



EMSTEP

3rd Newsletter

Issue No. 3 | August 2025 - January 2026

Empowering Classrooms in Florence. A collaborative Milestone in Florence.

The EMstep project reached a significant milestone in this past September with the successful hosting of Workshop 1 and the Third Transnational Meeting (TPM3) in Florence, Italy. Held from Sep 22 to Sep 26, 2025, at the innovative Le Murate complex, the event brought together 49 participants, including 36 teachers and managers and 13 project mentors from Turkey, Bulgaria, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia, and Norway. Organized by Me We - Istituto di ricerca innovativa, this gathering was designed to move beyond theory into the practical application of social inclusion tools.



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

KA220 SCH - Cooperation partnerships in School Education
Empowering Middle School Teachers for Social Inclusion through Observation-based Professional Development.
2023-2-TR01-KA220-SCH-000170568

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Mastering Classroom Observations

The core of the Florence training focused on the Classroom Observation Toolkit, a suite of structured templates designed to monitor key competencies like student engagement and inclusivity. Participants engaged in high-stakes classroom simulations led by experts like Knut Ove Æsøy from OsloMet and Öner Uslu from Ege University. These sessions were not mere lectures; 18 students and 18 observers participated in real-time simulations where observers completed detailed forms to interpret teaching techniques and classroom behaviors.

Designing for Inclusion: The BEST Framework

Beyond observation, the workshop empowered teachers to become designers of inclusive learning. Using the BEST framework, participants worked in multi-national teams to create 20-minute inclusive activities. These tasks required addressing fictional but realistic student profiles—such as refugee students or those with learning difficulties—ensuring every child has a seat at the table of learning.





Partners in Florence, Italy

At a glance

AT A GLANCE: The Numbers Behind the Mission

- Total Participants: 49 dedicated professionals from 6 European countries.
- Target Impact: The project aims to train 36 leadership staff and 54 teachers, eventually reaching 2,880 students through improved practices.
- Observation Goals: A staggering 360 peer observations are planned to ensure a data-driven approach to social inclusion.
- Key Toolkit Elements: Interaction maps, teacher questioning analysis, and classroom management forms.
- Florence Venue: The historic Le Murate: Piazza della Madonna della Neve.

Key Decision Point: Each school leadership team is now tasked with conducting local workshops to train their own staff using the insights gained in Florence.

4th Partnership

Meeting in Porto.

The EMStep partnership recently gathered in Porto to review project milestones and plan the next phases of teacher empowerment and social inclusion:

- **DLP Pilot Success:** Evaluated the Digital Learning Platform pilot study. The 6 core modules received high praise from European teachers, paving the way for final technical and visual refinements.
- **360 Peer Observations:** Partners are actively deploying newly developed classroom observation tools (checklists, diagrams, and narratives) across 18 schools in 6 countries.
- **Handbook Underway:** Framework finalized for the *Handbook of Professional Learning*, which will compile 54 school-based activities to support vulnerable pupils.
- **Dissemination Boost:** Communication KPIs are on track across all channels, expanding project visibility and local media outreach.
- **Looking to Izmir 2026:** Preparations have officially begun for the *International Conference on Digital Transformation in Education* in Türkiye.



WHAT'S NEXT

As the EMStep project enters its final phase, the partnership continues to strengthen its commitment to fostering inclusive and innovative educational practices across Europe. Over the past months, educators, researchers, and institutional partners have worked collaboratively to evaluate the impact of peer learning, classroom observation, and digital transformation on supporting vulnerable students in diverse learning environments.

This fourth newsletter will highlight the major milestones to be achieved between April and July 2026, including the successful 5th Transnational Project Meeting in Maribor, Slovenia, the completion of extensive peer observation activities, and preparations for the upcoming International Conference on Digital Transformation in Education (DITEC26) in İzmir, Türkiye.

Through evidence-based research, intercultural collaboration, and shared professional learning, EMStep continues to contribute meaningful insights and practical tools that empower teachers and promote social inclusion in education systems across Europe.



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Follow the EMSTEP journey as we
continue working to make
classrooms more inclusive,
collaborative, and effective across
Europe.

Empowering teachers. Enabling
inclusion. Inspiring change.



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