

Minutes 4th transnational meeting in Ljubljana, Slovenia
Wednesday 3rd till Friday 5th of October 2018

Wednesday 3rd Program

<i>Location:</i>	<i>Ljubljana Town Hall, Mestni trg</i>
<i>8:30 – 9:00</i>	<i>Gathering in Ljubljana Town Hall, Mestni trg</i>
<i>9.00 – 9.10</i>	<i>Welcome</i>
<i>9.10 – 10.00</i>	<i>Presentation of Slovenian Educational System</i> <i>Transfer to the locations for field visits</i>
<i>10.30-13.00</i>	<i>Field visits (different options: preschool school Šentvid, primary school Livada, primary school Vide Pregarc and Educational Centre Pika. All sites have good practices in working on the field of social inclusion (especially working with different language groups of children and parents).</i> <i>Transfer to the city centre</i>
<i>13.30-14.30</i>	<i>Lunch outside</i>
<i>14:30 – 16:00</i>	<i>Reflections from the groups & wrap up</i>
<i>19.00-21.00</i>	<i>Optional: Sightseeing</i>

Notes on Wednesday 3rd

Ljubljana town hall meeting

Start at Town Hall. Opening with movie about Ljubljana; small impression of the city, the demographic data, the goals and ambitions of the city concerning ECEC.

Status on all outputs by Odette. Powerpoint can be found on surfdrive. 1 is done, 2 almost done, 3 is a work in progress, 4 is work in progress, will be done before the 12th of November and will be tested during the second student exchange week, 5 is work in progress, a draft of output 5 is sent to everyone and needs to be read before Thursday.

After the introduction a presentation of the educational system of the Republic of Slovenia. The powerpoint can be found on the surfdrive. In Slovenia early childcare is optional. From 11 months - 6 years it is provided. Mandatory school starts at age six. There are public and private kindergartens.

A question is raised whether the provision of free day care for five-year olds who don't partake in childcare, on the basis of 240 hours a year, is sufficient to make a difference. However, 93% of this age group is in some form of day care in Ljubljana.

It seems that the day care provision for SEN children is more sufficient in Ljubljana than in other parts of Slovenia, for instance the provision of physiotherapists here is guaranteed and not in other parts.

Day care is paid for by parents but is calculated on income. Generally they pay 70% of the costs for the first child, 30% for the second, children after that are free.

The definition of social inclusion in Slovenia is still very much focused on the inclusion of SEN children. But the municipality and research institute are trying to broaden the definition, for instance, to also include Romani children and migrant children. For more information on the system, the powerpoint can be found on the surfdrive.

After the presentation the groups are divided in two and are going on the following field trips:

- 1: Preschool Sentvid and Primary school Livada
2. Primary school Vide Pregarc and Educational Centre Pika

Field trip notes for group 2

Primary school Vede Pregarc

455 kids, 55 teachers.

Children from ages 6-14. Divided into two different age groups and buildings. There is one group, not part of this school, they are guests in this school, it's a group with special needs children. The area the school is in is very diverse. Housing communities, home for abused mothers, integration house, upper social class, romian pupils, special needs pupils, gifted pupils. High percentage of gifted pupils, 20% it is said. English as a subject is taught from the 1st grade with subject teachers. Other subjects (w.e.o. music and fys-ed) start at grade 6.

What are good practices at this primary school? They are proud of socially including different groups (refugees, foreigners and romian pupils). They cooperate a lot together and they are building a learning society. There are afternoon activities provided by the school, parents don't have to pay. It's financed by the government/municipalities.

Pica

The center is located in an elementary school. The center has a good relationship with the school.

The aim of the Pica Center is teacher training and on-going education for teachers and parents.

The center focuses on professional and personal development of teachers, service providers and qualified personnel for children with special education needs (from birth to age 15) and their families. The program consists of counselling (telephone and e-counselling), seminars and workshops, schools for parents, individual counselling/coaching for families and professionals, on-going education 2 year program, publication resources. A lot is provided for free, only schooling/workshops/trainings are paid for.

Interestingly, part of the 2-year training for teachers is that every Wednesday they start with an observation, then they have a break, then lectures, then a break and then workshops. There is an observation room where students and others sit and observe whilst parents (sometimes with their children) or teachers have counselling sessions. The only condition the participants have to sign off on, is that teachers/parents/children agree that they are taped and observed, and then the sessions are for free.

