



**AI PIONEERS**  
Artificial Intelligence in education & training

# Report on the aims, membership development, activities, impact and future sustainability of the AI in education Reference Network. Including CoP reference points and articulation

Ana Dias, TecMinho (author)  
Fátima Correia, TecMinho (author)  
Manuela Neves, TecMinho (editor)  
Miguel Ferreira, TecMinho (editor)

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## **D2.4 Report on the aims, membership development, activities, impact and future sustainability of the AI in education Reference Network. Including CoP reference points and articulation**

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## PROJECT PARTNERS CONSORTIUM

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- Institute Technology and Education (ITB), University of Bremen, Germany
- ACP – Active Citizen Partnership, Greece
- Pontydysgu SL, Spain
- UPV/EHU – University of the Basque Country, Spain
- TecMinho – Associação Universidade-Empresa para o Desenvolvimento, Portugal
- CARVET – University of Verona, Italy
- EDEN Digital Learning Europe – European Distance and E-Learning Network, Estonia
- BIBB – Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training, Germany
- CNOS-FAP - Federazione Centro Nazionale Opere Salesiane - Formazione Aggiornamento Professionale, Italy
- CSI – Center for Social Innovation, Cyprus

# AI Pioneers Reference Network

## Results and sustainability

### 1. INTRODUCTION

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AI Pioneers is an Erasmus+ Forward Looking, cross-sectoral project and aims at promoting the use and teaching of artificial intelligence (AI) in adult education and vocational training (VET).

As AI continues to transform education, **the project aimed to build a network of AI Pioneers**, including trainers, stakeholders, policymakers, and educational planners, to act as reference points for the design and implementation of future educational projects related to AI. Our objectives included:

- developing policy recommendations,
- toolkits,
- implementation guidelines for AI Pioneers,
- identifying and piloting use cases of AI in education,
- developing guidelines for ethical and trustworthy use of AI in education.

To achieve these objectives, the consortium involved stakeholders throughout the project life cycle, fostering training and education so that all stakeholders understand the issues in developing ethical and trustworthy approaches to the use of AI in education.

The AI Pioneers Reference Network was established to bring together educators, trainers, institutional leaders, and stakeholders committed to advancing the ethical and pedagogical integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education and training. Guided by the DigCompEdu framework's notion of "Pioneers" (those who experiment with innovative technologies and pedagogies), this initiative was designed to create a dynamic, participatory community at national, European, and international levels.

The Network has four core aims: (1) to develop a sustainable community of leading stakeholders in AI for education and training; (2) to support members with resources and knowledge to act as reference points in their institutions and countries; (3) to promote peer exchange and sharing of best practices; and (4) to establish Communities of Practice (CoPs) focused on contextualised and collaborative implementation of AI in VET and Adult Education.

This report outlines the objectives, membership development, key activities, and demonstrated impact of the AI in Education Reference Network. It presents the formats and results of reference network activities (such as consultation seminars, webinars, newsletters, and events), and a summary of the contributions from national and international CoPs. The final

section of the report provides an overview of the sustainability strategy that will ensure the long-term viability and relevance of the AI Pioneers Network beyond the project duration.

The AI Pioneers Network, activities and developments was managed and coordinated by TecMinho and has been developed and implemented through a collaborative effort involving all project partners. A dedicated evaluation group, comprising representatives from each partner institution, has worked jointly with the project coordinator to identify, assess, and guide strategic cooperation opportunities across the network.

## 2. AIMS OF THE AI PIONEERS REFERENCE NETWORK

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The AI Pioneers Reference Network was created to include pioneers, teachers, trainers, and organizations with practices in AI in the educational and training sphere. The network seeks to enhance VET and Adult education trainers' capacities to increase individual, organizational, and systemic resources needed for AI use in the classroom and other learning spaces like labs or professional schools' facilities for learning for instance. The term "Pioneer" is drawn from the DigCompEdu Framework (Redecker, 2017, p. 30).

*"Pioneers experiment with highly innovative and complex digital technologies and / or develop novel pedagogical approaches. They lead innovation and are a role model for teachers and trainers."*

The AI Pioneers Reference Network has four main aims:

- To develop a sustainable network of leading pioneers, teachers and trainers, educational planners, stakeholders, and policymakers in European countries in the use of AI in education and training.
- To support members of the network with knowledge and resources for them to become reference points for the use of AI in education and training both in their institutions and within their countries.
- To create an environment for sharing of best practices, experiences, know-how about the use of AI in Education and Training.
- To develop a community of practice in the use of AI in education and training in Europe.

Fostering knowledge and debate in AI in Education to support the educational community is central. To meet these goals, the Reference Network has and will continue to engage stakeholders across every stage of the AI system's life cycle, promoting training and knowledge exchange to ensure a shared understanding of the challenges involved in developing ethical and trustworthy applications of AI in education.

The AI Pioneers Network seeks to expand continuously its reach by fostering strategic collaborations with experts and innovators not only locally, regionally or at European level, but also reaching out at global level. Through the implementation of dynamic and inclusive activities,

the AI Pioneers framework will continue to empower educators, trainers, institutional leaders, and policymakers to cultivate essential competencies needed to address future challenges in the field of AI in education.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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The European AI Pioneers Reference Network played a central role in the implementation of the AI Pioneers project, serving as the cornerstone for designing a long-term action plan to extend the project's impact beyond its conclusion and support the integration of its outcomes into mainstream practices.

To ensure effective knowledge-sharing and scalability, the AI Pioneers consortium created the Reference Network Guidelines in June 2023 and the initial digital infrastructure for network collaboration in December 2023.

The initial phase of the AI Pioneers European Reference Network focused on establishing the digital foundation and recruiting, by invitation of each project partner, the first cohort of members to foster dialogue and collaboration around AI in education. This Membership initiation and development was based on a **series of activities and events** for involving its first members in Webinars, Consultation seminars and workshops, Collection of best practices to share, Demonstrations of applications and events organizations.

These Network activities started out with online Consultation Seminars promoted every semester with a smaller group of members that later evolved to larger online consultations through interactive international webinars. The first members were also the first pioneers to disseminate the project's aims and spread the word around the debate about the use of AI in VET among other future network participants.

AI Pioneers Reference Network targets a wide range of members for its reference network, which was considered by the project partners when inviting and involving them in the consultation seminars and other initiatives:

**Teachers and trainers:** Teachers and trainers are one of the most important target groups, both in relation to the pedagogical use of AI for teaching and learning and to AI as a subject in Adult Education and VET.

**Educational Managers:** AI will play an important future role in educational management and will hopefully reduce the administrative workload for managers and practitioners alike. Managers will be influential in deciding resource allocation and in promoting the introduction of applications for teaching and learning.

**Policy makers and planners:** In such a fast-developing field, it is critical that policy makers and planners at all levels can understand the benefits and issues that AI in education brings and to

develop new policy measures to support, regulate and monitor how AI is implemented in Adult Education and VET.

**Application developers:** Application developers are necessary for the technical development of AI applications. They require an understanding of the pedagogic context of how AI is deployed and used in education and training and of how to work in co-development processes with teachers and trainers.

**Researchers:** Educational researchers also play a key role in developing and exchanging knowledge. This is increasingly a cross disciplinary field, bringing together educational research with technology development.

**General public:** The growing use of AI in education is already an issue of public debate and concern with almost daily attention in the mainstream press, social media, and television. It is important that the public debates are informed and that results of projects like this are explained to the wider public.

These various audiences are currently represented in the various activities carried out by the network, from consultation seminars to the LinkedIn page and participation in Community of Practice (CoPs).

Dedicated communication channels were established for the reference network, including:

- the AI Pioneers website (<https://aipioneers.org>),
- the LinkedIn project page (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/ai-pioneers-network/>),
- the AI Pioneers weekly newsletter (available for subscription on the project website,
- and partner social media platforms and newsletters.

The AI Pioneers reference network has progressively refined its communication strategy to maximize efficiency, growth and impact. Initially, a diverse array of platforms (including Facebook, X, Mastodon, LinkedIn, ResearchGate, and EPAL) were employed to support the development of the reference network, by disseminating relevant information and engaging stakeholders.

Over time, **LinkedIn** emerged as one of the most effective channels for reaching the AI Pioneers Network's members, fostering meaningful connections, and enhancing participant engagement, followed by the Weekly Newsletter issued via the website. As a result, the project strategically consolidated its efforts around the LinkedIn page, ensuring that communication, discussion and dissemination activities are focused where they yield the greatest value, thereby strengthening interaction and cohesion within the AI Pioneers community. Currently, the network's LinkedIn page has 1058 followers from 41 countries dispersed through Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania, South and North America.

Another important channel for the Reference Network's growth was the **Weekly Newsletter, available on the project website** for subscription by anyone interested in learning more about AI in Education and Vocational Training, including educators, education professionals, members of regulatory bodies in the sector, among others. The weekly newsletter has had a flourishing number of subscribers throughout the AI Pioneers project timeline and includes:

- articles and media
- events and webinars dissemination
- project´s news

The AI Pioneers **weekly newsletter** reaches 359 subscribers (numbers from November 2025).

