



QUEST

ACTIVITIES REPORT

2025



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Ongoing Projects

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Activities 38

Internal Activities

Trainings Attended

Trainings Delivered

Events Attended

Speakers in events

Events organised in the Framework of Erasmus + Projects

Events Organised

08

Publications 50

QUEST Publications

QUEST Publications for Erasmus+ Projects



WHO WE ARE.

“Our purpose is to bring together schools, NGOs, institutions, and universities advocating for change in education and the promotion of lifelong learning.”



QUEST stands for **Quality Education in Europe for Sustainable Social Transformation**. We are an independent, democratic and participatory European network aiming to bring together NGOs, institutions, schools and universities advocating for change in education and the promotion of lifelong learning.

Together with our members, we conduct research projects, conferences, trainings, workshops, and work to have an impact on EU policies.

We aim to serve as a multiplier of best practices, actions and research.

OUR MISSION

To connect educational organisations in promoting children's rights in education by fostering democratic, inclusive, and sustainable practices across Europe and beyond through action research, advocacy, exchanges, and trainings.



QUEST VISION

A world where children and young people have equal access to an education – both formal and non-formal – that not only upholds their rights and agency, but also values their needs, aspirations, and contributions to a just and regenerative society.



OUR VISION

A world where children and young people have equal access to an education – both formal and non formal – that not only upholds their rights and agency, but also values their needs, aspirations and contributions to a just and regenerative society.

OUR STRATEGY

ADVOCATING

for change in the
European learning
landscape

CONNECTING

education
organisations in
Europe

RESEARCHING

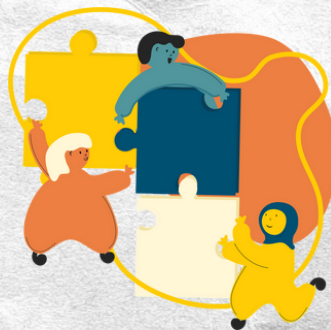
on democratic,
sustainable and
inclusive
education

OUR AREAS OF WORK



DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION

Self-directed learning
and shared decision-
making



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusion and diversity
in the learning
environment



SUSTAINABILITY IN EDUCATION

Outdoor learning and
nature pedagogy

OUR TEAM

Our Brussels based office is a multilingual and multicultural environment that allows the development of an open, united, responsible and sustainable spirit. Putting our values in actions, the office is based on a participatory governance, using sociocracy, nonviolent communication and shared consent decision making as statutory principles.



02

QUEST in Numbers



MEMBERSHIP & COMMUNICATION

95

MEMBERS



FROM 65 TO

74

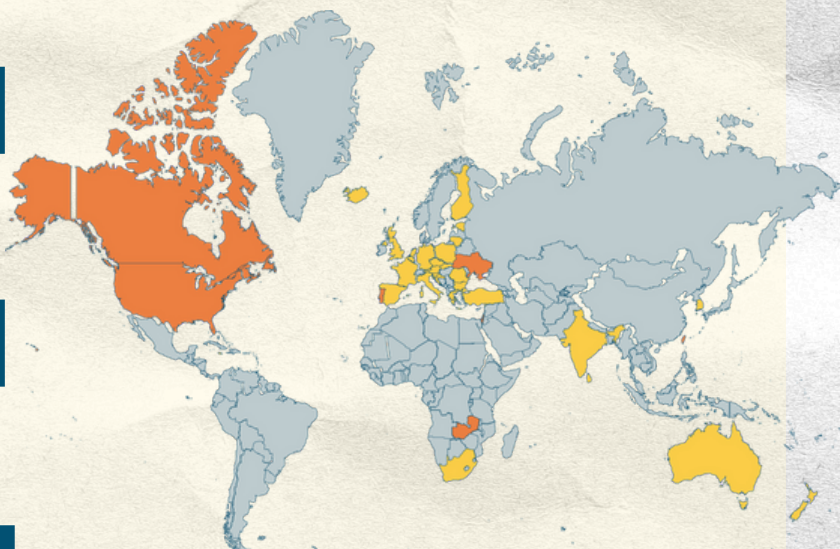
EU MEMBERS



FROM 27 TO

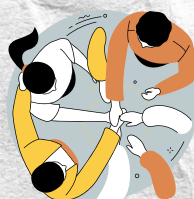
34

COUNTRIES



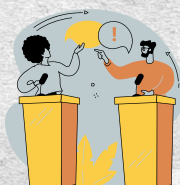
Joined in 2022-2024
 Joined in 2025

QUEST membership growth between Dec 5, 2024 and Dec 5, 2025



+17

**New members
from 7 new countries**



**8 Membership
events**

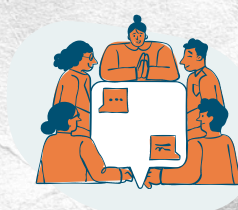
- 4 Members Forum
- 1 conference on Children's right in Education
- 1 Membership Info Session
- 1 Erasmus+ Speed dating Session
- 1 Workshop on Restorative Justice



**59
Email
campaigns**

17

**One-to-one
meetings with
our members**



MEMBERSHIP & COMMUNICATION



+141% Instagram reach

- **+1900%** increase in views from non-followers
- Engagement Rate from **7.6%** to **8.9%**
- **+140%** interactions growth
- **235** new followers

+170%

Clicks in LinkedIn

- **75.3%** reach increase
- **288** new followers
- **+15%** interactions



+17.3%

Facebook Interactions

- **+13.8%** page visitors
- **178** new followers



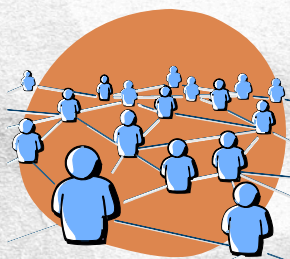
12,363 Website views

- 3,170 new visitors to the website
- 485 files downloads, carried out by 209 individual users
- User engagement rate of 4.47%



POLICY

Synergies



10

major external conferences and forums attended, including **3** as speakers (UN Forum in Geneva, WCD with EU Parliament, COP30 Youth Dialogue with EU Commission)

30+

new contacts with organisations, MEP, Commission officials, and other stakeholders, including **8** ongoing working relationships

Policy outputs



We authored and contributed to

5

key publications and formal policy documents

Collective reach through advocacy

430+

people reached by our policy work, disseminated via coalition statements, a position paper, and including **147** through email/social media campaigns across and beyond the 34 countries of our membership.



