



# Inclusive Early Childhood Education (IECE) Workshop sessions

# Overview of Workshop session 1 (Group III)

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- Introduction of participants
- Introduction of the workshop
- Presentation of 2 examples of inclusive practice & questions
- Discussion into small groups: Every small group can select a couple of themes with the aim to identify challenges of implementation and ways of addressing them
- Main outcomes

# Workshop session 1

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The project has highlighted key outcomes of inclusion: belongingness, engagement and learning. This entails the child's direct experience in five processes:

- Positive social interaction with adults and peers
- Involvement in daily activities
- Child-centred approach
- Personalised assessment for learning
- Accommodations/adaptations and support



# Workshop session 1

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- Discussion will kick off with two short inputs from examples of inclusive practice focusing on a few of the above-mentioned themes (40')
- **Icelandic example**
- **Focus:** involvement in daily activities, child centred approach and accommodations/adaptations and support)
- **Slovenian example**
- **Focus:** involvement in daily activities, child centred approach and positive social interaction with adults and peers

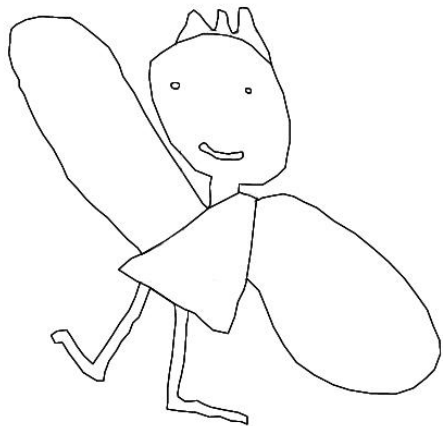


# Múlaborg

*„Leikskóli fyrir alla“*

**“A pre-school for everyone”**

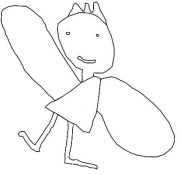
Respect - Trust – Equality - Democracy



An inclusive early years centre where our focus is the importance of development and education, through play and communication.

# All children have strengths and weaknesses...

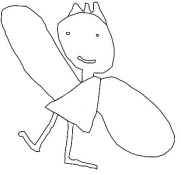
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We place emphasis on the fact children are active learners who learn from their environment and others

# Our work strategy...

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Inclusive strategy = Inclusive school

There is no “one way” to inclusion

Jean Piaget

Howard Gardner

Lev Vygotsky

Hafdís Guðjónsdóttir

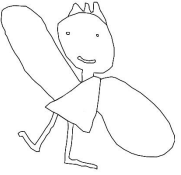
John Dewey

High Scope



# Múlaborg goals

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To promote equality for all children

To meet the needs of all children

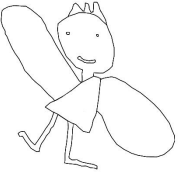
To foster cooperation amongst professionals within Múlaborg

To strengthen social development, promote tolerance, and empathy amongst children for others

To foster development in children which gives them the social skills to participate in society with respect for everyone as equals

# Key ingredient to inclusion in early years

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PLAY,PLAY, PLAY...

Everyone can!

We can teach everything through play

Fosters communication and cooperation

Promotes development on all levels

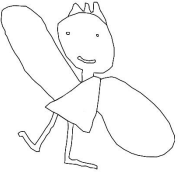
Children learn to respect objects and others

# Our weekly plan...

María	Marsela	Rannveig	Kristján	Arndís	Telma
<p>Nr.1. Fer fyrstur í útiveru (athugar garðinn) og fyrstur inn eftir útiveru. Fer í gulu/rauðu stofu</p> <p>Leggur á borð fyrir mat og kaffi. Sópar eftir kaffi.</p> <p>..... Leysir af þar sem þarf. Deildarfundir, undirbúningur og fer á aðrar deildir ef þarf.</p> <p>Annars með börnunum sem eru vakandi.</p>	<p>Nr.2. Umsjón með Dagbjörtu.</p> <p>Sér um klósettið/bleiur fyrir mat</p> <p>..... Er að vekja þar til Dagbjört vaknar.</p>	<p>Nr.3. Er með morgunstundina</p> <p>Seinastur út og seinastur inn.</p> <p>Gengur frá fataklefanum og fer svo í gulu/rauðu stofu. Sér um samverustund f.h.</p> <p>Ber ábyrgð á því að vekja börnin eftir hvíldina.</p> <p>Gengur frá dýnunum. Er í grænu stofu eða á bláu svæði eftir kaffi.</p>	<p>Nr.4. Klósett fyrir kl:10:00</p> <p>Innivera. Tekur til og gerir tilbúið fyrir hádegið. Sjá lista.</p> <p>Sér um klósetti/bleiur fyrir mat.</p> <p>..... Er með Igor e.h.</p>	<p>Nr.5. Umsjón með Bryndísi Emmu.</p> <p>..... Er að vekja þar til Bryndís Emma vaknar.</p> <p>..... Samverustund fyrir kaffi.</p>	<p>Nr.6. Sér um Igor f.h.</p> <p>..... Er með þeim börnum sem eru vöknud eftir hádegi.</p>
<p>Fer í mat kl:11:45. Rauða hvíld.</p>	<p>Borð 1 –Lea Jana Byrjar í rauðu hvíld</p>		<p>Borð 3. Græna hvíld (klárar hvíldina)</p>	<p>Borð 1-Sunna Græna hvíld (fer fyrr í mat)</p>	<p>Borð 2 Gengur frá</p>

