



VALUE DIVERSITY IN CARE AND EDUCATION

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Introduction

- Quality ECEC depends on well-educated and competent staff (EC, EQF, 2014/2015)
- Not only core practitioners, also assistants in ECEC (CORE, NESET II)
 - Invisible role: low / no qualifications, low job mobility, few CPD opportunities
 - Edu vs care?
 - Invisible diversity?



Aim of VALUE

Improving ECEC quality through strengthening the professionalisation and interprofessional collaboration of diverse staff within an educare approach.



The VALUE project

Erasmus+ KA3 (01/01/2018 – 31/08/2020)

Actions: desk research, professional learning paths in pilot schools, development of a training toolbox, publication for policy and practice

Partners:

- Belgium: VBJK, Erasmushogeschool (PJK & Kleuter), Karel de Grote Hogeschool (PJK & Kleuter)
- Slovenia: Educational Research Institute
- Denmark: Aarhus University, The Danish School of Education
- Portugal: Aga Khan Foundation Portugal, ESE-IPSantarém





2 PILOTS

**HOW TO STRENGTHEN THE PROFESSIONAL ROLE AND IDENTITY
OF CORE PRACTITIONERS AND ASSISTANTS?**

**HOW TO STIMULATE THE COLLABORATION
BETWEEN CORE PRACTITIONERS AND ASSISTANTS
AND VALUE DIVERSITY IN CARE AND EDUCATION?**



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- Involve all staff
- Give voice to all, especially to the assistants
- Reflect on Educare

- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)



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Conditions:

- Participation of everyone involved in 'learning labs'
- Process guidance from experts in two different fields (care & education)

How:

- Connect theoretical framework 'educare' with own practice, knowledge, goals
- Visit good practices & get new impressions together
- Create new perspectives for individuals & group
- Reflect on 'now' & new possibilities, seperatly and together
- Give 'voice' & 'language' to everyone involved
- Document own practice & changes





MAIN CHALLENGES IN THE 2 PILOTS



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Main challenges in relation to collaboration (baseline evaluation, N=75, December 2018):

- Accepting all opinions equally, regardless of person's level of education or professional experiences;
- Diverse views, personal characters;
- Lack of time;
- Appropriate and respectful communication.

Main challenges in relation to leaders of PLCs (process evaluation, N=8, June 2019)

- Ensuring a safe environment for all staff to open up
- Leading a PLC: clear instructions, be efficient and self-confident
- Coordination of diverse views



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- Speaking different languages, closing the gap
- Missing language to see and express the meaning of the own professional role
- Looking further than individual frustrations in the own classroom
- See opportunities for yourself instead of repeating there is not enough staff
- Pointing at parents' responsibility





LESSONS LEARNED IN THE 2 PILOTS



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The main lessons learned from the Slovenian VALUE pilot:

- strong leadership
- involvement of kindergarten's leader(s) in PLCs
- shared principles of collaborative work
- regular meetings of PLCs
- competent leader of a PLC: content, reflection, mentoring
- external support



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- Create possibilities for ongoing learning and reflection 'on' the job.
- Formulate the same goals for the whole group in an understandable language.
- Giving agency motivates. Don't forget the assistants!
- Care for staff results in engagement and better educare quality for children.
- Focus on the perspective of parents and the importance of communication about needs, expectations, efforts on both sides.





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