High-level engagements



15+

substantive meetings with external institutions including:

- **5** direct meetings with the EU Commission
- **2** dialogues with the EU Parliament
- coordination meetings with our coalitions

PROJECTS



11

Projects running

22 projects funded in total since 2022

4

New projects funded

involving 9 QUEST Members



10

Learning exchanges and trainings

- 4 In presence trainings
- 3 Learning exchanges to learn from volcanoes
- 3 Learning exchange to observe gender dynamics in outdoor schools
- 1 Youth Outdoors Festival
- 1 Erasmus+ partners meeting



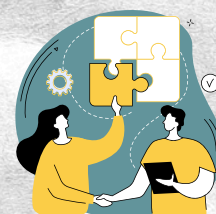
15



Resources created through projects

- 2 Policy Recommendations
- 3 Toolkits
- 2 Online Trainings
- 4 Guidelines and Reports
- 2 Digital Art Galleries

31



Partnerships established across Europe

- 12 partners involved in projects

03

Expanding our Policy impact

Highlights

**Roadmap of our key
milestones**

**2025 Policy activities
in a nutshell**



HIGHLIGHTS

In 2025, the Policy Circle strengthened QUEST's influence through high-level engagements, including direct meetings with European **Commissioners Hoekstra, Micallef, and Dombrovskis' Cabinet**, and active participation in key European Parliament conferences on children's rights, mental health, and climate. Our voice was amplified through leadership roles, notably representing the Child Rights Action Group (CRAG) on the **EU Children's Participation Platform Advisory Board**.



A landmark event was co-organising a child-dialogue with Commissioner Micallef and children for **World Children's Day, with the active participation of one of our Youth Advisory Board Members**. Strategic networking at events like the UN Social Forum and contributions to policy consultations like for the **next MFF**, and joint statements, such as defending the **Erasmus+ programme** (with the Erasmus+ Coalition) and the **EU Child Guarantee** (with the Alliance for Investing in Children), were central to our mission. Continuous internal training and strong inter-circle collaboration further solidified our position and message in rights-based education.

MILESTONES ROADMAP



FEBRUARY 2025

Solidified our strategic position at the intersection of EU economic policy, education, and children's wellbeing by preparing for a meeting with Commissioner Dombrovskis' Cabinet.



APRIL 2025

Amplified our collective advocacy by disseminating a key Joint Letter on the EU Child Guarantee to EU Presidents, after taking part in the second annual meeting with DG EMPL to discuss the state of play of this important initiative.



SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER 2025

Elevated our advocacy on the global stage, participating in the "Rising Voices" climate conference, the UN Social Forum on education, and the COP30 Youth Dialogue with Commissioner Hoekstra.

1



JANUARY 2025

Started the year with strategic networking at high-level events on child protection and inclusive education, while securing our first high-level advocacy meetings with the Cabinets of Commissioners Hoekstra and Micallef.

2



MARCH 2025

Joined the EU Children's Participation Platform (CPP) Advisory Board, co-representing CRAG alongside Eurochild + Attended first meeting of this new mandate's Intergroup on Children's Rights with the Child Rights Action Group.

3

4

5



JUNE 2025

Published our Position Paper "Choosing Education as Europe's Democracy Shield", and, with our members, called for collective action to prevent a split of the Erasmus+ Programme.

6

7



NOVEMBER 2025

Culminated the year by co-organizing a flagship World Children's Day event in the EU Parliament, facilitating a direct dialogue between children and high-level EU decision-makers including Commissioner Micallef, and with Sampo, one of Youth Advisory Board Members, presenting his recommendations on inclusion of children with disabilities.



2025 POLICY ACTIVITIES IN A NUTSHELL

Child Participation

- We obtained a formal role in shaping EU child participation by joining the EU Children's Participation Platform (CPP) Advisory Board as CRAG co-representatives.
- We created unique spaces for intergenerational exchange, most notably co-organising a World Children's Day event where our Youth Advisory Board Member, Sampo, presented directly to Commissioner Micallef and MEPs.

Policy contributions to the agenda

- We formulated and disseminated policy positions, including a Position Paper on Education as Europe's democracy shield.
- We mobilised our members to defend the integrity of the Erasmus+ programme.



Strategic engagement and representation

- We presented democratic education as a speaker in UN Social Forum 2025, and in meetings with Commissioner Micallef and the cabinet of Commissioner Hoekstra and Dumbrovskis

Responsiveness

- We brought education perspectives to EU future plans by responding to consultations on the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and the EU Anti-Racism Strategy.

2025 POLICY ACTIVITIES IN A NUTSHELL

Inter-institutional dialogue

- We attended the first meeting of the Intergroup on Children's Rights, as well as the annual meeting with DG EMPL on the European Child Guarantee.
- Liaise meetings with the Flemish Government, Department of Environment, and with MOS – Department of Environment, to collaborate on Sustainable Education projects

Training

- We enhanced our team's capacity through targeted training (Council of Europe, EUCHANGER, PiNA)
- We shared our expertise by delivering a session on youth advocacy at a member's event, as well as organising internal training on policy advocacy for QUEST team.



04

Membership Growth

Highlights



HIGHLIGHTS

2025 marked a year of significant growth for QUEST's membership both in numbers and in meaningful participation and connection.

