Output 1: Report on tasks and effects[1]

Preparing a tool for working with video coaching method at ECEC institutions. Collecting video materials and the coaching process inclusive of feedback from beneficiaries.

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Completed Tasks

The work covered by Output 1 took place between September 2017 and November 2019. They constituted the first part of the TRACKs project and had the main goals of sociological data collection, video material generation, as well as data analysis and beginning of the coaching process with the staff working at the ECEC institutions collaborating with the project. It should be noted that sociological data stems from the employed case study approach and includes both descriptive characteristics of the selected, participating ECEC institutions, and data generated during fieldwork at ECEC. The latter entailed interviews with ECEC professionals like teachers, care-persons, head personnel of ECECs, as well as parents sending their children to the ECECs examined in TRACKs.

The collected and generated data is used as follows:

1. For the process of coaching, which indirectly serves as means to improve the quality of work practices among the staff at the partaking institution, in particular in terms of the levels of professionalization of teachers and care personnel. We are especially focusing on the processes of:
   - Social inclusion
   - Decreasing inequality (linked to socio-ethic background and status, as well as disability)
   - Facilitation of self-observation and becoming a reflexive practitioner among teachers and other ECEC personnel
   - Facilitation of group work methods and generalized support for ECEC staff.
2. For preparation of a Handbook with a toolbox and guideline on using the video coaching methods for all interested audiences, e.g. ECEC institutions, teachers, students in teacher training, people responsible for supporting ECEC employees. This item also includes preparation of concept note and analytical framework for video coaching in the context of social inequalities in partner countries.

In the frame of the TRACKs project, we seek to acquire a possibility to compare the issues around inequality in ECEC across various countries. However, as it is important to first understand the existing systemic barriers and differentiated challenges, it was necessary to first

prepare the contextualized studies for each country. In TRACKs, this has been achieved by creating the *Background Report – Working Paper nr 1*. In addition, it was decided that each partner country will carry out at least two case studies, concentrating on the aspects of inequalities selected from the list above and concurrent to the national contexts. The cases have unfolded as follows:

	Shared focus	Specific interest
Poland	Socio-economic status, inequality linked to social class	Disability-related inequalities
Italy		Non-majority ethnic background and/or migration background
Belgium		

ECEC entities engaged in the project

Italy

Two sites for case studies in Italy are managed by the project partner, namely the Cadiai Copperative Soziale. Those ECECs combine nursery and kindergarten education and care. They have been chosen because of:

- Specificity of financing and management; in Italy the ECEC is very diverse in connection to organization and funding, in this case, the partaking ECEC operate within partnerships between city of Bologna and an NGO. It is vital to note that when an institution fulfills a role denoted by the city governance, it is mandatory to follow inclusive rules of admission and access to ECEC.

- Inner-diversity of ECECs and their clients – i.e. take-up by parents from middle-class and elite vs those with other socio-economic positions

- High proportion of children with migratory backgrounds and/or children from families with lower socio-economic status in one of the ECECs.

In addition, case study ECECs in Italy are carrying out the presently ongoing reform of the Italian early care and education system. Following the recent implementation of Law 107/2015 or *Buona Scuola* (meaning "Good School"), ECEC system in Italy was supposed to be modified

from a split (0-3 y.o. run privately or by the municipality or by a combination of both), to an integrated system (from 0 to 6y.o.), guaranteeing continuity of care for the children. Such integrated system is not currently implemented everywhere, but experimentation is carried out by certain services and in certain Italian regions (i.e. Emilia Romagna). Additionally, Law 107 and decree 65 of 2017 have reaffirmed longstanding commitment of inclusive practices for children with disabilities, and the strong pedagogical identity characterizing the ECEC services, particularly a holistic vision of children's development and an education/care approach. However, an increase in the socio-cultural diversity within ECEC services, due to the significant numbers of migrant populations residing in Italy, has contributed to challenges as regards consolidated practices. Those became entrenched in all these years, and if they are not re-thought in light of this diversity, they can reproduce and reinforce inequalities.

