

# The Border as Curriculum: *A Cartography of Teacher Professional Development in the Portuguese–Spanish Borderlands*

*Teachers as agents of cross-border cooperation*

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**LUPS-CESCI**  
Research Group on  
Cross-Border Cooperation

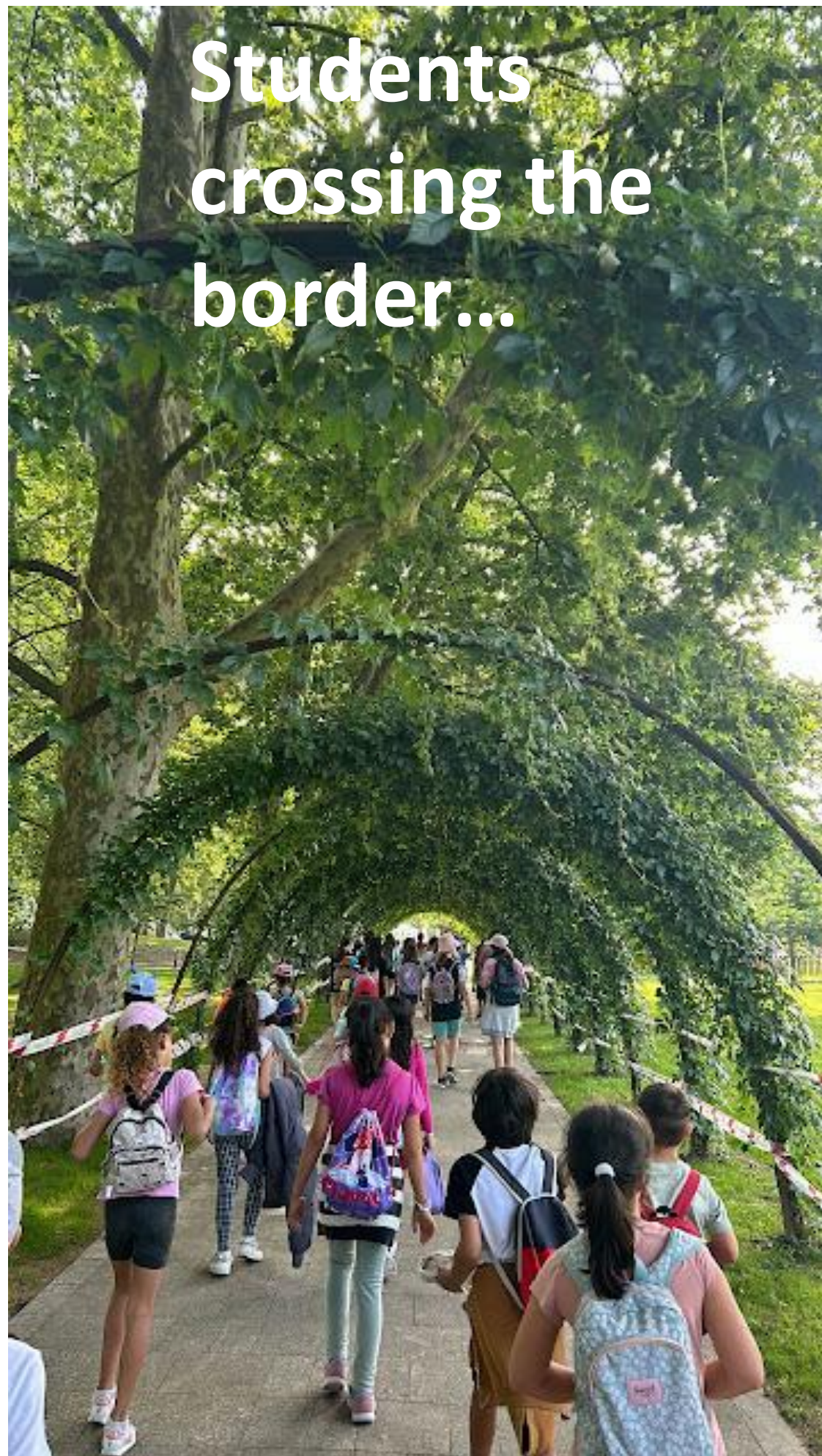


PROJECT  
FINANCED FROM  
THE NRDI FUND



*The smallest international bridge in the world connects Portugal and Spain.*

**How do teachers, in border regions, contribute to the construction of transnational educational identity?**



**Students  
crossing the  
border...**

## **Presentation structure**

1. Description of Bilingual and Intercultural Border Schools Project (PEBIF).
2. Example of a Pedagogical Project.
3. Final reflections.

# Partnership



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DE FRONTEIRA**

# OEI



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XUNTA  
DE GALICIA



JUNTA DE EXTREMADURA  
Consejería de Educación y Empleo



Junta de  
Castilla y León  
Consejería de Educación



## Objective

To create a network of schools along the **Spain–Portugal border**, transforming this network into a hub that disseminates knowledge, attitudes, and innovative educational practices aimed at **promoting bi/plurilingualism, interculturality, and the sociocultural diversity of the border region.**

## Structuring Concepts

- **Bilingualism/plurilingualism**
- **Interculturality**
- **Intercomprehension**

Portugal



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España



# Phases

Identification and selection of schools

Capacity building and continuous teacher education

Design and development of joint educational projects

Dissemination and extension of bilingualism and interculturality in border schools





❖ **Timeline of All Editions**

**1st - Oct 2021 – Apr 2022**

**2nd - Apr – May 2023**

**3rd - Jan – Apr 2024**

**4th - Mar – Jun 2025**

❖ **Expanding Network**

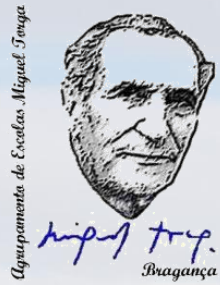
**48 schools**

**2.200 students**

**160 teachers**



# Schools



## Miguel Torga School Cluster, Bragança "Monte Gándara" Primary School, El Puente, Zamora



Edition  
2021/2022

# Título del Proyecto

O TRABALHO E O RESPEITO  
QUE NOS UNE.