Key stakeholder events took place in Belgium, where the majority of our members are based, creating opportunities for mutual exchange and peer learning. Highlights included our **4** Member Forums and the **EUDEC/IDEC Conference**, where we hosted **379 participants from 42 countries across all continents**. These gatherings really served as spaces for members to share the (often unexpected) challenges they encounter and to imagine ways to address them together.

A particularly significant achievement this year was the consolidated link between our membership and policy. We went deeper into the task of connecting the work and realities in the field with policymaking processes, and were therefore able to bring forward evidence-based and needs-driven recommendations. Notably, **members' contributions to the practical implementation of the EU Child Guarantee** directly informed the development of our policy recommendations on improving national implementation plans around education.

Finally, a major highlight of our membership engagement was the joint advocacy effort between QUEST and three of our members : Rights Centric Education, ALLI asb, and EUDEC. Together, we amplified the voice of rights-based educational models at the international level by representing our network's values in this year's UN Social Forum in Geneva.



Workshop on Restorative Justice

Conflicts between students and educators as well as among peers arose as one major complex challenge our members face in their educational settings. QUEST's online [workshop on restorative justice](#) – facilitated by Dileepa Manawadu and Sifaan Zavahir – invited educators, youth workers, school principals, and parents to explore an approach to conflict resolution that respects students' rights, can be translated in multiple contexts, and is consistent with the principles of inclusive, sustainable, and democratic education.

Project ideation and writing camp for our members

Hosted between June and September, this summer camp arose from the need to provide our members with practical knowledge so that they can write and submit their own project ideas. Participants registered received commented templates to guide the design of their Erasmus+ project proposals, along with dedicated info sessions on how to turn the concept into a set of coherent, impactful activities. A [speed-dating event](#) exclusively for our members was organized to help them connect with each other and develop potential partnerships. Follow up guidance and ad hoc support were provided to further develop the ideas. Next year, we aim to refine and pursue this process!

Mutual learning and best practices exchange

One of the main priorities of our Membership has been to elevate exchanges among each other as schools or organisations with similar visions and needs, and to strengthen their capacity in our core areas of work: democratic, inclusive and sustainable education. This goal is reflected in many of our activities, such as :



- Sharing relevant content on our social media channels and in our members' newsletter to keep our community updated and informed about funding opportunities, educational headlines, and emerging topics in the education field.
- Providing a dedicated space in our newsletter for members to share their activities, invitations, and publications.
- Maintaining a specific section on our website where we highlight our members' green practices in education and lifelong learning.
- Delivering trainings and workshops that address members' needs and respond to their specific challenges.
- Inviting members to our events to share their experience and expertise with their peers.

Strengthening links with and between our members

Probably our biggest achievement this year has been the strengthening of the links with and between our members. Targeted activities such as Membership Infosessions were organized to welcome new members, inform them about QUEST operations, introduce them to the benefits of our membership, and facilitate networking among our community.

Since September 2025, we have optimized the process of keeping in touch with our members by drafting the Membership Toolkit and launching Calendly, a platform that enables potential and existing members to book a meeting directly with our Membership Officer. Moreover, this year has seen a rise in in-person exchanges, as we met members during events, travels abroad and through visits we welcomed in our office in Brussels. Finally, 15 of our members have been involved in our Erasmus+ partnerships and gained valuable expertise in project development and the overall function of the Erasmus+ programme.



05

Outreach and Communication

Internal Communication

Capacitating our Membership

**Promotion of our work and
dissemination actions**



HIGHLIGHTS

In 2025, the Communication Circle focused on strengthening QUEST's communication ecosystem both internally and externally.

The year was dedicated to building clearer workflows, supporting our members through improved tools and processes, and enhancing the visibility and reach of our work across multiple platforms. These efforts aimed to reinforce our collective capacity, streamline collaboration, and ensure consistent, rights-based narratives throughout our activities.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

A key priority this year was the development of internal systems that improve coordination across the organisation. Several new workflows were introduced to support smoother collaboration and reduce administrative bottlenecks.

- **Content Calendar:** a structured content calendar was implemented to track social media posts and ensure alignment with our wider communication strategy.
- **Workflow Automation through Zapier:** a series of automated workflows were established using Zapier, connecting Mailchimp, Google Spreadsheets, and Gmail. These automations support processes such as new member acquisition and recurring administrative tasks, significantly improving inter-circle communication and reducing backlog.

POST CALENDAR - DECEMBER

PLATFORM	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1/12/2025	2/12/2025	3/12/2025	4/12/2025	5/12/2025	6/12/2025
INSTAGRAM	Inclusive voices Kick-off (re-shared) <small>QUEST attended the first partnership meeting of our new Inclusive voices Kick-Off</small>		Student participation in curriculum development CAROUSEL <small>What if students had a real say in what they learn?</small>		Inclusive voices Call for participants <small>We're inviting 2 young people (16-18) and/or a school to participate in our Inclusive voices Call for participants</small>	
FACEBOOK			Student participation in curriculum <small>What if students had a real say in what they learn?</small>		Inclusive voices Call for participants	
LINKEDIN			Student participation in curriculum <small>What if students had a real say in what they learn?</small>		Inclusive voices Call for participants	
Email			Newsletter			
Other	Student Participation Article					
	8/12/2025	9/12/2025	10/12/2025	11/12/2025	12/12/2025	13/12/2025
INSTAGRAM	Guidelines Dem. Education Carousel	Symposium on the Future of the Right to Education: Renewals	YOUDEX Podcast <small>New YOUDEX podcast episodes are live! Link / Our end-of-year theme</small>	Office Moving <small>We moved offices! We're wrapping up the year by presenting the year in review theme</small>	LLWeek - Sara presenting!	
FACEBOOK	Guidelines Dem. Education Carousel		YOUDEX Podcast <small>New YOUDEX podcast episodes are live! Link / Our end-of-year theme</small>	Office Moving <small>We moved offices! We're wrapping up the year by presenting the year in review theme</small>	Cambodia Carousel	
LINKEDIN	Guidelines Dem. post		YOUDEX Podcast <small>New YOUDEX podcast episodes are live! Link / Our end-of-year theme</small>	Office Moving <small>We moved offices! We're wrapping up the year by presenting the year in review theme</small>	Cambodia Carousel	
Email	NEWSLETTER					
Other	Guidelines Dem. Education for Teachers					

- Capacity Building:
 - EU Communications Academy Training: at the end of September, the Communication Officer attended the EU Communications Academy, which helped contribute to refining how we work internally with the policy team and how we tailor messages for different target groups.
 - Internal Training for Staff: as part of our commitment to internal capacity building, the Communication Circle delivered an internal training session on communication and social media.

