



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS  
**DELTA KAPPA GAMMA™**

## **EUFORIA**

### **Edition 62 Spring 2024**

**Dear friends,** here is EUFORIA, the Spring edition of 2024. In this Issue, you can read about committee works and various activities of the participating countries. Thanks to all the members who contributed to this issue with their interesting articles. Many thanks to Evelyn Goodsell (GB) for proofreading the articles, she has been a great help. I hope you'll enjoy the warmer weather and nature waking up as spring approaches. It's long been my favorite time of year and a great way to disconnect from the busy world of teaching and become one with nature. It is a wonderful way to concentrate on mindfulness and is very important for my mental health. I hope you all find your ways to keep calm after work and may your summer be filled with joy.



Enjoy reading!

**Kristín Guðbjörg Snæland**

Editor and member of Beta Chapter, Iceland



## The European Forum Committee

Thanks to our editor Kristín Guðbjörg Snæland from Iceland there is this new edition of the European newsletter.

Our new Artist of the Month is Elin Mathiesen from Norway. Visit the website for her beautiful jewelry.

The European Forum Committee has continued meeting via Zoom. The agendas and minutes are to be found on [dkgeurope.org](http://dkgeurope.org).



On the website you will also find all educational presentations that have been organized so far; lots of valuable resources for information on educational issues, chapter meetings, and the classroom. On December 13, 2023, our tradition continued: Lucia Day. Under the theme "Typical Handcrafted Christmas Decorations of our Member Countries" we were entertained with eight completely different presentations.

At the conference in Tampere, it was agreed that DKG Europe would connect with DKG Canada. A Zoom event took place in January 2024. Another interesting Zoom meeting was organized between Manitoba and Finland. There was a lot to learn about the school systems. The information Maarit Kostamo presented about the Finnish schools was so informative and extensive that the idea is to set up presentations of school systems in our member countries in Europe. It would be very interesting to do this also within our International Society, come to think of Latin American member countries and Japan!

Liz Day's theme for the Great Britain presentation was "Have Schools Seen Better Days?". The halcyon days as were described in the 1970s seem to be over, problems teachers face today seem to be universal, again lots of food for thought and discussion!

Norway will complete the educational presentations for this biennium on April 18. It will be announced on the website. As always Regional Director Marie-Antoinette Hubers de Wolf will provide us with the link for our Zoom events.

The European Forum Committee will meet in person in Norway in May. There will be a lot of things to be discussed and organized e.g. results of the survey and necessary actions to be taken, organizing the Forum meeting at the Convention in Maryland in July as well as the joint meeting of the US Forum, the Latin American, Canadian and European Forums which is a new endeavor, and develop ideas for future projects.

Our webmaster Eygló Björnsdóttir (eyglob@gmail.com) is constantly updating our website. Please send her important information about your countries, and any change of significance to our members, not to forget the dates of state meetings.

Enjoy the spring season!

**Marika Heimbach**

EFC chair 2022-2024

[mariakath49@gmx.de](mailto:mariakath49@gmx.de)

## **A Woman of Importance**

Marion Blumenthal Lazan is an Honorary Member of our Society. I am delighted that Marion received one of the highest honors of the Federal Republic of Germany: The First Class Order of Merit. It was presented to her by the Consul General of Germany at his residence in New York City on January 21, 2024. He said:

“ By sharing your experience as an eyewitness

and survivor of the Holocaust, you help to preserve the remembrance for further generations and contribute to the fight against Anti-Semitism by keeping the



demand 'Never Again' alive." Marion Blumenthal Lazan repeated her speech on January 24, so it is available again on our website.

After listening to her, our friend Lennor Stieda from Vancouver Island sent me this poem:

*As the wind sings among the swaying branches of the guarding old cedar tree  
Here at Inselnest, my home and sanctuary  
My heart is moved by the precious gifts of life and love  
Although strife and upheaval destroys so much  
I will continue to pray, to give and receive, in my circle  
Of humans and other creatures that God has given us.  
My steps walked past patches of snow covering the sleeping bulbs  
Waiting to burst forth in spring.  
Our small grove of trees in Rodolph Park greeted me silently  
Until my heart heard and felt the joy of nature filling me with  
Thanksgiving*

After having heard a story of so much suffering and endurance of a strong-faith Jewish woman who constantly hopes and prays that all humans would learn to care for each other and thus PEACE COULD BE RESTORED to all of our world.