# Curriculum areas

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Literacy and communication

Sustainability and science

Democracy and human rights

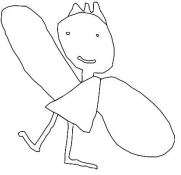
Equality

Health and welfare

Creativity and culture

# Outdoor play

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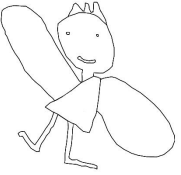
All children need access to outdoor play

Freedom to explore nature and self through outdoor play

Field trips, nature walks, free play in garden

# Non traditional methods of communication

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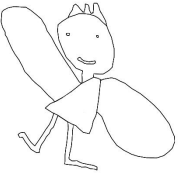


All children can use non traditional methods of communication to build stronger language skills

Sign with language

PCS (picture communication symbols) pictures

# Picture Communication Symbols



Pictures from Boardmaker program

Simple and clear pictures

To put words where there are none

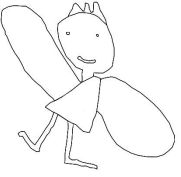
Communication books



# Thank you

# Please feel free to contact us....

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Múlaborg

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Reykjavik 108

Iceland

+354-568-5154



# Leikskólinn Sólborg

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2017

# Sólborg preschool in Reykjavik Iceland a city of 120.000 people

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80 children attend the school for 8-9 hours a day.

17 children with special needs:

- deaf and hard of hearing students

- students with diagnoses of autism, down syndrom, Williams syndrom, CP, speech delays.

14 with other language than Icelandic

CODA children (deaf parents)

website: [www.solborg.is](http://www.solborg.is)

# Teachers and support staff

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Staff is about 37, but not all of them teach full time.

17 teachers, preschool teachers and special teachers

6 special educator

1 music teacher

3 deaf teachers assistants

2 special needs coordinators

Included are kitchen staff and supervisors

Sign language interpreter

website: [www.solborg.is](http://www.solborg.is)

email: [solborg@reykjavik.is](mailto:solborg@reykjavik.is)



# Teachers and support staff

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- We receive support services the from community center.
- Communication Center for The Deaf and Hard of Heraring support us in the sign language, for children and teachers.
- Occupational Therapist once a month
- Physical Therapist comes in once a week
- Speech Therapist comes in once a week

website: [www.solborg.is](http://www.solborg.is)

email: [solborg@reykjavik.is](mailto:solborg@reykjavik.is)

# Teachers in inclusive school

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We need teachers;

who have a wide range of knowledge and experience.

who have a positive attitude towards children with a wide range of needs and abilities.

with ability to team teach

and share ideas and knowledge.

can share responsibilities

for all the children.

are flexible and

continually learning.

who believe in teaching through

daily routine and play.

website: [www.solborg.is](http://www.solborg.is)

# Our main goals are to:

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recognise and build on children's strengths and interests

foster equality and equal opportunity among all the children

encourage cooperation among teacher's, children and parents

develop a program that meets the needs of all the children

website: [www.solborg.is](http://www.solborg.is)

# What makes a good preschool?

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A philosophy that builds on the fundamental right of every child and we believe that every child is unique.

Teachers with a positive attitude and good collaboration that is followed by weekly meetings.

Three main components for success:

good curriculum,

parent involvement,

excellent teachers.

website: [www.solborg.is](http://www.solborg.is)

# The curriculum frames the work in preschool.

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National curriculum.

Each school has its own curriculum: We set outcome based goals for all subjects, including social and self help skills.

Individual curriculum: For all children but more elaborate and goal-oriented for children with special needs.

website: [www.solborg.is](http://www.solborg.is)



# Individual education plan (IEP)

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## An IEP

is written in the fall for each child with special needs.

contains information who is gathered from parents, preschool staff, and diagnostic centers and specialists outside the school.

describes the child in all aspects of development.

can have many developmental aspects

states what areas should be in focus for the next few months.

each aspect has one long –term goal and then many short-term goals

is a plan that is always under review, the classroom staff evaluates the IEP goals every month.

