclusivity and resilience in heterogeneous learning environments, as well as for the preparation of leaders and students to navigate the intricate interpersonal dynamics that are inherent to such environments.

## The concept of Challenge-Based Learning (CBL)

CBL has emerged as a transformative methodology for inclusion. Vincent Merk underscored the value of implementing this approach in order to collectively tackle the complexities of real-world diversity issues. By engaging students and educators in problem-solving, CBL facilitates the development of cultural intelligence and the implementation of practical solutions. The collaborative process entails the resolution of conflicts, the formulation of solutions, and the development of a range of transferable skills, including problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication. These abilities are essential for success in future professional endeavours.

## Types of diversity

The exploration of visible and cognitive diversity, as presented in Vincent Merk's keynote, provided a framework for understanding and addressing diverse perspectives. The recognition of these dimensions allows leaders and educators to develop inclusive strategies that are tailored to the specific requirements of all stakeholders.

## Cultural competence and awareness of bias

The panel discussions indicated the importance of cultural competence in addressing microaggressions and promoting equity. It is imperative that leaders acknowledge and mitigate their biases to foster an environment in which all voices are valued.

## Practical Application of D&I theory

Both, the panel and workshops concurred that there is a necessity to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical strategies for inclusion. The Diversity Wheel exercise, for instance, furnished attendees with tangible instruments for introspection and the implementation of diversity practices.



## **PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EDUCATORS AND SCHOOL LEADERS IN IMPLEMENTING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PRACTICES**

The implementation of diversity and inclusion practices needs to deliberate actions that contribute to the creation of educational environments characterised by equity, security, and the flourishing of all members of the academic community. The conference offers insights into key strategies for educators and leaders, underscoring the significance of establishing inclusive environments, fostering emotional intelligence, and addressing cultural competence. The following section presents practical recommendations for school leaders and educators based on the topics and discussions that emerged from the conference. Here are the practical recommendations to school leaders retrieved from the conference:

- **Role of Educators**

Education professionals play a pivotal role in promoting inclusivity. It is the responsibility of educators to prioritise the creation of safe and welcoming environments in which students feel valued and at ease in participating. To this end, there is a necessity for the establishment of transparent standards for respectful interactions, as well as the facilitation of avenues for the articulation of all perspectives.

- **Challenges in Education**

Educational professionals encounter significant challenges in reconciling their professional obligations with their personal lives. This predicament is often termed the parent-professional dilemma, and it signifies a substantial challenge for those engaged in the field of education. The conference emphasised the necessity of addressing these challenges in order to ensure that educators are able to prioritise the nurturing of student development. It is the responsibility of educational leaders to provide support to staff by acknowledging the pressures they face and offering flexibility and professional development opportunities.

For students, the fostering of resilience is of paramount importance. Keynote speaker Vincent Merk compared resilience to a muscle that requires regular training. The implementation of resilience-building activities, such as reflective practices and problem-solving exercises, can equip students with the necessary skills to effectively navigate the complexities of diverse environments.

- **Emotional and Social Intelligence**

Emotional and social intelligence encompasses the capacity to comprehend, regulate, and convey emotions in a constructive manner, thereby fostering robust interpersonal connections. The integration of this matter into the curriculum enables students and staff to navigate the complexities of diverse

It is essential to adopt a holistic approach to education, integrating traditional academic disciplines with emotional and social development. It is, therefore, the responsibility of educational leaders and practitioners to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to comprehend and address the emotional needs of their school communities, while concurrently cultivating empathy and cooperation.

- **Expanding cultural competence**

In the contemporary globalised world, educators and leaders must demonstrate a high level of cultural competence if they are to effectively navigate diverse educational contexts. This process involves the acknowledgement and appreciation of cultural diversities, whilst concurrently addressing unconscious biases and promoting equitable outcomes. The conference emphasised the value of practical instruments such as the Diversity Wheel in prompting reflection on identity and privilege. A proactive approach to cultural competence is essential to ensure that schools remain inclusive and welcoming to all members of the community.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS, TRAINING, OR RESOURCES THAT COULD SUPPORT THE PROJECT'S GOALS**

Expanding on the ideas discussed during the conference, the following are practical suggestions for future projects, training, and resources that can further advance the goals of the Leadership for Diversity initiative:

### **Cultural Celebrations**

The organisation of events and activities that celebrate cultural diversity is a highly effective strategy for promoting understanding and inclusion within school communities. These events offer a valuable opportunity for students and staff to gain insight into the traditions, histories and experiences of diverse cultures, thereby fostering mutual respect and reducing the prevalence of stereotypes.

### **Safe Spaces**

The creation of safe spaces is vital for the facilitation of open dialogue concerning identity, diversity and inclusion. Such an environment encourages students and staff to express themselves without fear of judgement or discrimination, which is essential for the promotion of psychological safety and trust.

### **Parental Engagement**

Engaging parents and families in school activities and decision-making processes is of the utmost importance in order to create an inclusive educational environment. A comprehensive understanding of the needs of diverse families enables schools to provide more effective support to students and to cultivate stronger relationships between the school and the wider community.

# Suggested Readings

- Leithwood, Kenneth & Louis, Karen & Wahlstrom, Kyla & Anderson, Stephen & Mascall, Blair & Gordon, Molly. (2009). How Successful Leadership Influences Student Learning: The Second Installment of a Longer Story. Retrieved from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/251222964\\_How\\_Successful\\_Leadership\\_Influences\\_Student\\_Learning\\_The\\_Second\\_Installment\\_of\\_a\\_Longer\\_Story](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/251222964_How_Successful_Leadership_Influences_Student_Learning_The_Second_Installment_of_a_Longer_Story)
- Merk, V. (2024, December 4). Resilience in the new VUCA world. LinkedIn. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/resilience-new-vuca-world-vincent-merk/>
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Finally, we would like to express our recognition to all individuals and organisation part of the consortium for their dedicated efforts, expertise, and contributions, which have been essential in achieving the objectives of this programme.

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# CREDITS

**Conference Proceedings** has been developed within the framework of the Leadership for Diversity project: **Building inclusive and resilient schools through the CVET. Programme to enhance the competences of school leaders for the development of educational leadership and diversity management**, funded by the Erasmus+ programme (Cooperation Partnership in the field of VET), Ref. Nr. 2022-1-ES01-KA220-VET-000089393

Seven organizations—Dramblys (Coordinator, Spain), Intercultures (Spain), Emphasys Centre (Cyprus), Hanze University of Applied Sciences (The Netherlands), Momentum (Ireland), Le LABA (France), and ESHA (The Netherlands)—joined forces to strengthen educational leadership by equipping school leaders with the skills and tools to promote inclusion and equity in their schools.

Recognizing the increasing complexities of managing diversity in today's schools, the project addressed a critical gap in professional development. Through the development of a tailored CVET programme and the Leadership for Diversity eHub, this initiative offered school leaders practical strategies, adaptable resources, and actionable tools to foster inclusive cultures and implement meaningful change in their educational settings.

This collaborative effort has laid the groundwork for more equitable, resilient, and inclusive schools across Europe, where diversity is acknowledged and valued as an essential asset in education.

More information about the project and developed results can be found on the project website: <https://leadershipfordiversity.eu>



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