While I have wishes that are hard to fulfill, I am thankful that I have this Inselnest still.

**Lennor Stieda**

**Marika Heimbach**

# Great Britain



## Meetings after covid

During and after Covid many schools stopped hosting groups and for us, this meant that our Chapters had lost their meeting rooms. The cost of hiring rooms is prohibitive so only used if necessary. Meeting in members' houses is an option, but it's not always easy if you want to invite guests. We now manage Zoom meetings, with some excellent ones so far this year, such as the talk on 'Cults' by Prof. Dennis Tourish and 'Have our schools seen better days' by Alpha Member Liz Day. But, although useful, Zoom meetings are not conducive to discussion, it is obvious that members want and need to meet face-to-face.



One way to manage meeting other members has been through visits. We have had some interesting ones this year, such as the visit to the Museum of London: Docklands Exhibition, 'Fashion City', which showcased how Jewish Londoners shaped global style – think Kipper ties, Winklepickers, Princess Diana's Maternity dresses, Marks



and Spencers, etc. This was followed up with lunch, which allowed for plenty of conversation. A few of us attended 'The Glass Heart' Exhibition at 2 Temple Place

in London. The exhibition was worth seeing, as was the building – William Waldorf Astor’s residence and estate office, built at the time when he was probably the richest man in the world! The Cultural Exchange meeting between Canada, Alaska, and Europe was most interesting. We heard about the different states and some highlighted their ideas to retain members, and a few talked about difficulties many



of us share, with, for example, aging membership. Our State Conference on the 20th of April will be a one-day affair at a Junior School (pupils aged 7-11) in Dulwich, South London, considered an 'outstanding' school. The headteacher will take us on a guided tour of the Victorian Buildings with their modern extensions and up-to-date technology. She will then tell us about the latest OFSTED School Inspection (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) – dreaded by most schools. It will be good to see many DKG faces again. Guests are very welcome. For more information about our visits and events do read, 'GB News in Brief' which can be found at [www.dkggb.org.uk](http://www.dkggb.org.uk).

**Diana Bell**

State President Great Britain



# The Netherlands



## **DESIGN EDUCATION, (DBE) EDUCATIONAL CONCEPT IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

For several years, yours truly, and fellow college teachers at Hanze University of Applied Sciences (Ria, Elsje, and Margreet) have been involved in this educational concept. In the college where I work, NHL-Stenden University of Applied Sciences, DBE has undergone its development since the completion of the merger process between NHL and Stenden University of Applied Sciences in 2018. The DBE concept in higher education is a further development and is an existing concept of both (old) colleges, namely Problem-Based Education (PBL) and Competency-Based Education. It has been supplemented with innovative elements.

### **Definition Design-Based Education**

*Design-based education is a teaching and learning approach that empowers the learning process of all stakeholders in (higher) education: a triological process between students, professional field, and lecturers. Actual and complex issues are faced via iterative processes in order to bridge the gap between a current situation and an intended situation. Characteristics of the non-linear, iterative DBE processes are empathizing, defining, ideating, applying, testing, evaluating, and improving in order to bridge this gap. The methodological triological interaction between students, professional field, and lecturers is domain specific. The DBE teaching and learning approach adds value to the learning of students, professional fields, and lecturers in terms of gaining multidisciplinary knowledge,*

*developing metacognitive skills, and by creating social value* (Geitz & De Geus, 2019:7).

DBE is based on social constructivist, contextual, self-regulated, and collaborative learning. The starting point is empathy for the student, teacher, and environment. The starting point for learning and collaboration is the actual demand from practice (business) and the students' learning question. There is intensive collaboration between students, teachers, field, and researchers (also called co-creation) in workshops. The focus is on the investigative approach, stimulating the student's investigative ability which is based on Design Thinking. This is considered an important skill, thinking, and working method by which students in educational practice go through a project in about five phases applying a collection of different methods.