Evaluation field trips group 1 and 2

Group 1

Large pre-school, 22 groups, four locations through the neighborhood. What were the impressions? There are definitely children with SEN, but very little, and children from other countries, but not so many. Within the budget the school is limited in what they can offer the child in additional care or support. When extra support is needed, 'complaints' are made towards the ministry; the ministry needs to prescribe the need for extra support, and then perhaps the municipalities can offer extra financial support. Teachers have autonomy and freedom to decide how the special support is organized. But they don't have authorization to determine that extra support is needed. It first needs to go through a long bureaucratic procedure. There are evaluation meetings three times a year to evaluate the individual support that is organized for SEN children.

The interior of the school was very nice, with many small areas where children can play. A beautiful basement, the 'lighting' area. Dark curtains with special lighting where the sensory skills were challenged. The way of working with children, the environment was very nice. It seemed like the outside area was very open and plain. A question is raised whether a child with SEN could get easily lost on such a big playground.

Second primary school: the director started with his personal story, he came to Ljubljana as a refugee and eventually became director at this school. The school he started at as a director was not doing well when, with a lot of crime and problems. And now the school is doing well, has grown so much it's twice as big, with children of many different nationalities. One of the questions Yvette asks, is how can it be so inclusive when there are so many challenges. This is the most multicultural school of Ljubljana. It is nowadays an award-winning school. They support speaking different languages within and outside of the classrooms. A question for discussion? What kind of parents are interested in signing their children into the school? And also, how to spread that excellence to other schools? All children going to the school, with an exception of a few, come from the neighborhood the school resides in. In Slovenia the criterion is that parents enroll their children into the school within their district and it's only possible to deviate under exceptional circumstances.

The question is asked, whether it's not better to spread out children with SEN and immigrants over more schools, is that not more inclusive? In the end it seems as though infrastructure creates or prohibits the conditions for inclusion.

What was also inspiring were the preparatory classes where children are able to develop their linguistic skills if they happened to have language deficiencies. They worked with beautiful materials and it was noticeable how proud the teachers were of what they were doing. The question is, is it inclusive when kids get split up in their own little group? But in the end it is, because being in that group strengthens them to be able to integrate more afterwards because they have the abilities, linguistically, cognitively etc.

Group 2

Primary school: upon entering there is a good atmosphere, it's really a beautiful school. There was a grade 5 boy sitting at the reception. Every day there is a different pupil who sits there and does his or her school

work there and is able to welcome visitors. He held the door open without being asked when we left. There is a lovely art room with a tranquil feel to it. It seemed as though the children felt safe in their environment. There is also a group of SEN children from a different school, but where there is a lack of space and therefore they are being housed here, and they also play and work together with the regular school children.

The Pica education center: The pica experience left some of the visitors unsure what to think of it, mainly with the open and vulnerable atmosphere that is created with the observation room where teachers and parents are so exposed when discussing their questions with the counsellor while being watched by students. Is it not better to take the counselling to the classroom and also the observation? But it's mostly parents coming to PICA to talk, and teachers call and have PICA come to them. The main purpose of PICA is to be an educational center for professionals. But then they also support parents. They try to connect the two. This kind of counselling and teaching is also new for Slovenia.

Program Thursday 4th

8:30	<i>Transfer to Kindergarten Center VRTEC Hans Christian Andersen</i>
9.00- 12.00	<i>Introduction of Hans Christian Andersen Kindergarten and visiting the groups</i>
12.00-13.00	<i>Lunch in Hans Christian Andersen Kindergarten</i>
	<i>Transfer to the city centre</i>
13.30-17.30	<i>Working sessions: output 4/C2 and output 5, short presentation of the website of the project</i>
19.00	<i>Official dinner</i>

Notes on Thursday 4th

Field visit at Hans Christian Andersen Childcare Center - A kindergarten with a heart

Welcome introduction by Tina and Nadja.

A film is shown that the center made to show the activities by the center. The idea for this film was developed in Ghent during a transnational meeting. The film is about ten minutes long and shows the children, the activities, the parents, the pedagogues, the manager, the janitor, the cook, the administrative worker, all people play an important role. There are quotes by Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales. The respect and pride of the different employees working here is very apparent and inspiring.

There are 140 employees. There are 43 groups and one of them is specifically for disabled children. This day care opens very early, at 6-6.30. Children have breakfast here. There is a kindergarten curriculum from the government, focusing on art, science, movement, nature etc. The kids always go outside and have a warm lunch every day that is prepared in the kitchen by professional cooks. The children rest in the afternoon.

With regard to the philosophy, the focus is on creating a home-like environment where children learn to be independent, where they get enough opportunities to play inside and outside, where they get to participate, also in decision-making.