One teacher is responsible for child’s IEP but other teachers also have a role in it

The teaching is embedded in all daily activities and play.

website: [www.solborg.is](http://www.solborg.is)

# Parent's role in inclusive schools

## Parents involvement is important

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Parents are:

always welcome in the school to participate in every day school activities

the key figures in fostering positive attitude among their children

involved in setting goals,

They take part in all decision making

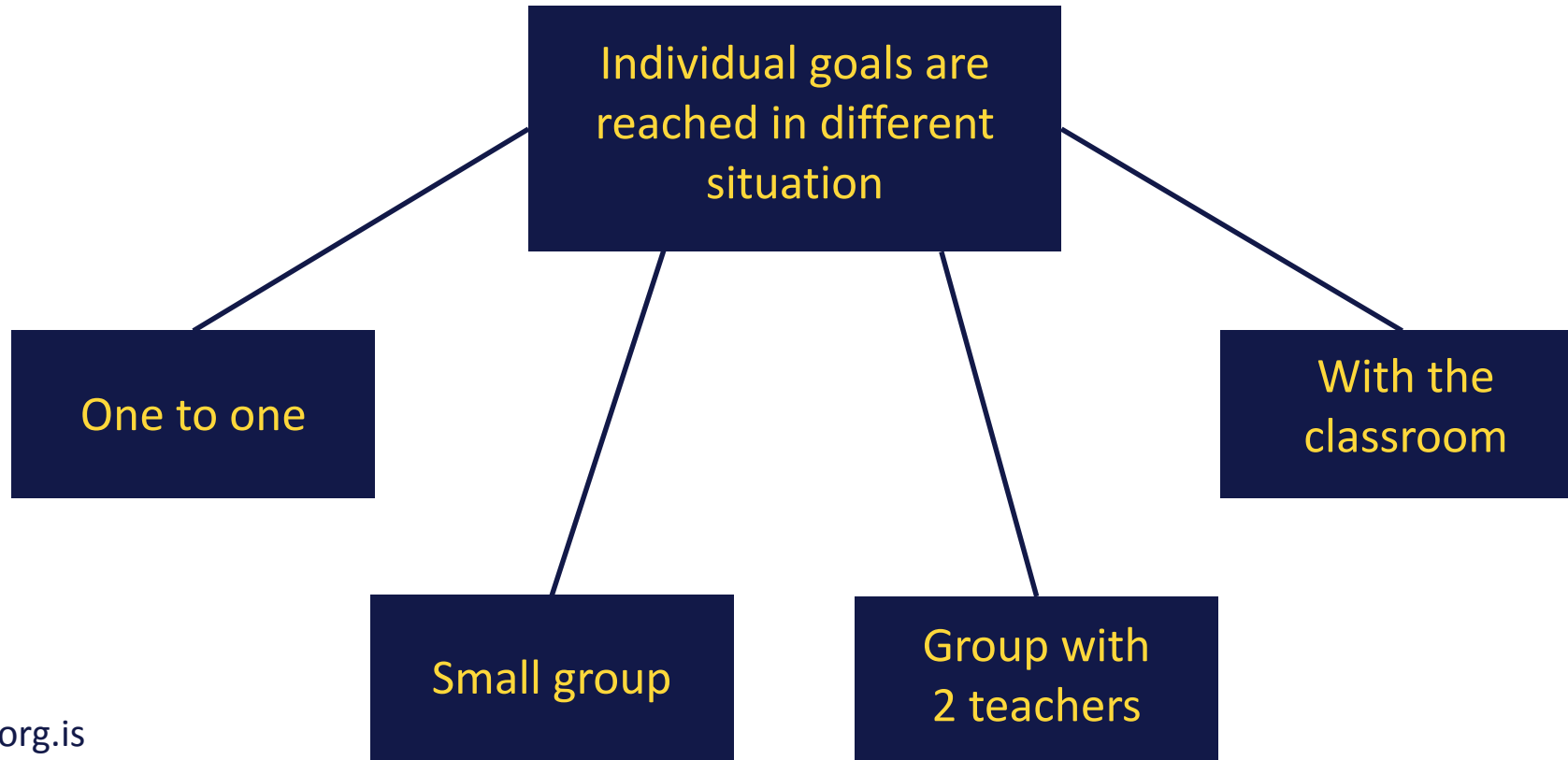
involving their child

**Parents are partners**

website: [www.solborg.is](http://www.solborg.is)

# IEP – implementation in the classroom

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website: [www.solborg.is](http://www.solborg.is)

# Inclusion Schools

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Our goal is that every child has an opportunity to participate, make friends and socialize with their peers.