1. Examine the demand from the field
2. Determine the demand based on knowledge
3. Generate ideas
4. Create a design or prototype
5. Apply it
6. Investigate the effect

### **DBE contributes to effective learning**

The goal is to come to adaptation and possible improvement of a presented problem/problem situation in the work field, based on interaction with practice, testing improvement proposals developed by students, and giving solutions and lines of thought back to the work field, in which designs are created. The prevailing idea is that with DBE students learn effectively because the learning is a social activity, the brain of the student is activated as much as possible precisely because the learning takes place from an actual and authentic issue and the student is stimulated to apply what they have learned in a new situation. The student learns from curiosity and involvement of the student in the learning process which promotes motivation.



DBE has five interrelated facets that reinforce each other: multidisciplinary collaboration, international and intercultural, design thinking, personal leadership, and sustainable education.

**More information in English about DBE, the education system of NHL-Stenden University of Applied Sciences:**

1) Donker, A. Geitz, G., Assen, H., Coelen, R. (2021) Stepping into Design-Based Education. NHL-Stenden University of Applied Sciences, Leeuwarden: The Netherlands.

Free copy can be downloaded at:

[https://www.academia.edu/71666943/Stepping\\_into\\_Design\\_Based\\_Education](https://www.academia.edu/71666943/Stepping_into_Design_Based_Education)

2) Geitz, G. De Geus, J. (2019). Design-Based Education, sustainable teaching, and learning. Cogent Education 6, 1647919

3) NHL-Stenden | Ons onderwijssysteem: Design Based Education (DBE)

<https://www.nhlstenden.com/studeren-bij-nhl-stenden/over-ons-onderwijssysteem>

On this page, you will find some explanatory videos [with subtitles in English] and an Atelier Book [Dutch] with some 30 portraits of ateliers offered within the college.

4) Preparing students for future careers: NHL Stenden and Design-Based Education [n.d. 2021]

<https://feedbackfruits.com/blog/design-based-education-nhl-stenden>

**Jacqueline Muller**

Member of the Epsilon chapter

Part of Delta Kappa Gamma Netherlands

# Germany



## LEADERSHIP and ACCOUNTABILITY

### LESSON #21



As leaders, we set the tone for our chapter, state, region, or Society. We can set a positive tone simply by being accountable, and by taking responsibility for our actions. When we hold ourselves accountable, we inspire everyone to take responsibility for their actions and to follow through on their commitments. When this happens, we reap benefits such as:

- Happier and more satisfied members
- More active members
- Better retention of members
- Stronger bonding between members
- Clearer communication
- Clearer priorities
- Better follow through on tasks and projects
- Higher levels of trust (especially earned when errors are owned and acknowledged)

As leaders, we can help create an “accountable environment” by:

- Leading by example
- Encouraging mutual respect
- Making expectations clear
- Establishing SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound) goals
- Exchanging feedback (both positive and constructive)
- Linking responsibilities to purpose
- Taking responsibility for mistakes

Remember, accountability starts with YOU. If we want members to be active and committed, we must walk the talk. A chapter, state, region, or Society composed of members who are accountable and feel ownership will be successful because the members will work hard to find solutions to keep moving forward.

*“Accountability is not consequences, but ownership. It is a character trait, a life stance, a willingness to own your actions and results regardless of the circumstances.”* Brian P. Moran

**Dr. Elisabeth Johnen**

Member of the International Membership Committee

# Estonia



## **Contradictions in Education in Estonia: High PISA Results Yet Dissatisfied Teachers**

The recent cultural exchange Zoom meeting involving Europe, Canada, and Alaska prompted me to ponder the contradictions within Estonia's education system. One aspect that stands out among these contradictions is our country's admirable performance in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). According to the PISA results, Estonia achieved remarkable success, securing the 7th position globally [1]. At the same time, the teachers have been dissatisfied with their work for some time, so it was decided to start a strike. The Estonian Education Personnel Union (EHL) reported the participation of 15,000 education workers in this nationwide strike.



The strike ultimately concluded with an agreement between the Estonian Education Personnel Union and the Ministry of Education and Research to address the labor dispute. However, the strike's purpose remained a subject of debate, with some asserting its objectives lacked clarity. It was unclear whether the strike advocated for improved salaries or better workload management, as

the letters' expectations were ambiguous compared to the former. Those who supported the strike highlighted concerns such as teacher succession, workload, responsibility, the absence of a clear career model, and the need for self-realization and development opportunities, emphasizing that salaries should align with qualifications [2].