The project partner in Italy, namely CADIAI, is an educational social cooperative. It is already applying the integrated system, offering services from 0-6 y.o. Moreover, CADIAI has a long-standing collaboration with UNIBO for in-service training provision for educators, and they were willing to undertake the experimentation of video-recording and video-analysis. Another significant peculiarity of CADIAI is that the pedagogical coordinators in their services have a leading role, and they are responsible for carrying out team supervision, professional development, as well as for crafting the pedagogical aims and activities for the services. Also, CADIAI had a specific interest in the issue of inclusion, since its services are located in urban settings, characterized by a higher representation of children from migrant and lower social class backgrounds. Within the case study, ECEC professionals from CADIAI assumed the role of co-researchers, as they themselves gathered the data and recorded the videos in their own settings. The analysis was done with the facilitation of the Italian research team, with a particular focus on inclusive practices.

Belgium

Belgian case studies are rooted in the local cooperation of the research team with both the city officials in Ghent, and with the supervisory pedagogical institution interested in the project. The case studies were selected and both integrate early kindergarten and early primary school education. Their characteristics are:

- Voiced and expressed interest of expanding the offer of support and trainings for teachers/educators.
- High representation of children from families with lower socio-economic status and/or with migration background.

Specific procedure was that the Ghent TRACKS project team searched for a number of Ghent schools, Stibos and daycare centers that wanted to join the video coaching process. Ideally, we started two trajectories in which we could take a school, a stibo and a daycare together. To discuss the options, we turned to the Ghent City Council. On March 15, 2018, the project team met with the pedagogical counseling services of the City of Ghent, both for childcare education and education. Based on their suggestions, we chose the 'Brugse Poort' district as the working area. The indicators - see below - suggested that for a project that opts for tackling social inequality and poverty, this neighborhood could be a good choice. In that particular area, 'De Feniks' and 'De Piramide' schools, stibo's called 'De Feniks' and 'De Palmboom', as well as the daycare centre 'De Palmboom' wanted to participate in the project. We divided these partners into two processes / cases. The 'Brugse Poort' is located in the so-called "19th-century belt" around the center of the city. This 'belt' was for a long time characterized by a combination of disadvantageous features in housing, employment, etc. Migrants from Turkey, the Maghreb countries and (later) from Eastern Europe mainly settled in these types of neighborhoods since the houses there were still relatively cheap. Over the past decades, the City Council has made efforts to revalue these neighborhoods.

Poland

Case studies in Poland were sampled on the basis of several criteria. While there two general cases were researched, the first encompassed selected two ECECs and the second meant studying one as many as four small kindergarten entities. This has been driven by the following rationales:

- One of the defining characteristics of the Polish ECEC system is the uneven distribution between rural and urban areas. To account for this difference, one case has been selected in the largest cities – with to ECECs in Kraków and Warsaw, while the latter was

- represented by four ECECs in peripheral rural areas of the Podkarpackie region (South-Eastern Poland).

- Another aspect relates to the divisive nature of the financing/funding of the ECECs in Poland, which are split into publicly and privately funded entities. From this arena, the TRACKS researchers have chosen a private, a public/commune-led and a mixed form of ECECs managed by the Project Partner – Komensky Institute – together with local, rural communes.

- Finally, as Poland is a homogeneous country with a majority population being ethnically Polish and low in-migration rates, different axis of inequalities that the one most relevant for Italy and Belgium had to be conceived. In this realm, the TRACKs researchers decided to study ECECs recruiting not only able-bodied children, but also those facing challenges linked with various – physical and mental – disabilities.