CAPACITATING OUR MEMBERSHIP

2025 also focused on reinforcing communication with our network and equipping members with clearer tools, information flows, and points of contact.

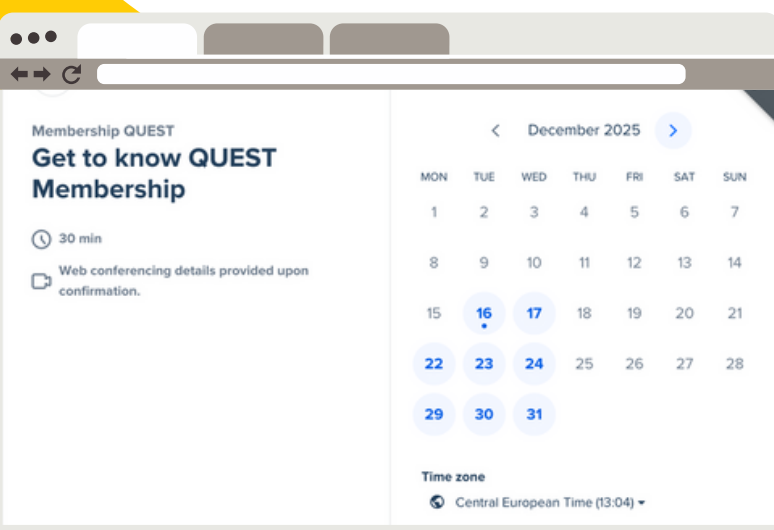
Creation of Calendly

A Calendly system was launched to facilitate clearer and faster communication between the Secretariat and members.



Automation of our Member Database and Contact Management

The contact database was updated and automated to ensure accuracy and a streamlined communication flow with our membership.



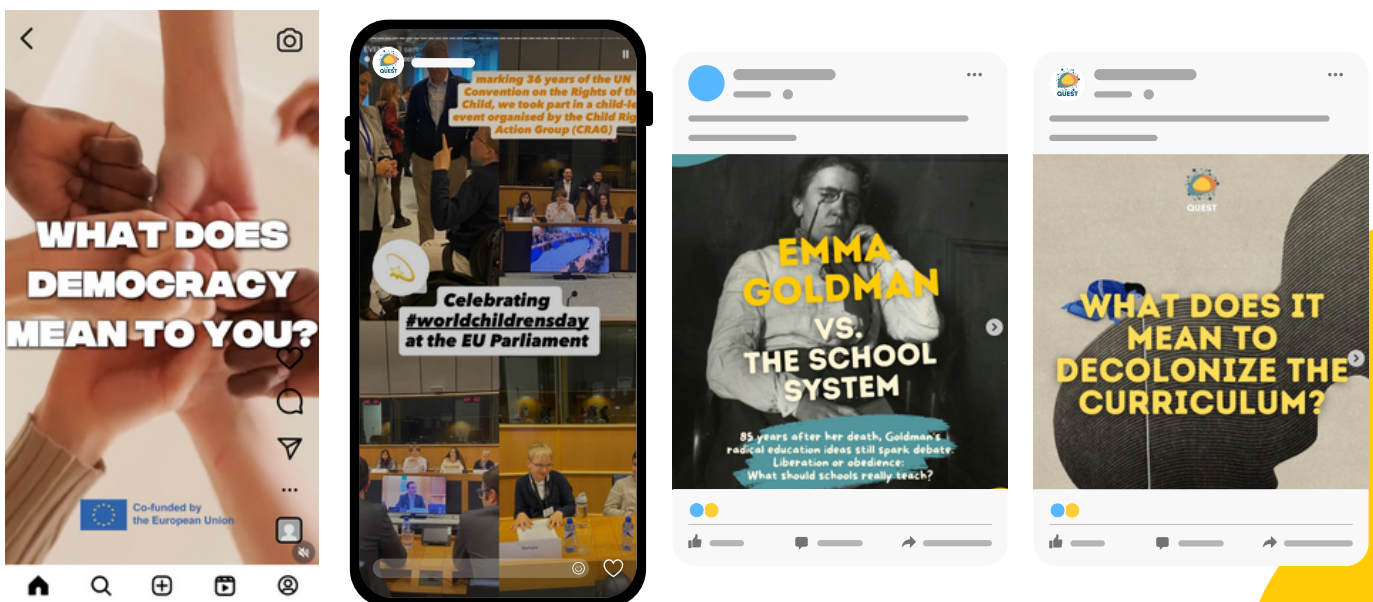
PROMOTION OF OUR WORK AND DISSEMINATION ACTIONS

In 2025, promotion efforts concentrated on social media visibility, storytelling, and expanding our outreach materials.

Social Media Strategy

A renewed strategy was developed to guide content creation and strengthen our online impact. Key formats included:

- Reels, showcasing progress within our Erasmus+ projects and events.
- Livestreamed Member Forum on Sustainability, reinforcing our online community through interactive dialogue.
- Article and Report Showcases, using accessible carousels to engage a general audience and increase visibility of our written work.
- Events and Workshop Stories through Facebook and Instagram, offering in-depth insights into our participation and positions.
- Educational Figures Series, presenting historical and contemporary figures in education.



