

Committee on Education for Democracy – webinar series #5

“The Role of the ECEC Sector”

Wednesday, 26th March 2025

Report

Following up on the report from the first two years of the work of the Committee on Education for Democracy where some gaps had been identified notably in the VET sector and in ECEC, the committee has tried to find good practices from these sectors to be able to develop recommendations for the Council of Europe and the member states that are based on concrete examples on what would need to be changed and how this could be implemented to foster democratic ways of thinking and living through the lifecycle starting from the early years passing through childhood and adolescence and arriving to adulthood up to old age.

In this 5th webinar we explored the Early Childhood Education sector with our speaker, Aljoša Rudas from the international Step by Step Association who presented his organization and their unique approach to co-constructing child-centered, democratic early childhood classrooms and their principles of intentional quality interactions, shared decision-making, and environments that invite inquiry, so that young children are not just learning about democracy—they are living it. He also shared with us some practical examples on three main concepts in their work:

- Fostering autonomy while preserving structure
- Enhancing collaboration in a learning environment
- Cultivating a child-centred mindset

During the event he invited comments and questions from the audience to dive deeper into what it takes to truly cultivate democracy from the earliest years.

Speaker

- Aljoša Rudas, program manager at the International Step by Step Association (ISSA)
- Moderated by Arja Krauchenberg, Chair of the CINGO Committee on Education for Democracy, project coordinator of the European Parents' Association (EPA) and senior expert of the Lifelong Learning Platform (LLLP)