

# EDUPLAY

“Promoting High-Quality ECEC through Education and Play in All-Day Settings”

4th Newsletter

April 2026

e  
d  
u  
p  
l  
a  
y



## 1st Annual Network Meeting



The **1st Annual Network Meeting** of the EduPLAY project took place in Thessaloniki, Greece, hosted by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. The two-day hybrid event brought together academics, researchers, educators, students, and stakeholders from Greece, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Cyprus, and Portugal, giving them the opportunity to share ideas and reflect on the current state of play in ECEC systems across European countries.

The meeting promoted the exchange of good practices and discussed the importance of promoting learning through modern play-based pedagogy. Specifically, inspiring keynote talks, research presentations, and interactive discussions, provided participants with the opportunity to explore both current challenges regarding the use of play -from a research and practice point of view- and future directions for enhancing play-based approaches in ECEC.

### Meeting Highlights

- A keynote by Prof. Glykeria Fragkiadaki, (AUTH) “The Status of Play Today: Are we on the Right Track?”, sparked critical reflection on the place of play in contemporary ECEC.
- A presentation by the IPP team, delivered by Prof. Sara Araújo and Prof. Sílvia Barros, “Cross-National Mapping of Play in ECEC: Shared and Divergent Needs to Inform International Collaboration”, highlighted key similarities and differences across countries, offering valuable insights for future collaboration.
- A presentation by Prof. Eleni Loizou (UCY), “Toward an Inclusive Play Pedagogy: Participation and Agency in Play”, highlighted the importance of participation and agency in promoting inclusive play-based practices.

Other sessions focused on advocacy for children’s play in communities, children’s perspectives, and the fundamental question of whether we are born to play—emphasizing the need for meaningful, inclusive, and research-informed play practices in ECEC.

Discover more insights from the meeting by browsing the speakers’ presentations: <https://eduplay-project.eu/eduplay-network/>



## Transnational Partners Meeting

As the EDUPLAY project enters its second year, partners gathered at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki for the **2nd Transnational Partners Meeting** on 11-12 March 2026. During the two-day meeting, the partners discussed the key findings from field research conducted across participating countries and reflected on the implications that emerged. The field research findings contributed to the development of the EDUPLAY training package, which will be implemented in the next school year.

## EDUPLAY – Teacher's Guide to Play

We are excited to announce that the **EDUPLAY Teacher's Guide to Play** is now available.

Developed through collective work from all project partners, the Guide aims to support in-service and pre-service ECEC professionals to improve their play-based practices. The guide draws from modern play pedagogy and covers five main themes:

1. Theoretical Origins of Play Pedagogy
2. Development and Play
3. Play as a Learning Environment
4. Teacher's Role in Play
5. Play Observation and Assessment in ECEC

It combines theoretical foundations with practical examples, reflective questions, and tools to support everyday practice of ECEC educators.

Access the Teacher's Guide here: <https://eduplay-project.eu/resources/>

Translations of the Guide in the other languages (Greek, Lithuanian, Portuguese, and Dutch) will be available in the coming days.



## What's Next in EDUPLAY

Partners are currently working on the development of **the EduPLAY training package**, which will include, in addition to the Teacher Guide, five e-learning courses and an asynchronous learning platform, enabling pre-service and in-service teachers, as well as school leaders, to engage with the material at their own pace and effectively implement play in their schools. The e-learning courses will be delivered in the next school year and will lead to a certificate upon completion. Interested participants are invited to express their interest through our website: <https://eduplay-project.eu/contact-us/>



[eduplay-project.eu](https://eduplay-project.eu)



[eduplay\\_eu](https://www.instagram.com/eduplay_eu)



[Eduplay](https://www.facebook.com/Eduplay)



[eduPLAY project](https://www.linkedin.com/company/eduPLAY-project)



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them. [Project Number: 101196299]