



ISSUE 3 — August 2023

## ISEX 3<sup>rd</sup> newsletter

### Integral Sexual Education and Empowerment in Schools

#### ISEX has reached its end!

ISEX has reached its end after three years full of activities, educational material, teachers' trainings and mentoring sessions!

The ISEX project, funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union (2020-1-HU01-KA201-078722) started in November 2020, with 7 partners from 4 EU countries: Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Greece.

During the past 3 years the project's partners have worked hard to bring the issue of sexual education high on the agenda not only of educational institutions, but also of teachers and parents, in an effort to tackle stereotypes and change long-lasting mentalities. Through the creation of a rich collection of educational materials for teachers, educators and youth workers, the organisation of national and international trainings and its mentoring programme, ISEX aimed to build the capacities of teachers and school professionals on approaching the topic of sex education in a positive and comprehensive way.

Read more to find out about the project's activities in each partner country!

#### ITALY

Within the ISEX project, in the last 3 years CESIE have asked dozens of teachers and educators about their attitudes, levels of awareness and competence and challenges faced with regard to the subject of Comprehensive Sex Education. Based on what emerged, we created a program of non-formal activities and tested it within European and local formations. In this video we retrace the experience of the Mentoring Program "The Elephant in the Room", carried out in Palermo between October 2022 and March 2023. Check out CESIE's video from the mentoring programme in Italy [here!](#)



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In July 2023 CESIE published the [White Paper on Comprehensive Sex Education](#) in Italy, which aims to frame the topic in Italy, where sex education is still excluded from official school curricula. Based on the lessons learnt within the ISEX project, CESIE drafted 8 policy recommendations for policy makers to move a step forward in the promotion of sexuality and affectivity education in schools and all educational agencies.

## NETHERLANDS

As the summer holidays have finally arrived, InTouch is thrilled to announce the successful completion of the ISEX teachers mentoring program at Hyperion Lyceum in Amsterdam. Over the entire second semester of the year, from January to July 2023, we worked tirelessly to implement ISEX activities.

During this period, we collaborated closely with the teachers, enabling them to incorporate ISEX based sex-education curriculum into their SDL - 'tutoring' classes. Each class was dedicated to six different subjects that allowed teachers to address various, sometimes difficult, topics in an open and playful way. Throughout the mentoring sessions, teachers had the opportunity to seek advice, share their questions and concerns, and learn how to tailor the activities to best suit their students' needs.

This mentoring program played a vital role in providing ongoing support throughout the six-month journey. It fostered a dynamic exchange of knowledge and experiences between InTouch and the tutoring teachers, benefiting both parties. InTouch learned valuable insights from the teachers' experiences with the ISEX program and activities, while the teachers gained valuable guidance from the InTouch team on effectively teaching sex-education.

We are incredibly proud of the success of this collaboration and look forward to fostering a sustainable, long-term partnership between ISEX and Hyperion Lyceum. Together, we can continue to make a positive impact on sex education, ensuring a brighter and more informed future for the students.

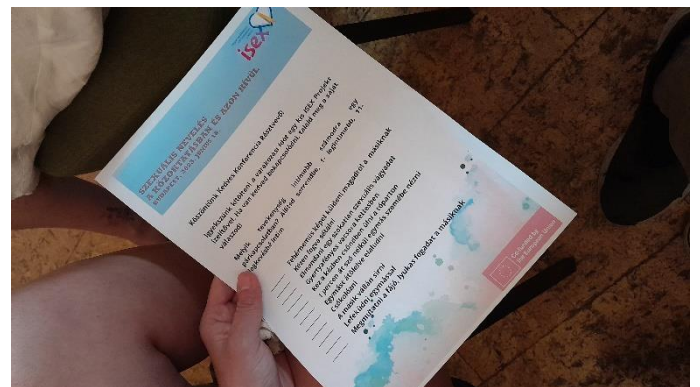
## HUNGARY

Finishing the project brings a sense of relief and accomplishment, knowing that all the hard work has paid off. However, it also carries a tinge of sadness as it marks the end of a fruitful and rewarding collaboration with ISEX team, leaving behind cherished memories and shared experiences. As we part ways, we'll cherish the valuable relationships and look forward to new beginnings on the horizon.

For the Hungarian ISEX team, the last months of the projects have been incredibly busy. We managed to finish the mentoring sessions in Hungary which has been demanding but also rewarding. From their feedback, all participants seem to have had the opportunity to grow and develop professionally.

Another great outcome is the outline of the Hungarian sex-ed training program for teachers which is now issued to have an institutional acknowledgement by the Hungarian Educational Board. This would be vital for maintaining high educational standards, providing teachers with credible and transferable sex-ed approaches for their future endeavors.

Lastly, the closing conference in Budapest on 16 June proved to be a fruitful face-to-face event to share the iSEX project's main messages. General public met enthusiast experts here. We discovered that we were facing the same challenges, which brought us closer together in understanding each other's perspectives. Through open dialogue and discussion, we agreed what truly mattered and the priorities that needed immediate attention.



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Despite the intensity, the Hungarian ISEX team feel accomplished and grateful for the valuable experiences gained during this period.

## GREECE

From May until July 2023 the teachers' mentoring programme was successfully implemented in Greece, with 6 online sessions with a group of teachers, educators and health professionals from various areas of the country. The sessions followed the topics of the ISEX curriculum and activities, with each one covering a specific topic of sex-ed: body, emotions, consent, relationships, sexual orientation and gender, and culture. Participants highlighted the need for such activities that help teachers navigate the issues related to sex-ed, either they are formally introduced as part of the school's curriculum, or as they are brought up by students in everyday instances.

ISEX activities in Greece were concluded on the 30<sup>th</sup> of August with the organisation of an online national event to present ISEX and its results to a wide audience of teachers, educators, health professionals and the general public.

## TRANSNATIONAL PROJECT MEETING & FINAL CONFERENCE IN BUDAPEST

On the 15<sup>th</sup> June ISEX partners joined together in Budapest for the projects' last face-to-face meeting. The next day ISEX's final conference also took place in Budapest.

Despite some concerns due to the current political environment in relation to a conference that addresses the topics of sexual education in school, a diverse and enthusiastic audience of teachers and educators joined us for the final event. On the one hand it was a bit sad to see that the number of professionals and activists on the field hasn't changed significantly in Hungary in the last ten years, but on the other hand it was great to hear all the accountability of participants of their active work and experience in sex ed in various fields.



Beyond sharing the project results with participants, the most important aim was to create a platform for the Hungarian professionals to get connected and share experiences. It seems to be a general challenge – not limited to Hungary – that teachers, nurses, youth workers, parents, sexual educators, work quite isolated from each other. Meanwhile there is an obvious need for sharing, for exchange and mutual support. Especially because most of sex-ed work happens in 'after hours', as volunteer work for many people being active on the field. It was sad to hear that many NGO-s operating hotlines had to stop their services while there is a need for that. When it came up how teachers can cope with sexual education in general, participants brought up their first hand, real life, good practices; *'do not put extra self-control when it's not needed'* said a participant –we should not create uncertainty where people stop daring to do anything. Sexual education is about teaching how to build healthy, happy and ethical relationships with yourself and others – this cannot be banned.



## ISEX ONLINE PLATFORM!

The ISEX project has created a rich variety of resources for teachers who want to become more familiar with and introduce sex education in their classrooms: activity sheets, educational tools, informative videos and suggested resources, all will be available through the project's online platform: <https://isex-project.eu/online-platform>

Check it out to find activities on several sex-ed topics, videos, and our 4-day training curriculum!