The foundation for inclusion is a "good school" for all the children, teachers and parents.

How do we make this happened,

website: [www.solborg.is](http://www.solborg.is)

# Inclusive preschool education in kindergarten Jelka



## Vrtec Jelka

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1000 Ljubljana

SLOVENIA

00386 1 580 91 80

<http://www.vrtec-jelka.si>

## Petra kočar

00386 1 580 91 82



Ustanoviteljica

Mestna občina  
Ljubljana



Organizacija Združenih  
narodov za izobraževanje,  
znanost in kulturo

LJUBLJANA:  
MESTO/CITY  
OF/LITERA-  
TURE ...

Unescova  
kreativno mesto  
od 2015

# Vrtec Jelka - kindergarten Jelka



Kindergarten Jelka is a public preschool upbringing educational organization. Its primary goal is to provide and to take care of child's foundational needs and well-being.



In **29 groups**, we take care of **500 children**.

Four units on five locations.

The institution employs 103 workers, 63 of them are professional staff.

Kindergarten has established strong **cooperation with the parents**, the **local community** and with their **international partners**.

A great part of the **kindergarten's philosophy** and vision is also **continuous professional growth and development of the staff, teamwork and excellent cooperation** at all levels of the kindergarten.

Through teamwork, innovation, project work and international cooperation they successfully extend their mission and cooperate with the local and the international community.

# Kindergarten's Program

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**CURRICULUM FOR KINDERGARTENS** (1999, Ljubljana: Ministry of Education and Sport) is applied when organising pre-school educational work which assures the appliances of the basic principles of educational work with preschool children.

The objective of the curriculum is greater consideration of human and children's rights, consideration of diversity and distinctiveness among children.

Child is an active participant in the process who acquires new skills through researching, testing and choosing activities.

# Kindergarten's program

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The emphasis is laid on the educational process, interactions and experiences from which the child learns.

Greater respect and consideration of the child's individuality, diversity and privacy.

Empowerment of children's cooperation in planning, designing and decision-making and accountability (more active role of the child).

The importance of professional autonomy of professional, management and consulting workers.



# Inclusion of children with special – additional needs

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Children with special needs are included into regular groups and are provided with additional individual attention by special needs teachers, such as special pedagogues, a speech therapist, and a psychical therapist.

All children with special needs have adaptations according to their individual programs.

The kindergarten has developed a systematic and strong cooperation with children's families and further supporting advisory service for families of children with special needs.

Various disabilities are represented in the kindergarten with children that are physically disabled, those with learning disabilities, children with autistic spectrum disorder and others.

A blind child and two children with diabetes are provided with additional supportive assistants to help them overcome physical barriers.

# Kindergarten's Inclusive Features

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The institution pays a special attention and care of children from different social and cultural backgrounds, children from foster families and safe houses. Furthermore, the number of immigrant's children is also increasing.

Individual adjustments of educational program for children with special needs in the kindergarten are prepared and carried out in cooperation with all the professionals, counsellor service and parents.

The advisory and observation process currently includes 66 children with distinct developmental problems.

Children with special needs are included in regular groups, yet a maximum of two are set to be allowed for one group; consequently, the number of children could get reduced for up to six members.

Children of the local community, those from socially disadvantaged families and children with special needs have the priority for the admission to the kindergarten.

# CHILD – CENTRED APPROACH

## Active learning

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**Active participation** of all children is guaranteed by active involvement of children in planning, implementing and evaluating educational process according to their chronological and developmental age.

Allows children to be **active participants in their learning**.

Each child is an individual and has its own way of learning, research and exploring.

Activities for children in kindergarten offer various opportunities to find their own answers to their questions and the same time require listening to each other.

The child's expression is an important independent activity which gives us guidelines for further planning and designing new objectives.

# CHILD – CENTRED APPROACH

## Individualized program

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The professional staffs prepare individualized programs for all children with special needs, which contain certain adjustments according to the child's disability.

Furthermore, individualised programs are prepared for children from different social and cultural backgrounds as well.

Child's individual characteristics, abilities, interests, motivation, strengths and weaknesses are taken into consideration while planning adjustments and individualised programs.

Besides, a great importance is placed on planning possible forms and methods of work, allocation of responsibilities and monitor progress, working with parents, forms of necessary adjustments and collaboration with experts of the relevant fields from other institutions (health, school, etc.).

**Children with disabilities are provided with the normalization of conditions in terms of life without exclusion and a common education in an appropriate environment.**

# Some examples of adjustments for blind children:

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A constant assistant to overcome physical barriers and encourage independence.

Spatial adjustment: permanent space planning, tactile markings for orientation on fences, doors, floors.

