



# INCLUSIVE PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

Kick-off meeting, 9-10 June 2015

# ECEC/PPE essential foundation

There is increasing international agreement (EU, OECD, UNESCO) that Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)/Pre-Primary Education (PPE) has long-lasting positive effects on children's development. **A quality ECEC/PPE experience is an essential foundation for successful lifelong learning, social integration, personal development and later employability.**

High quality ECEC/PPE is seen as essential to the achievement of two other ET 2020 targets: reducing early school leaving to below 10 per cent and lifting at least 20 million people from poverty and social exclusion.

# Previous Agency Projects on Early Intervention

The Agency has already been involved in two projects related to Early Childhood Intervention, one between **2003 and 2004**, followed by an update project in **2009–2010**. An important conclusion of the second project was that:

- Access to **universally** available, **high-quality** and **inclusive** ECEC services is the first step of a long-term process towards inclusive education and equal opportunities for all in an inclusive society. (European Agency, 2010)

# Inclusive Pre-Primary Education (IPPE) Project

The **overall goal of IPPE** is to identify, analyse and promote the main characteristics of quality inclusive pre-primary education for all pupils.

## Focus:

- On **structures and processes** at PPE level that can ensure a systemic approach to providing **high quality IPPE** in **mainstream** provision that meets the **academic and social learning** needs of **all** learners;
- And particularly of those regarded as being **at risk of disadvantage and exclusion**: how are they identified? How are their strengths and needs assessed? How are they enabled to participate equally in quality IPPE?

# Participants

- **Nominated experts (62)** (researcher/practitioner) from Agency countries
- **Project Advisory Group**, to be involved in project planning and monitoring the implementation of project activities
- **Close co-operation:** Commission , Eurydice , OECD, UNESCO, the International Society on Early Intervention and the EC Disability Support Group

# ECEC & IPPE

**Early Childhood Education and Care and Pre-primary education** refer to a wide range of programmes, designed with a **holistic** approach, all aimed at the early **physical, cognitive, social** and **emotional** development of children before they enter primary school.

In line with **UNESCO**, there are two categories of ISCED O:

- **Early Childhood Educational development** – young children from 0 – 2 years
- **Pre-primary Education** – children from 3 years – the start of primary education

# IPPE areas to be addressed

## Pre-Primary

3-years to start of compulsory schooling.

Age-range is generally more structured and regulated within Education ministries.

## Quality in ECEC/IPPE

No internationally agreed concept of quality in ECEC/IPPE services. Project adopts idea of **areas of action** for improving quality (Commission) or **policy levers** (OECD):

- a) **access and procedure,**
- b) **workforce,**
- c) **curriculum/content,**
- d) **evaluation and monitoring,**
- e) **governance and funding**

# Methodology

## Survey

**Quantitative** and **qualitative** data on current IPPE quality provisions across EU

Identification of **exemplars** of quality inclusive provision

**Challenges** (e.g. policy-practice gap) and needed improvements across

## Case studies

Identify and analyse the **structures and processes** in exemplar services that enable

quality and effective pre-primary programmes **for all pupils** in inclusive settings

and that are particularly important in enhancing the quality of **inclusiveness, accessibility** and **equity** of these services.

# Expected Project Outcomes

To be further discussed in the Working Groups

- A **literature and policy** review
- **Country reports** providing information on policy and practice in relation to inclusive pre-primary education
- Detailed reports of the selected **case study** sites, including analysis of the key project themes investigated.
- A project **synthesis report** that brings together all the evidence from all project activities to add new insights to the literature and research on IPPE.
- A **practical tool/guide**, aimed at pre-primary local provision, on how to make quality inclusion work at pre-primary level



# Next steps

Discussion and agreement in the plenary and the Working Groups sessions of this kick-off meeting, about:

- The project **methodology** and **expected outcomes**
- Drafting the questionnaire for collection **of country info**
- The criteria for the description and the selection of examples of good practice for **case studies** analysis
- Development of **the methodology** and data collection and analysis strategies for the case studies

# First Project Product: Draft Literature review

Reviews international research evidence and policy making (EU,OECD,UNESCO) on how:

1. A **quality ECEC/PPE** experience is an essential foundation for successful **lifelong learning, social integration, personal development and later employability**.
2. ECEC/PPE is particularly beneficial **for children at risk of disadvantage**.
3. It is only when ECEC/PPE provision has the **characteristics of a quality PPE** service that positive outcomes are assured for the child.

# Draft Literature review (cont.)

4. **Quality** ECEC/IPPE provision defined in different ways but can be improved. Describes the ‘areas of action for improving quality’, alternatively termed ‘policy levers’ by the OECD (2012), namely quality of:

- access and procedure,
- workforce,
- curriculum/content,
- evaluation and monitoring,
- governance and funding.

## Draft Literature review (cont.)

**5. Quality can be measured.** The Project uses the measurement model suggested by the EU and OECD, namely

- structural quality;
- process quality; and
- outcome quality.

With regards to outcome quality, the project's scope will be limited to outcomes measurable within the period of pre-primary education: e.g. levels of engagement, progress in skills and wellbeing

# Examples of Structural & Process Quality

## **Structural Quality:**

How the IPPE overarching system is designed and organised – includes standards associated with the accreditation of individual IPPE settings.

- Inclusive Access to quality services
- Well qualified and supported staff
- Quality curriculum design
- Quality physical environment
- Quality health and safety
- Quality leadership, management, monitoring and evaluation

## **Process Quality:**

Elements that influence the everyday nature of IPPE settings and directly influence the quality of the education program experienced by each child.

- Quality of interactions between children and IPPE staff
- Quality implementation of inclusive curricula, supporting all children's wellbeing and active learning
- Inclusive collaborative connections with family and community