

Collaborative Learning Communities for Redesigning Primary Education Towards Innovative & Sustainable Learning Environments (ISLE)

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Abstract

The ISLE project addresses the urgent need to transform primary education systems across Europe by rethinking learning environments through innovation and sustainability. Grounded in extensive needs analysis and aligned with EU policy priorities on inclusion, diversity, and the green transition, ISLE aims to establish high-quality, equitable, and inclusive learning systems.

Led by a diverse consortium from seven EU countries, ISLE brings together providers of initial teacher education (ITE) and continuing professional development (CPD), policymakers, school leaders, and researchers. The project unfolds in three interconnected phases: (1) mapping national and international policies and identifying systemic needs and challenges; (2) implementing a school-wide professional development programme that empowers in-service and pre-service teachers and headteachers to co-design and utilize innovative sustainable learning environments (ISLEs); and (3) developing evidence-based policy recommendations to guide future educational reforms and investments.

The project blends research-based design with practical implementation, supporting more than 500 teachers and reaching over 6,000 primary students. A strong focus is placed on professional collaboration, co-teaching, and mobility schemes to foster shared learning. The ISLE framework prioritizes flexible, eco-conscious, inclusive learning spaces that promote student wellbeing and 21st-century competencies.

ISLE's long-term ambition is to reshape how school infrastructure investments and educational practices converge, creating systems that are pedagogically effective, environmentally sustainable, and socially inclusive. By building international networks and communities of practice, ISLE paves the way for systemic change and the upscaling of innovative models in primary education across Europe.