Analytics and Monitoring

To track progress, the team used Metricool, enabling an integrated overview of analytics across Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Quarterly monitoring supported evidence-based adjustments to our strategy.

Linktree

Linktree was introduced as an essential bridge between Instagram and our website, improving navigation and increasing traffic to key webpages.

Expanding Outreach Materials: Merchandising

New outreach tools were developed to support our messaging on children's rights and participation:

- Deck of Cards – “Know, Share, Reflect: Convention on the Rights of the Child”: this set brings together the 54 articles of the UN Convention and proposes a reflective question for each, supporting children and young people in exploring their rights, experiences, and needs.



- Deck of Cards – “The Right to Wonder”: designed to encourage safe conversation between children, youth, and adults, fostering connection and self-expression.



Collaboration and Amplification with Coalitions and Alliances

To strengthen visibility and promote joint actions with our coalitions and partner networks, several initiatives were implemented in 2025:

- We created a dedicated section on the QUEST website to showcase our involvement in Erasmus+ Coalitions and the work carried out in collaboration with partner organizations.
- We actively participated in communication strategies within the Child Rights Action Group, amplifying shared messages and initiatives.
- The Communication Circle led the promotion strategy for the IDEC@EUDEC Conference, coordinating social media campaigns, website content, flyers and venue map creation, and an email campaign to ensure wide participation and visibility. Following the event, we created a Digital Gallery for participants, providing access to all photos and videos taken, extending the reach and impact of the conference.



06

Projects

Projects Successfully completed in 2025

Ongoing Projects

Projects Started in 2025



In 2025, QUEST engaged in **11 European Erasmus+ projects**, each contributing to the organisation's mission of promoting democratic, inclusive, and sustainable education, and impacting various communities across Europe.

PROJECT SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED IN 2025

DESC – Democratic Education in Schools

Duration: February 2022 – February 2025

Coordinator: GO! Scholengroep Brussel (Belgium)



DESC supported schools across Europe in integrating democratic education practices into their everyday environments. The project strengthened students' sense of belonging and participation while equipping teachers with practical tools to embed democratic approaches in learning.

2025 results include [Transferability Guidelines](#), [Policy Recommendations](#), and the easy-to-read version of the Research Report.

DESC project inspired QUEST member [Slobdona Skola](#) in transferring its results through international cooperation opportunities in different geographical and cultural contexts. They developed a follow-up of the project idea through QUEST- Project Camp.



YGBN – Youth Going Back to Nature

Duration: May 2023 – November 2025

Coordinator: Paint & Quarter Horse Foundation (Bulgaria)



YGBN supports young people with fewer opportunities by enhancing their mental and physical well-being through sustainable outdoor activities. The project empowers youth to reconnect with nature while promoting inclusion and environmental awareness.

2025 results include the hybrid International Conference on Environmentally Sustainable Outdoors Activities for Youth, where QUEST presented research on **the challenges that Young people at Risk of poverty experience in accessing healthy environments in urban areas**, and the consequences on their wellbeing and development.

In June 2025 QUEST took part in the 4 days Outdoor Festival in Bulgaria that connected more than 30 participants from the target group. QUEST also invited its member Casa Verde to the event, providing it with a key opportunity to connect with organisations across Europe working in the fields of outdoor education, exploring avenues for future project cooperation.

REGEN – RE-imagining Gender in Education in Nature

Duration: Sept 2024 – Dec 2025

Coordinator: Kweebus (Belgium)



REGEN aims to contribute to a broader understanding of gender dynamics in nature-based education for children aged 2–6. The project promotes gender-inclusive





practices and supports teachers in identifying and addressing gender-related barriers in outdoor learning contexts.

In 2025, REGEN carried out a survey among outdoor educators that has been answered by 12 QUEST members, and contributed in the drafting of the REGEN REPORT.

REGEN published its Research Report and Practical Guidelines, providing tools for educators to foster gender inclusion in outdoor settings. An online Final Conference was also hosted to present the project's findings.

Regen project involves 3 school members from QUEST network: Kweebus, EDUNAT, and Canale Scuola and has been a key opportunity for our members in developing international cooperation actions through Erasmus+ projects and strengthening project-management skills.

ONGOING PROJECTS

YOUDEX – YOUTH DEMOCRATIC EXperiences (YOUDEX)

Duration: March 2025 – May 2026

Coordinator: Flovira



YOUDEX enables young people to share and explore their democratic participation through digital storytelling. It engages youth in creating podcasts, digital galleries, and zines that amplify lived experiences of democracy in schools, families and communities.



In 2025, YOUDEX delivered its **digital toolkit on youth narrating democracy**, and **launched podcasts capturing youth democratic experiences**

YOUDEX partnership is composed of 2 members of QUEST network: Orvita and EUDEC.

The project provides a key opportunity to connect and reflect on participatory learning and the meaning of democratic processes for young people, collecting key insights about their experiences and perspectives. QUEST members had the opportunity to develop project management and implementation capacities in the Erasmus+.

DECUS – Decolonising Curriculums in Democratic Education in Schools

Duration: Dec 2024 – Sept 2027

Coordinator: QUEST



DECUS supports teachers in recognising and addressing the power dynamics and Eurocentric structures embedded in secondary education. The project promotes decolonial, intersectional, and inclusive approaches to curriculum, teaching practice, and school culture.

DECUS carried out a survey on Decolonial Practices needs, collecting insights from 61 secondary education teachers, of which 11 were from QUEST network.

DECUS delivered in 2025 its 4 modules of online training, and carried out the in-person training in Italy. The decolonial tools have been joined in the interactive DECUS Toolkit.



VOLT – VOLcanoes as Teachers

Duration: Sept 2024 – Feb 2026

Coordinator: QUEST



VOLT brings together schools in Italy, Greece, and Iceland to explore local volcanic environments through STEM and inquiry-based learning, supporting students in understanding natural phenomena while fostering cross-cultural collaboration.

