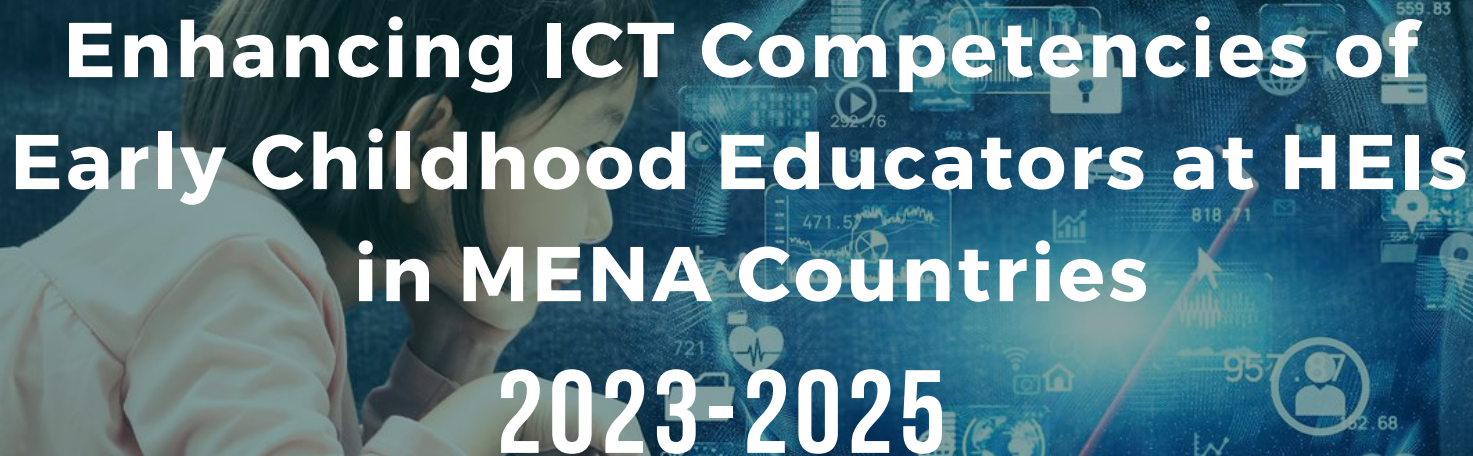


NEWSLETTER

4th ISSUE - DECEMBER 31, 2024

A young girl with dark hair is looking at a laptop screen. The screen and the background are overlaid with various digital icons and data visualizations, including bar charts, line graphs, and icons representing technology and education.

Enhancing ICT Competencies of Early Childhood Educators at HEIs in MENA Countries 2023-2025

PROJECT ON THE GROUND

After a year and a half of dedicated planning and curriculum development, the time has come to see these efforts come to life. The past six months have been filled with on-the-ground activities, from EU academic visits to in-house training sessions for local university communities.

Now, the updated courses are being delivered to students in the first semester of 2024-2025, with the teaching staff fully equipped to deliver them effectively.

This issue will showcase the progress made so far, highlighting the milestones achieved and the recent events that have contributed to these accomplishments.



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Diverse Generation



PROJECT PROGRESS

NAVIGATING THE PATH TO ACHIEVEMENTS



CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION HAS STARTED

The updated curricula, including both new and revised courses, are currently being implemented in the first semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. Official accreditation for these courses has been completed, and partners have provided details on student enrollment, along with study plans and implementation reports.



CAPACITY BUILDING INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL

Three workshops have already been completed at EU partner universities in Porto, Padova, and Nicosia, with the next one scheduled to take place in Bucharest. Additionally, in-house workshops are being held to transfer knowledge and skills to the academic communities of MENA universities, ensuring broad dissemination of expertise.



ICT LABS ARE NOW OPENED

The ICT labs are now fully operational. Each partner has successfully purchased signs, opened their ICT labs, installed equipment, and developed an action plan to ensure ongoing lab operations and activities.



E-LEARNING PLATFORM UNDER CONSTRUCTION

The newly constructed E-learning platform is designed to host a wide range of recourses, including EU training materials (TOT), updated courses of each university, and new mutual ICT competences E-courses. User accounts have been created for teachers, enabling them to edit and upload materials, while students accounts are currently being created.

ACADEMICS WORKSHOPS

ADVANCING ICT INTEGRATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The Academics Workshops allowed MENA professors to benefit from the practical applications and real-world experiences of EU universities. These workshops facilitated an exchange of knowledge, where educators gained valuable insights into how European institutions effectively integrate ICT tools into early childhood curricula, providing them with hands-on approaches to enhance their teaching methods and promote international collaboration.



