

Equity in Gifted Education (EGE): A Practical Guide to the Project



Equity in Gifted
Education



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Why Equity in Gifted Education?

Across Europe, gifted students from disadvantaged, multilingual, migrant and low socioeconomic backgrounds remain significantly underrepresented in gifted education programmes (Peters, 2022; Dixon et al., 2025). Traditional identification procedures often rely on academic achievement, teacher nominations and demonstrated performance. As a result, many high-ability students whose talents are masked by language barriers, limited educational opportunities or social disadvantage remain unnoticed (Matthews & Peters, 2018; Stambaugh & Olszewski-Kubilius, 2021).

Research increasingly shows that giftedness exists across all social, cultural and linguistic groups, yet access to opportunities for talent development is not equally distributed (Plucker & Peters, 2020; Sternberg, 2023). Creating more equitable pathways for identifying and supporting gifted learners is therefore one of the major challenges facing gifted education today (Rutigliano & Quarshie, 2021; OECD, 2023).

The Erasmus+ project Equity in Gifted Education (EGE) was established to address this challenge. Rather than focusing solely on identification, EGE developed and tested a comprehensive model that combines identification, academic language development and parent participation. By bringing together researchers, teachers, school leaders and families from four European countries, the project aimed to explore how schools can create more inclusive systems for recognising and nurturing talent.



The EGE Project

The Equity in Gifted Education project is a European Erasmus+ partnership involving organisations and schools from Belgium, Ireland, Kosovo and the Netherlands. The project was developed around a central question:

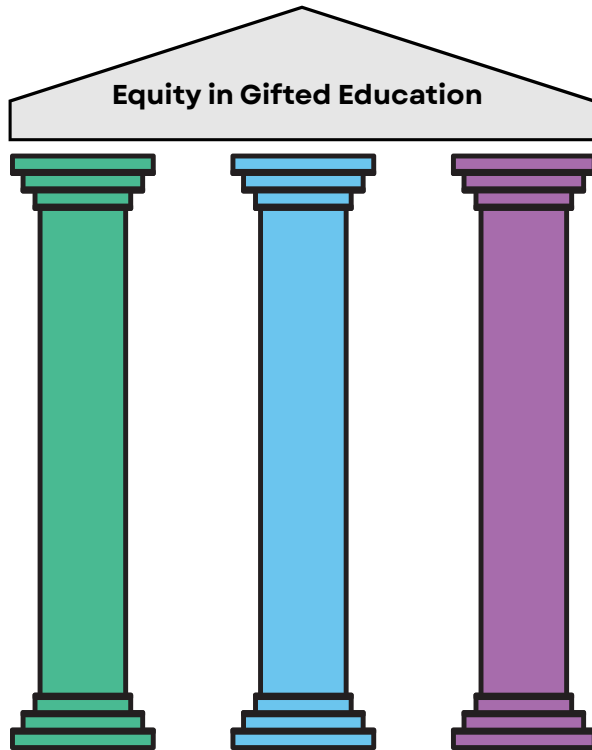
How can schools create more equitable pathways for identifying and supporting gifted learners from underrepresented groups?

To answer this question, the consortium designed, implemented and evaluated three complementary interventions across participating schools. The project combined research, professional development, classroom implementation and parent engagement, allowing partners to investigate equity in gifted education from multiple perspectives. Participating schools implemented project activities over the course of the school year while researchers and practitioners collected data, documented implementation processes and reflected on emerging outcomes. The EGE project builds on earlier Erasmus+ initiatives in gifted education, including the CEOS project (Tierens, 2021).

The Three Pillar Model

At the heart of the EGE lies the Three-Pillar Model

1. Identification of Cognitive Potential
2. Academic Language Development
3. Parent Involvement



These Three-Pillars connect schools, students and parents/guardians, aiming to alleviate the barrier of limited command of academic language faced by some students.

1. Identification of Cognitive Potential

Traditional identification procedures may overlook students whose abilities are not immediately visible through achievement or teacher nomination (Card & Giuliano, 2016; Peters et al., 2021). EGE therefore introduced broader approaches to identifying cognitive potential through universal screening and evidence-informed identification practices.