The AI Pioneers website was enhanced with features to nurture the development of the Reference Network such as:

- A directory of AI-related projects in education and training
- Listings of relevant networks and upcoming AI events
- Opportunities for members to become associated partners
- A repository of expert contributions, best practices, and member-published articles
- The results of AI Pioneers project available in all partner languages.

The communication channels were carefully coordinated with the AI Pioneers Project's dissemination efforts. They were synchronized with the timing and flow of the resources being developed, resulting in key information materials that were essential for supporting project activities and strengthening outreach within the reference network. These efforts, together with the consultation seminars organized by the network, building on the project results (the DigComEdu AI supplement, the tools and the ethical strategy for AI in Ed) helped establish a vibrant and interconnected community of practice, supporting the sustained visibility and influence of AI Pioneers across Europe and beyond.

The AI Pioneers Reference Network was the project implementation backbone and shaped the design of a long-term action plan for the progressive roll-out of its sustainability.

As a result of the AI Pioneers Reference Network's development, the membership expansion is taking place at various levels:

- at **local/national level** in each of the member countries of the AI Pioneers project, through **5 country/ language-based Communities of Practice** launched and coordinated by project partners.
- **at European level**, with network members including the EDEN CoP and the reach of the network in countries outside the AI Pioneers consortium, and by interacting **with European organisations** such as ETF and JRC.
- also at **international level**, by networking with organisations in Australia (AMES Australia, and Future Skills Organisation) and integrating members from countries on all continents.

## 4. REFERENCE NETWORK ACTIVITIES FOR MEMBERS

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The different activities of the European AI Pioneers Reference Network have been the driving force behind its development and growth, ensuring that the project's vision translated into concrete opportunities for collaboration, dialogue, and dissemination among its members.

Each activity was carefully designed to strengthen the network's foundations and to engage members in meaningful exchanges about the role of artificial intelligence in education and vocational training.

The main Network activities can be divided into:

- consultation seminars and webinars
- LinkedIn page engagement
- weekly newsletter
- communities of practice
- AI Pioneers final conference

Together, these five activities have shaped the Reference Network into a vibrant ecosystem. They ensure that the AI Pioneers project not only achieved its immediate goals but also laid the groundwork for long-term sustainability, visibility, and influence across Europe and beyond by creating an ever-growing space for networking, debate, knowledge sharing by professionals of VET and adult education.

#### 4.1. CONSULTATION SEMINARS AND WEBINARS

At the heart of the effort to create the network of pioneer members are the Consultation Seminars and Webinars, which marked the network's starting point by creating spaces for focused discussion among smaller groups of members. These seminars later evolved into larger, interactive webinars, enabling international participation and expanding the debate on teaching about AI and teaching with AI. Together, these formats provided continuity and scalability, ensuring that knowledge-sharing remained dynamic and inclusive.

Throughout the AI Pioneers project timeline, 6 Consultation Seminars were organized by the Reference Network, and an extra final online event is being prepared for the end of November 2025. The first two consultation seminars were held in the first year of the project, with a restricted group of invited stakeholders from Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Greece, Cyprus and Europe via EDEN. This paved the way for the development of a wider community of experts, including teachers, trainers, educational planners, stakeholders, and policy makers in European countries, that participated in the next 4 consultation seminars and webinars in the following 2 years.

- **1<sup>st</sup> Consultation Seminar for the Reference Network of AI Pioneers** - 26th of June 2023, 10:00 and 12:00 (CET)

**Speakers and topics:** Ana Dias (AI Pioneers Network), Graham Attwell and Ludger Deitmer (AI for Vocational Education and Training), George Bekiaridis (Mastodon Tech for Networking).

The seminar brought together project partners and 19 invited experts from Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Greece, Cyprus, and Estonia. The seminar aimed to introduce the AI Pioneers Reference Network, explain its purpose, and gather input for its development. Discussions highlighted the transformative role of AI in education, particularly in vocational training, where AI

can serve as a tutor, coach, mentor, or simulator, supporting both teachers and learners. The seminar also introduced the Mastodon platform, the first networking tool of the AI Pioneers Reference Network launched to facilitate collaboration among members in a decentralized, privacy-focused environment. Breakout sessions in the seminar allowed participants to share national perspectives and experiences. Overall, the Consultation Seminar was crucial for shaping the AI Pioneers Network, defining its priorities, and establishing collaborative mechanisms to support the ethical and effective integration of AI in education across Europe.



Image 1: First Consultation Seminar

- **2nd Consultation Seminar for the Reference Network of AI Pioneers** - 27th November 2023, 15:00 to 16:30 CET

**Speakers and topics:** Ana Dias and Ludger Deitmer (Consultation on Network Development), George Bekiaridis and Graham Attwell (Competencies of Teachers and Trainers; The use of Mastodon for networking).

The Consultation seminar focused on presenting the main findings of the report “*Supplement to the DigCompEdu Framework – Outlining the Skills and Competences of Educators related to AI in Education*”, which is based on surveys and interviews with teachers, trainers, and stakeholders across Europe. With 36 participants from Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Germany, and Portugal, the event included discussions about strategies for integrating AI into education, shared examples of projects using AI for energy efficiency and classroom management and reflected on the evolving roles of teachers and students in the age of generative AI. This seminar was significant for advancing the network’s development, and for validation of the DigCompEdu supplement.

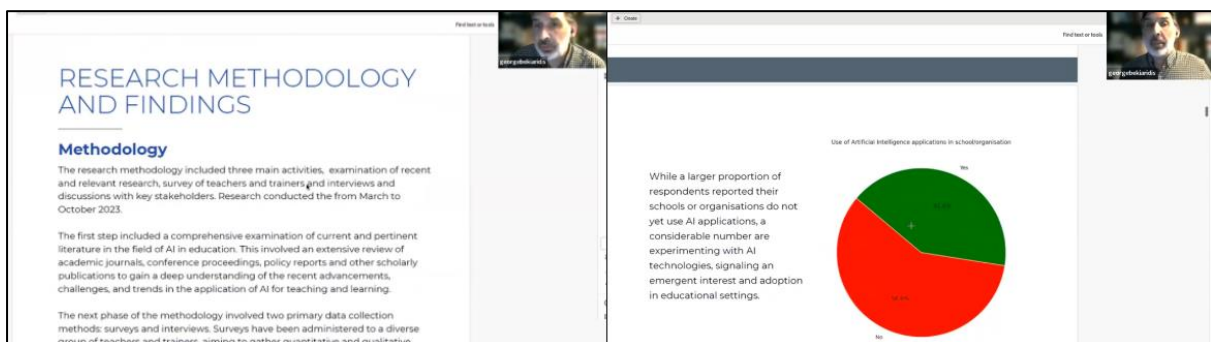


Image 2: Second Consultation Seminar

- **3rd Consultation Seminar/Webinar “AI in Education: Navigating Ethical Dilemmas and Practices”**- 30th September 2024, 15:00 to 16:30 CET<sup>1</sup>

**Speakers and topics:** Ana Dias and Lisa Meyne (The AI Pioneers Project), keynote speaker: Alexandros Kofteros (AI in Education - Ethics aside).

The webinar focused on one of the project’s core objectives: the ethical and trustworthy use of AI in education. The webinar attracted 121 registrations from 30 countries and gathered 63 active participants, including educators, trainers, and stakeholders from vocational education, adult learning, and higher education. The keynote speaker Alexandros Kofteros (Primary school teacher, EUCodeWeek Ambassador) addressed the opportunities and challenges of AI in education, highlighting ethical concerns such as bias, inclusivity, privacy, transparency, and accountability. Participants engaged in breakout discussions around three ethical questions: whether it is acceptable for teachers to use AI to create resources, to assess students, and for students to use AI in assignments. This seminar was pivotal for the AI Pioneers Network, reinforcing its role in promoting ethical practices, sharing expertise, and building collaborative spaces for educators across Europe and beyond.

