



# TEACHER'S MANUAL: Intercultural competences for the training of educational staff in early childhood services

Edited by Drs. Muhammet Safa Göregen



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Intercultural Competences For The  
Training Of Educational Staff In Early  
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*Drs. Muhammet Safa Göregen*

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# CONTENTS

<b>PREFACE</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>5</b>
Summary . . . . .	5
Suggestion didactic work forms . . . . .	6
Guiding Questions . . . . .	6
<b>CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>7</b>
Summary . . . . .	7
Suggestion didactic work forms . . . . .	8
Guiding Questions . . . . .	8
<b>CHAPTER 3: MODULE 1 COMPLEX AND DIVERSE SOCIETIES</b>	<b>9</b>
Summary . . . . .	9
Suggestion didactic work forms . . . . .	10
Guiding Questions . . . . .	10
<b>CHAPTER 4: MODULE 2 RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY in INCLUSIVE ECEC CENTRES</b>	<b>11</b>
Summary . . . . .	11
Suggestion didactic work forms . . . . .	12
Guiding Questions . . . . .	12
<b>CHAPTER 5: MODULE 3 PARTICIPATORY AND INCLUSIVE AP- PROACHES TO INVOLVE ALL CHILDREN</b>	<b>13</b>
Summary . . . . .	13

Suggestion didactic work forms . . . . .	14
Guiding Questions . . . . .	15
<b>CHAPTER 6: MODULE 4 FLEXIBLE PRACTICES, INNOVATION and TRANSFORMATION</b>	<b>15</b>
Summary . . . . .	15
Suggestion didactic work forms . . . . .	16
Guiding Questions . . . . .	17
<b>Open Educational Resources (OER)</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>19</b>

## **PREFACE**

The final publication comprises the literature review, methods, observations, findings, good practices related to ECEC in an intercultural perspective and practical examples derived from the Intercultural Early Childhood Education and Care Curriculum Design for Professionals (I.ECEC) project. It was made possible with the cooperation of the partners Erasmus Brussels University of Applied Sciences and Arts, University of Florence (UNIFI) Department of Education, Languages, Intercultures, Literature and Psychology (FORLILPSI), Eötvös Loránd University-Faculty of Primary and Pre-School Education, Galileo Progetti Nonprofit Kft., ARCA Cooperativa Sociale a r.l. and Józsefváros United Nurseries. This manual is based on the usage of the final publication. It includes a summary for each chapter along with guiding questions in order to understand the final outcomes regarding social inclusion in intercultural pre-school education. The aim is therefore to concretize a shortcut towards the use of the final publication in order to contribute to the field of education of educators and practice-oriented scientific research.

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## Summary

The introduction emphasizes nowadays sociological changes, in particular globalization and migration posing challenges for educational professionals in pre-schools with consequences such as increasing pluralism - linguistic and cultural diversity – and therefore the need for an adapted curriculum for early childhood education and care. Mainly new knowledge, science-based tools and good practices to accommodate and guide the growth of all children. Reinforcing the recommendation of the European Commission regarding “Reviewing and strengthening the professional profile of teaching professions and preparing teachers for social diversity”, next to “focus on cultural mediators and role models for the integration of Roma and children with an migration background” (European Commission, 2013, 2.2). Furthermore, explaining the core competences in order to work with young children and families in complex and diverse societies and to which extent it could be divided into: (1) The ability to seek solutions in contexts of disagreement; (2) The focus on meeting the other, the one we don’t know; (3) The ability to build up knowledge together with others (colleagues, parents, children); (4) Acting with a focus on social change (Peeters, 2008, 248-255). Previous insights with comparable subdivisions from other international scientific research have been taken into account in this chapter (cfr. DE-CET & ISSA, 2011).

## **Suggestion didactic work forms**

The following guiding questions could be answered using the following didactical methods:

1. Individual research, in particular using the final publication;
2. Using the final publication in pairs;
3. In group together with the supervisor.

In addition, using the OER a research could be performed using the words “definition intercultural education”; “core competences ECEC”; “inclusive ECEC service”.

## **Guiding Questions**

What is the importance of intercultural education nowadays?

What kind of / which competencies are needed today to be able to work within an inclusive approach aimed at valuing diversity?

What are the core competences of the educational professional in complex and diverse societies?

Which competencies are needed to increase the accessibility and desirability of ECEC services?

Which to guide the growth of children as active citizens, by encouraging the involvement of families and service communities? What is the critical note when focusing on the standardization of a list of competencies that professionals must possess to promote inclusive practices? What



does have an important role here?

How can we support the development of these competences within a specific course?