The question arises: how do Estonian students excel in PISA despite teachers expressing discontent in various areas? Maie Kitsing, a prominent advisor in Estonian educational leadership and teacher policy, offers insights into this paradox. Kitsing suggests that while general well-being indicators may weakly correlate with PISA results, indicators of school-related well-being—such as a sense of security, belonging, and the quality of teacher-student relationships—positively correlate with students' test performance. The positive correlation between relationships within the school environment and both student well-being and academic achievement underscores the significance of fostering conducive learning environments [3].

Ultimately, these observations underscore the importance of prioritizing student well-being and fostering positive relationships within the educational ecosystem. Despite the complexities inherent in education, ensuring students feel a sense of security, and belonging, and are nurtured within high-quality teacher-student relationships remains paramount for effective learning and knowledge acquisition. This sentiment is echoed in the theme of our DKG state convention—'well-learning'—which underscores the critical role of well-being and positive relationships in education. We are proud to welcome our keynote speaker, Minna Huotilainen, who will speak about Well-learning – Changing education with Perspectives from Well-being and Global Learning. We are also very happy to welcome our DKG Regional director, Marie Antoinette de Wolf. Additionally, we have two more speakers from Estonia: Anu Luure, who will cover the well-being of refugee students from Ukraine, and Evelyn Soidla, a language coach who will provide ideas on how to create cooperation as the foundation for maximizing the learner's potential. Everyone is welcome to participate on March 23rd.

[1] PISA ranking 2023 is announced and the results are concerning. Retrieved from <https://dataconomy.com/2023/12/06/pisa-ranking-2023-is-announced/> (March 2, 2024)

[2] Mändveer, M (2024). Õpetajad ei streikinud ainult palga pärast. [The teachers weren't just striking for pay.] Retrieved from <https://opleht.ee/2024/02/opetajad-ei-streikinud-ainult-palga-parast/> (March 2, 2024)

[3] Tire, G., Puksand, H., Kraav, T., Jukk, H., Henno, I., Lindemann, K., Täht, K., Konstabel, K., Lorenz, B., & Kitsing, M. (2023). OECD Programme for international student assessment. Suurim rahvusvaheline õpilaste õpitulemuslikkuse uuring PISA 2022 Eesti tulemused. [The largest international student performance study PISA 2022 Estonian results] Retrieved from [https://harno.ee/sites/default/files/documents/2023-12/Pisa\\_tulemused\\_2022\\_v\\_eebi.pdf](https://harno.ee/sites/default/files/documents/2023-12/Pisa_tulemused_2022_v_eebi.pdf) (March 2, 2024)

**Siiri Vimberg**

The State President of Estonia



# Finland



## Greetings from Finland!

We are back to our regular activities after last July's conference in Tampere. It took us a lot of energy to get it done, but it also gave us a lot of new experiences. We have often discussed it still afterward. This winter we have also started cooperation and Finland-Canada activities. The first joint session was on Saturday the 9th of March and all Europeans were very welcome to join the lectures and discussions and also later when the project continues. Ms Maarit Kostamo has been our Canada contact person, organizing everything very well. You will find separately an interesting article by Professor Leena Salminen, Gamma member, on nursing teacher education. This has been an Erasmus+ project. Our annual meeting will be in Helsinki on Saturday the 13th of April from 10-16. Invitations will come to state presidents and they can share them with chapters. In the morning we shall have the meeting and in the afternoon we have a professional seminar including an online lecture by Ms. Amanda Nolen, an International speaker, on non-verbal communication, and another speaker, Mr. Aleksis Meaney, theatre director, talking about Communication and Theatre.



Warm welcome.

**Eija Liisa Sokka-Meaney**

DKG Finland President

<http://www.deltakappagamma.org/finland/>

<https://www.facebook.com/DKGFinland>

**Here are some greetings, news, and events of the chapters in Finland during autumn 2023 and spring 2024.**

### ***Alpha Chapter***

*Helsinki*

We have had our monthly meetings under different titles like 'Teaching in Vietnam' and 'Teacher Exchange to China' both of these presentations were based on our younger members' experiences. Moreover, we had an exceptional presentation on AI (artificial intelligence) as a mother and a 4-year-old child told us about their book project - the pictures were drawn by the child and the text/story was created by the mother with the help of AI. What a wonderful example of AI's vast possibilities.