Adjustments to the playroom for free passage.

Marking paths for guidance, tactile markings, and different tactile structures (floor mark from the entrance of the kindergarten to the playroom, the playroom entrance, bathroom and toilet, a permanent place in the group is established).

Indications of the names of all children in the dressing room in the Braille alphabet.

Toys that develop all the senses and compensatory skills.

Application of specific natural materials designs and models.

Predicting extra time for characterization, illustrations and familiarize themselves with new content, in instalments, movement and integration of verbal describe with their own sensory-motor experience.

Communication: verbal announcing, concrete orientations description of events.

Specific experience and active learning: allowing various multi-sensory experience, tactical guidance's with verbal support and explanation.

Additional training of all professionals who works with the blind child, best practice exchange and observation lessons and regular visits to the Institute for the blind and partially sighted children of Ljubljana.

# Positive social interactions and developmental process approach

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The educational work is process-oriented and ensures compliance with the developmental characteristics and individual needs.

It takes place in working playing corners and the implementation of daily routines.

Takes into account the fact that the child is in a certain stage of development, and that its activity raises the learning process and further development.

**Focus on process rather than on the content and results.**

It promotes children's own strategies, perceptions, expressions and thinking, which are special to a particular child's development period.

Organizing conditions for the child's learning by discovery and testing in cooperation, communication with children and adults.

# Positive social interactions

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The emphasis is placed on the importance of spontaneous children's play, various learning environments and guided learning activities where all children, including children with special needs, are enabled to actively participate on their own initiative and without any specific additional support of the adults.

All the children as well as children with special and various educational needs have the opportunity to express themselves through their strengths and are able to choose the content they are interested in.

A great importance is placed on promoting positive self-esteem and self-confidence with respect to children's competencies.



# Positive social interactions and supportive environment

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Children are provided with supportive learning environment, individual, joint and collective forms of work according to their individual needs and strengths.

There is a constant concern about the ongoing assurance of a comfortable and supportive environment for learning that permits the educators both planned and unplanned guidance, as well as child's own-initiatives.

**Children with disabilities are provided with the normalization of conditions in terms of life without exclusion and a common education in an appropriate environment.**

Special attention is dedicated to the early detection and diagnosis and to providing the appropriate support to the child.



We offers opportunities for child's optimal development and provide equal opportunities for everyone, irrespective to their gender, social and cultural origins, religion or nationality.

Education is based on understanding, tolerance, friendship, sincerity and sensibility for the others.

The children are included in a safe and supportive environment for play and optimal development with high appreciation of their individual needs and capability.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION**

# Workshop session 1

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- Discussion into small groups (30')
- Every small group can select a couple of themes from the above mentioned processes with the aim to identify challenges of implementation and ways of addressing them.
- For example, 'Child-centred approach': What are the main challenges of not implementing it? How can we address these challenges?
- We need to agree on the main outcomes(10')

# Main Outcomes

## Challenges of implementation

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- Education of staff
- Beaucroatic processes
- Limits to means and resources
- Ratio of students and staff
- Individual, curriculum and social norms to be assessed
  - Who should do the personal assessment
  - Time constraints for the full process

# Main Outcomes

## Strategies for addressing them

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- All staff need to be educated – not just teachers
- Reduce administrative load of management
- Means and resources for all of the school rather than particular students or teachers
- Aim to establish a better staff to student ratio
- Decide on appropriate tools and systems
- Give responsibility to the Agency over time management and expectations

# Overview of Workshop session 2

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- Introduction of the workshop
- Discussion into small groups
- Main outcomes

# Workshop session 2

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## **Aim:**

Presentation of the project's Ecosystem Model of Quality IECE and discussion on how to use it to improve IECE quality at national level

# Ecosystem Model of Quality IECE

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- Inspired by combination of three frameworks:
  - Structure-process-outcome framework (e.g. OECD, 2009).
  - Ecological systems framework (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Odom et al., 2004).
  - Inclusive education framework (European Agency, 2015).
- Grounded in the project data.
- Sets out the key factors of quality IECE in five dimensions within three ecological system levels.
- Enables collaboration among policy makers, researchers and practitioners.

# Dimension 1: Inclusion OUTCOMES

IECE practitioners worked towards the goal of enabling each child to **belong** – be a valued member of the group, to be **engaged** in regular activities, and to acquire relevant **learning**.





# Inclusion outcomes (cont...)

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All children are invited and enabled to:

- use their strengths;
- exercise their curiosity and self-direction;
- make choices, particularly in play;
- express interests and goals and engage in problem-solving accordingly;
- be motivated for and engage in valued activities alongside and in interaction with their peer group, with guidance and relevant support as necessary.