The research process relied on a qualitative methodology within social sciences. Drawing on primarily sociological – but also pedagogical and educational studies' - expertise in action-research, TRACKs implemented actions at a meta-team level, engaging both researchers and ECEC professionals in the process of researching and fostering of social change formulated as improvement in terms of alleviating ECEC inequalities. The first step within the research process has been a literature review on video-analysis, so as to explore the existing literature on the subject[2]. One of the most recurrent themes emerging from the review of the literature, was that video-analysis has already been commonly used as a tool for professional development. The second step signified conducting qualitative research at ECECs. The employed techniques and groups of participants were as follows:

a) semi-structured interviews with teachers and other staff, headmasters, as well as parents

b) group interviews with teachers, parents, representatives of the local governance / pedagogical supervisory body

c) observations et ECECs. At the end of each observation, the teams exchanged ideas in order to clarify:

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[2] The analysis of the existing literature was conducted by all Partners, with Valentina Migliarini (UNIBO) being the leader for this task. As a result, a state-of-art article has been written and submitted to *Italian Journal of Educational Research*. The article is now under review at that academic journal.

- What were the aims of the observed activities?
- What were the reasons laying behind the methodological choices?
- What were, in her/his opinion, the strength and weaknesses connected with implementation?

Finally, the third stage was the use of the video-coaching method. This process had its own stages from recording, to selecting materials, to shared analysis with the teacher. In addition, for certain cases and with agreement from the teacher, small-group meetings and discussions were held with other teachers and/or parents. In the latter scenario, videos have been analyzed collectively, maintaining a specific focus on the interactions between educators and children. This has led to educators reflecting on what practice results more inclusive, considering the setting, through the prompts of the researchers. Such collective practice guaranteed ECEC professionals' ownership of change in the practices, as they participated in the research process exploring everyday practices and keeping innovation grounded to the context. In their video-recording, they could choose a specific focus in each service and making explicit taken-for-granted assumptions. Additionally, the collective discussion of the themes emerged from the observation and video led to the creation of a positive tension among the ECEC professional. Such tension favored the de-construction of existing practices and co-construction of new meaning of inclusion and inclusive practices, through the facilitation of pedagogical coordinators and researchers.

The sections below present preliminary findings of the TRACKs project, specially reflecting on the case studies' results which became the starting point for subsequent stages of the project. Predominantly, they served as a backbone for devising (1) an analytical frame (which will be presented in the *Result 2 – Report on the completion of the tasks*) and the (2) early scheme for doing coaching with teachers/ ECEC professionals/staff. The table below gathers all actions realized during O1 of the TRACKs project, with categorization of data collected by each partner country and acknowledging the variety in the research techniques. This showcases bottom-up approach to deepening the data collection and accumulation of material for later stages of the work. It can be noted that the Italian team relied on observations as the main research technique. These were followed by group interview and that sequence fitted best with the local context. Conversely, the Polish and Belgian team found it more useful

for the goals of the projects to concentrate on individual and group interviews in their local contexts.

	Belgium	Italy	Poland
Interviews (Individual and group)	17 (head-personnel, teachers, carers, parents, representatives of the pedagogical supervision committee; individual and group interviews)	4 (teachers/ teaching assistants, parents – group interviews)	18 (head personnel, teachers, parents; group and individual interviews)
Observations at ECEC	10	6	9
Recordings	10	15	9
Coaching sessions	9	8	7
Meetings with ECEC staff/ parents (which will be continued)	5	2	2
TOTAL per country	**51**	**35**	**45**
TOTAL in project	**131**		

Preliminary summary of results and conclusions for further tasks I – issues formulated on the basis of analyzing interview data

1. <u>**ECEC as a space for educational opportunity – a departure point conclusion**</u>

It has been observed that ECEC clearly operate as spaces where children can capitalize on chances to be better-prepared for subsequent educational phases:

B. So yes, [Teacher X] said that some children who come to this ECEC have never experienced holding scissors or even crayons in their hands:

R: Yes, you can forget about scissors for some of them completely. Now the children go to the year-zero grade. Look now the 3-year-olds are good at cutting with scissors already. We draw some circles, other shapes… I like it when they draw various circles, squares, rectangles and at the end of the school year it is not even possible with some 4-year-olds because they do not know the colors at the beginning. So this year I went to teach grade Zero and I said, well, it has not been that many years, but these children, they are very different from how they once came (…) Now for a 4-year old not to attend kindergarten, it became something strange, especially since we now have two ECECs and someone not getting a place is very rare, single cases. So it is quite a large village so a four-year-old should be in. Not to even mention the 5-year-olds. They all get a spot, nearly 100% of children. (Teacher, village ECEC)

For the most part, the interviewed parents perceive the ECECs they children attend as a place that stimulates cognitive, emotional and social development of their children. In that sense, it is no longer just a space where children are being cared for when the parents are at work (Ślusarczyk 2010). This applies not only to urban milieus, but also to rural settings. While this is a positive development, it also leads to growing expectations the parents voice towards the ECEC professionals and staff. This now encompasses education, yet also extends to good functioning of a child in a group and his or her social development. In addition, in villages that typically have limited access to professionals able to assist a child, the ECEC place becomes one of the key – if not the only one – spaces for equalizing social or developmental deficiencies early on:

No more speech therapist. I know because my son had trouble pronouncing 'R' but we somehow managed to practice at home and he learnt. So I was not driving off to that therapist (Parent, village ECEC)

Concurrently, when the dominating model of ECEC is the neoliberal, market educational (Moss 2009), the risk of the ECEC institutions' diversification and hierarchization becomes greater. In this context, it is important to propose widely-accessible training tools for teachers finding themselves in varied social contexts.

2. **Paying attention to social inequalities: differences in socio-economic welfare, children's behavior and language competence**

All conversation partners referred to very diverse 'types' of vulnerabilities. Especially the signals that refer to poverty or exclusion have been voiced spontaneously.

General living conditions

The researchers noted that the ECEC professionals refer to general issues that affect different areas of life like housing, health, work, welfare. For example:

> "Language, poverty, housing, diseases as a result, or external signs of these characteristics, such as children who smell bad, clothes that smell like fungus, unkempt, long-term illnesses, unhealthy food, teeth that are broken, therefore also stress ..."

Financial signals - the "lunch box" and similar indicators

The professionals are aware that some families are struggling to make ends meet. The schools try to set up a very cost-conscious policy and alleviate the emergency where necessary.

> "You notice that some children do not bring any cake or fruit, that they come from financially poor families. Children notice that from each other: 'this child has nothing with him and gets a cake from the teacher again.'"

> "One signal is the content of the lunch boxes: cold fries, cold hamburgers ... We are concerned about that. But we have to be cautious about this, because certain things can also be culturally bound. How do you respond best to this?"

Aggressive behavior vs shy behavior

Not only the visible, external characteristics or signals are cited, but also more indirect or hidden ones that can be demonstrated by a certain behavior in context. Knowledge about the home conditions is then essential to interpreting the causes of some striking behaviors:

> "I mainly see children who hurt each other, even when they are very small. For some, that behavior remains, so they often get punished. They get the image of being the difficult, the aggressive one. That must affect them in their self-confidence. You look for explanations and sometimes you notice family circumstances that make that behavior comprehensible. Sometimes it's because of the large groups that their behavior is triggered and they are much quieter and cute in smaller groups."

In addition, the professionals see their own role in somewhat perpetuating specific treatment of behavioral differences between children in their ECECs:

"As already mentioned, children who are often quiet or shy sometimes get insufficient attention from us. So that is also a potential signal of vulnerability, especially if the noisy or busy children are really dominant."

Language barriers

Some professionals indicated that the existing language barrier precluded them from making specific signals negotiable. Similarly, they could not try out some of the pedagogical approaches in the fear of not being properly understood. The policy of the school pay attention to this, so that there is still some diversity in the languages that can be used.

