Call for contributions to Special Issue in 'Learning in Context': *ECE teacher training and professional development in mathematics – international views*

The E-CER network "Teacher professional competence: Theoretical, methodological and instructional challenges in the domain of preschool mathematics" (funded by EARLI 2024-2028, https://www.earli.org/e-cer-torbeyns) engages in scientific reflections and discussions about the development and stimulation of teacher professional competence in early childhood mathematics education via professional development and teacher training programs . A major challenge in reaching mutual understanding of and initiating collaborative research projects on foundational teacher competencies and how to stimulate their development, is the rich diversity of cultural and educational contexts wherein early childhood education teachers are trained and operate. Our limited understanding of timely questions regarding early childhood mathematics education is at least partly due to the country-specific differences in early childhood education (ECE) settings, in the national guidelines for what and how to teach in ECE settings, in teacher training programs and in professional development initiatives. Altogether, these differences confront the international community of early childhood mathematics researchers with serious challenges in interpreting, evaluating and - not least - replicating studies and findings across countries.

Given the pivotal role of high-quality ECE in the domain of mathematics and of competent ECE teachers to provide this instruction, we urgently need to collect and synthesize studies of high scientific standard in a special issue that focuses on ECE teacher training and professional development in early mathematics education, crossing national, cultural and educational borders. The aim of the special issue is to initiate discussion about both commonalities and differences in international research on teacher professional competence and its development and stimulation, and to improve our insights into the key components of ECE teacher training and professional development in the domain of early mathematics education, at both national and international levels.

The journal *Learning in Context* aims to highlight research where insights into teaching and learning are rooted in interpretations grounded in their specific contexts. This means, the special issue is anticipating contributions that highlight learning in context, in line with Damşa et al. (2025). This may include professionals' (teachers') cultural and historical background as well as the institutions' (teacher training programs') history, existing discourses and perspectives that frame the norms, values, content, methods and tools embedded in the teacher training and professional development which interacts with what activities are performed and how, and not least, the relationships between these elements.

How to contribute

Up to ten articles will be accepted for publication within the Special Issue, expected to be published by April 2027. Each manuscript will go through a rigorous peer-review process, to ensure highest scientific quality.

The Special Issue is open to a rich diversity of methodologies central to the field and welcome both methodologies addressing the particularity of the challenges addressed above, and allowing for generality. Each manuscript submitted to the Special Issue is required to include a substantial description of the context within which the reported study is conducted and what contextual aspects will be addressed. The reported study is expected to deal with questions critical for moving the field forward, that is, going beyond context descriptions and elaborating on that context as an aspect of the learning and development taking place.

The special issue welcomes articles in the domain of early mathematics education – teacher training and professional development – focusing on (but not limited to):

- Reviews of developments in ECE teacher training and professional development (e.g., historical, policy or international comparisons)

- Intervention studies in ECE teacher training and professional development programs

- Empirical studies on pre-service and in-service ECE teachers' competencies, attitudes or domain-specific (pedagogical content) knowledge for providing high-quality instruction in ECE mathematics

- International comparison studies on ECE teacher training and professional development programs, and their associations with ECE teacher competencies

- Theoretical analyses of the key components of ECE teachers' professional knowledge and skills to be developed in teacher training and professional development programs

Technical issues

Articles may be up to 10,000 words (excluding references and appendices). Authors are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the journal's guide for authors: https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/learning-in-context/publish/guide-for-authors and the commentary to the Special Issue *Setting the scene for 'Learning in Context'* (see Damşa et al., 2025).

Researchers interested in contributing to the Special Issue are asked to send an abstract briefly sketching the research query, methodology, context and main points of the knowledge contribution. Core references may be included where appropriate (reference

list not counting towards the word limit). In addition, a brief bio of contributing authors (max 100 words each) should be included in the abstract, outlining the authors' history and location in the field.

The selection of articles to be published in the Special Issue will be based on quality with respect to the theme outlined above.

Camilla Björklund, Simone Dunekacke, Pernille Bødtker Sunde, Joke Torbeyns, guest-editors.

Summary of instructions for submitting an abstract

Abstract should include:

- Title and abstract, maximum 300 words excluding references
- Brief bio of contributing authors, maximum of 100 words each

Submission should be made via e-mail to Camilla Björklund: camilla.bjorklund@ped.gu.se

Timeline

Call for papers deadline	April 14th 2026
Notification of acceptance of abstract	May 1st 2026
Submission of full paper	August 31st 2026
Following review and revisions are expected to be completed in February 2027	
Publication	April 2027

Reference

Damşa, C., Hofmann, R., Ingerman, Å., Ligorio, M. B., & Myhill, D. (2025). Setting the scene for Learning in Context. *Learning in Context,* 2(1–2), 100013, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lecon.2025.100013