

ICT4EDU

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

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Facultatea de Psihologie și Științele Educației

Manager Proiect: Lect. univ. dr. Anișoara DUMITRACHE

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Coordonator proiect: The University of Jordan (P1), Jordan

Parteneri proiect: Irbid National University - IORDANIA (P2); Mutah University - IORDANIA (P3); Al-Azhar University – EGIPT (P4); Suez Canal University – EGIPT (P5); Heliopolis University Association – EGIPT (P6); Palestine Technical University – PALESTINA (P7); Palestine Technical College - PALESTINA (P8); Al-Istiqlal University – PALESTINA (P9); Turun Yliopisto – FINLANDA (P10); Universitatea din București – ROMÂNIA (P11); Instituto Politecnico Do Porto – PORTUGALIA (P12); Universita Degli Studi Di Padova – ITALIA (P13).

*Beyond teaching history, science or languages, teachers guide our children, shaping the attitudes, skills, and values they will use in the world beyond the classroom.
(Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah).*

Early Childhood Education is considered an important foundation for life-long learning and an essential building block of a child's future success. It is the most important and crucial of all stages for the proper development of a child, whether in the emotional, behavioural, or cognitive areas. The first years of a child's life are crucial as they are of utmost importance for the child's physical, emotional and intellectual development.

In line with today's digital era, teachers need to integrate ICT into their daily teaching and replace their traditional methods with modern tools and facilities.

ICT4EDU (Enhancing ICT Competencies of Early Childhood Educators at HEIs in MENA Countries) aims to ensure that newly graduated student teachers are able to teach using ICT and to improve the digital literacy of teachers and students', especially in dealing with children with special educational needs or disabilities, as ICT plays a key role in facilitating their educational process.

The cross-national implementation of the (ICT4EDU) project is essential for defining practices and influencing policies and curricula in schools of education and the integrating ICT teacher training to meet the needs of digitally literate youth and children.

The main objective of the (ICT4EDU) project is to improve the quality of ICT competencies of early childhood teacher's educators in the (9) higher education institutions in Jordan, Palestine and Egypt in line with the advanced EU practices and thereby increase the quality of education in preschools in Jordan, Palestine and Egypt.

This wider aim will be achieved through completion of the set of specific objectives concerned with the areas where the measures should be applied:

1. To Identify the student teachers' levels of digital competence when entering teacher education and compare across institutions.
2. To develop of new teaching and learning methodologies and ICT support tools in classrooms, including e-learning Educational Resources, to be able to use technology, in designing, producing and using ICT-based instructional materials.
3. To identify, test and mainstream best practices and innovative methods of participation particularly in context of ECE digital competences.
4. To enhance professional competences and skills of teaching staff through train of trainers workshops in contemporary pedagogical approaches, methodologies and educational technologies; learn from the experiences of colleagues from other countries in Europe
5. To improve the integration and interaction of the different components of the system (children, practitioners, researchers, families, community)
6. To deliver new/updated ICT-based courses in psychology, pedagogy, methodology of teaching, and technology enhanced learning at the PC HEIs in line with the modern European strategies; as well as implementing the curricula through accreditation and enrolment of students.
7. To ensure access to the latest developments in ICT to provide physical infrastructure and technical support that will make ICT accessible and useful to students, teachers, administrators and support staff (Establishing 9 ICT labs at the school of educational sciences in P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9 universities).
8. Dissemination of the results obtained among Jordanian, Palestinian and Egyptian HIEs and stakeholders (connected to Deliverable: Dissemination report and exchange of good practices)

9. Share materials and teaching activities for teachers through online toolkit, workshops, seminars and conferences. -Reorientation of teacher education towards the aim of sustainable development by designing course no.3: "Design and Develop web-based teaching materials".

The most innovative element of this project is the approach of developing and integrating the ICT in the field of early child hood education, which is the first Tempus and Erasmus+ project proposal that deals with this field of education. Jordanian, Palestinian and Egyptian universities have exerted great efforts to include ICT in their educational courses.

In addition, training programs have been extendedly held to educate and train lecturers how to efficiently use modern technologies in teaching and learning but mostly in the engineering and applied sciences. Bearing in mind that these new trends have begun recently in Jordan, Palestine and Egypt, and are an ongoing process, there is still a need for further insights into the state of educational setting with respect to the contribution of ICT in the educational field and that's what our proposal seeks by the updated courses, ICT labs and training workshops for staff and students.

The other innovative character is introducing the concept of Education for Sustainable Development through implementation of obligatory Course no.3: *Design and Develop Web-based teaching Material*, where students can exchange design and upload interactive projects online, share and discuss their project ideas, while the instructor could make comments and monitor the development process, this technology in general can transform student's teachers from only software users to hypermedia authors

Project Site: <https://sites.ju.edu.jo/en/ICT4EDU/home.aspx>

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