## **CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY**

### **Summary**

This chapter includes the chosen method, namely Action Research (AR) in order to collect and analyse data. Action research is most common for data collection that can engage a large number of participants and collect their knowledge, attitudes and approaches in dealing with intercultural education in ECEC. It allows us to listen to the real educational needs of educators: to listen, to understand, to know, to become aware (and acquire it for the research subjects), enabling us to make informed decisions to intervene on a reality and how to improve it. AR is a cyclical process whereby the observation of a problem; designing possible action(s); implementing action(s); evaluating the outcome(s); reporting; and repeating are milestones in this cycle with the aim of progress and tackling the problem. In addition to the practical phases of action research, the structure of the modules are explained as following: (1) introduction to core concepts and topics related to the module and (2) participatory problem-oriented and activity-oriented sessions such as brainstorming, exchange of experiences, collective discussion and reflection on educational practices, with the aim of stimulating the active

participation of professionals and thereby their involvement in transformation and ownership of their own learning process. This chapter ends with COVID-19 modalities that changed the training in a certain way.

### **Suggestion didactic work forms**

The following guiding questions could be answered using the following didactical methods:

1. Individual research, in particular using the final publication and primary sources;
2. In group together with the supervisor;
3. Class discussion along with the supervisor.

In addition, using the OER a research could be performed using the words “Curriculum design ECEC “Action Research method”; “COVID19 modalities ECEC”.

### **Guiding Questions**

What are the characteristics of Action Research?

What are the main reasons and arguments for using Action Research?

What are the main benefits of Action Research when doing research regarding intercultural education?

What alternatives are possible when dealing with COVID-19 modalities/precautions during the training process?

What can be noticed about the physical absence of the coach during the training process?

## **CHAPTER 3: MODULE 1 COMPLEX AND DIVERSE SOCIETIES**

### **Summary**

The aim of the first module is to provide a framework towards the whole training (through presentations, inspirations and practical experiences). It begins with a literature review regarding the notion of plural and complex society, and the ensuing crucial role of ECEC services as spaces aimed at promoting diversity, equity and democracy. The focus is here on the importance of services accessible for everyone, with particular reference to families and children with a vulnerable background (Vandenbroeck, Lazzari, 2014). While promoting a 'non targetised' approach, far from the stereotypes that could help amplifying the risks of exclusion instead of combating them. Investing in individual competences of ECEC professionals is crucial but not enough. Hereby, the concept of a 'competent system' is discussed as referred by the CoRe research (Urban et al., 2011). This chapter ends with highlighting the functioning of cultural, relational, reflective and methodological competences within a holistic and transformative approach in a plural context (Catarsi, 2003). Followed by several examples how to value diversity in ECEC.

## **Suggestion didactic work forms**

The following guiding questions could be answered using the following didactical methods:

1. Class discussion along with the supervisor;
2. Debate in group together with the supervisor;
3. In pairs, in particular to emphasize the pro- and contra arguments, for example progressive universalism.

In addition, using the OER a research could be performed using the words “non targetised approach”; “progressive universalism”; “educare holistic approach”.

## **Guiding Questions**

In what extent could ECEC services have a positive role in combating exclusion and discrimination while promoting equal rights and diversity?

Why is the focus on ‘human level’ important to make a distinction between or cultures and culturally different people?

What are the multiple meanings of diversity and why is it important to give it a voice and value it?

What is the relationship between ‘progressive universalism’ and the ideal ECEC?

Why is it important to promote a ‘non targetised’ approach?

What is the importance of promoting an educare holistic approach?

To which dimensions of the ECEC system should a competent system invest?

What are concrete guidelines when investing both at the socio-pedagogical and the political level and promoting competent systems?

## **CHAPTER 4: MODULE 2 RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY in INCLUSIVE ECEC CENTRES**

### **Summary**

The second module aims to value and enhance the knowledge, the relational and reflective capacities of educative professionals with regard to the fundamental relationship between ECEC services to the plurality of families inhabiting them, as well as to the community they are in. While working with children holistically, by respecting their diversities, the relationship with their families and with the territory cannot be ignored. In sum ECEC professionals are required to: (1) know the context in which the service is located, the types of families attending ECEC services and not, the possible relationships with the community and the territory; (2) be able to 'put themselves in crisis', to 'stay in their own questions', to value their own doubts, in order to constructively co-transform the educational related to their relationship with the families (Urban, 2008); (3) recognise families as 'first educators' of their children, which means adopting an attitude of respect, acknowledge-

ment, dialogue, negotiation, through non-judgemental communication methods, based on active listening.

### **Suggestion didactic work forms**

The following guiding questions could be answered using the following didactical methods:

1. Develop individually a concrete practical example, taking preconditions into account;
2. Develop and reflect on three actions in pairs;
3. Organize a focus group discussion regarding democratic micro-societies in order to provoke arguments pro and contra.

In addition, using the OER a research could be performed using the words “parental participation”, “democratic micro-societies”, “Children Crossing Borders”.

### **Guiding Questions**

Which strategies are possible to increase parental engagement in ECEC?

What is the importance of ‘reflection’ when defining specific strategies?

What do we understand with ‘real relationship’ with parents when dealing with formal parent participation? Is there a distinction?

What is the relevance of the international research Children Crossing

Borders?

Can we describe ECEC services as 'democratic micro-societies' as a reflection of macro-societies?

What implies the contextualisation and social analysis when dealing with families?

How can we describe the preconditions of plural relationships with plural families?

