

WORKSHOP TITLE: Facing the biggest challenges of education systems – how we deal with challenges like increasing number of dropouts and mental health problems and how we support positive trends, such as increasing inclusion?

Workshop was organized by the Learning Cities Commission and the Youthful Cities Commission and hosted by commission Chairmen Matti Mäkelä (LCC) and Dmitrijs Zverevs (YCC).

Workshop was divided into two parts:

- panel discussion
- participant workshop

In the panel the participants discussed what kind of strategies and approaches can better help us to face challenges and support positive trends in creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for all students.

1. How well are we doing right now in these issues at a national or European level?
2. In the title of this workshop increasing number of dropouts and mental health problems are mentioned as an example of the biggest challenges, and increasing inclusion is mentioned as an example of the positive trends. Is there something missing? A theme or themes that we should bring up and discuss more?
3. Who are the major players in this work? What's the role, for example, of the management, teachers, and other personnel working at schools? How do we ensure that we involve children, youngsters and parents into this work?
4. Is our educational system supportive enough for students facing different kinds of challenges and problems (for example, poverty, trauma, racism)?
5. How can collaboration between cities and regions strengthen our ability to face these challenges?
6. Can you share a personal or professional positive example where education played a key role in tackling these challenges?
7. Looking ahead, what policies or innovations do you believe will be most effective in supporting positive trends and finding solutions for the challenges of our educational systems?

In the second part of the workshop all participants (altogether 33) discussed in smaller groups as follows:

1. Individual work

- Think of the biggest challenge and best practice of which you just heard
- Share your ideas with the rest of the group

2. Group work

- Decide 1-2 challenges to discuss with
- Discuss the best possible practices to tackle these challenges

3. Sharing

- Share your findings with the other participants of the workshop