Next week we will hear more about AI, this time in the academic world. Our scholarship (1000 euros) was given this year to the Federation of Sámi people. Their chairperson gave us a presentation on the history and present situation of the Sámi people who are the only officially recognized minority within the EU. It is important to support the skills of spoken Sami language and our scholarship enables children to have more teaching in this important issue.

Here are some examples of our interesting meetings!

**Suvi Kalela**

Alpha Chapter President

### ***Epsilon Chapter***

*Joensuu*



We had four meetings in the autumn. In September we had planned a berry-picking picnic to find cranberries, but then it soon started pouring down with rain. However, some of us managed to get some berries. Afterward, it was good to have coffee at the home of our president, Jaana Tanskanen, who lives nearby. In October we had a beauty evening with





Noora-Liia, who guided us and showed nice tips on skincare and make-up. The European Lucia event has been a nice event for Epsilon, since we have met together every year, and had glög and ginger biscuits and other goodies together while watching the Lucia stories, chatting and enjoying. In December we went together to the local Joensuu City theatre to see Bulgagov's play Master and Margarita. In February 2024 we had our annual meeting, but before that, we went to Mr. Esko-Pekka Tiitinen's art exhibition, and here are three photos of his art. Jaana, our chapter president, is an art teacher so she keeps us well-informed of new exhibitions.



Epsilon chapter has local cooperation with the Women's Bank, like all the chapters in Finland, activities, and in late March the Bank is arranging a charity lunch on a Saturday with a Sri Lankan menu. International students arrange it and cook the dishes. It will be an interesting experience. As usual during the spring we shall visit schools and learn from professionals. Later we shall have other events and in early June the traditional garden coffee and exchange of plants and saplings.

**Eija Liisa Sokka-Meaney**

Photos *Anna-Kaisa Räsänen*

Epsilon Chapter

### ***Gamma Chapter***

#### *Turku*

Our Chapter continues to organize member activities as planned by the Board and the Program Committee in their January meeting. We have been invited to visit the Department of Nursing Science at the University of Turku in February. In



March, we will have our regular annual meeting where Board and Committee members will be elected for the next two-year term. Other activities planned for this spring include participating in the annual meeting of DKG Finland in Helsinki in April and an excursion to the Louhisaari Manor near Turku. In addition, members will

be offered to buy theatre and concert tickets to contribute to Gamma Chapter's small scholarship fund. Last but not least, we congratulate our member Marja-Leena Niitemaa, who defended her Doctoral Dissertation Complexities of Competence: A Study on Finnish Upper-Secondary School Students' Lexical Development and Use of L2 English at the University of Turku in



February. Her work is an interesting contribution to research on second language acquisition and assessment, with valuable implications for teaching. She will present the main findings of her study to Gamma Members later this spring.

**Marianna Sunnari**

Gamma Chapter Secretary

### **Zeta Chapter**

*Tampere*

Here are some events which we have had. In the autumn we had dinner together at the Marriott Hotel remembering and talking about the conference. In November we had a Christmas party and at the same event, we initiated two new members. Zeta members have had their annual fundraising event in February when they sell tickets to a Church concert called Candle Concert. Everyone who comes to the church takes a candle to the altar and after that, the concert starts. Our chapter is organizing a Fulbright evening, where two American exchange teachers will come and tell us about their work in



March in connection with our annual chapter meeting. During the spring term, we are going to hear about a voluntary reading project called Reading Granny. A



retired teacher will come and tell us about this activity, and teach us how it works. This is a one-to-one activity – an adult to a child – they read together and the child improves reading skills. It is rewarding for the adult when s/he sees the child gradually getting enthusiastic about reading. We look forward to this voluntary activity very much. In May we are going to have a summer picnic in a neighboring community by train and of course, take with us picnic baskets full of goodies.

**Jaana Hanninen**

Zeta Chapter President

Poster *Maarit Kostamo*

**New Nurse Educator –  
first steps to common nurse educator education in Europe**



A New Agenda for Nurse Educator Education in Europe, New Nurse Educator–project aimed to develop and test the common nurse educator education in Europe and evaluate the competence of nurse educators. The project was conducted in 2020-2023, coordinated by the University of Turku, Department of Nursing Science with four partner countries (Malta, Scotland, Slovakia, Spain). Now, when the project has ended, we can say, we took the first steps in harmonizing the nurse educator education within Europe, and the educators’ competence to adopt global and future health issues and utilize digital learning environments in their teaching increased.