In 2025, VOLT carried out travel observation with the partner schools, resulting in the [VOLT Art Catalogue](#) showcasing students' creative interpretations of their local volcanoes.

VOLT involves 2 school members from QUEST network, [Albero della Tuscia](#) and [Stapaskoli](#).

The project aligns with our ongoing efforts of promoting scientific-basis for innovative educational practices, aimed at fostering life-competences for the 21st century, among students and educators, and building connections with nature.

YouCare – YOUTH Creating Action Research on Eco-Anxieties

Duration: April 2024 – March 2026

Coordinator: QUEST



YOU-CARE enables young people to explore eco-anxiety and the emotional impact of the ecological crisis through youth-led research and advocacy. The project links research, policy and youth participation to support active and informed engagement.

In 2025, YOU-CARE organised its Youth Open Conference, produced a set of youth-generated recommendations for policymakers, and launched its Youth-Led Participatory Action Research (YPAR) Toolkit for educators and youth workers.



PROJECTS STARTED IN 2025

REGEN 2 – RE-imagining Gender in Education in Nature 2

Duration: September 2025 – September 2027

Coordinator: Kweebus (Belgium)



REGEN2 supports primary school teachers in addressing gender stereotypes through an online training on gender dynamics (ages 6–12) and a card game that sparks classroom discussion. Building on research from forest schools, the project will also develop an app to help educators tackle gender bias in outdoor learning contexts.

Launched in September 2025, REGEN2 has already produced a literature review on gender dynamics in primary education and completed the first of four study visits in participating forest schools.

Regen-2 project involves 3 school members from QUEST network: Kweebus, EDUNAT, and Canale Scuola supports the ongoing work of promoting equity-driven and inclusive educational practices, providing research basis on innovative educational practices.

Inclusive Voices

Duration: November 2025 – June 2026

Coordinator: Love and Care for People (Ireland)



Inclusive Voices is a project involving organizations from Ireland, Belgium, and Spain, aiming to support youth workers in developing skills and competences needed to engage youngsters (14–17) with fewer opportunities (FO) in rural areas, including migrants, Ukrainian refugees, and asylum seekers.

The goal is to foster active citizenship by connecting them with local decision-makers through non-formal youth-entered seminars and workshops to exchange needs-based practice.

SWELL – Self-directed learning for Wellbeing of Educators and Lifelong Learners

Duration: December 2025 – November 2028

Coordinator: Frederick University

The SWELL Academy is the first Teacher Academy partnership designed by QUEST and gathering 11 partners from Europe: 5 Universities, 2 practices schools and 2 education NGOs. Moreover, the partnership is supported by 15 associated partners from 10 different countries that will support the widespread of the practices developed and accelerate Educational policy-reforms at the national level.



SWELL seeks to empower both pre-service and in-service teachers with the tools to take ownership of their wellbeing and that of their students, by promoting competencies grounded in Self-Directed Learning (SDL) approaches to strengthen motivation, inclusion, participation and a sense of belonging among school communities.

The SWELL teacher academy will engage 4 QUEST members: EUDEC, CANALE SCUOLA, Vilnosvita, Lejutajate Kulakool and KALVI.

The projects offers key opportunities to advance innovative practices, through practice-based research, and connect educational institutions in various sectors.

YPARC – Youth Participatory Action Research for Change

Duration: December 2025 – November 2027

Coordinator: QUEST

Youth-Led Participatory Action Research for Change (YPARC) is a project aimed at empowering young people in 6 countries to bring forward their perspectives on challenges that concern them through Youth-led Participatory Action research, proposing solutions, action plans, and recommendations!

YPARC sees young people as experts in their fields, and will aim to support them in developing key competences to research and advocate for their rights, in their local communities and beyond, participating in shaping policy-making at the national and European level.

The project stems from the shared needs of strengthening the capabilities of young people to engage and participate in democratic processes, by fostering innovative approaches and learning processes.

YPARC involves 3 members from QUEST network: Innovatyvi Karta, Association for You, and Vilnosvita.



07

Activities

Internal Activities

Trainings Attended

Trainings Delivered

Events Attended

Speakers in events

Events Organised



INTERNAL ACTIVITIES

SPICE (Strategic Political Information and Critical Education) Committees:

The team has carried formal and informal conversations, especially on the topics of social justice and education, leading to the refining of QUEST position in relation to key social and environmental issues. A **Social Justice Statement** and a **Scope and Positionality Document** were drafted and validated by the team to guide our work.



Volunteers & Interns Onboarding

In April and May 2025 we welcomed Fabiana Grasso and Rachna Thim, our new ESC Volunteers, and Malena Laguna, an Erasmus+ trainee from the University of Finland. We organised Ice-Breaking activities and an outdoor gathering to share tips on the life in Brussels and get to know each other better. During the week, each circle presented its goals and core activities for the remainder of the year, and the new team members had the opportunity to familiarise with QUEST work and formulate their learning objectives with their supervisors.



Team Feedbacks and Circle Feedbacks

In April, QUEST took time to re-evaluate and assess the Goals of this year's workplan. The whole team sat in Feedback sessions, where we shared the qualities of each team member, and formulated constructive feedback and requests to improve our working relationships and towards more participatory and efficient procedures. The exercise was repeated 6 months after, in October, this time inside each Circle.



Mid-Term assessment of our tools, procedures, and (sociocratic) governance

In May, QUEST assessed the tools and procedures we have available and each team member shared its perspective on the effectiveness and degree of implementation of these instruments as well as how they could be improved. We set milestones to reach through the second term of the year, and elaborated action-plans to implement them!



