



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