# Dimension 2: PROCESSES WITHIN THE SETTING

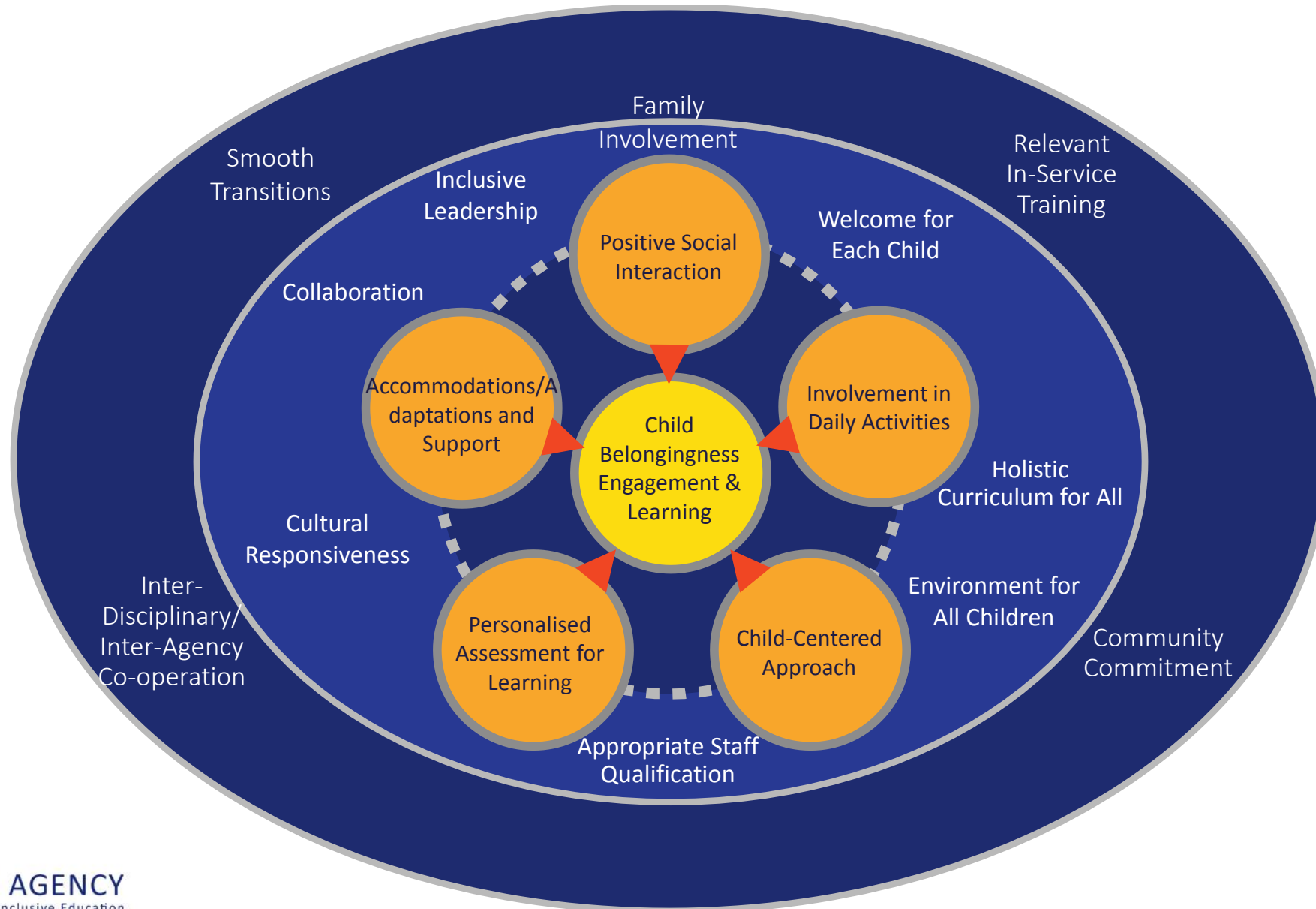
Children are directly involved in these five processes that enable them to belong, to be engaged and to learn