"Some parents cannot speak Dutch or do not speak it well. We do have people here at school who speak Arabic, Turkish or another non-Western language, they can already help."

The professionals are aware of the complex mechanisms behind social inequality and poverty. That is why they try to formulate a policy aimed at training and team-oriented approaches.

"I put a lot of effort into in-service training, education and literature, etc. I try to remove the assumptions. That starts with the naming of certain things: 'language deficit' actually means 'multilingual'. You must also adjust our policy in reaching out for parents. For example, we do not do 'cheese and wine evenings' because this is more for a middle-class parent audience. We try to invite mothers during the day if they cannot come in the evening."

"We discuss the problems and signals on a weekly basis. In this way we can decide what to do when we notice, for instance, cold fries in a child's lunch box. In this way we try to work out a common approach, or at least we learn what every colleague thinks about it. At a next meeting we discuss it further: 'I have tried this or that, and it has succeeded or failed.'"

3. **Support need/ access to tools for group work in classrooms with children of special needs/from underprivileged groups**

A need for more assistance was especially vivid in the absence of institutional or state-level support, such as in cases of village settings and no established practices for handling special cases:

[Describing a situation of managing a group with a child with disabilities] So I 'use', yes 'use' other children, ask other children to help me first and, after a while, they also do it of their own

volition, they do it spontaneously, sometimes I really don't have to ask and they let me know that 'Antek did not go to pee' (…) (Teacher in a village setting)

In some ECECs, working with children who have special needs, are not able-bodied or come from underprivileged social groups occurs without any sort of support from specialists, second teacher, assistant or forms of trainings. Conversely, it is often based on the intuition of the teachers, their extensive experience and assuming good will of the parents. Even more so in this context, the quality of work and professionalization of practice are vital:

> I am not sure how it is between them but for the mum to come to me and say that she wants the child not to come, that never, never happens. We even tell the parents that we lead this kind of kindergarten and explain that one a child is - from early age – with a child who is different, needs care, then that child will learn empathy, and to sympathize, and compassion and to help (teacher, village setting)

> I used the framing of patriotism because they were very eager and latched on to patriotism. Some time earlier there was a TV commercial that a patriot is not only someone who fights for their country but also someone who helps those who are weaker (group interview with teachers, village settings)

We asked the professionals what they still need as support in their approach to vulnerability and social inequality. The answers vary from extra in-service training and 'refresher courses' on specific sub-themes of poverty and social inequality, to more efforts as a team for a common approach. Some teachers asked for support exceeding the scope of the project, like an additional teaching assistant with appropriate, special qualifications:

> "In the long run it would be nice if we could be with two teachers in the classroom. That would have many advantages. You can observe with two, make appointments, set up a project, play a game ... Because you are two, you can compare your observations of a child. Together you see more."

However, the majority of interviewees pointed to the need for coaching and support:

> "It is not evident to discuss matters with the whole team. Sometimes it is delicate. Sharing the same vision is not easy in practice, not always feasible. Our attempts to reach this goal have not achieved much. Our job itself, the contact with the parents themselves, when we are able to help them, thàt gives us satisfaction."

"What we miss is things like: how do you communicate with parents, how do you handle delicate conversations, how do we deal with certain situations, how do we organize our meetings? And: how can we put this into practice?"

As a final theme emerging from the data, some ECEC professionals spoke about language development, support in co-teaching and pre-teaching, more time to consult, as well as extra time to discover new didactic material.