2. Academic Language Development

Academic language plays a crucial role in students' ability to demonstrate what they know and can do. Research shows that mastery of academic language strongly influences educational achievement and access to advanced learning opportunities (Cummins, 1999; Snow, 2010; Hamilton et al., 2020). The ALP was developed to strengthen academic vocabulary and language skills that support participation in challenging educational environments and help students express their cognitive abilities more effectively.

3. Parent Involvement

Families play a key role in talent development. Research consistently demonstrates positive relationships between parental involvement, educational achievement and student wellbeing (Epstein, 2011; Harris & Goodall, 2008; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). The PPP focused on strengthening collaboration between schools and parents, empowering families to recognise and support the talents of their children and creating stronger partnerships between home and school.

Project Impact

Although the final analyses are still ongoing, the project has already generated significant impact across participating schools and countries.

Schools reported increased awareness of equity issues in gifted education and gained practical tools for identifying and supporting students whose talents might otherwise remain hidden. This aligns with international recommendations advocating more inclusive and equitable approaches to gifted education (Cerna et al., 2021; OECD, 2023). Teachers became more conscious of the role that language, culture and opportunity play in students' educational development.

The project also fostered international collaboration between researchers and practitioners. Partners shared experiences, developed common resources and explored how interventions could be adapted to different educational contexts while maintaining a shared focus on equity.

Perhaps most importantly, EGE shifted conversations about gifted education from identifying talent alone towards creating systems that enable all students to demonstrate and develop their abilities.

Key Findings

Several key themes emerged across the project:

- Giftedness exists across all socioeconomic, linguistic and cultural groups.
- Traditional identification practices may overlook high-potential students from underrepresented backgrounds.
- Academic language can function as both a barrier and a gateway to talent development.
- Parent engagement strengthens opportunities for students to flourish.
- Equity requires a systemic approach that combines identification, support and partnership.
- International collaboration enriches both research and practice in gifted education.

Across participating schools, teachers reported increased student engagement, growing confidence and stronger participation in learning activities. Students demonstrated increasing ability to express complex ideas and make use of academic language. Parents reported greater awareness of talent development and stronger connections with schools.

These findings are consistent with previous research showing that equitable identification, academic support and family engagement can significantly increase access to gifted education for traditionally underrepresented populations (Card & Giuliano, 2016; Peters, 2022; Stambaugh & Olszewski-Kubilius, 2021).

Concluding Remarks

The Equity in Gifted Education project demonstrates that equity is not simply about finding gifted students. It is about creating educational environments in which all students have genuine opportunities to demonstrate and develop their abilities.

By combining identification, language development and parent participation, EGE offers a practical and evidence-informed framework that schools can adapt to their own contexts. The project highlights the importance of moving from isolated interventions towards inclusive systems that recognise and nurture hidden potential.

As educational systems continue to address questions of diversity, inclusion and opportunity, EGE contributes valuable insights into how gifted education can become more equitable for all learners.

The EGE project contributes to a growing international movement that views gifted education not as a system for selecting a few students, but as a framework for recognising and developing talent wherever it occurs (Lo et al., 2022; Sternberg, 2023).

Project Information

Project Title: Equity in Gifted Education (EGE)

Programme: Erasmus+ KA220-SCH Cooperation Partnership

Project Number: KA220-SCH-000157819

Project Duration: 2023-2026

Project Partner Institutions:

- Stichting Voortgezet Onderwijs Haaglander (Netherlands)
- Bureau Talent (Netherlands)
- Thomas More University of Applied Sciences (Belgium)
- Dublin City University (Ireland)
- Kolegji Heimerer (Kosovo)

Project Lead:

- Birgit Broekhoven

Partners:

- Lineke van Tricht
- Marlies Tierens
- Gresa Murati
- Leeanne Hinch
- Cathy Woods
- Megan Griffiths

Project Email:

equityingiftededucationteam@gmail.com

Project Website:

<https://equityingiftededucation.eu/>



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EGE Project Website

For further details on the three pillars of the EGE project, along with access to guidelines and resources, visit our project website