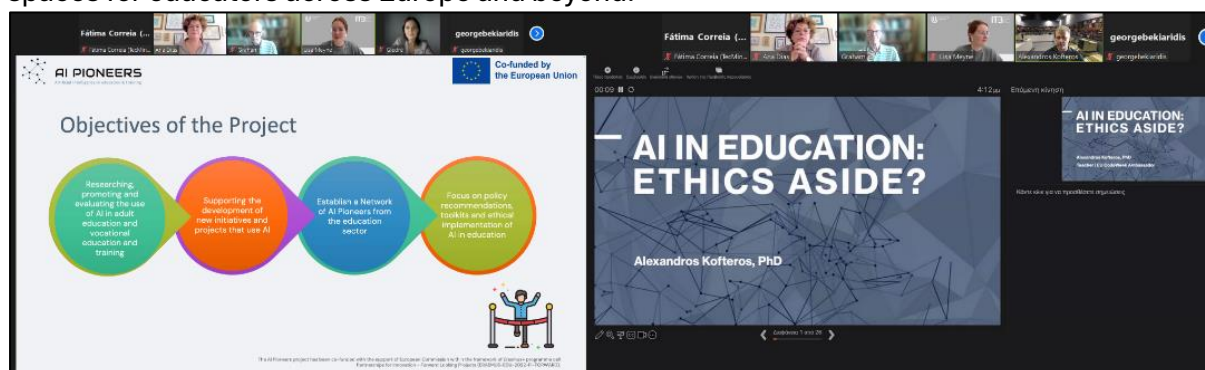


Image 3: Third Consultation Seminar/Webinar

- **4th Consultation Seminar/Webinar “AI Citizenship in Vocational Education and Training”**- 27th November 2024 – 15:00 to 16:30 CET<sup>2</sup>

**Speakers and topics:** Ana Dias and Lisa Meyne (The AI Pioneers Project), George Bekiaridis and Graham Attwell (AI Citizenship in VET).

The consultation webinar gathered 49 registrations from 18 countries and included 27 active participants, mainly educators, trainers, and stakeholders in VET and adult education. The session focused on the intersection of citizenship, ethics, and AI literacy in vocational education, aligning with the project’s goal of promoting ethical and inclusive AI use in education. This webinar reinforced the AI Pioneers Network’s commitment to ethical AI adoption, civic engagement, and collaborative knowledge-sharing, paving the way for future initiatives and consultation events.

<sup>1</sup> <https://youtu.be/JbkwAAYnQMI?si=Y4Nrwb8j1OuNTHrJ>

<sup>2</sup> <https://youtu.be/9G5ZWxialvs?si=TF4Z6Hbxv20K-2g0>



Image 4: Fourth Consultation Seminar/Webinar

- **5th Consultation Seminar/ Webinar “Research Based Digital Transformation in Vocational Education and Training”** - 17th February 2025, 15:00 to 16:30 CET<sup>3</sup>

**Speakers and topics:** Ana Dias (The AI Pioneers Project); Keynote speakers: Anastasia Economou (Supporting the digital transformation of education and training through research - Educators’ Digital Competences) and Cesar Herrero (Supporting the digital transformation of education and training through research – VET perspective).

The webinar attracted 85 registrations and gathered 35 participants from various countries, focusing on how evidence-based research informs digital transformation and AI integration in education, particularly in VET. This session aligned with the project’s commitment to ethical AI use and the development of digital competence frameworks. The keynote speakers Anastasia Economou and Cesar Herrero (European Commission’s Joint Research Centre - JRC) presented research initiatives supporting educators’ digital competences and VET transformation, debated future research priorities, including digital well-being, societal impacts of AI, and life-long learning strategies. The seminar concluded with a call for collaboration, awareness-raising, and continued research to bridge gaps between technology and pedagogy. This webinar reinforced the AI Pioneers Network’s role in promoting evidence-based practices, ethical AI adoption, and capacity-building for educators and institutions across Europe.

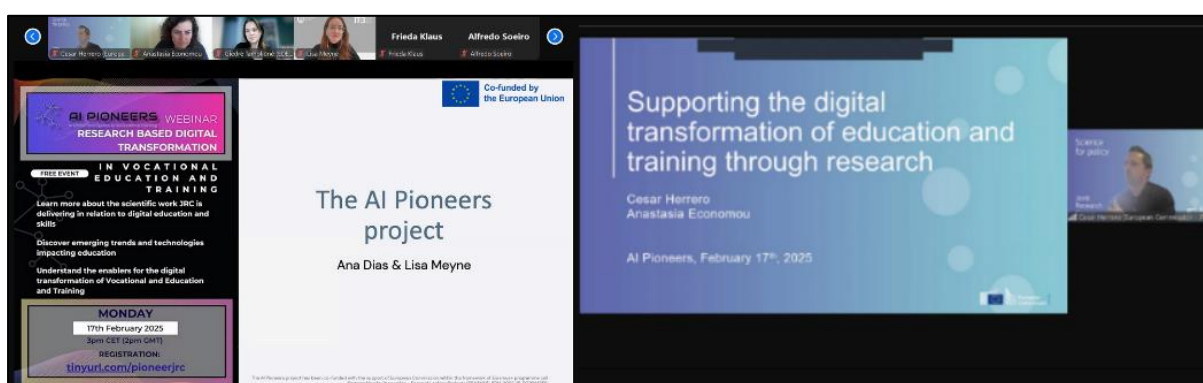


Image 5: Fifth Consultation Seminar/Webinar

<sup>3</sup> <https://youtu.be/HnEfk5GVvrg?si=Ten-OUP6hZMbsarR>

- **6th Consultation Seminar/Webinar "Teaching with AI: Lessons learnt and ideas from the ETF new Learning Club"** - 19th May 2025, 15:00 to 16:30 CET<sup>4</sup>

**Speakers:** Ana Dias, Fabio Nascimbeni (ETF); Roberto Righi (STEPS); Community panel: Arjana Blazic (EduDigiCon – Croatia); Mahmoud Mohammad Hawamdeh (Al-Quds Open University – Palestine); Alessandro Iannella (affiliation – Italy).

The webinar attracted 147 registrations and gathered 67 participants from multiple countries. It focused on sharing insights from the European Training Foundation’s (ETF) Community of Innovative Educators and its “Teaching with AI” Learning Club, which brings together educators worldwide to explore generative AI in teaching, learning, and assessment. Other topics from the event: "Unlocking AI in education: A Teacher’s Guide to AI Literacy" (Roberto Righi) and “What are we learning about the use of AI in teaching settings?” (community panel). The webinar reinforced the AI Pioneers Network’s commitment to collaboration, knowledge exchange, and promoting responsible AI integration in education, while fostering links with other international communities such as ETF’s Learning Club.



Image 6: Sixth Consultation Seminar/Webinar

- **7th Consultation Webinar “AI and Skills in Australian Education”** - 24<sup>th</sup> of November 2025, 09:00 to 10:00 CET.<sup>5</sup>

**Speakers:** Lisa Meyne (The AI Pioneers Project); Thuy Cao Reynolds (Panorama of AI in Australian Education), Alison Wall and Lisa Bale (Building Australia’s VET Workforce AI Capability) - Future Skills Organisation.

The event brought together a group of AI pioneers Network members from Australia and Europe to share their innovative work and perspectives on Artificial Intelligence in education and vocational training. Thuy Cao Reynolds (AMES Australia & International Specialised Skills Institute) focused on a current outlook on Artificial Intelligence in Australian Education. Alison Wall and Lisa Bale (Future Skills Organisation) gave us the overview of the relevance of AI competences in the preparation of Australia’s future workforce through Vocational Education and Training, according to the needs of the industry and feedback from other stakeholders in the society.

<sup>4</sup> <https://youtu.be/Jyhhq7ygDRk?si=4tJ6iECT6AFXiE9t>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Fu-WRysFC8>



Image 7: Seventh Consultation Seminar/Webinar

## 4.2. LINKEDIN PAGE

The network relied on dedicated communication channels to sustain engagement. After the initial testing and promotion of the use of the Mastodon, Facebook and EPAL technology platforms, the [LinkedIn AI Pioneers page](#) became the most effective platform for fostering professional connections, promoting member-led initiatives, and cultivating a sense of community. It is a technological and communication platform that is well established and widely used by professional communities, making it easier for members to engage in discussions and establish meaningful networking, disseminating it among new potential members. Since creation, the LinkedIn page has been actively used to cultivate member engagement and collaboration by:

- Sharing articles and media
- Promoting member-led events
- Disseminating AI Pioneers results
- Creating newsletters and polls
- Hosting and advertising community events.

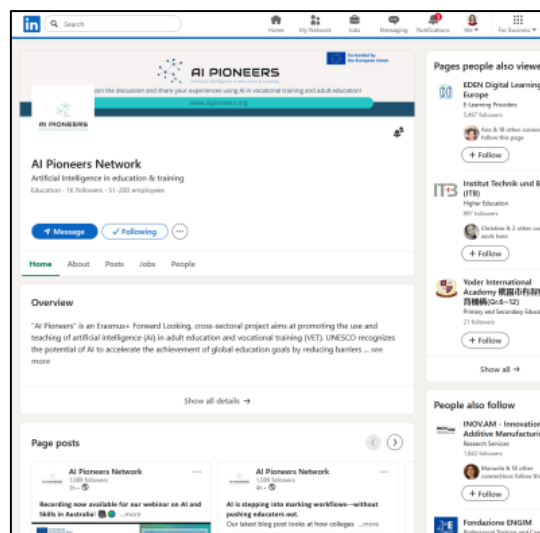


Image 8: AI Pioneers Network LinkedIn page

At present, the LinkedIn page of the AI Pioneers Network brings together a vibrant community of 1,058 followers representing 41 countries across Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania, and the Americas.