## **Need for common qualification requirements**

The European Commission (2017) has stated the importance of higher education teachers to develop their pedagogical competence and strengthen the cooperation between teacher education and training in the EU. Concerning nurse educator education, there is no common regulation of minimum qualifications (Campos Silva et al., 2022), even the nurse education is very regulated in



Europe. It has been discussed for decades that there is a need to harmonize the nurse educator education and define minimum qualification requirements for educators (Salminen et al., 2010) to guarantee the equal high-quality nurse education in Europe. Therefore, this project aimed at uniforming nurse educator education and their

competence requirements in Europe. In this project nurse educator was seen as an educator, who teaches the academic content in the educational institutions.

## **What did we do?**

The project was three phases. First, we assessed and described the education, competence, and continuous educational needs descriptions of nurse educators. In the second phase, we developed and piloted a future-oriented nurse educator education program ("Empowering the nurse educators in the changing world", 30 ECTS), which after the project can be used in all European countries. In the third phase, we created the recommendations for minimum requirements for nurse educators and their education and continuing professional education in Europe and published a handbook that can be used in educator education and as learning material in continuing education.

The handbook is freely available on our website (<https://new-nurse-educator.utu.fi/>).



## **Some results**

The nurse educator program conduct was a success and even more importantly, it was found to be an illustrative example of organizing the common European nurse educator education with varying teaching methods and modern contents. The learning outcomes were good, and the participating students were satisfied with the program, even though it was hard work. All in all, the evaluated competence of the educators in project partner countries was at a good level, but there were differences between the countries. In each country, students were more critical in their assessments than the educators themselves or the heads of nursing schools (Elonen et al., 2023, Vauhkonen et al., 2024). There is a need for systematic continuing professional development (Smith et al., 2023).



## **Future recommendations for nurse educators**

At the end of the project, based on our research results we created the common recommendations of minimum requirements for nurse educators concerning their qualifications, competence requirements, training, and continuing professional development. Moreover, the recommendations to set up a monitoring organization and a joint network to promote educator competence in Europe were made. Before the publishing of the recommendations, educational experts, including educators and educational leaders, evaluated the recommendations. Even there a clear need for these recommendations was found, they also received criticism such as the high educational standards presented. The recommendations suggested that educators should have a doctoral degree and at least 30 credits of pedagogical studies. The requirement for a doctoral degree is difficult to achieve, as there are a few doctoral-educated nursing scientists in several countries. The created recommendations offer evidence-based knowledge to policy-makers in European countries to evaluate

and develop their nurse educator requirements and education policies. This way the quality of educators' competence, the high quality of nurse education, and the mobility of the workforce can be promoted.

### **Acknowledgments**

I want to thank all my project members for their hard, innovative, and important work during the project. Without you, this could never have been possible. Moreover, I want to thank the funder, Erasmus+, for giving me the possibility to conduct this project. This was our common dream and we managed to do it.



Please see more: <https://new-nurse-educator.utu.fi/>

**Leena Salminen**

[leesalmi@utu.fi](mailto:leesalmi@utu.fi)

Professor (Health Pedagogy), Leader and coordinator of the New Nurse Educator project  
University of Turku, Department of Nursing Science

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Vauhkonen A, Saaranen T, Cassar M, Camilleri M, Martin-Delgado L, Haycock-Stuart E, Solgajová A, Elonen I, Pasanen M, Virtanen H & Salminen L. 2024. Professional Competence, Personal Occupational Well-Being, and Mental Workload of Nurse Educators – A Cross-Sectional Study in Four European Countries. Nurse Education Today. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2023.106069>

**Leena Salminen**

Professor (Health Pedagogy), Leader and coordinator  
of the New Nurse Educator project  
University of Turku, Department of Nursing Science



# Iceland



## **DKG in Iceland: Actions for Impact**

As the spring appears The State Organization Board in Iceland is looking forward to moving on with our strategy plan created in October. One of the goals was to survey our 334 members in thirteen chapters to have their attitudes and views on several issues as input in our action plan.