## **CHAPTER 5: MODULE 3 PARTICIPATORY AND INCLUSIVE APPROACHES TO INVOLVE ALL CHILDREN**

### **Summary**

Both module 2 and module 3 comprises an inclusive approach. However, module 2 focuses on families and module 3 proposes a similar participative perspective by focusing on children. In particular, by appreciating children's voices, their interests, their stories, their needs, their relationships, their right to learn, play and care. In addition to the importance of exploring strategies for different topics and acquiring knowledge and competencies related to valuing an educational/holistic perspective on working with children. In this perspective, learning, play and caring are intertwined and professionals should be aware of its practical implications in order to value the relevance. Finally, it em-

phasizes the routine moments as well as to all other moments of the day by being aware of the fact that learning, playing and caring for children is continuous. Creating connections on these topics is essential to promote an inclusive approach.

*During an activity a child did not want to take part in the common play. The professional went closer to the child, put herself on his level, slowed down her way of speaking, explained the activity again to encourage him. It seems that the professional has the means to involve the child, without forcing. However it needs to be kept in mind that it is not always necessary to involve a child in an activity, as the reflection with the team underlined when reflecting on the video.*

Example 1: Experience during training in Hungary

### **Suggestion didactic work forms**

The following guiding questions could be answered using the following didactical methods:

1. Give an observation assignment on multilingualism in their practice;
2. Give an assignment on multilingualism to implement in their practice;
3. Organize a debate to map out pros and cons for example about educare approach.

In addition, using the OER a research could be performed using the words “educare”; “multiple identity”; “inclusive communication methods”.



## **Guiding Questions**

Why are ECEC centres relational contexts?

What is the relevance with promoting dialogue with children?

Explain the concept of educare.

Why is educare categorized as a holistic and democratic approach?

What are the preconditions of dealing with the notion of multiple identity?

How can we describe 'small' ways of valuing multilingualism?

Which inclusive approaches or communication methods are possible when valuing multilingualism?

## **CHAPTER 6: MODULE 4 FLEXIBLE PRACTICES, INNOVATION and TRANSFORMATION**

### **Summary**

The final module focuses on flexible and transformative competencies needed today in planning day-to-day activities and organizing spaces and materials in ECEC centres. It contributes to acquiring reflective and methodological competences needed to plan in a transformative way, and to rethink the organisation of spaces and materials in a plural and flexible manner. More specifically:

- ❖ Developing the ability to plan educational activities in an open and

- flexible educare holistic approach;
- ❖ Developing the ability to reflect and negotiate meanings and methods related to educational planning;
  - ❖ Developing the ability to observe, document, plan, and evaluate in a circular and transformative way;
  - ❖ And developing the ability to organise and transform educational spaces and materials, taking into account diversities of children and families.

*During an activity at the table, a child starts jumping on the bench while sitting. Instead of stopping her, the professional verbalizes what she is doing, her discovery, by saying: 'yes, if you do like this, you jump and the bench moves'. The child continues to jump, the professional starts doing the same by saying 'I can do it too'. Both adult and child laugh, and another child starts doing the same, before going back to the activity.*

*This seems a small powerful example of a professional that is capable of 'letting go' (even if just for a moment) the control on the activity, in order to 'follow' and give voice to the 'unexpected diverse discoveries' that children bring every day.*

Example 2: Experience during training in Italy

## **Suggestion didactic work forms**

The following guiding questions could be answered using the following didactical methods:

1. Design (individually) your ideal ECEC service;

2. Debate in group about the ideal ECEC service with special attention to adapted space;
3. Socratic group dialogue about nowadays third pedagogue.

In addition, using the OER a research could be performed using the words “third pedagogue”; “conditions educational space”; “ECEC infrastructure”.

### **Guiding Questions**

Why is it important to co-transform the educational space/practice?

What are the preconditions in re-thinking spaces / infrastructures / materials?

Explain the concept of the ‘third pedagogue’.

How can we guarantee that everyone has ‘a place’ in pedagogically rich ECEC services?

### **Open Educational Resources (OER)**

[www.interculturaleducation.eu](http://www.interculturaleducation.eu)

The Open Educational Resources (OER) is an open-access online platform that has been developed through the collaboration between the project partners. It includes a compilation of literature arising from the project outcomes which will be accessible for free towards a wide audience such as students, educational professionals and executives in ed-

ucation. The literature could be categorized in various forms of sources such as books; scientific articles; workshops; practical activities; lectures; videos; artworks; reports; games; and educational tools for practice oriented as well as academic purposes regarding Intercultural Early Childhood Education and Care. All the sources are divided in modules from this publication in order to use in conjunction, based on the findings of the international literature review and on the exchange with the partners:

- (1) Plural and Complex Societies;
- (2) Diversity, Inclusion and Participation in ECEC Services: Relationship with Families and Community;
- (3) Diversity, Inclusion and Participation in ECEC Services: What Approaches and Methods with Children;
- (4) Flexible Practices, Innovation and Transformation.

As suggested per module, certain keywords could be used in order to use the OER in accordance with the final publication.

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