

VALIDATION WORKSHOP REPORT

- GREECE -

Hosting partner: Militos Consulting SA

Title of the event: Ethical values in ECEC, kindergarten and primary school

Venue and date: 11th Nursery school of the Municipality of Acharnes, Athens, Greece, July 5, 2019 (10:30-13:00)

Participants:

11 participants (ECEC and primary school practitioners, including core group of 3 persons in the role of ECEC coordinator, primary school teacher/coordinator, ECEC expert with secondary and adult education expertise, especially in the field of ITC and pedagogies for teachers)

Program of the event

10:30 – 11:15 Presentation of AVAL project scope and objectives including research results (tool: website)

11:15 – 12:15 Hands on presentation of online training modules in Greek (tool: online platform)

12:15 – 14:00 Discussion and feedback on training material with core group

Feedback and results

General remarks

The workshop was structured in a way to present the issue of ethical values teaching in ECEC, kindergarten and primary school across the EU and at national level, including the needs and/or readiness of teachers to support in-class teaching, as coupled with the provided training material by the project and its potential to be fully adopted by teacher curricula at practical and theoretical level. The key issue characterizing the Greek educational system in this case is that ECEC structures function under the auspices and monitoring of Municipalities, whereas kindergarten and primary schools are functioning under the auspices of the Ministry of Education. This is reflected in the training curricula of respective teachers, but also in the notion of teachers, parents, society and the State, that pre-kindergarten pedagogical methodologies are rather considered loosely connected with the notion of 'education'. According to the workshop participants, pre-kindergarten structures (daily care, nursery structures) are not monitored by an education body (e.g. the Ministry of Education) and have therefore no standard curricula and education goals, verified by such a body. However, ECEC teachers and primary school teachers share relevant curricula during tertiary education attendance to become teachers. This issue has been clearly identified in the research phase of the project and the respective results, thus acknowledged by the participants as well.

Once the project has been presented to the participants by project partner Militos Consulting SA (presented by Kyriakos Lingas), a core group of 4 participants exposing a mix of expertise in ECEC and primary school coordination, adult education as a life-long activity, and ICT in teacher-training pedagogies, have explored the training material as presented online in the AVAL platform, followed

by the AVAL Handbook for teachers. The discussion was moderated so that a feedback on what works well and what not could be drawn from the core group among the participants.

Feedback regarding the modular structure of the training provision

Experts noted that targeted material for ECEC and primary school teachers is by and large missing in the Greek case. They liked the modular approach with bite-sized training activities to be applied in classroom. At this point, the teachers have been informed on the piloting results across project countries, showing the relevant feedback we received regarding the modular structure

Content and in-class application

12 modules in total have been deeper explored by the core group across the three umbrella topics of the training provision and age-groups (4 modules per umbrella topic), so that a balanced, representative feedback regarding content could be provided. ECEC experts stated that modules as practical teaching activities can be easily adopted in their daily activities with children in the age group 0-4. They stated that the pedagogical goals at this educational level can easily be complemented by these activities. However, they pointed out that some preliminary work is needed to prepare children of this age in order to understand concepts such as 'democracy', 'environment', 'society'. They suggested that teachers should maybe in this case prepare easy to understand 'models' which would help children understand abstract concepts. For example, children at school as a community as coupled with children in other schools as a separate community, adding to a society, and from there on to larger entities, culminating in human race, the animals, nature, planet earth.

Regarding use of material in primary school, experts stated that since curricula in primary school, as well as the pattern of a 'class-model' at this educational level, are firmly conditioned by the Ministry of Education, teachers should explore ways to successfully 'insert' these activities so that they relate to the curriculum provided by the Ministry. Teachers should thus use several material as presented in the form of experiential learning that should help to create a scenery where concepts as addressed in curricula across teaching subjects (e.g. Geography, Environment, History, Religion) could be attended through some kind of gamification, since this is the main methodological approach they identified throughout the training provision and the modules they explored. In addition, they pointed out, that the upper age group of primary school (9-11) could as well prompted to re-design activities by using real-life experiences that are relevant to the activities, using tools such as story-telling, gauging real-life experiences with the modules scenarios and drawing valuable results to be discussed at peer-level.

Recommendations to be included in the general guidelines document:

The AVAL training provision for ECEC and primary school teachers offers easy to use teaching activities to address issues such as the relationships between the person, society and the environment. The modular structure of the provision is facilitating the teacher to pick relevant topics and activities according to will and pedagogical goals. However, especially in the case of pre-kindergarten teachers, they should be aware of the abstract nature of several concepts. It is recommended, that teachers should exploit own scientific knowledge and maybe relevant literature to support concepts with tangible models suited for that age, reflecting the meaning of the aforementioned concepts. A transversal issue is this of the different approach of ECEC and primary school education at national level, and even the coupling thereof under the scope of lifelong learning. In particular, ECEC is not monitored by an educational body, whereas kindergarten and primary school are. This makes adopting and adaptation of the material at hand easier in the case of ECEC, but not in primary school. In the latter case, teachers should closely follow the standard curricula and identify 'entry points' where the provided material suits the pedagogical goals as set out by the ministry of Education. At a different level, this of lifelong learning, it is recommended that teachers should be aware and explore application of such

initiatives, since teachers in Greece are substantially lacking behind in terms of lifelong learning after having finished tertiary education. A lifelong learning culture is missing at national level, and this affects teachers as well. The AVAL project provisions for teachers are thus recommended to be used by teachers, who however are prompted to cross-fertilise them as in-class activities so that they respond to overarching pedagogical goals. Lastly, in the particular case of Greece, hosting an increasing number of immigrants, provisions like this could be adapted in order to support an open-class, intercultural educational model that is needed.

Pictures