In the survey, the members were asked how satisfied they were in both their chapter and the State Organization if they had attended conferences and state meetings. They were asked what the best time for these events was, as well as if they preferred only the state meeting every other year or conference one year and state meeting the other. In open questions, the women could express their perceptions and opinions towards DKG practice in Iceland and give their meaning on how to make DKG more visible in Iceland and have more impact on education in Iceland as the strategy plan reads.



The main results were that overall, almost 84% of the members are very satisfied with the practice of DKG in Iceland. 23 % of the members have



attended state meetings and conferences more than five times but 30% have never attended these events, of which the most convenient time to attend the participants indicated as May or April. More than 50% of the women say they wish conference one year and state meeting the other.

When asked about the benefits of being a member of DKG the most common answers were the following:

1. Interesting meetings, conferences, and visits.
2. Friendship, support, fellowship.
3. Solidarity and networking.
4. Empowering women.
5. Delegation of assignments, all voices heard.

The most common answers on what can be improved were the following:

1. More cooperation between chapters – chapters visiting each other.
2. More visibility in society e.g., by authoring articles in media and social media, offering speakers for meetings and conferences, and sometimes inviting members outside the organization to DKG events.
3. Be aware of having women of all ages and from diverse sectors within the chapters.
4. Increase the participation in state meetings and conferences.
5. Have more impact on educational issues in Iceland by consulting the government, e.g. in the Consultation Portal, offer The Ministry of Education and Children experts within DKG for committees and councils.

The State Organization Board is very thankful for all the valuable information we received in our survey which will certainly help us activate our strategy plan for 2023 – 2025. We are looking forward to our spring conference on April 20th where the themes are Arts, Literacy, Feelings - for Prosperity.

Wish you all the best!

**Árný Elíasdóttir**

The State Organization President

# Norway



## A glimpse into a meeting in DKG EPSILON in Kristiansand Norway

Epsilon has twenty-four members and has meetings once a month.

Meeting content:

- Welcome, a few words for the day, perhaps a poem, perhaps a song. (Ellen plays the piano).
- A current main topic with a speaker, questions, and input from the audience.
- Coffee and cakes, pleasant conversation, and a small raffle to raise income for Epsilon's project in Bangladesh.
- Information from/about DKG centrally and locally.
- Sometimes a new member's ceremony.
- End with some welcome home words and an invitation to the next meeting.



At our meeting on the 11th of March, the theme was:

**"To belong, - to be an important participant in the community."**



Mette Midling-Jensen was our speaker this evening.

Midling-Jensen is a special education teacher and subject developer at the upper secondary school KKG (Kristiansand

Katedralskole Gimle). Here she works with students on the HT course (everyday life training), designed for students with functional variations.

Midling-Jensen is concerned with which words we use when we refer to people with functional variations. We must think with our hearts; rigid rules will never suit everyone! She talks about how she experiences the differences between people, which could otherwise be obstacles to collaboration, being erased when coming together creatively.

Midling-Jensen is the prime-mover for the Spor"/Traces performances, as well as Ikke A4/Not A4 at the Kilden theater and concert hall in Kristiansand. <https://vimeo.com/369827240/508f00efcd>

is an interview with a young participant, in Norwegian.)

The theatre has a dialogue and competence center for inclusion and creative art.

Spor is a professional artistic production developed in collaboration with one hundred different young people from many different environments in the city, and the city's symphony orchestra. Here, students with mental and physical challenges collaborate with able-bodied students. These meetings between the young people and the professional artists create a climate of tolerance and provide excellent quality experiences.

The name Spor/traces has been chosen because one can experience how this collaboration can leave lasting traces for the individual participant as well as "ripple effects" in society. The performances are the result of long and challenging processes where everything is adapted to the participants both in front and behind the curtain.

Due to completely different conditions, psychologically and physically, one must treat the individual differently so that equality is created.

Midling-Jensen emphasizes this and explains how important it is to meet Kildens employees who do everything to ensure that all participants feel an important part of the community and the performance.

Midling-Jensen could point to many examples where e.g. wheelchairs were transformed into both princesses and animals, at the request of the actors! She also explained how other arrangements were made so that the individual could challenge their capacity and be proud of both of them and their fellow students.