The sectors of activity most represented among followers are Higher Education, Education Administration Programs, Research Services, Government Administration, Education, IT Services and IT Consulting, Primary and Secondary Education, Professional Training and Coaching, Software Development, E-Learning Providers, Non-profit Organizations, Business Consulting and Services, Civic and Social Organizations, International Affairs, Technology, Information and Internet, Banking, Political Organizations, Professional Organizations, Technical and Vocational Training, Language Schools.

### 4.3. WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

The **weekly newsletter** offers a consistent flow of information, disseminating project updates, events, and expert contributions to a growing audience of educators, policymakers, and stakeholders worldwide. This regular newsletter reaches 359 subscribers (figures as of November 2025), ensuring regular updates and engagement with educators and stakeholders worldwide. Articles, blog posts, events and project results are the main topics addressed in this communication platform. In order to reach more pioneers, the project website includes a subscription form for this newsletter.

### 4.4. COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE (CoPs)

The AI Pioneers Network has established national Communities of Practice (CoPs) in the partner countries, organized by language and local context. These CoPs serve as collaborative spaces where educators, trainers, and stakeholders may share best practices, exchange experiences, and access resources to integrate AI into education and vocational training. They also promote networking events (face-to-face and online) at both national and international levels, fostering dialogue on ethical, pedagogical, and technical aspects of AI in education.

The CoPs are the most efficient way to enable the network to expand in each member country/language region of the AI Pioneers project's partners, as it is easier for members to interact, share experiences, difficulties, and contexts of stakeholders in their own countries, and preferably, in their own language. It was on this basis that the various Communities of Practice (CoP) were established between 2024 and 2025:

- One CoP in Greek (Greece and Cyprus)
- One CoP in German (Germany)
- One CoP in Spanish (Spain)
- One CoP in Portuguese (Portugal)
- One CoP in Italian (Italy)
- One CoP in English, via EDEN (International)

The objectives, concept, and activities of the CoPs were established by each partner group and included the following focus: to meet regularly, organise national and/or regional workshops, provide input to the reference network and play a key role in identifying relevant projects and

networks within their countries or regions, ensuring that local perspectives and initiatives contribute actively to the broader goals of the AI Pioneers Network.

The complete report with the presentation, activities and plans sustainability of each CoP can be found in the annex, with the following summary:

#### **4.4.1. CoP IN GREEK (GREECE AND CYPRUS)**

AI Pioneers coordinators: ACP (Greece) and CSI (Cyprus).

The CoP in Greek language was established to strengthen national engagement within the AI Pioneers Reference Network in Cyprus and Greece. Membership development has been significant: in Greece, the CoP includes vocational training institutes, adult education providers, and professional associations, engaging around 50 active members; in Cyprus, the CoP is more diverse, involving universities, research labs, digital skills coalitions, NGOs, and creative communities, with over 137 participants across activities.

Activities carried out include targeted workshops and webinars in Greece, and in Cyprus a broader range of initiatives such as a 10-module certification series, specialized training on AI applications, and collaborative events under Erasmus+ projects. The achieved and expected impact lies in raising AI awareness, fostering digital pedagogy, and promoting practical AI integration in VET and adult education. Both CoPs have contributed to the dissemination of AI Pioneers resources, including the DigCompEdu supplement and the AI toolkit, and have highlighted the need for more hands-on training and applied resources.

Plans for sustainability focus on securing funding, formalizing structures, and developing professional development courses, while sharing localized best practices and translated materials with the wider European network. These CoPs act as key reference points for articulating national perspectives with the broader AI in Education community, ensuring that local initiatives feed into European-level strategies and knowledge exchange.

#### **4.4.2. CoP IN GERMAN**

AI Pioneers coordinators: Institute Technology and Education (ITB) - University of Bremen; Bundesinstitut Für Berufsbildung (BIBB).

The German Community of Practice (CoP) plays a central role in connecting vocational schools, training institutions, and industry partners within the AI Pioneers Reference Network. Its membership has grown steadily, starting with vocational schoolteachers and expanding to include department heads, training providers, and industry representatives, with outreach supported by symposiums and international exchanges.

Activities delivered include numerous workshops and presentations between 2023 and 2025 and sessions on AI implementation phases. Highlights include a webinar with 170 participants and workshops engaging headmasters from the Mittelfranken region. These initiatives have enhanced educators' skills, promoted networking, and raised awareness of ethical issues, data protection, and practical steps for AI adoption. The CoP actively uses AI Pioneers resources

like the DigCompEdu supplement and evaluation schema, with feedback suggesting the need for practical checklists and guidelines.

The achieved and expected impact lies in building capacity for AI integration in vocational education, fostering peer exchange, and addressing challenges such as scaling AI use and motivating educators. Sustainability plans include an annual AI Day at ITB, continued LinkedIn engagement, and webinars via BIBB's Leando platform, alongside exploring national projects. The CoP serves as a key reference point for articulating German perspectives within the wider AI in Education network, ensuring ongoing collaboration and knowledge sharing.

#### 4.4.3. CoP IN SPANISH

AI Pioneers coordinators: UPV/EHU (University of the Basque Country) and Pontydysgu.

The Spanish Community of Practice (CoP), coordinated by UPV/EHU (University of the Basque Country) and Pontydysgu, brings together educators, researchers, and developers from vocational education and training (VET) institutions, universities, and innovation-focused organisations. Membership currently includes around 46 participants, primarily VET teachers and trainers, alongside university lecturers and researchers.

Engagement has been driven mainly through online events, which have facilitated knowledge exchange and discussion of challenges related to AI adoption. Three key seminars have been delivered: one on ethics and opportunities in AI for education, another showcasing AI-based emotional support practices in VET, and a third addressing ethical challenges and policy development. These activities have sparked strong interest in AI's potential for vocational training and adult education, while highlighting concerns about ethics and student wellbeing.

The CoP has contributed to building awareness and connecting institutions involved in EU-funded innovation projects, although reaching VET centres remains a challenge due to workload constraints. Looking ahead, plans focus on expanding membership, continuing online seminars, and strengthening institutional engagement. Sustainability will depend on reinforcing collaboration between practitioners and researchers and aligning with national and European AI in Education initiatives.

#### 4.4.4. CoP IN PORTUGUESE

AI Pioneers coordinator: TecMinho

To engage educators and stakeholders in Portugal in exploring the ethical and practical integration of AI in education, the Portuguese CoP brings together members from VET schools, secondary schools, higher education institutions, municipalities, associations, and companies, forming a diverse group committed to advancing AI literacy in education.

Membership has grown steadily through outreach and participation in project activities. In 2024, the CoP conducted interviews with VET teachers and education professionals to assess AI awareness and practices in schools. In 2025, it organized two major webinars with over 480 participants combined, and delivered four training courses on generative AI tools, reaching 75 members. These activities have helped raise awareness, build skills, and encourage ethical use of AI in teaching and learning. Key observations reveal strong interest in AI tools and frameworks

such as the DigCompEdu supplement, alongside challenges like resistance to change among many teachers/trainers, lack of institutional guidelines, and the need for continuous training. Educators are experimenting with tools like ChatGPT, Copilot, Gamma, and Perplexity to design learning activities that foster critical thinking, while addressing issues such as prompt creation, data security, and equity in access to AI resources. The CoP actively engages with AI Pioneers resources, including the toolkit and evaluation schema, and calls for more hands-on materials and case studies. Looking ahead, sustainability plans include organizing at least two webinars annually, focusing on emerging topics such as assessment and practical case studies, and maintaining strong links with the European AI Pioneers network. Continued support from the consortium and collaboration with other CoPs will be essential to ensure growth and knowledge exchange.

#### 4.4.5. CoP IN ITALIAN

AI Pioneers coordinators: University of Verona and Fondazione CNOS-FAP.

The Italian Community of Practice's membership includes VET trainers from CNOS-FAP and CIOFS-FP, representatives from European VET networks (EVTA and EfVET), and university professors and students from Verona and other institutions such as Politecnico di Milano and SFUVET. The CNOS-FAP Federation is present in 16 Italian regions with 15 Regional Delegations, whose objective is to assure the promotion of the Salesian vocational training offer, the coordination of vocational training activities in their respective Regions and the representation of the Federation at regional level. The Delegations operate in 60 Centres called CFP – Vocational Education and Training Centres – located throughout Italy.

Engagement has been achieved through consultation seminars, six national webinars (four in 2024 and two in 2025), and annual CNOS-FAP seminars, complemented by LinkedIn outreach and email communication. Activities have focused on presenting the AI Pioneers toolkit, discussing ethical issues in AI use, and sharing research findings and case studies. Topics of interest include digitizing vocational training, applying AI for student performance assessment, and ensuring conscious and ethical use of AI. While universities show higher AI awareness, VET centres display heterogeneous levels of competence, largely influenced by regional funding and institutional priorities. A key challenge is the fragmented adoption of AI tools and the need for practical examples and regulatory alignment across Italy.