3. **Keeping a balance between educational, compensational and free play tasks**

When child/children with special needs or from underprivileged groups are found in the ECEC classroom environment, there is an expectation that the activities taken by the kindergarten will have vast educational effect. Concurrently, it is vital to draw attention to the fact that compensatory actions cannot cause an increased isolation of the affected child in the group:

> It is important not to have them feel that he belongs to a group but then a new 'aunt' or 'teacher' comes and takes him away to an office, so he is again excluded from the group. I wanted for him to be integrated with the group as much as possible. Despite all care that he gets here, all those therapeutic sessions and activities, he is still taken out of the group, and with Asperger, he should be with the group. So there was always this internal fight for me. And the headmistress knew about finding this sweet spot. I know he needs to go and do some work, but he should not do it at the cost of losing touch with the group /A parent of a child with special needs/.

4. Integration and cohesion of kindergarten group

In the previous point, we underline integration of a child with a group. An obverse of this is work towards ensuring cohesion in the entire group of children, so as that children with special needs or from non-majority social backgrounds do not get isolated. In addition, they should never be placed "above" the group, or above the rules that the group has agreed on.

> So there is a line: when in a group you have three, five, more children with special needs and the kindergarten is one that integrates them and has specialist that dedicate time to those special-needs children, then one sees that children who do not have disabilities become forgotten. So here there's this paramount role of remembering and being aware that all children require our attention (…) one needs to balance so that each child is noticed because every child requires attention and he or she wants it (Teacher, urban setting)

We all should be treating each other equally, there's no exceptions regarding Darek being in a wheelchair. We already have to give it to Darek a lot because that's the tendency he has, that when something is not going his way, then it's immediately anger, sobbing, being upset and no go. However, he has to take into account that other children, for instance, have a different idea about something at a given moment, right? (teacher, village setting)

Preliminary summary of results & emerging themes from recordings and observations in ECEC institutions

1. Systemic ways to pay attention to a level of interaction with children experiencing inequalities (with migrant/ethnic backgrounds, with disabilities, from families of lower socio-economic backgrounds)

During observations, it was noticed that there is a discrepancy in the level of language stimulation. The children exposed to inequalities were disadvantaged in those context. It was observed that in the situations of conflict or choice, parents and staff tended to even stop actions towards non-favored children so as to take care of the others. Thus, it is crucial to systematically address the need to reflect on the intentionality of communication in educational relations.

For the youngest groups studied by the Italian team, it was crucially observed that more reflection is needed on both verbal and non-verbal interaction. The research group has highlighted the importance for ECEC professionals to maintain the focus of attention for all children, paying particular attention to the response to children's questions, how to look at them, and how to deal with their verbal and non-verbal interactions. The research group has also noticed the importance for ECEC professionals to facilitate children in respecting waiting times and the turns in communication. Critical accidents in free play moments have also been noted: educators privilege a normative/individual approach to children's behavior rather than a constructive management of that would offer children tools to manage conflict autonomously (e.g. when two children fight to take the same game).

For the age group of 2-3 year old, one of the main theme emerged is involvement and non-involvement of children in structured activities. The team has noted the need for educators

to pay attention to the setting up of educational environment and the facilitating of practices during free play and structured play time. The research team has noted a lot of free play without proxemics / closeness of the educators, for at least 40 minutes within the classroom. This means that some children may get bored and start running or causing harm to other children; as a consequence, children do not use the spaces functionally. Lack of educational direction in guiding children to the use of materials for symbolic play.

For the age group 3 to 6 years old, the main theme emerged is <u>legitimization and recognition of children's agency and belonging.</u> During circle time the educator gives space to all the children, especially the newcomers, of introducing themselves to the classroom and to the researcher. The Educator asks the children to pronounce their names and teach the other children how to pronounce their names, while sharing their meaning. Circular communication between all children, with the mediation of educators with respect to the communication style of the disabled child.

2. **Directing attention at all children (how to react to questions/ how to observe them/ how to pay attention to verbal and non-verbal interaction)**

It has been found that teachers pay less attention to children from non-majority backgrounds/ with disabilities. What is more, when they direct attention to those children, the communicative intention seems to mostly revolve around care and support. While this is positive, it indicates absence of the education and development focus. For other – i.e. majority – children, there was a balance between different types of intentions in interactions.