Epsilon's meeting participants were also shown video clips from three different performances. These showed both touching and wonderful performances, both for reflection and a better understanding of all the work put in. (NRK, the state broadcasting company has made a documentary of two of the members and their efforts and challenges before the opening night..!)

Midling-Jensen told us moved, and engaged, about feedback from both students with and without functional variations, and not least from their parents. Everyone clearly expresses that this has been very important. For some, life-changing.

We, Epsilon members, have experienced an evening of unusual collaboration that can change ingrained perceptions and thoughts. Yes, it simply changes lives if a space is created where everyone can participate and perform in a community.

Togetherness, kindness, friendship, and joy make us stronger together!

In 2021, Mette Midling-Jensen received the well-deserved Agder County Culture Award together with her collaborator, singer, and actress Elisabeth Lindland, for her work with the SPOR performances.



**Helene Øydne Fredly  
(Muriel Marsh)**

# Sweden



## DKG Sweden's 50th anniversary

Saturday, March 23, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of Delta Kappa Gamma Sweden. We gathered in the same hotel restaurant as when the Swedish branch of our association was founded, called *Hotel Reisen*. It's a waterfront hotel with a superb view over part of Stockholm, including the island of Skeppsholmen. The hotel has a restaurant section, called *Reiss*. There were 40 of us present, and we started by taking a group photo. The idea of our cashier, Birgitta Johansson, was to



take a photo of all of us, then gradually remove from the group the members since the 2020s, since the 2010s, since the 2000s, and so on. The photo of members from the 1970s still shows 11 people!



The lunch was a joyous affair, with a glass of champagne to start things off, and a short welcome speech from me, as President of Sweden. A speech in which I made the point that a lot happens on a long trip. Even more so if the journey lasts 50 years! Sweden has had more and more chapters,

then fewer and fewer, but these days several chapters are registering new members, which is extremely gratifying. I also thanked the Jubilee Committee (Karin Grundahl, Marie-Louise Nordesjö, Inger Palmquist) for their work in collaboration with the Alpha Chapter (Stockholm), and the Information and Marketing Committee (Martina Lundström, Marie-Louise Nordesjö, Ann-Katrin Swärd) who, in collaboration with Birgitta Johansson, produced a small book (which you can read here:

<https://www.dkgsweden.com/dkg-sweden-50-aringr.html>

She also produced an informative flier containing games/memorabilia. I'd also like to thank all the members who came, some of them from far and wide, for this celebration.

We were fortunate that the Vice-President of Sweden, Karin Grundahl, agreed to act as *toastmaster* at the luncheon, and she was able to begin her work once everyone had found their seats around the tables. We began with speeches from International President Debbie Le Blanc and Marie-Antoinette de Wolf European, European Regional Director (both had recorded them, and we were able to play them back orally, showing their portraits). But the whole lunch was a long succession of moving, interesting, and funny speeches. Our association was also presented with gifts and souvenirs. We were honored to have representatives from Norway, and their president brought us a rose from the president of Finland! I don't want to name some more than others, as that would be a bit unfair, but I must say that Marianne Skardeus's speech about our founder Dr Annie Webb Blanton was particularly appreciated.

After lunch, we were lucky enough to be able to visit an exhibition of paintings by the woman who has been called "The Greatest Nordic Woman Painter", Harriet Backer, at the National Museum of Sweden. Our member, museum educator Jeannette Jacobsson Rangner, acted as a guide. Immediately afterward, some of us chose to see an operetta, *Hotell Vita Hästen*. The original title is *Im Weissen Rössl*, and the action takes place in Austria. The music was written by Ralph Benatzky, but the script and lyrics have been rewritten and adapted many times by many authors (Magnus Lindman produced a Swedish translation suitable for opera in Sweden). One of our members, Ann-Mari Asker-Badersten, was able to reserve seats for us thanks to her contacts in the theatre.

In short, a memorable day, incredibly well orchestrated. We'll long remember Delta Kappa Gamma Sweden's 50th anniversary! I couldn't possibly mention all the people involved by name, so I apologize if anyone feels left out. I want to thank once again everyone involved in this celebration, in Sweden and around the world.

This article has also been published in the DKG Canada information letter called the Totem Talk.

**Charlotte Lindgren**

president, DKG Sweden