The CoP actively uses AI Pioneers resources such as the DigCompEdu supplement, toolkit, and research outputs. Looking ahead, sustainability plans include opening the network to new schools and businesses, organizing events (including paid workshops), fostering collaborations with European networks, and submitting new Erasmus+ applications. CNOS-FAP intends to adopt the AI Pioneers toolkit as a standard resource for national trainer development.

#### 4.4.6. INTERNATIONAL CoP

AI Pioneers coordinator: EDEN Digital Learning Europe.

This CoP operates as a distributed network rather than a formalized group, leveraging EDEN’s extensive membership base of over 50 institutions, 100 individual members, and 14,000 newsletter subscribers. The CoP focuses on raising awareness, exploring ethical and pedagogical implications, and supporting professional development through collaborative activities. Engagement is primarily online, with participation ranging from 50 to 150 attendees in virtual events.

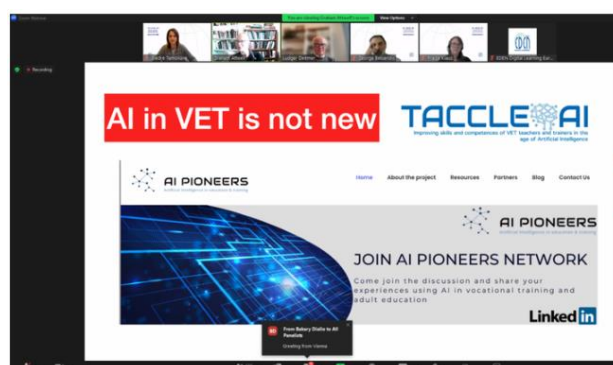


Image 9: AI Pioneers’ webinar at EDEN EODLW 2024

Key activities include dedicated webinars such as *“AI and Education: Enhancing Learning and Pedagogy”* and *“Rethinking Digital Assessment in the Age of GenAI”*, as well as action labs during EDEN’s annual conferences on topics like ethics and evaluation frameworks. Continuous knowledge sharing occurs through newsletters, social media updates, and collaborations with organizations such as the European Training Foundation and the EC Joint Research Centre. These initiatives have sparked discussions on generative AI, ethics, policy gaps, and the redesign of teaching and assessment, while highlighting the need for practical resources and institutional guidelines.



Image 10: AI Pioneers’ Action Lab delivered at EDEN Annual Conference 2025 in Bologna, Italy

The CoP actively disseminates AI Pioneers resources, which members use to initiate institutional dialogue on AI competence development. Feedback emphasizes the importance

of adding case studies and sector-specific guidelines to the toolkit. Looking ahead, EDEN plans to sustain its role by integrating AI topics into future events, strengthening collaboration among institutional members, and maintaining opportunities for participation and knowledge exchange beyond the project's lifespan. As a global reference point, EDEN's network exemplifies how international communities can foster CoP-like dynamics, bridging national contexts and promoting responsible AI adoption in education.

## 4.5. AI PIONEERS FINAL CONFERENCE

The AI Pioneers Final Conference – AI and the Future of Education was held in 22 to 23 September 2025, in Bremen (Germany), bringing together 116 participants for two inspiring days of exchange and collaboration, creating a true hub for knowledge exchange and networking. In this international conference 13 countries were represented among participants: Germany, Italy, Spain, Namibia, Czechia, Norway, Latvia, Poland, Sweden, Portugal, Greece, Finland, Cyprus. Over two days, educators, researchers, and industry experts from different countries shared experiences, explored innovative practices, and shaped the future of AI in vocational education and training (VET). Three thought-provoking keynote speeches set the tone for the event:

- *“How AI is transforming dual vocational training – insights from apprenticeship training at FESTO”* by Stefan Dietl,
- *“Upskilling, Deskillling and Skillflation: A critical reflection on the AI skills discourse and implications for VET education”* by Prof. Dr. Marco Kalz,
- *“Fostering deep learning through informative feedback with AI: toward a learning dialogue in VET”* by Prof. Dr. Karsten D. Wolf and Prof. Dr. Andreas Breiter.

Participants engaged in five dynamic workshops and four interactive networking sessions, designed to spark collaboration and inspire new ideas. A highlight was the lively panel discussion featuring voices from four countries: Ana Dias (Portugal), Angela Karadog (Spain), George Bekiaridis (Greece), Prof. Dr. Ralph Dreher (Germany), and Prof. Dr. h.c. Michael Gessler (Germany), moderated by Dr. Ludger Deitmer.

Beyond the formal sessions, the conference offered ample opportunities for informal dialogue, enabling participants to deepen existing connections and forge new partnerships. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many attendees expressing a strong desire for similar events in the future. With lively debates, hands-on workshops, and informal conversations, the event held special importance for the Pioneer Reference Network: it offered a unique opportunity for members to meet in person, strengthen relationships, and build new connections around the debate about AI in VET with the spirit of a community coming together.



Image 11: AI Pioneers final Conference group photo, opening session and keynote presentation

## 5. IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY FOR THE NETWORK

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The AI Pioneers Reference Network has created a robust foundation for lasting impact in the field of Artificial Intelligence in Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Adult Learning. By supporting collaboration between educators, policymakers, researchers, and developers across Europe and beyond, the network has fostered an inclusive and dynamic environment for critical reflection, pedagogical innovation, and ethical practice in AI integration.

The AI Pioneers Network has succeeded in mobilising a diverse community of practice, bringing together VET professionals, higher education institutions, and innovation agencies across Europe. Through a wide range of consultation seminars, webinars, newsletters, and national Communities of Practice (CoPs), the network has significantly contributed to:

- Enhancing awareness and digital readiness among educators regarding AI tools and practices;
- Promoting ethical and inclusive approaches to the use of AI in educational contexts;
- Strengthening capacity building in digital pedagogy and AI literacy;
- Facilitating cross-country collaboration and shared strategies for AI in VET.

Its visibility and relevance have been amplified by continuous communication and engagement activities, such as the weekly newsletter, social media outreach, and high-level events involving stakeholders from over 40 countries.

To ensure the continuity and added value of the AI Pioneers Reference Network after the end of the project, a clear sustainability plan has been established. This includes structured commitments from project partners to support the ongoing coordination, communication, and dissemination of network activities. Core components of the sustainability model include:

- **One international conference per year** dedicated to AI in VET and Adult Education, fostering high-level exchange of knowledge and practices.

- **Six webinars annually**, featuring leading experts and practitioners on themes such as AI literacy, ethics, assessment, and digital transformation.
- **Twelve blog posts per year**, authored by network members to share insights, case studies, and reflections from their contexts and experiences.
- **Presentations during Open Education Week** and other international events to increase visibility and reach new audiences.
- **Exploration of an Action Lab** at EDEN's annual conference, dedicated to the ongoing work and development of the AI Pioneers Network.

The network will continue to be supported by partner organisations through the provision of updated resources, ethical guidance tools, collaborative meeting spaces, and digital infrastructure for interaction and dissemination. These contributions aim to maintain the momentum built during the project and reinforce the community's relevance in an evolving digital education landscape.

## 6. REFERENCES

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Redecker, Ch. (2017). European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators: DigCompEdu, Punie, Y. (ed.), EUR 28775 EN, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2017, ISBN 978-92-79-73718-3 (print), 978-92-79-73494-6 (pdf), doi:10.2760/178382 (print), 10.2760/159770 (online), JRC107466.

## 7. ANNEXES

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### 7.1. NATIONAL COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE (CoPs) REPORTS

## CoP in Greek

**Country: Greece and Cyprus**

**CoP Coordinator(s): ACP / CSI**

Participating Institutions/Organisations: From Greece, members include vocational training institutes like Thematic S.A.E.K. Egaleo, adult education providers such as the Second Chance School of Syros, a specialized Digital Pedagogy Community of Practice, and the Hellenic Association of Vocational Training Centers (ELSEKEK). From Cyprus CoP includes universities and their research labs (UCY & CPI, KIOS CoE, Cyprus Interaction Lab), a national digital skills body (Cyprus Digital Skills Coalition), professional communities (EPALE Cyprus, NEARVET), and a society for arts education (CySEA).

## Community Composition and Engagement

The composition of the CoPs in Greece and Cyprus shows distinct characteristics, reflecting their respective national educational and professional landscapes.

From Greece CoP is primarily composed of formal educational institutions and associations. The engagement primarily involves teachers, educators, and VET professionals. There are at least 50 active members who participated in specific events. The engagement formats included targeted workshops, a webinar, and a formal presentation to the members of the VET association. The Cypriot part is more diverse, encompassing a wider range of organizations. This diverse composition brings together university academics, researchers, VET practitioners, adult educators, emergency responders, policymakers, NGOs, and creative professionals. The network demonstrates a higher number of active participants, with over 137 individuals noted across various events. The engagement methods were varied and frequent, including workshops, specialized training sessions, webinars, a 10-module certification series, and both local and cross-country meetings under Erasmus+ projects.