Project Title: "Work and Respect That Unite Us"



## The teachers' voices on the project...

The project's title reflects a concern not only with the obvious and tangible cultural aspects that unite both sides of the border, but also with something less visible — the way in which Spain and Portugal have both emphasised core societal values such as WORK, RESPECT, and EFFORT. (Teacher testimony – Spain)

Throughout the project, students identified shared elements between the two countries and discovered how the values of work, respect, and effort are present in both cultures. (Teacher testimony – Portugal)

*The teachers' voices on the project...*



*In the case of **Bragança**, one of the key pillars of the Educational Project is the internationalisation of the school cluster, aligned with the European development plan... (Teacher testimony – Portugal)*

*It was a bold, daring, challenging, innovative, and labour-intensive project... (Teacher testimony – Portugal)*

*As for El Puente (Zamora), our commitment to the local environment has been constant throughout the improvement plans we have carried out. When the opportunity arose to develop this project, we extended our concern for the local area to the broader border region, with all the socio-cultural implications that this frontier context entails. (Teacher testimony – Spain)*



Source: researcher's personal archive.

# The Border as a Shared Experience: Inhabiting the Common

Student performance in the central square – Bragança/PT



Source: researcher's personal archive.

Carnival procession through El Puente – Sanabria/ES



Source: image provided by the teachers from Sanabria.

# The Border as a Shared Experience: Inhabiting the Common

Exhibition of materials at the Casa del Parque del Lago de Sanabria/Espanha

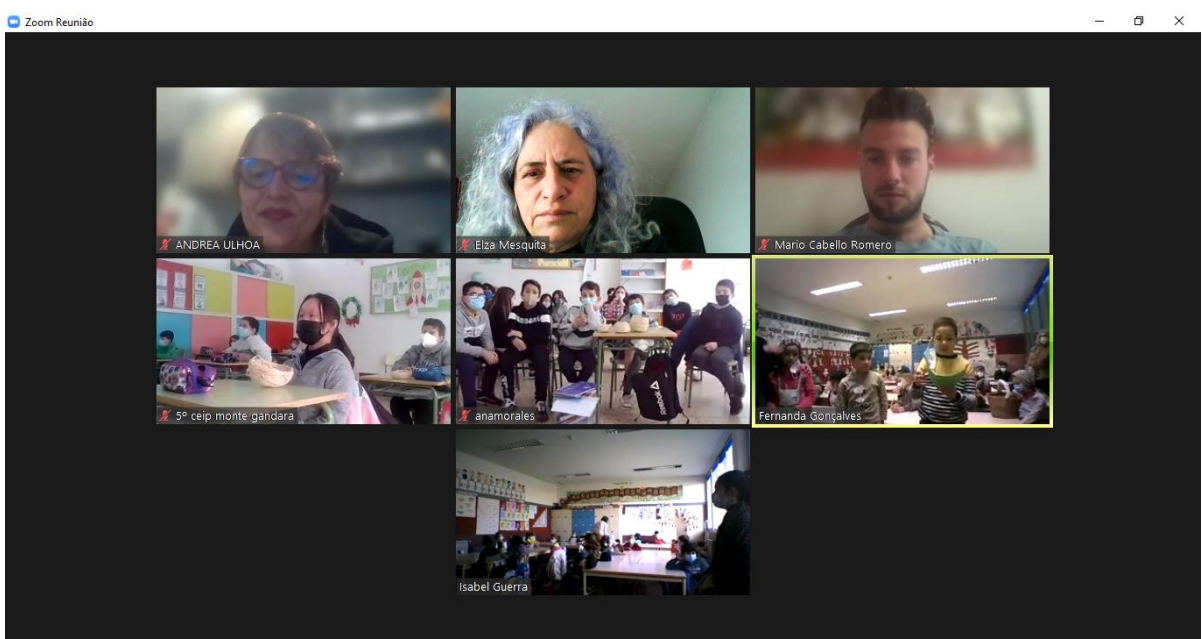


Source: researcher's personal archive.

Exhibition of materials at the Primary School Centre Bragança/Portugal



Source: researcher's personal archive.



Cross-border students in an online meeting

Source: researcher's personal archive.

# **The Border as an Educational and Political Space**

**The border as a space for curricular invention and shared belonging.**

**Teacher education as a space for listening, movement, and co-authorship.**

**The curriculum as a situated, relational practice oriented towards the common good.**

**Teachers as agents of cooperation and intercultural justice.**

**Cross-border teaching as an ethical and political force for transformation.**

## In summary

We cannot truly discuss territorial cooperation or overcome the exclusionary narratives that still shape Europe without recognising the role of teachers as mediators, promoters of intercultural justice, and builders of shared belonging.

[Learn more about PEBIF](#)





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HUNGARY

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