

ELNE ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024



EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN PRACTICE



Tuesday, 23rd of April 2024 **Brussels, Belgium**

REPORT



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THE ELNE ANNUAL CONFERENCE: EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN PRACTICE

On Tuesday, April 23rd 2024, the ELNE hosted its first ever Annual Conference to commemorate the first year of the Network. Around 100 education stakeholders from all over Europe got together to celebrate the success of the ELNE so far and, most importantly, to put their minds together as they co-designed its future. Through a series of inspiring interventions and interactive activities, participants exchanged their extensive knowledge and ideas regarding collaborative leadership, the creation of learning communities and the relationship between educational practices, research and policymaking in Europe.

The Conference was characterised, above all, by its level of diversity and engagement, as all types of education stakeholders were represented: practitioners, researchers, policymakers, students, parents... all contributed to the discussions bringing their own perspective to the table.

A great representation of this diversity of stakeholders was the opening speech, which included the European Commission's Director for Youth, Education and Erasmus+ and representatives of the five key stakeholders: the employers, the teachers, the school heads, the parents and the students. They highlighted, amongst other things, the need to restore attractiveness to the teaching profession, to ensure the well-being of educators and to increase stakeholder engagement and cooperation.

As the Network focuses on promoting collaborative leadership, this was naturally a central topic of the Conference, starting with its definition. Through an interactive activity, participants were able to give their input about what they understood as collaborative school leadership. With all the submitted answers, the ELNE is currently working on its own "collective definition of collaborative school leadership". Some key words collected were transparency, trust and collaborative decision-making. Following this activity, two practitioners from Belgium and Finland shared their own leadership success stories.

Another highlight of the Conference was the policymakers' panel, where representatives from the OECD, the European Commission and the Flemish Department for Education and Training addressed the topics of evidence-informed policymaking and collaborative leadership. One of the main takeaways of this panel, also thanks to the questions and input from the audience, was that collaborative leadership is the best way to approach education and it is gaining relevance in the community, but there is still work to do in order to strengthen collaboration and quality of education. Some areas that Europe should focus on in this regard are research literacy, peer-learning, instructional leadership and investment in long-term policy goals.

Following the panel, participants were asked to share their own perspectives on the role of the ELNE in supporting policymaking. These contributions will be taken into account by the ELNE when making its policy recommendations. For participants, the main topics that educational policy should address are, amongst others, resilience, critical thinking and inclusion.

The Conference also provided an opportunity to reflect on the work done so far by the Network and to lay the foundation for its future. When designing the next steps, the ELNE will be able to benefit from the valuable feedback and suggestions gathered from participants.

All in all, the ELNE Annual Conference 2024 can be seen as a clear example of the importance of using collaborative leadership in order to solve the challenges that we are faced with in the education and training sector. In line with the ELNE's mission, it provided a space for all stakeholders to share their unique insights and work together to improve the quality of education in Europe.



HIGHLIGHTS

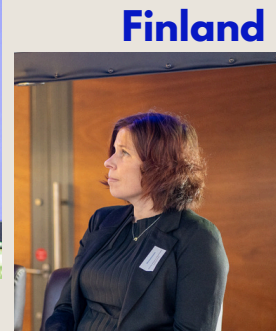


Starting strong with some inspiring words

Representatives of the European Commission and the ELNE Leadership kicked-off the Conference.



Belgium



Finland

Leading by example

A teacher from Finland and a school head from Belgium inspired us with their leadership practices.

Want to learn more? Click on their pictures to be redirected to their schools' websites.

The ELNE's social media:



@elnenetwork



@elnenetwork



ELNENetwork



Educational Leadership Network Europe



Collaborative leadership: in search of a definition

With the input gathered from participants in this activity, the ELNE will develop a "collective definition of collaborative school leadership"



HIGHLIGHTS



The ELNE toolbox

Participants were asked to find solutions to case scenarios using a “toolbox” inspired by real practices collected by the ELNE.

Give it a try at home! Click on the images to find the Toolbox materials.



Click on the image to read the ELNE Journal!



The symbiosis between research and practice

We enjoyed a lively exchange of ideas between the ELNE Research Committee, the practitioners’ representative and the audience.



The policy lab

Participants’ answers will be used as a basis for the ELNE’s policy recommendations, which will be published this year.

Click here to see more pictures and videos from the ELNE Conference!



The policymakers’ panel

Representatives of the OECD, the Flemish Department for Education and Training and the European Commission addressed the topics of collaborative leadership and evidence-informed policymaking in education.

GET INVOLVED IN THE ELNE

The ELNE calls for proposals

Each year the ELNE will launch a set of calls for proposals in search of the most inspiring practices and research being carried out across Europe, focusing on success stories.

Developed by the Research Committee, these calls are centred around collaborative leadership as a means and as an ultimate goal, addressing different challenges in education.

The calls will be launched in September 2024 on the new ELNE website.

Want to participate?



When the calls are launched, go to the ELNE website



Read the calls for inspiring showcases and research



Select and submit your showcase or research summary for the chance to be featured in the EELW, ELNE Journals and website

The EELW

In 2024...

On the week of the 12th to the 16th of February 2024, the first-ever European Educational Leadership Week (EELW) was held under the theme of Transforming Schools into Learning Communities.

In 2025...

We asked

'What topics would you like to see at the EELW 2025?'
and you said...



The ELNE Journal

The ELNE Journal will be published three times a year and will include contributions from the ELNE network and from practitioners and researchers who participated in the calls.