It's a big center where communication is essential. Problems are bound to rise but are tackled head on. The team also partakes in activities outside of the kindergarten, such as running, hiking etc, building a team spirit and believing that being good in something outside of work, they can bring that same spirit to their work. A lot is asked and given by the employees, they work hard and more hours than asked.

Reflections on the observations in the units:

There are inclusive practices organized by parents and teachers to include children into summer and winter camps.

A unit for SEN children with four classes was visited, where all the children have various special needs and disabilities. The children aren't always in their own class room, but these children are especially in need of a safe environment, and that's why they don't always play with other groups or take part in all the activities and outings. But it is part of the organization's approach to include them where possible.

What is also inspiring is that teachers here in Ljubljana (at this center) stay with the class of children from one to six years when possible. It's not like that in most participating countries and seems as though it creates a good amount of continuity and pedagogical safety. A question is posed why age groups within the classes aren't mixed. How do they have role models? Mixed age groups are actually preferred, but the municipality prefers homogenous groups because they can be bigger. Outside of the class, on the unit-level, there are many opportunities for interactions between different age-groups.

Also it's obvious there is a serious lack of men in the day care center. This remark comes from Denmark, where there are more men in day care centers. On a municipal level the participation of male caretakers is on the agenda. It also needs to be raised on the level of universities and in regards to wages, because it's also a low paying job and therefore not attractive for men, who have higher demands in that regard.

Another observation was how structured the rooms were and how rich learning environments were facilitated. The concentration of the children was fascinating, despite the large groups.

The interactions between adults and children is easy going. It's smooth. The tone is easy going and warm. Not just the rooms are rich learning environments, also the corridors, the halls, the communal play areas are challenging. The comparison is made between child-care taker ratios. Seeing that childcare here is organized till six years old, in Belgium it's from 2.5/3 years old. The ratio for 3 years old in Belgium is 24 to 1. Here it is 24 and 2, till 6 years old, which is a big difference.

With regard to inclusion, the center doesn't really have a lot of inclusion issues when it comes to migrants, because there aren't many to begin with. But they are more actively focused on it since the project participation. This year they initiated an event- during their yearly summer party- in which the foreign parents were able to fill corners with food and other information about their own countries, so that these parents were able to show their roots and what they are proud of. There was one country that was too shy and didn't want to show their country (Armenians), there is a bigger barrier language wise. The other foreign parents (there were about ten different countries) were very excited and thankful to be able to

present their countries. What the day care would need to reach those families in which they experience barriers, is translators, in order to communicate effectively and include more. The center is meeting up in November with the teachers to create more awareness around inclusion and working with foreign families. The research institute will give a training to raise awareness and address stereotypes.

The definition of social inclusion is addressed. Inclusion is not so much just in regards to migrants or SEN children, but is an attitude. It is observed that the approach here is very inclusive.

Another observation is how this center has very good leadership. There is a very loving approach, a strong vision and philosophy.

The morning is ended with a beautiful surprise, a class of children and their teachers give us a lovely performance in a traditional costume. After that a group of seniors gives us a beautiful performance with dance and music in traditional costumes.

Afternoon program at the Town Hall

A presentation is given about the status of Output 4 by Rochelle Helms. The powerpoint can be found on the surfdrive. After the presentation four groups were formed to reflect on discussion points in regard to the development of Output 4.

Tips for discussion output 4

- Learning skills, they just want to be really practical, have small practical steps.
- New fresh input.
- Creating awareness through students coming in.
- In many countries the training in universities and university colleges and vocational schools is still old fashion, practitioners need to know how to find information, where to go, who to ask.
- Staff is sometimes disappointed what comes back from university. A guideline into a new era from pedagogy.
- New input from students for how to observe children for instance.
- Students need to feel safe to criticize and dare to initiate new ways of working. Younger students seem to be more reflective.
- What kind of product: asking honest questions, being critical.
- There is a big gap in teacher's training and reality.
- More training on skills and less on knowledge.
- What would be useful: group reflection. To stimulate reflection with practitioners in combination with reflections of students who have done observations. For instance; what is the interaction circle, stimulating children, small things, in the details.
- Helping students to observe, what do I know, how do I close the gap, where do I want to go, what do I need to learn and practice to develop these inclusive skills?
- Start with a personal biography on students' own social inclusion in their childhood-to adulthood.
- Talked about all the children we think are included, are sometimes not. Become aware of our own behavior that sometimes stimulates exclusion.
- Develop a culture of questioning, reflecting with the students.
- How could we in reality work with students? Once a week work together with the practitioners?