3. **Waiting period (time dedicated to a child by a teacher), communication turns and conflicts**

Among results and recommendations in this realm, the Research teams suggested that children who have difficulty – due to disability or limited language competence in majority language – should be always given extra time for responding or liaising with a teacher during interaction. Such an approach would stimulate willingness to engage in relations, as well as increase the level of socializing with other children in the group. A fast intervention by the teacher in communication (adding, suggesting, answering for the child) removes a child's chance at being active in an interaction. Further advised is posing questions that are specific and direct. In the

conflict context, an intervention that comes too early again prevents children from having autonomy and managing conflict alone.

4. **Crisis situations during free play**

Teachers prefer a normative or individual (1on1 conversation) approaches to children's behaviors. This precludes the attitude of constructive management, which would offer a tool for solving and managing the conflict alone, e.g. when two children are fighting over one toy. For children with disabilities, some teachers presumptuously places them on a privileged position, which might result in the disagreement from other children.

5. **Complementarity of actions performed by teachers, carers and support staff**

When more than one adult works in a group (i.e. teacher and teaching assistant, supporting teacher), it is important to analyze the strategy of cooperation. By engaging in inclusive actions, the staff can foster the process of good interaction and communication in a broader setting.

6. **Adult supervision and creating an educational setting – time for play vs time for education**

Some challenges have been observed in regards to splitting time between free play and educational activities. On the one hand, there was a need to encourage children to play freely and experiment. On the other hand, the issue of education and development has been valid as well.

7. **Engaging vs. non-engagement of children in ECEC activities**

One of the noted problems was the unintentional attention deficit in teachers who were not actively engaging all of the children in the planned activities. In effect, there is a risk that some children will usually (or always) remain on the margins of the planned activity or task (e.g. time for reading, choosing a book). At the same time, it is important to find balance and accept that when children do not want to partake in shared activities, they shall not be forced. Simultaneously, it is pivotal to establish the reason and possibly solving the problems that is behind that. The Italian team concentrated on the necessity for proximity and focus on engaging children who might lose attention during activities. As the team has noted, the general educator maintains a balance between participation in activity and peripheral activity of the children (in

other areas of the classroom). Educational direction as far as the management of the group and the dynamics of individuals within the group are concerned.

8. **Space for individualized interactions**

Teachers and care personnel have a tendency to favor children who are more linguistically competent during various activities (see Bernstein, 1964 on codes). An important inclusivity strategy is to balance the groups of children in a way that children from non-minority backgrounds are not grouped together, at the margins of the rest of the group. Constructing mixed-groups, also when it comes to language – will mean certain intervention in the choices of interaction partners, yet it enables and fosters more peer learning and interactions.

9. **Cohesion of teacher actions and their goals**

An example from observations:

> The support teacher conducts a conversation with four girls who are sitting at the table painting and with a disabled child. Unfortunately, communication is limited - either talking to painting girls or a disabled child does not try to help in establishing interaction between children. A disabled child wanted to make contact with the girls and interact, but the teacher blocked his efforts.

The challenge here is to reflect upon the cohesion and the actual objectives of the teacher's actions, as well as the fact that they have certain consequences.

10. **Balancing attention directed at an individual and at a group**

The teachers must be vigilant in keeping the balance between giving attention to an individual and to an entire group. One of the solutions is to have two teachers present at times when educational activities take place, so as to fulfill the needs of many different children (including those with special needs, disabilities, lower competence etc). The main teacher could lead the activity, i.e. paying special attention to children who complete more orderly tasks preparing them for transition to the primary school. The supporting teacher could focus on individual needs of children -i.e. for those who need contact, attention, explanation, cuddle, clarification etc.). The balance is necessary to avoid conflicts.

As the subsequent analyses and results progress and emerge, alongside discussions of coaching session and feedback from the beneficiaries, the analysis will be expanded.