The ELNE Website

The ELNE Website will become a repository for all ELNE-related content including the EELW webinars, the Journals and all other practices and research collected by the Network.



COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP TOKENS



Prior to the Conference, we asked participants to bring an item that represented collaborative leadership for them. During the event, we got to hear about some of these tokens...



Water bottle from the Scouts



Scarf



Embroidered school crest



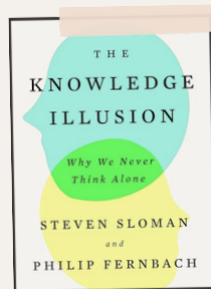
Water bottle with a map of the world



Mayflower pin



A song



A book by one of our participants

Want to tell us about your token? Share a picture or video of it on social media under #CollaborativeLeadershipToken and we will repost it.

APPENDIX

Conference Agenda

08:45 - 09:15

Welcome to the ELNE Annual Conference 2024

SPEAKERS

Sophia Eriksson-Waterschoot (Director, Youth, Education and Erasmus+, European Commission) -
Daniel Wisniewski (EFEE) - Agnes Roman (ETUCE) - Myrthe Stienstra (ESHA) -
Arja Krauchenberg (EPA) - Gilda Isernia (OBESSU)

DESCRIPTION

The ELNE Conference will kick off with remarks from the **European Commission** and the **ELNE Lead Partners**, who will provide a brief introduction to the ELNE's work and goals through the lens of the different education stakeholders they represent.

09:15 - 09:45

Defining collaborative school leadership

SPEAKER

Hannah Grainger Clemson (University of Edinburgh)

DESCRIPTION

This interactive activity aims to delve into the definition of collaborative school leadership. Participants will be asked to share what their own understanding of collaborative school leadership is. With the results of this activity and the subsequent discussion on the responses, the ELNE will create a **collective definition of collaborative school leadership**.

09:45 - 10:15

Collaborative school leadership: the ELNE as a collector of success stories

SPEAKERS

Ulla Saastamoinen (University of Eastern Finland) - Jan Peeters (Openluchtschool Sint-Ludgardis Brasschaat) -
Moderated by: Myrthe Stienstra (ESHA)

DESCRIPTION

In this section, we will present specific **cases of effective collaborative leadership**. These success stories show how a school's situation improved through the implementation of a specific practice, method, tool...
They are examples of real solutions to real problems in education.

10:15 - 10:50

Coffee Break

10:50 - 11:20

The European Educational Leadership Week

SPEAKER

Silvia Pesini (EFEE)

DESCRIPTION

This section will include highlights of the **EELW 2024**, information about the **EELW 2025** and an **interactive activity** in which participants will be asked to give their input on what they would like to see in the EELW 2025.

11:20 - 11:45

The symbiosis between research and practice

SPEAKERS

Mikael Risku (JYU) - Maria Zenios (UCLan Cyprus) -
Miquel Àngel Essomba (UAB) - Fergal McCarthy (ACSS)

DESCRIPTION

The **ELNE Research Committee** will explain how their work has supported the ELNE's mission of promoting **practice- and evidence-informed policymaking**.

Through an **open conversation between the Research Committee and a practitioner**, this activity will aim to address ways to close the gap between educational research and practice.

11:50 - 12:30

Collaborative Leadership Toolbox: problem-solving scenarios

SPEAKER

Valentina Lacasa (EFEE)

DESCRIPTION

This problem-solving activity will provide participants with **hypothetical scenarios** in which different characters are faced with recurrent problems in education. Parallel to this, participants will also be provided with a **set of "tools"** inspired by **real practices** collected by the ELNE. Participants will work collectively to find the best solution to each problem using these tools.

12:30 - 14:00

Lunch Break

14:00 - 14:25

Collaborative Leadership Suitcase

SPEAKER

Silvia Pesini (EFEE)

DESCRIPTION

Prior to the Conference, participants will be asked to bring to Brussels an item that represents collaboration and/or leadership for them. In this activity, they will be asked to put this token in a suitcase and to share their **personal examples** of **collaborative leadership**.

14:25 - 15:05

The ELNE's role in supporting evidence-informed policymaking

SPEAKERS

Jeroen Backs (Department for Education and Training of the Flemish Community of Belgium) - Anna Pons (OECD) - Susanne Conze (European Commission) - Moderated by: Agnes Roman (ETUCE)

DESCRIPTION

In this **panel discussion**, we have gathered representatives from the **Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU**, the **European Commission** and the **OECD** to discuss the importance of **evidence-informed policymaking in education** and how the ELNE can better support policymakers in this endeavour.

15:05 - 15:20

Break

15:20 - 15:50

Policy lab: supporting evidence-informed policymaking

SPEAKER

Gilda Isernia (OBESSU)

DESCRIPTION

In this **brainstorming session**, participants will reflect on the topics touched upon in the previous panel discussion regarding the role of the ELNE in supporting evidence-informed policymaking. Using an interactive tool, participants will be able to share their thoughts on **challenges and opportunities for EU educational policy** and how to strengthen the relationship between researchers, practitioners and policymakers.

15:50 - 16:25

The ELNE 2024/2025

SPEAKERS

Silvia Pesini (EFEE)

DESCRIPTION

As the Conference comes to a close, representatives from the ELNE Steering Group and coordination team will give a brief **overview** on what to expect for the **next year** (2024/25) of the ELNE. Participants will then be asked to deposit their **main takeaways** from the Conference into a mailbox as the event wraps up.

16:25 - 16:30

Closing words

SPEAKER

Daniel Wisniewski (EFEE)