- This program could be relevant for the teachers of primary schools as well.
- Breaks are a grey area; children are on their own then; how to work there on inclusion? Pedagogue students could come to the schools and observe these breaks. Creating an inclusive environment; game, movie etc.
- Observation skills are necessary. Observation can end up with questions; why do you do this?
- Material for a workshops in different settings.
- How can we change the mindset of the people who work in practice and people who make the decisions (politicians, policy makers). Small conference, course; it has to be on the agenda first.
- Who is the owner of the material? Costs for translations?
- Organizations which can partner up: Parents/board of parents, practice.
- Case material: translate into study material, could be a help book (ask Rikke what needs to be changed).
- As university help other organizations to implement.
- Expand the ideas, travel with the model.
- Students trying to help innovate practice; the students are not the experts, the practice is.
- Superdiversity; discuss those concepts if we discuss inclusion. Intersectionality.
- How do we connect it back to the people on the EU level? Put in elements of the EU level.
- The concept inclusion to make the profession of the child care more attractive.

After that a presentation is given on the development of output 5 by Serv.

The powerpoint can be found on the surfdrive.

How can we develop general recommendations on a policy level that are useful and applicable to all countries, given the diverse countries with very different backgrounds?

Questions regarding dissemination: where do we hand in such a letter of recommendations. Different municipal colleagues reply they can use it for strategy documents in preparation for elections and in regards to their offices.

But: make sure that we are proud of what we have already reached.

A tip that is given: make best practices as recommendations.

Kirsten: the communication group – to look at the text. That was formed in Copenhagen.

A deadline will be made to give feedback for output 5, and after that the communication group will pick it up.

Program Friday 5th

Location: Ljubljana Town Hall, Mestni trg

9.00-12.00 Presentation of the films by Kirsten and Maarten

Working sessions: Dissemination and sustainability, Conference May 2019, Transnational Meeting Amsterdam May 2019

Wrap up & goodbye

12.30-15.00 Meeting for those working on output #4

Notes on Friday 5th

Today we start the day with the films (output 3).

The first rough edit we get to see is the Copenhagen film. The reflection questions for discussions are a great resource for study materials which can be used also for output 4. Afterwards the film of Ljubljana is presented and the discussion questions are discussed.

Reactions to the films:

Ljubljana: It feels like something is missing; The light, the joy of the children. It was maybe a little too serious. The lively footage of children in the forest etc., will still be added, as well as a change of music. The Ljubljana film seems a little too slow, the Copenhagen film too fast. That will be edited. Some practice elements were missed in the Ljubljana film, there seemed to be more dialogue, less footage of activities etc. Thoughts of the professionals in Ljubljana have been captured very well.

Social inclusion is very broadly approached; the diversity is not addressed in the Copenhagen film. It comes back to what social inclusion is. It's not the same as integration according to the Danish members. Kirsten explains that the aim of the film was really to show 'how does the inclusive pedagogue work', it was not meant to be a film on 'social inclusion'. Remark Rochelle: maybe social inclusion shouldn't be the word popping up, but then the movie could start with 'the inclusive pedagogue'.

Ruben: make sure the students get also to cross-compare the different films. Also promote blended learning, integrate it into a wider perspective. Connect images with theory and policy. So that students also learn about the political contexts of the film they are watching. Mathea: the five words, they were brought out intuitively by Kirsten and Maarten but it might have been valuable to ask the pedagogues in practice to describe their values themselves.

After the showing of the films appointments have been made with the partakers: Ljubljana gets the rough edit of the film and is asked to send their feedback and ideas to Maarten and Kirsten (before 22nd of October). The five words at the end of the film will be adjusted to what the practice wants. Also the educative questions after the films need comments from the partakers.

Presentation of the website Amsterdam Cities Including Children (CIC)

The website is presented by Esther. It is already online but has not yet been promoted because it's still somewhat under construction. The link will be sent to all project members and they can send her their feedback, additions, photos, other material if they want it added.

Dissemination and sustainability.

Different groups have been made to discuss the points that were developed during the last transnational meeting and will be made more concrete. In regards to discussing the definition of social inclusion it is remarked by Odette that it is important not to judge each other when members hold various definitions.

Your view of social inclusion is often associated with the history, population, actuality etc of your country. You can act within these borders and possibilities.

Group contributions:

Odette and Rochelle:

In regards to sustainability, is it an idea to apply for another Erasmus+ subsidy to continue cooperation between (applied) universities but also vocational schools perhaps, in order to further the development of the curriculum in regards to social inclusion. Many organizations and municipalities feel that students don't get the right training in skills, knowledge and attitude to be equipped for practice (especially regarding social inclusive practice). How can we contribute to narrowing this gap, and further the development of output 4 and perhaps expand this output to contribute to the educational curriculum in Ghent, Ljubljana, Berlin, Copenhagen, Rotterdam and Amsterdam? Find out which partners we can approach?