ENHANCED ICT SKILLS FOR EDUCATION: TECHNOLOGIES FOR ACTIVE LEARNING

PORTO, PORTUGAL



July 8-12, 2024



Polytechnic of Porto



The workshop equipped educators with practical tools to integrate emerging technologies into active learning. Over five days, participants explored ICT tools, gamification strategies, serious games, Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR), and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education. They not only learned how to design digital classrooms and gamified lesson plans but also saw and experienced firsthand how these technologies can be applied in educational settings to enhance engagement and learning.



DEVELOPING EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULA INCLUDING ICTS

PADOVA, ITALY



September 23-29, 2024



University of Padova



The workshop aimed to equip educators with the skills to integrate ICT into primary education. Over five days, participants explored personalized learning, social networks, robots in education, and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Educators also visited local schools to observe real-world applications of these strategies, deepening their understanding of how to implement these approaches in the classroom.



ICT-ENABLED EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHING, LEARNING AND CURRICULA

NICOSIA, CYPRUS



November 16-20, 2024



Fredrick University



The workshop aimed to equip educators with the skills to integrate ICT tools into early childhood education, focusing on sustainability. The workshop covered a variety of topics such as the role of ICTs in promoting sustainable behaviors, engaging families in sustainability education, and using digital tools to enhance teaching practices. tools.

Participants explored tools like digital storytelling, educational games, and robotics, applying them to lesson plans designed around sustainability themes from the SDGs. They also worked on developing community-based sustainability projects and participated in collaborative activities to evaluate and select ICT tools.



FROM EU EXPERTISE TO LOCAL IMPACT: IN-HOUSE WORKSHOPS FOR EDUCATORS



The in-house training workshops aim to empower teaching staff, who were trained at EU universities, to share their newly acquired knowledge and skills with their colleagues and communities at their home universities. These workshops feature materials developed by the trained staff and are supported by the EU partners.

Following a "train the trainer" model, each participant who attended the EU training will go on to train 10 additional teachers, amplifying the reach and impact of the workshops. This approach ensures widespread knowledge transfer, benefiting a larger group of educators.

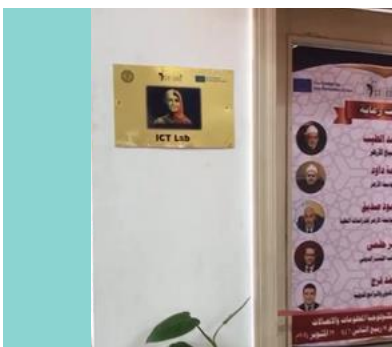


INNOVATIVE LEARNING SPACES: THE OPENING OF NEW ICT LABS



The newly opened ICT laboratories at each partner university are already making a significant impact on how technology is integrated into teaching and learning. These labs were established with a clear vision: to support the development and implementation of courses that integrate ICT, ensuring both teachers and students are well-prepared for the challenges of modern education.

The labs are designed to support a range of activities, including conducting teacher training workshops to enhance educators' professional development, utilizing advanced equipment to create innovative ICT-enabled teaching methodologies, and producing appropriate course and training materials, including digital student-driven lesson plans for early childhood education.



Ultimately, the goal of the ICT labs is to create a lasting legacy. By formulating a policy and strategy for sustaining and utilizing these ICT labs beyond the project's funding period, the initiative aims to ensure that ICT remains a core component of the teaching and learning process for years to come.

TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

EMPOWERING EDUCATORS FOR A DIVERSE GENERATION



In the journey towards an inclusive society, the future begins when we embrace every child for who they truly are. Our project has focused on preparing future teachers to offer rich and accessible learning experiences to all children, particularly those with special needs and learning difficulties.

The project has developed two key courses: “ICT for Children with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities” and “Special Needs Psychology”. Both courses aim to equip educators with the knowledge and tools to support children with disabilities or exceptional intellectual abilities, with a focus on early childhood education. The first course emphasizes Assistive Technology (AT) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL), while the second provides strategies for psychological support and intervention. Both courses also highlight the importance of family collaboration to ensure comprehensive care and development.

In addition, Al-Azhar University hosted an event alongside the In-House training workshops, aimed at providing future educators with a deeper understanding of the realities faced by children with special needs in the community. It featured sign language interpretation, shared inspiring stories from individuals with special needs, and showcased their handmade crafts. University students also presented tech projects focused on improving the lives of children with special needs. Practical Montessori tools for teaching were introduced, giving educators fresh ideas and resources to better support their students.

Through these curricula and events, we are shaping a future where every child, regardless of ability, receives the education and care they deserve, and thrives in an inclusive community.

UPCOMING

Fourth Academics
Workshop



Bucharest, Romania

UPCOMING

First Students Training



Padova, Italy

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