## Activities Delivered

In Greece, the activities were focused and specific. They included a workshop for 20 teachers at Thematic S.A.E.K. Egaleo, another workshop for 11 teachers at the Second Chance School of Syros, a webinar hosted by the Digital Pedagogy Community of Practice with 18 participants, and a presentation delivered to the members of ELSEKEK. In Cyprus, the activities were more extensive and varied. Key activities included workshops on conversational AI by UCY & CPI, a 10-module series on AI tools by the Digital Skills Coalition, and specialized training on computer vision and robotics for emergency responders by KIOS CoE. Furthermore, the Cyprus Interaction Lab conducted workshops on generative AI for creatives, while EPAL and NEARVET organized a continuous stream of webinars, thematic discussions, and collaborative workshops. CySEA also engaged its members through national workshops as part of its Erasmus+ project.

## Main Observations and Reflections

**Topics of Interest:** Across both countries, there is a strong common interest in the digital transformation of education, digital pedagogy, and the application of AI-powered tools for learning analytics, personalized learning, and content creation. In Greece, the focus is sharply on VET, work-based learning, and the implementation of digital competency frameworks like DigiComp. Cyprus shows a broader range of interests, including advanced topics like

conversational AI, AI for civil protection, generative AI in the creative arts, and the ethical implications of AI.

**AI Awareness and Competence:** The current level of AI awareness varies. In Cyprus, organizations like KIOS CoE and UCY are at the forefront of AI development and application. However, communities like EPAL Cyprus report limited AI experience among adult educators, indicating a significant gap. In Greece, the focus on digital transformation suggests a growing awareness, but the primary challenge remains the practical integration of AI into existing VET curricula.

**AI Tools and Practices:** In Cyprus, specific AI tools like TeacherMate, Study Buddy, and DALL-E are being actively explored and used. The focus is on both practical applications (chatbots, document AI) and experimental uses (generative art). In Greece, the use cases are more conceptual, focusing on the potential of AI for learning analytics, personalized pathways, and quality assurance in VET, without mentioning specific tools being implemented.

**Identified Challenges:** Common challenges include the need to keep curricula updated, the ethical and secure integration of AI tools, and the digital readiness of educators. Greece faces challenges in ensuring consistent AI adoption across VET centers and aligning policy. Cyprus highlights issues such as regulatory compliance for high-stakes AI applications, intellectual property concerns with generative AI, and the limited AI infrastructure within some institutions.

**Immediate Needs:** The primary need identified across both CoPs is for practical training and accessible resources for educators. There is a clear demand for professional development that builds confidence and competence in using AI tools effectively and ethically in pedagogical contexts.

## Interaction with AI Pioneers Resources

The CoP members in Greece and Cyprus actively engaged with several key resources from the AI Pioneers project. Specifically, the materials that were accessed and shared include the supplement to the DigCompEdu framework, which provides critical competencies for educators using AI; the comprehensive Knowledge Base with its extensive list of AI tools and best practices; and the evaluation schema and handbook for AI in education, focusing on data, privacy, ethics, and EU values. While the provided information confirms access to these foundational documents, it does not include specific feedback from the members on these materials. For future development, a clear suggestion is to build upon these resources by creating more applied, hands-on training materials, such as webinars or video tutorials, that demonstrate the practical application of the tools listed in the Knowledge Base within real-world VET and adult education contexts. This would directly address the members identified need for practical training and confidence-building. Additionally, implementing a dedicated forum or a structured feedback mechanism on the project website would enable the consortium to gather direct input and continuously refine the resources based on the evolving needs and experiences of the educators in the AI Pioneers network.

## Future Plans and Sustainability of the AI Pioneers Network

To ensure sustainability beyond the project's lifespan, the network should seek further funding, formalize their structures, and develop professional development courses, while contributing localized best-practice case studies and translated resources to the broader

European network. The continued success of these initiatives hinges on ongoing support from the project consortium, particularly in the form of expert guidance, technical assistance, and collaborative opportunities with other CoPs.

## CoP in German

**Country: Germany**

**CoP Coordinator(s): Institute Technology and Education (ITB), University of Bremen; Bundesinstitut Für Berufsbildung (BIBB)**

Participating Institutions/Organisations:

- BBS II Verden (technical vocational school), Benjamin Mautz (VET teacher),
- BBS II Neustadt am Rübenberge (technical vocational school), Florian Beier (Head of Electrical Engineering),
- BBS II Delmenhorst (technical vocational school), Martin Ohm (VET Teacher),
- BBS II Wolfsburg (technical vocational school), Stefan Manemann (Head of department),
- Technisches Bildungszentrum Mitte (TBZ; technical vocational school),
- BBS II Emden (technical vocational school and college), Hauke Fremy (VET teacher),
- Berufsbildende Schulen Osnabrück Brinkstraße (technical vocational school), Stefan Sayk (Director of Studies, Electrical Engineering),
- Werner von Siemens Schule, BBS Hildesheim (technical vocational school),
- BBS ITECH Elbinsel Hamburg-Wilhelmsburg (technical vocational school), Holger Schmidt (Head of School Development and Institutional Cooperation),
- ma-co maritimes kompetenzentrum (further training institution), Bremen, Kirsten Krüger (Head of Port and Logistics Department),
- Oldenburgische Industrie- und Handelskammer (Chamber of Commerce and Industry),
- Bau ABC Rostrup (Training Centre for the Construction Industry), Bad Zwischenahn, Melanie Campbell (managing director),
- BBS für Wirtschaft und Verwaltung Bremerhaven (vocational school), Hermann Pieper (school management),
- FOBIZZ (provider of AI tools and courses for VET schools and training companies), Vivien Ferencz (Client Relationship Manager),
- Festo Didactics SE (provider of technical training and further education), Stefan Dietl (Head of Global Vocational Education at Festo),
- University of Siegen, Prof. Ralph Dreher (Chair of technical Vocational Didactics),
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für künstliche Intelligenz (German Association for AI),
- A few vocational school teachers from South Africa and Namibia.

Note: Only one representative was appointed for each organisation, even though more people participated in the network activities.

## Community Composition and Engagement

The CoP is mainly made up of vocational schoolteachers, but also includes people from other vocational training institutions, such as teaching staff or department heads, i.e. from the vocational training service provider sector. Additionally, trainers from small and medium-sized enterprises (KMUs) have been engaged through workshops and presentations, further

enriching the community. Initial members for the CoP were recruited through surveys in vocational schools in northern and north-western Germany. The number of members and institutions was increased through various workshops and seminars. By participating in an education symposium organised by one of the participating vocational schools and having the opportunity to hold a workshop at the education symposium, we were able to expand our CoP.

## Activities Delivered

Several presentations were given (ITB: two in 2023; five in 2024; four in 2025) and several workshops were held (ITB: five in 2024; eleven in 2025). Three key activities are presented below: In May 2024, a workshop entitled 'Science meets Practice' was held, which gave 10 members of our CoP the opportunity to give short presentations on their current engagement with AI and the current use of AI in their educational institutions. These provided the basis for discussions on the use of AI in vocational training and adult education institutions. In March 2025, ITB had the opportunity to hold a workshop on the use of AI in vocational training institutions for a South African delegation of vocational schoolteachers. The focus was on the various phases of AI implementation in educational institutions. The workshop also enabled the CoP to expand beyond the borders of Germany.

As already mentioned in section 2, ITB were able to hold a workshop at an education symposium in May 2025. The content of the workshop was based on the AI Pioneers evaluation schema.

In addition, the BIBB contributed two presentations in 2024 and four in 2025. Workshops at BIBB included four in 2024 and ten in 2025. A key objective of the activities was to enhance the skills of teachers and trainers while also highlighting the networking opportunities offered by AI Pioneers. A particularly rewarding experience was a workshop in March 2025, which brought together almost all headmasters from the Mittelfranken region in Germany. Another highlight was a successful 2025 webinar with 170 participants, aimed at vocational education trainers, as well as the final conference of the AI Pioneers project with the final symposium, where the majority of participants were German vocational training stakeholders.

## Main Observations and Reflections

Questions regarding the ethical use of AI in educational institutions were raised repeatedly in all workshops and presentations. In particular, concerns were expressed about the protection of learners' personal data. However, there was also frequent discussion about how to take the first step towards implementing AI in educational institutions. The usefulness of introducing AI cafés in educational institutions was also frequently emphasised. Discussing job-specific applications of AI allowed participants to identify commonalities and differences. However, the importance of mutual exchange was repeatedly emphasized. In the discussions during BIBB-Workshops, it became clear that one of the major challenges is not just the technical integration of AI in educational settings but how to scale its use across institutions and engage colleagues. There is a strong interest in understanding how to motivate peers to start experimenting with AI tools and incorporating them into their teaching and administrative processes. Another important reflection concerns the limitations of AI systems. While the potential for AI in education is immense, it was noted that not all applications are suitable for every context. Understanding the strengths and limitations of AI tools is crucial in deciding where to implement them effectively. Members expressed the

need for frameworks or guidelines that help evaluate the feasibility and impact of AI solutions before rolling them out on a larger scale.