Kirsten's group:

- Two project suggestions: an article, to get the different outputs together. And a factsheet on the policy suggestions. The second: the working definition that was written in the policy paper: *'inclusion is an ongoing process which involves creating open and development-oriented environments in which all children and young people can be active participants in the community. The objective is that all children and young people are viewed, acknowledged and appreciated as the unique people they are, ensuring that they can develop academically, personally and socially.'* The second part of it needs some semantic adjustments. For instance, the 'academically'- part needs to be changed into something else.
- The group agreed that social inclusion is a journey, and not a destination. In that sense you can work on it in different settings.
- A comment for the pyramid: it's very school oriented. It could be an option to think about the pyramid, maybe make our own version of it?
- The flyer that Odette and Kirsten made in the spring has been distributed: not sure if it's been translated into different languages? It is also about dissemination: how do we spread the news about this product/project? It's not only happening in the conference, but also in the Netherlands it's been presented at conferences and it's been discussed in the university. It's requested by Kirsten to report when and where different project members mention the project.
- Being prepared to tell about the project in a good way so that it makes it into the news. That's a great task for the communication group 😊

Ruben's group:

- Our group focused on the definition issue: what is the most inclusive figure/shape that we have. Is it a pyramid? Or is it a rectangular shape? Or is it a circle? A circle is much more intersecting and uniting. Holistic. It should be a circle. This group also has trouble with the pyramid and its educational jargon. An alternative is presented: the a-b-c- model. Affordable, appreciated, accessible. Being, becoming and belonging. Cities, children, communication cooperation and communities. It's an abc model in progress.
- What should be included in the definition: the youngest children should be included in the model as well. From 0-...

- When seeing movies, visiting sites, we see children that are already included. But there are also children that are not included. Families not within reach. Let's include a wider perspective with those not yet included.

Esther's group:

- To have a flyer: it should be based on facts. People can draw their own conclusions. What has to be included: learning processes we have gone through these two years. Combining practice, policy and research levels, and that it's been a process.
- What journal could we choose: the hunch is that it could be more of an academic journal. But time constraints.
- Story of the group, is it perhaps an opportunity to write about the process the group went through and what they learnt.
- Local magazines/ union journals etc. to write in own language of each country with an English introduction.
- Also use the existing material, we already have the website and the outputs.
- The definition: we need a broad definition. This group also transitioned to a circle. We need the broad definition and a theory to have an analytical way of looking at work. But definitely with a connection with practices. Lisbeth has a proposal for the circle. Make additions to the model: add different approaches and analyze the challenges and talk about intersectionality.
- Lisbeth is the circle coordinator 😊

Yvette gives a presentation on the congress.

Program transnational meeting in Amsterdam on 22nd of May 2019: working on the workshops: it's not the aim to develop workshops within the hour but it's the aim to do the final check-up for collaborative members giving workshops together.

Also: we need time to end the project, as it will be the final meeting. Also: continuation, dissemination and sustainability needs to be added to the program. Perhaps start the program earlier than 12.30, otherwise we won't be able to get all things done. Why is the meeting not in Rotterdam? It's complicated and it wasn't possible. Also it's too time consuming to do field visits in Rotterdam.

Who are we going to send the 'save the date' e-mail to? Members need to think about people and make a list. It's better to send the list so the organization can send e-mails. It's better than to just spread flyers. 150 people is the maximum capacity. Aspects of the guest list are discussed, who is able to come etc. See ppt. on the surfdrive.

The program of the congress is discussed.

It is not yet fully designed, it is in progress.

It is remarked that it is preferred that someone give the European comparison that is from the project itself. Maurice Crul is the professor on inclusion. He will focus more on inclusion in regards to primary and secondary school. It is remarked we also really want to focus on child care. If you know any interesting speaker on inclusion and day care, let us know the names.

Final remarks:

Ghent: key note speakers, make sure the quality is attached to our findings and researchers. If they have a different perspective, for instance, only on educational fields and not on child care. It's important to make sure the speakers do also align their presentations and keynotes with the participants. A list is requested of names, function, location and contact information to be sent around.

A special thanks is given to the hosts of this transnational meeting. The field visits were very inspiring and the organization was incredible!!

The transnational meeting in Amsterdam will take place on the 22nd of May,

We look forward to seeing you all there!