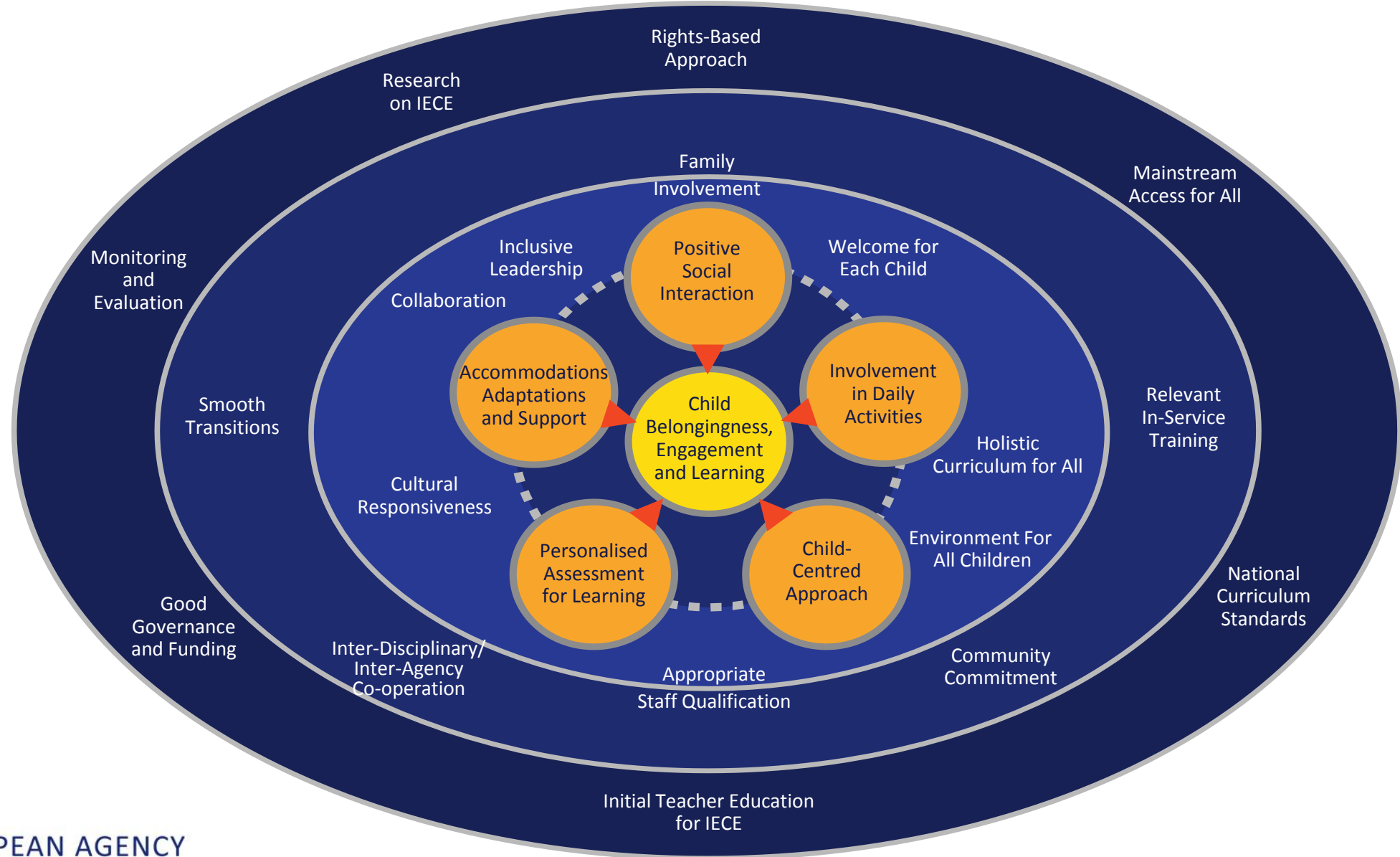
# Dimension 3: STRUCTURES WITHIN THE SETTING



# Dimension 4: STRUCTURES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY



# Dimension 5: STRUCTURES AT REGIONAL/NATIONAL LEVEL



# Model links micro provisions to macro policy

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E.g. **Access issues:** ‘Rights-based approach’ essential for regional/national policy-makers (outer circle) to legislate and fund entitlement of all learners to access mainstream provision; but also highlights that same attitude is essential for leadership and practitioners at IECE setting level to ensure ‘Welcome’ and accommodation for all children and families in the community.

**Staff quality:** Initial teacher education for IECE may be primarily a regional/national responsibility (outer circle in the Figure). On the other hand, the employment of qualified staff and their continuing up-skilling is more closely linked to the responsibilities of IECE settings (inner circle in the Figure).

# Workshop session 2

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- The project suggested that the Ecosystem model provides a useful comprehensive framework for IECE that enables policy makers, practitioners and researchers to plan, develop and monitor the quality and inclusiveness of early childhood education provision at national, local and education setting levels.
- In what ways, do you think can the Ecosystem Model for quality IECE be used for policy making and provision planning, implementation and evaluation?
- Discussion into small groups

# Discussion into small groups

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- Access, participation and learning for all (20')

How is access, participation and learning for all ensured in your educational system? How is it orchestrated in your setting?

What are the areas for changes and improvement?

- Curriculum (20')

How does the curriculum address a holistic approach in your educational system? How is it orchestrated in your setting in order to enhance child's engagement and learning?

