

Program URBAN EDUCATION TIG
Symposium Vlora, Albania
April 22 till April 24, 2026



Wednesday 22 April 2026

14.00-15.30	Registration Meet and Greet TIG leader
15.00-16.00	Opening Ceremony
16.00-17.00	Welcome reception
19:00	Dinner with the TIG <i>Taverna Kalypso</i> , https://maps.app.goo.gl/vqWWZ9qFaQY98XAr8 

TIG meeting Urban Education 23 April 2026
Starting from UV, Main Building- Rectorate, first floor

8.45-9.00	<p>Title: <i>Whole Child Development in Urban Education</i></p> <p>Isa van der Plank, Marytske Veltman and Astrid van Schoonacker-de Groot from Leiden University of Applied Sciences (Netherlands)</p> <p>Within the framework of Global Citizenship Education, the Faculty of Education of LUAS has chosen the Whole Child Development approach. This workshop will explain this approach based on the findings from the school visit. We will also explore whether the cardinal virtues can serve as a framework for (global) citizenship education in an Urban setting.</p> <p>Isa, Marytske and Astrid will give us some instructions for the school visits, and after the school visits, we will continue with their workshop.</p> <p>Format: interactive workshop</p>
9.15-12.30	<p><i>School visits</i></p> <p>9.15-10.30: School visit 1 at the 'ELITE' School</p> <p>10.30-11.00: Coffee Break</p> <p>11.00-12.30: school visit 2 at the Public School ' Lef Sallata '</p>
12:30 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30-14.25	<p><i>Follow up the workshop 'Whole Child Development in Urban Education' from Isa, Marytske and Astrid</i></p> <p>Format: interactive workshop</p>

	<p>Title: <i>Safe Space Matters: Academic Freedom, Cultural Respect, and Civic Responsibility in Urban Settings</i></p> <p>Dr. Nurun Begum and Dr. Mahfuzul Khondaker from East Stroudsburg University and University in Pennsylvania (USA)</p> <p>Understanding diverse learners is essential for fostering inclusive learning environments and promoting student success. National policies and political discourse surrounding diversity, equity, and cultural responsiveness influence all educational contexts; however, their impact is often intensified in urban settings. Recognizing urban students' cultural identities, academic needs, social realities, and community dynamics is critical to cultivating environments where all learners feel valued and supported (Gay, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 2021).</p> <p>This session examines how diversity, policy, and politics shape the learning climate in urban schools. We explore how national debates on inclusion and cultural responsiveness have heightened effects in urban contexts, where understanding students' cultural identities, social realities, and academic needs is essential.</p> <p>We investigate how shifting policy climates and politicized discussions can create feelings of insecurity, exclusion, or discrimination among marginalized students, while educators must navigate the tension between inclusive teaching, academic freedom, and diverse viewpoints.</p> <p>Using a case study from an urban district in Pennsylvania, the session analyzes how changes in school climate influence students' emotional well-being, sense of belonging, and academic engagement. Special attention is given to Muslim immigrant youth, multilingual learners, and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.</p> <p>14.30-15.10 Format: paper presentation + discussion</p>
<p>15.10-15.30</p>	<p>Coffee break</p>
<p>15.30-16.50</p>	<p>Title: <i>A normcritical approach to pedagogical practice</i></p> <p>Jacob Graack from University College Copenhagen (Denmark)</p> <p>My presentation & workshop will be based on my teaching at the University College Copenhagen, on my experience with 'continuing education/ training' of pedagogical practitioners in ground schools & kindergartens – and finally on my theoretical insights which derives from writing papers on the subject and co-editing the Danish anthology 'Normcritical approaches in pedagogical practice' (my translation).</p> <p>Content:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A short presentation of the main 3 stages in a norm-critical approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a) Reflection on the existing norms ○ b) Identification of those norms limiting the possibilities for some ○ c) Norm-creative action that broadens the participatory possibilities for all 2. Theoretical concepts of the approach: Social categorization, Intersectionality, Positioning & Representation 3. Through a couple of small hands-on exercises 4. I will share experiences with how we work with e.g. children's sexuality, stereotypical views on masculinity etc.

	Format: presentation/ hands on workshop
16.50-17.00	Conclusion first day
17.00-18.30	Cultural visit/ Vlora city by walking
TIG meeting Urban Education 24 April 2026 Starting from UV, Main Building- Rectorate, first floor	
	<p>Title: <i>Relaxing together in diverse school contexts: A study of lunchtime breaks in primary schools</i></p> <p>Linde Van Reusel & Eve Baert from Karel de Grote University Antwerp (Belgium)</p> <p>In many primary schools, the lunch break is currently experienced as a source of stress, unrest, and conflict. This research on 'qualitative lunch breaks' proposes a shift from top-down ad-hoc solutions to a sustainable, strategic vision. The central goal is to transform the lunch break into a qualitative moment of rest that promotes the overall well-being of students.</p> <p>The theoretical framework of this approach focuses on two crucial domains: the structure and culture of the school organization. Within these domains, four fundamental pillars are identified that form the basis for any break policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organizational structure of the lunch break. • The physical infrastructure of both the playground and the dining area. • The competencies and coaching of the supervisors. • The social skills of the students. <p>During this presentation, not only is the theoretical framework explained, but there is also room for discussion. We explore how these domains and pillars take shape in the participants' practice, with the goal of inspiring each other and generating new insights into how relaxing together at school can become a reality.</p> <p>https://reftersenspeelplaatsen.kdg.be/hoe-samen-ontspannen</p>
9.10-10.10	Format: presentation + discussion
	<p>Title: <i>Exploring Inclusive Leadership in Higher Education through a Serious Game</i></p> <p>Michel Hogenes, The Hague University of Applied Science</p> <p>Inclusive leadership is increasingly important in diverse urban higher education contexts. Teacher education institutions are challenged not only to widen access but also to create cultures of belonging, participation, and equity. This interactive workshop introduces the Inclusive Leadership Game, a dialogical learning tool designed to stimulate reflection on inclusive leadership practices in higher education.</p> <p>Participants will work in small groups and explore real-life leadership dilemmas through a series of cases. The game invites reflection on six key dimensions of inclusive leadership: recognition and appreciation of diversity; equal opportunities and social justice; participation and shared leadership; openness and dialogue; support and professional development; and inclusive team culture and belonging.</p> <p>Through facilitated discussion, participants analyse cases, exchange experiences, and develop practical insights for their own institutional contexts. The workshop demonstrates how serious games can foster meaningful dialogue and support</p>
10.15-10.50	

	professional learning about inclusion and leadership within teacher education and other higher education programmes. Format: game
10.50-11.00	Conclusion second day
11.00-12.00	Closing ceremony
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch
13.30 – 16.30	Cultural Program by bus: visiting the Ancient City of Apollonia, and the monastery of Zvernec
18.30-22.00	Gala dinner (by bus starting from the Main Building-Rectorate)
(optional) 25 April 2026	
10.00-16.00: Tour by boat, visiting the coast of Vlora Bay (Karaburun Peninsul and Sazan Islands) Ticket 20 euro	