TRAININGS ATTENDED

★ January

- **E-mpACT: Youth for Inclusive e-ducation Event** (IFM-SEI)
- **Erasmus+ Partner Meeting** in Koper, Slovenia (PiNA)



★ March

- 24+ hours training on **Anti-Racism for White Educators** and individuals in any role in education or work with youth, taken by QUEST Policy Officer (IDEA)

IDEA



★ May

- 2-day Training on **EU Advocacy** for QUEST Policy team (EU-CHANGER)



★ June

- Training on youth advocacy to uphold human rights and the rule of law (Council of Europe, Strasbourg)
- Workshop **"To engage or not to engage with the far-right"** (The Good Lobby & Alliance for Investing in Children)

★ September

Advocacy & Communication Training (EUCHANGER)



★ December

ECHOES Youth Voices for Climate Action in Europe (CERA Europe)



TRAININGS DELIVERED

★ March

Workshop on **Restorative Justice** led by Sifaan Zavahir and Dileepa Manawadu



★ July

Invited to speak at the **Decolonise Youth Advocacy Training** organised by our member ICYE



★ May

3-day **training for youth workers**, hosted by PiNA, where QUEST Policy Assistant presented YPAR as an youth-led advocacy tool

EVENTS ATTENDED

1

JANUARY 2025

Breaking the Silence: Uniting Efforts
to Address the Sexual Exploitation
of Minors (KMOP)

2

FEBRUARY 2025

E+ Coalition: The Future of Erasmus
(LLLP & European Youth Forum)

3

MARCH 2025

Anti-Racism and Diversity Week at
the European Parliament (ENAR)

EU-Social Forum 2025

4

APRIL 2025

**Shaping Tomorrow: Advancing
children's right to a safe and
sustainable future** (ChildFund Alliance)



EVENTS ATTENDED

5

MAY 2025

Ali Meghi at the University of Ghent
**Workshop on Decolonizing higher
education in Europe**

6

JUNE 2025

High-Level Conference "Supporting
mental health of children - the role of
schools and teachers" (European
Parliament, co-organised by Ewa
Kopacz (Vice-President, the European
Parliament Coordinator on Children's
Rights), Adam Jarubas (Chair of the
Committee on Public Health), and
Bogdan Zdrojewski (Vice-Chair of the
Committee on Culture and Education).

7

SEPTEMBER 2025

High-Level Conference "**Rising
Voices: Children Lead on Climate**" at
EU Parliament (Save the Children and
MEP Corrado)

8

DECEMBER 2025

**International Symposium on the
Future of the Right to Education:
Renewing Global Commitments and
Charting Future Directions** (UNESCO)

LLLP Week, 3 members of the QUEST
team attended the following sessions :
"Equity and Inclusion in Education",
"Holistic Approaches to support
learners and their Mental Health",
"Planting seeds of change: Green
education as a path to resilience",
"Inclusive citizenship education: The role
of teacher education", and "From
International Graduates to European
Professionals"



EVENTS IN WHICH WE PARTICIPATED AS SPEAKERS

February

Final conference of the Democratic Education in Schools (DESC) project, presenting its journey and research results

January

Creating Bridges (28th of January) - Learning Planet Event

March

Membership Info Session to learn everything about QUEST network and its membership

May

GoTalk- International Event - QUEST presented to students, teachers and principals participatory learning models that could be applied at school, departing from stimulating the inner motivation of students, to favouring engaging learning environments.

4 VOICES Event in May 2025: We presented DECUS project at the 4 Voices Kick-Off event in May 2025, where we tackled the role of narration in education, and in particular in the history of women.

June

Speeddating Event - Find your Partner for Erasmus+ Project

July

Speeddating Event - Find your Partner for Erasmus+ Project



GREAT CONVERSATIONS.
INSPIRING IDEAS AND
FUTURE COLLABS AHEAD ✨

EVENTS IN WHICH WE PARTICIPATED AS SPEAKERS

November

World Children's Day Event : A dialogue between children (including QUEST's YAB member Sampo) and EU decision-makers, including Commissioner Micallef (co-organised by QUEST with Eurochild and SOS Children Villages)

A SCUOLA D'EUROPA - Giovani cittadini tra Bruxelles e l'Unione Europea. QUEST met with two secondary schools in France and Italy, presented the role of an European NGO and facilitated an activity assessing Students participation and Inclusion in decision-making in their schools, at the Umbria Region Office.

October

UN Social Forum 2025 under the topic "The contribution of education to the respect, promotion, protection and fulfilment of all human rights for all."

COP30 Youth Dialogue with Commissioner Hoekstra, asking the EU to implement the Universal NDC Youth Clause and presenting our policy recommendations to tackle eco-anxieties in youth, including the recognition of the role of education and youth participation.

December

LLL WEEK : In between times: intermediaries of belonging and democracy. QUEST's Project Manager delivered



EVENTS ORGANISED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF ERASMUS+ PROJECTS

February

Final conference of the Democratic Education in Schools (DESC) project, gathering 31 people from the educational sector, among which teachers and students.



April

Volcanos as Teachers (VOLT) project observations in Kos, Greece



May

As part of the **You-Care** project QUEST, partners, and 32 young people met in Lithuania for a **youth exchange focused on eco-anxieties**, youth participation and environmental action



Youth going back to nature (YGBN) - hybrid Conference on Outdoors Environmentally Sustainable Activities for Young people, gathering over 80 participants, between young people, youth workers and educational practitioners.



Volcanos as Teachers (VOLT) project observations in Iceland

Youth Democratic Experience (YOUDEX) Training in Berlin with 15 young people to learn how to use digital tools to do storytelling.



June

Youth going back to nature (YGBN) Outdoors Festival in Bulgaria, connecting with over 50 youth practitioners, educators and outdoors and sustainability experts

EVENTS ORGANISED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF ERASMUS+ PROJECTS

September

4 days **Online training for teachers on Decolonizing Curriculum in Secondary Schools**

Volcanos as Teachers (VOLT) project observations in Italy

October

In-person training for teachers on Decolonizing Curriculum in Secondary Schools in Montebelluna, Italy gathering 15 teachers from Italy, Belgium and Greece.