### **Interaction with AI Pioneers Resources**

The workshops covered e.g. the content of the evaluation schema as well as the toolkit. With regard to the evaluation schema, feedback from one workshop suggested that a concrete checklist would be helpful in verifying whether AI is being used ethically in educational institutions. The workshops referred to the DigCompEdu supplement, which meant that this resource was widely used by members and served as a reference.

### **Future Plans and Sustainability of the AI Pioneers Network**

The plan is to hold an annual AI Day at ITB with the German CoP in order to maintain contact with vocational schools. Efforts will also be made to apply for or consider national projects with CoP members. In addition, the AI Pioneers community on LinkedIn will be continued. BIBB will also support with webinars via their platform Leando for VET training and teaching staff.

### **Additional Notes**

The CoP is growing steadily, and the debate on AI is not yet over, as AI continues to evolve. Therefore, the main goal is to stay in touch with members in order to keep track of further developments to learn from each other.

## CoP in Spanish

**Country: Spain**

**CoP Coordinator(s): University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU) and Pontydysgu**

Participating Institutions/Organisations: VET institutions, universities, and research organisations linked to labour market innovation and competitiveness.

## Community Composition and Engagement

The Spanish Community of Practice brings together participants from vocational education and training institutions, universities, and research centres. Members include teachers, trainers, lecturers, researchers, and individuals involved in AI tool development and training provision for VET centres. The CoP was formed as part of the AI Pioneers Network to promote awareness, understanding, and dialogue on artificial intelligence in education and training primarily through one-to-one online meetings and webinars. Engagement has been primarily online and based on attendance at the webinars there are approximately 46 active members.

## Activities Delivered

Three key webinars were organised to engage members of the CoP. The first, titled “Artificial Intelligence in Education: Ethics, Challenges, and Opportunities,” explored the ethical challenges and opportunities that AI presents within educational contexts and attracted 40 participants. The second, “MenTek-AI: Integration of AI in Emotional Support for Students,” was presented by VET trainers and showcased innovative practices in using AI to support learners’ emotional wellbeing, with 28 participants. The third session, “Ethical Challenges of AI in Society and in the Classroom,” focused on the development of AI policies and ethical considerations in teaching and learning and brought together 48 participants. Collectively, these activities fostered the exchange of experiences among educators and encouraged reflection on the ethical and pedagogical implications of AI use. In addition, the project was presented in 2024 at the International Conference on Social and Educational Inclusion (Congreso Internacional en Inclusión Social y Educativa – CIISE), which was organised by the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU) in Bilbao.

## Main Observations and Reflections

The main topics of interest among members of the Spanish Community of Practice include AI ethics, emotional wellbeing, curriculum adaptation for AI-driven futures, and institutional readiness for AI integration. Most participants are already familiar with tools such as ChatGPT and DALL·E; however, their practical experience with AI remains limited, often based on individual experimentation rather than systematic application in teaching and learning. Despite this enthusiasm, several challenges persist, including limited institutional engagement, time constraints and a general lack of structured training on how to effectively implement AI in educational settings. To address these gaps, members have identified a clear need for practical guidance on embedding AI into teaching practice, access to concrete examples of pedagogical models that use AI, and the development of ethical frameworks to support its responsible and informed use in VET contexts.

## Interaction with AI Pioneers Resources

Members of the Spanish Community of Practice have engaged with AI Pioneers resources, related to ethical aspects of AI in VET and adult education. In individual online interactions,

information was shared about the ethical products developed under WP 5, including the evaluation schema and the AI Pioneers handbook. Feedback was collected for both products. On the other hand, the CoP's online seminars were designed to extend beyond the immediate project outputs, aiming instead to spotlight expertise and perspectives from outside the consortium. To this end, researchers and trainers actively working with AI were invited to share their experiences, present ongoing projects, and discuss the ethical and practical challenges of AI uptake in educational contexts.

## **Future Plans and Sustainability of the AI Pioneers Network**

Looking ahead, the Spanish CoP aims to continue strengthening collaboration between educators, researchers, and practitioners. Reaching out to VET centres remains a challenge, as many are overburdened and not yet deeply engaged with AI-related initiatives. However, the CoP has been able to connect with several centres involved in EU-funded innovation projects, where AI integration is starting to develop. This has provided valuable opportunities to exchange experiences and establish links with institutions across Spain that are at different stages of AI adoption.

Looking forward, the CoP plans to continue organising webinars and discussion meetings, expanding its membership and reinforcing collaboration between practitioners and researchers. Strengthening institutional engagement and aligning with national and European AI in Education initiatives will be key to ensuring its sustainability.

## CoP in Portuguese

**Country: Portugal**

**CoP Coordinator(s): TecMinho (Ana Dias)**

Participating Institutions/Organisations: The organisations that connected more closely with the Portuguese CoP through the participation of their teachers and trainers in consultation seminars/webinars, and interviews/meetings are VET schools, public and private secondary schools, Universities and Polytechnics, and IT companies. These educational institutions are located throughout the country. Other educators, education professionals and public institutions took part in consultation webinars promoted by the AI Pioneers project team and follow closely the AI Pioneers LinkedIn page.

## Community Composition and Engagement

The first pioneers to integrate the Portuguese CoP were teachers and educators from VET schools, secondary schools and higher education institutions that had already contacts with TecMinho and that showed interest in topics related to educational technologies, new pedagogical methodologies and AI in education. They were invited by Ana Dias to take part in the CoP and to share with the members what their experience was with AI in education, what were the difficulties they encountered with AI in their educational contexts. These first contacts further disseminated the CoP and the project's events and initiatives, bringing news members to the group of professionals interested in understanding better AI in Education. The CoP integrates teachers and trainers from VET schools, primary and secondary schools, Higher education institutions, members of municipalities, associations, companies and other professionals that are interested in the ethical use of AI in education and other areas. They have been participating in consultation seminars/webinars, meetings, workshops, and on the official AI Pioneers network channel (LinkedIn page).

## Activities Delivered

In 2024, the CoP in Portugal held 5 interviews with VET teachers, trainers, and education professionals to gather information on the AI knowledge in VET and schools in Portugal, considering their area of expertise (teachers of languages, chemistry, IT, education). From these meetings we were able to understand teacher's points of view, difficulties encountered, activities created with students and results obtained, and their school's stand on AI in daily educational activities.

In 2025, the CoP in Portugal promoted two webinars to disseminate knowledge about generative AI tools (mainly Chat GPT and Copilot) and how to use them in everyday professional activities, taking ethics always in consideration: "IA na prática" webinar (3/7/2025 with 232 participants) and "Introdução ao Copilot no Microsoft 365" webinar (07/10/2025 with 251 participants). Three training courses were conducted in the uses of generative AI tools: "IA na Prática" (3 courses) and "Copilot 365 na Prática" (1 course) with 75 participants in total.

## Main Observations and Reflections

Through the participation in the several activities held by the CoP and AI Pioneers project project in general, we were able to understand that these pioneer educators have interest in all topics that the AI Pioneers project developed and published through the project's deliverables, namely examples of AI tools for educational purposes, ethical use of these

tools, case studies. A particular interest was also showed about the Supplement to the DigCompEdu, and how it could be a guideline to further skills in AI for teachers, and how it could be relevant for schools to help teachers to increase AI skills. These pioneer teachers have been working with AI in education and creating awareness among fellow teachers. From their point of view, educators have different levels of knowledge regarding AI in education, but the majority are all very keen on learning new tools and uses to be better prepared to face the new challenges that generative AI brings to the classrooms, many times brought directly by the students themselves. Nevertheless, resistance still exist among some educators, like with every new technology.

The challenges they face are the everchanging tools that they have a difficult time in keeping up with, the learning curve that learning a new tool carries, and how to keep the use of AI in class as a resource for learning and evaluation (among others) by students, and not as the only resource for easy answers. Teachers feel the constant need for specific training in these areas. The educators we encountered have showed us that in their case, schools don't have strict guidelines about AI, leaving teachers to uses tools as they see adequate. Some schools don't even have any kind of policy guidelines in these matters.

Many of the educators in the CoP chose to use ChatGPT, CoPilot, Gamma, Magic AI, Perplexity to create the teaching and evaluating activities for students, fostering critical thinking in students: creation of effective prompts (a difficulty that teachers see among students), comparison between responses obtained and critical reflection by students, further research and validation of answers, oriented brainstorming activities with students . Info-exclusion must be combated by teachers, as it can arise if they do not support the creation of prompts with a critical spirit. Another difficulty point out was the danger of level gaps among students that the different access to AI can bring (due to paid/free versions access) and that the teachers must overcome. The security of information gathered by AI tools is also a topic that many teachers and educators feel the need to know more about. The relevance of these tools, which allow teachers to save time on administrative tasks and free up time for educational activities, has been a major factor in favour of increased use of AI by educators.