What are the areas for changes and improvement?



# Discussion into small groups

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- Family involvement (20')

How is family involvement promoted through your national system? How are families involved in your setting?

What are the areas for changes and improvement?

# Main Outcomes

## Challenges of implementation

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- Access
  - Gap between legal entitlement and real access due to lack of resources
  - Challenges to access the appropriate educational system
  - A need for European standard for access
  - The transition between stages of education
  - Lack of common quality standards within the country

- 
- Curriculum
    - Differing guidelines for a curriculum
    - Lack of a framework at EU level
  - Family Involvement
    - Families as outsiders rather than partners
    - Lack of attention to vulnerable parents
    - Mostly mothers as family contact

# Main Outcomes

## Strategies for addressing them

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- Access
  - Improve resources (staff, materials, methods, training, cooperation) needed to bridge the gap between legal entitlement and accessibility
  - Access to learning opportunities within the system
  - European standard for access
  - Communication systems between stages of education to ensure a smooth transition
  - Sharing the standards of quality within the country

- 
- Curriculum
    - Agreement of guidelines for an open curriculum
    - Standards, importance of having a framework at EU level
  - Family Involvement
    - Families as partners
    - Attention to vulnerable parents
    - Families are not only mothers

# Overview of Workshop session 3

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- Introduction of the workshop
- Discussion into small groups (60')
- Main outcomes

# Workshop session 3

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- The project has developed the Self-Reflection Tool for use by Early Childhood Education Settings that wish to improve the inclusiveness of their provision.
- Discussion on using the Self-Reflection Tool to improve the inclusiveness of the physical, social and learning setting

# 2. Development of a Self-Reflection Tool

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- Early in the project, **need** felt for a tool that all professionals and staff could use to reflect on their setting's inclusiveness.
- **Inspiration** for the observation tool from well-established instruments on inclusion in early childhood education environment.
- **Aimed** to provide a *snapshot* of the environment from the perspective of the IECE project's key question: "What are the main characteristics of quality inclusive early childhood education settings for all children?"
- **Used** during site-visits in inclusive early childhood education settings in eight countries.



# Focus of the Self-Reflection Tool

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- The focus of this self-reflection tool is on **increasing the capacity** of inclusive early childhood education environments to enable the ***participation*** of all children, in the sense of ***attending and being actively engaged*** in activities and interaction.
- **Engagement** is defined as being actively involved in everyday activities of the setting, and is the core of inclusion. It is closely related to learning and to the interaction between the child and the social and physical environment.

# Content of the Self-Reflection Tool

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**Eight aspects are addressed in the tool:**

- Overall welcoming atmosphere
- Inclusive social environment
- Child-centered approach
- Child-friendly physical environment
- Materials for all children
- Opportunities for communication for all
- Inclusive teaching and learning environment
- Family friendly environment

Each aspect is covered by a set of questions that require a qualitative response.

# Uses of the tool

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The self-reflection tool may be used for a number of purposes:

- (a) to provide a picture of the state of inclusiveness in the setting;
- (b) to serve as a basis for discussions about inclusion;
- (c) to describe, formulate and prioritise areas for improvement in inclusive practice.

The tool can be used flexibly, will be published in all EU languages, and is expected to be used by IECE settings across Europe.

# Workshop session 3

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Discussion points (in small groups):

- How would you like to use it?
- What can you accomplish by using the tool?
- How can the use of the tool improve the quality of inclusive ECE provisions?
- How are you planning to disseminate the tool?

# Main Outcomes suggestions regarding implementation

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- To be used by
  - Groups of school staff to discuss and improve quality of inclusive practice
  - For research purposes – as an index for inclusion
  - Groups of stakeholders eg. Teachers, parents, policy makers, children

# Main Outcomes Strategies for implementation

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- What can be accomplished?
  - As a basis of discussion to increase awareness of inclusion within the setting
  - Used to evaluate and improve practices within the setting
  - Can help to create a shared vision about the setting
  - Can help to understand the gaps and needs for staff education
  - Help to motivate staff and school as a community
  - Can aid active participation of parents in the educational process
  - Can be used as is or modified to create ownership of the tool by using it as a basis for school adaptation

- 
- How the tool can improve quality of inclusive provision
    - Can help to identify gaps in inclusive practice
    - Can help to identify and compare priorities amongst stakeholders
    - Can help to develop a pragmatic view to the practice
  - Dissemination of the tool
    - Translation adapted to cultural context
    - Accessible for all preschools
    - Can be presented throughout various institutions and events at various levels
    - An accessible website explaining the benefits and the use
    - Included in teacher and education professional training
    - The need of facilitators with particular knowledge of inclusion should be considered