November

RE-imagining Gender in Education in Nature (REGEN) Project Final Online Conference - What did we learn and how can we put it in practice? (34 participants, including 5 speakers, forest educators and parents)

Policy Meetings as part of the YouCare Final Conference, with over 30 young people meeting with MEP Nela Riehl and the head of Cabinet of Commissioner Roxana Mînzatu, Alina Ujupan.



EVENTS ORGANISED

IDEC@EUDEC – A Culture of Dialogue – August 2025



One of the flagship events of this year was the co-organisation of IDEC@EUDEC 2025! This conference brought together 379 participants from around the world, including children, young people, educators, researchers, parents, and activists, to celebrate rights-based, democratic education and to explore how education can recognize students as active learning agents and holders of knowledge. The conference featured a range of engaging panels, including 'Decolonising Curriculum at Our Democratic School', 'Another Way is Possible: How to Be a Democratic Teacher in a State School', and 'The 20%

Project: Mainstreaming Democratic Education'. Moreover, the academic Panel, moderated by QUEST Coordinator, Martina Paone, gathered international scholars to discuss both current research on self-directed and participatory education and practical approaches to applying democratic principles in teaching, curriculum design, and institutional culture.

A detailed [report](#) of the conference is available in the annexes!

From Eco-Anxieties to Action – Youth-led Research for Change – October 2025

We hosted in Brussels a youth-led event where 35 young participants from 4 EU countries presented their research and policy recommendations on eco-anxieties directly to MEPs and Commission representatives. It highlighted the

emotional impacts of the ecological crisis, and through keynote speeches, artistic expressions, and a panel discussion, proposed key recommendations including integrating youth into decision-making, reforming education to address ecological wellbeing, and ensuring strong mitigation actions are undertaken and strengthened.



08

Publications

QUEST Publications

QUEST Publications for Erasmus+ Projects



QUEST PUBLICATIONS



Inquiry Based Learning – A Student-Centered Pathway to Knowledge

Imagine entering a 21st-century classroom characterized by engagement and curiosity. Welcome to Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL), an educational approach that redefines the learning experience as a collaborative exploration.



Decolonizing Education: What Does It Mean to Decolonize the Curriculum?

The ongoing influence of what many scholars call coloniality: the lasting impact of colonial ways of thinking and organizing the world (Quijano, 2007). And one of the places where this shows up most clearly is in school curricula



Statement on World Day of Social Justice 2025



Nonviolent Communication Guidelines for Teachers

Nonviolent Communication (NVC), developed by Marshall B. Rosenberg, is a communication approach grounded in empathy, clarity, and mutual respect. Its purpose is to help individuals connect with themselves and others in ways that reduce conflict, increase cooperation, and foster emotional safety.



Guidelines for Teachers in Democratic Education

In keeping with the principles of lifelong learning and the need for continuous professional growth in an ever-changing world, QUEST presents its guidelines for teachers working in democratic schools.



IDEC@EUDEC Report

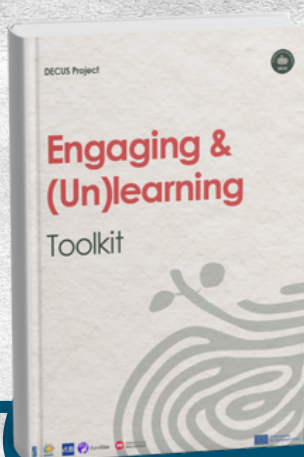
In August 2025, from 1 to 7 August, the European and International Conferences of the Democratic Education Communities (IDEC) converged in Belgium under the banner IDEC@EUDEC 2025. The venue was De Kluis, a youth residence in the forested area of Meerdaalwoud, in Sint-Joris-Weert, near Leuven. This marked the first time either of the two conferences has been hosted in Belgium.



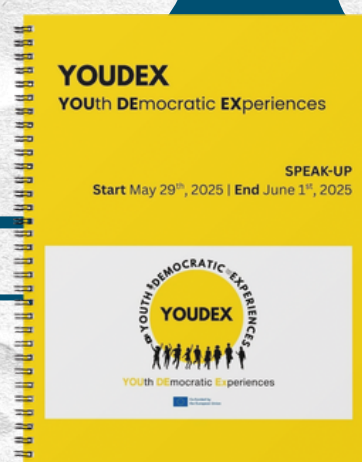
Towards Participatory Education

Without meaningful participation, schools risk becoming environments of passive compliance rather than spaces of active engagement and growth.

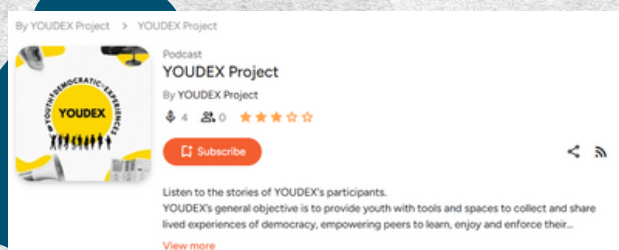
QUEST PUBLICATIONS FOR ERASMUS+ PROJECTS



“Engaging & (Un)learning” → As part of DECUS project, a toolkit to spark deeper, context-sensitive educational transformations.



Youdex Toolkit: collection of resources for digital storytelling. Structured in three modules, it offers ethical reflection, storytelling techniques, and practical instructions for tools like Canva, CapCut, Audacity and more.



The YOUDEX Podcast Series showcases youth-led stories of democracy collected throughout the project. Each episode shares personal experiences, reflections, and creative perspectives from participants across Europe.

"Nothing about the planet without youth": Recommendations for reclaiming our right to environ(mental) health" → YouCare Project Policy Recommendations



"Exploring Gender Dynamics in Forest School Kindergartens" → REGEN Project Research Report



"VOLT Art Catalog" → A collection of pieces produced by children during the VOLcanoes as Teachers Project



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