## **Interaction with AI Pioneers Resources**

The educators from the Portuguese CoP have shown us interest in all the materials developed by the AI Pioneers project, including the Supplement to the DigCompEdu, the toolkit, and the evaluation schema for the use of AI in education. The interest in all materials and initiatives by the AI Pioneers consortium is demonstrated by the participation of CoP educators in webinars, consultation seminars, the project's LinkedIn page, and subscriptions to the pioneers' network newsletter.

## **Future Plans and Sustainability of the AI Pioneers Network**

The Portuguese CoP plans on promoting 2 webinars per year. The topics will be prepared considering the issues that are most relevant to educators in the coming year, in line with current needs and emerging technologies. Topics such as assessment and case studies may be of relevance.

## **CoP In Italian**

**Country: Italy**

**CoP Coordinators: Cassandra Wubbles (University of Verona), Angelica Progetti (CNOS-FAP)**

Participating Organisations: University of Verona, Fondazione CNOS-FAP-ETS

## **Community Composition and Engagement**

### **CNOS- FAP:**

- Italian VET trainers of CNOS-FAP Foundation – 30 trainers of the digital sector took part in online Consultations and Webinars;
- European VET trainers represented by the Salesian umbrella organisation DB Tech Europe - The Executive Director of the network has participated in the first Consultation Seminar and shared the project materials and the invitation to join the CoP to all VET bodies;
- VET trainers representatives (EVTA and EfVET);
- Italian VET trainers of CIOFS-FP – Padova VET centre has been actively involved in the Consultation Seminar,
- Poliestetico di Milano (VET school outside CNOS - FAP Federation in the beauty sector) – attended the National Webinars

### **University of Verona:**

- In-training trainers and Students at the University of Verona – course for Training and Professional Development: attended the Seminars;
- University professors;
- Swiss Federal University for Vocational Education and Training SFUVET - attended the Seminars ;
- Politecnico di Milano SFUVET - attended the Seminars;
- ENAC Verona (VET provider) attended the Seminars;
- APRESO Researchers - attended the Seminars and participated in the Research of the project

## **Activities Delivered**

The above-mentioned members have been involved and reached through:

- Consultation Seminars organised as project activity.
- 6 National Webinars/Seminars (hybrid format online and in presence, 4 delivered in 2024 and 2 delivered in 2025) who addressed the issue of the ethical use of AI in VET, presented the project and toolkit developed by the University of Verona, and explained the research for the case studies and literature review.
- Emails and LinkedIn posts
- In the case of CNOS-FAP: almost all the trainers of the Foundation have been informed and involved during the yearly national seminars and updating courses that the Foundation organises for each VET sector

## Main Observations and Reflections

**Topics of interest:** digitizing vocational training through the use of AI tools in the classroom, applied to every VET sector for both student learning and teaching and student performance assessment.

**AI awareness:** different levels of awareness depending on the type of education/training institution (university or VET centre).

In the case of universities, the level of competence in the use of AI tools is perhaps higher because students use AI more for academic tasks, to simplify their studies and research. In the case of vocational training, which in Italy is regulated by the regions, the situation is highly heterogeneous - depending on the region (depending on the regional funds available for investment in vocational training facilities), the awareness and competence in the use of AI tools varies significantly from one VET centre to another. VET centres are experimenting the use of AI tools in the classroom and what emerged is the need of having more practical examples on how to use it effectively.

**Challenge:** Conscious and ethical use of AI in VET and higher education contexts by teachers and students – there is the **need** to regulate the use of AI in educational institutions as well as the need to align the educational offering that makes use of AI tools throughout Italy (At the moment, the situation regarding knowledge and use of AI in the classroom is still too fragmented because it depends on the willingness of individual trainers).

## Interaction with AI Pioneers Resources

**Project material shared:** Research and case studies, Toolkit, supplement to DigComp Edu framework

## Future Plans and Sustainability of the AI Pioneers Network

Ideas for maintaining the CoP beyond the project lifespan :

- Opening of the AI Pioneers network to new schools, training institutions, and businesses;
- Organization of events and workshops, including paid events, to finance maintenance;
- External collaborations with European networks;
- New Erasmus+ applications aiming to enhance the CoP created.

As part of its efforts to ensure the sustainability of the CoP, CNOS-FAP already plans to adopt the toolkit created by the project as training tools to be recommended to all its national trainers.

## International CoP

**Country: International**

**CoP Coordinator(s): EDEN Digital Learning Europe**

Participating Institutions/Organisations: Institutional and individual network members.

## Community Composition and Engagement

EDEN DLE has a growing membership of over 50 institutional and more than 100 individual members who are part of the Network of Academic and Professional (EDEN NAP).

Additionally, EDEN has access to more than 14,000 subscribers of the monthly newsletter, including institutions, academics, professionals, researchers, and students in the field of digital education. Considering this international context and online community, although no specific CoP was established, EDEN DLE facilitated a distributed and networked community centred on shared professional interest in the field of digital education, with a specific focus on AI in education. The community comprises members with diverse expertise, ranging from newcomers to experienced practitioners, researchers, educators, policymakers, and EdTech developers, who interact freely, sharing curiosity and uncertainty about AI's pedagogical alignments and implications across various educational sectors. The participation is voluntary and self-directed, allowing members to engage in topics and activities relevant to their interests. Typically, between 50 and 150 participants engage in virtual events.

## Activities Delivered

Participation in [virtual events organised by EDEN](#), including EDEN NAP monthly webinars, EODLW sessions, and action labs during on-site conferences, as well as knowledge sharing via social networks, demonstrates continuity and a shared interest in exploring multiple aspects of AI in digital education. Key community engagement activities include:

- **Dedicated webinars and workshops:**
  - o [Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Adult Education and VET](#) (EODLW2023; 06.11.2023)
  - o [AI and Education: Enhancing Learning and Pedagogy](#) (EODLW2024; 11.11.2024)
  - o Rethinking digital assessment in the age of GenAI (EDEN NAP; 06.03.2024)
- **On-site action labs/workshops at annual conferences:**
  - o [Meeting the Challenges of AI in Education](#) (EDEN Annual conference 2024)
  - o [Artificial Intelligence and Ethics in Education – An Evaluation Schema Workshop](#) (EDEN Annual conference 2025)
- **Ongoing knowledge sharing:**
  - o Monthly newsletters including information on the project deliverables, announcements of the upcoming consultation webinars, and invitations to take part in surveys or provide expert feedback when needed. Multiple posts were re-shared across EDEN DLE social media channels, sharing resources, news, event highlights, and updates of the AI Pioneers project, to reach a wider EDEN network community, extending beyond live participation in virtual events.
- **Expanding collaboration networks** with EC Joint Research Centre and European Training Foundation.

Through these multiple formats, EDEN created a flexible and inclusive space for professional dialogue and learning about AI in education across various educational sectors.

## **Main Observations and Reflections**

Members showed strong interest in the GenAI application for assessment. Equally important were questions and discussions on ethics and policy implications, as well as the pedagogical redesign of teaching, learning, and assessment, and the support for teaching and learning. While some members were already experimenting with AI tools in their practices, others were seeking conceptual understanding and guidance on responsible use.

A lack of clear institutional guidelines and regulations emerged as a significant challenge for many members. Additionally, concerns and uncertainty were expressed regarding data privacy, responsibility, explainability, and digital competence in AI among both teachers and learners. Participants expressed a need for practical and contextually relevant resources, particularly those focused on specific educational sectors.

## **Interaction with AI Pioneers Resources**

Project resources were disseminated via EDEN's communication channels, including newsletters, webinar contents and presentations. Members found these resources useful for starting institutional or departmental dialogue on AI competence development. Feedback suggested updating the toolbox with additional case studies and short institutional perspectives, including specific guidelines for practitioners in VET education. Being recognised by international network members resulted in invited presentations at other events, such as E-learning Centre Week, as well as collaborations with the EC Joint Research Centre, European Training Foundation, and similar organisations.

## **Future Plans and Sustainability of the AI Pioneers Network**

Building on its role as a facilitative network, EDEN will continue integrating AI-related topics into virtual events, strengthen collaboration between institutional members working on AI-related projects, and contribute to the AI Pioneers network through dissemination, cross-linking of events, and dedicated spots in virtual events or conferences. In this way, EDEN will remain an important part of the Network, creating spaces for AI in education-focused dialogues and maintaining opportunities for participation, communication, and knowledge exchange beyond the project's timeframe.

## **Additional Notes**

EDEN's distributed and networked community serves as an example of an international virtual professional community, nurturing CoP-like dynamics without formal boundaries and fostering shared learning and mutual support across institutions and national contexts.