

Resources, experiences, and support needs of families in disadvantaged communities

INTEGRATIVE REPORT D2.5

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SUPPLEMENTARY ONLINE APPENDIX FOR
PART 3: Pastori G., Sarcinelli A.S., Pagani V., Children's views on and contributions to inclusive education: studies in diverse classrooms.



WP2 Integrative Reports

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Table of Contents

1. ENGLAND	8
1.1. INTRODUCTION	8
1.2. PRESENTATION OF THE SITES	9
1.2.1. SELECTION	9
1.2.2. CHARACTERISTIC OF THE SITE	9
1.2.3. CHARACTERISTIC OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	9
1.3. METHODOLOGY AND PHASE OF WORK	10
1.4. METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUE	13
1.5. CODING AND ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY	14
1.6. MAIN FINDINGS	14
1.6.1. IDENTITY AND LANGUAGE ATTITUDE	15
1.6.2. SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS	18
1.6.3. FACTORS AFFECTING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL	20
1.6.4. SCHOOL CONTEXT	21
1.7. DISCUSSION	22
1.8. REFERENCES	23
2. NORWAY	24
2.1. INTRODUCTION	25
2.2. PRESENTATION OF THE SITE	25
2.2.1. SELECTION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITE	25
2.2.2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	27
2.3. DAYS AND PHASES OF WORK	28
2.4. METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	30
2.4.1. METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS	30
2.4.2. ETHICAL CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS	31
2.5. THE ANALYTICAL PROCESS	32
2.6. FINDINGS	35
2.6.1. FACTORS PROMOTING AND UNDERMINING WELL-BEING	37
2.6.2. CHILDREN'S PROPOSALS	43
2.7. EDUCATIONAL AND FORMATIVE IMPACT	45
2.8. DISCUSSION	46
2.9. REFERENCES	47
3. GERMANY	48
3.1. INTRODUCTION	48
3.2. PRESENTATION OF THE SITE	49
3.2.1. SELECTION	49
3.2.2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITE	49
3.2.3. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	49

3.3. METHODOLOGY AND PHASES OF WORK	50
3.4. METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUE	52
3.5. CODING AND ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY	52
3.6. FINDINGS	52
3.6.1.FACTORS PROMOTING WELL-BEING AND INCLUSION	52
3.6.2.FACTORS UNDERMINING WELL-BEING AND INCLUSION	54
3.6.3.EDUCATIONAL/FORMATIVE IMPACT	55
3.7. DISCUSSION	55
3.8. REFERENCES	56
4. ITALY	58
4.1. INTRODUCTION	58
4.2. PRESENTATION OF THE SITES	59
4.2.1.SELECTION AND CHARACTERISTIC OF THE SITES	59
4.2.2.CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	60
4.3. METHODOLOGY AND PHASES OF WORK	61
4.3.1.PRESCHOOL	61
4.3.2.PRIMARY SCHOOL	63
4.3.3.INFORMAL CONTEXT	65
4.4. METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES	67
4.4.1.METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES	67
4.4.2.ETHICAL ISSUES	69
4.5. CODING AND ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY	70
4.6. MAIN FINDINGS	70
4.6.1.FACTORS PROMOTING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL	74
4.6.2.FACTORS UNDERMINING AND PROMOTING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL	77
4.6.3.TRANSFORMATIVE PROPOSALS	78
4.6.4.EDUCATIONAL/FORMATIVE IMPACT	82
4.7. DISCUSSION	84
4.7.1.LIMITATIONS	84
4.7.2.LESSONS LEARNED	84
4.7.3.RECOMMENDATION	85
4.8. REFERENCES	86
5. GREECE	87
5.1. INTRODUCTION	88
5.2. PRESENTATION OF THE SITES	88
5.2.1.SELECTION OF THE SITES	88
5.2.2.CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITES	88
5.2.3.CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	89
5.3. METHODOLOGY AND PHASES OF WORK	90
5.4. METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	95

5.4.1.METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND RIFLECTIONS	95
5.4.2.ETHICAL CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS	96
5.5. CODING AND ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY	97
5.6. MAIN FINDIGS	97
5.6.1.FACTORS PROMOTING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL	97
5.6.2.FACTORS UNDERMINING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL	100
5.6.3.TRANSFORMATIVE FACTORS	102
5.7. EDUCATIONA/FORMATIVE IMPACT	105
5.8. DISCUSSION	106
5.9. REFERECES	107
6. POLAND	108
6.1. INTRODUCTION	108
6.2. PRESENTATION OF THE SITES	109
6.2.1.SELECTION OF THE SITES	109
6.2.2.CHARACTERISTICS OF TH SITES	109
6.2.3.CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	109
6.3. METHODOLOGY AND PHASES OF WORK	110
6.4. METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES	114
6.4.1.METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS	114
6.4.2.ETHICAL CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS	114
6.5. CODING AND ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY	115
6.6. MAIN FINDINGS	117
6.6.1.FACTORS PROMOTING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL	117
6.6.2.FACTORS UNDERMINING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL	121
6.6.3.CHILDREN'S PROPOSALS	123
6.6.4.EDUCATIONAL/TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT	124
6.7. DISCUSSION	126
6.7.1.LIMITATIONS	126
6.7.2.LESSONS LEARNED	126
6.7.3.RECOMMENDATIONS	127
7. THE CZECH REPUBLIC	129
7.1. INTRODUCTION	129
7.2. PRESENTATION OF THE SITES	130
7.2.1.SELECTION OF LOCATIONS	130
7.2.2.CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCCATIONS	130
7.2.3.CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	131
7.3. METHODOLOGY AND PHASES OF WORK	132
7.4. METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES	134
7.4.1.METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS	134

7.4.2.ETHICAL CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS	135
7.5. CODING AND ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY	136
7.6. FINDINGS	138
7.6.1.FACTORS PROMOTING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL	139
7.6.2.FACTORS UNDERMINING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL	143
7.6.3.INCLUSION KIT AND TRANSFORMATIVE PROPOSALS	148
7.6.4.EDUCATIONAL/FORMATIVE IMPACT	151
7.7. DISCUSSION: MAIN LIMITATIONS, MAIN LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS	153
7.8. REFERENCES	154

1. ENGLAND

How do home and school experiences of Turkish children in the UK interact with their language attitudes and preferences?

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative child study is carried out as part of the Task 2.5 of the ISOTIS project to investigate the influences of everyday experiences of ethnic-minority children on their language behavior, identity and well-being. The children came from families with differing socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds within the Turkish community in London. In total 25 children being raised in bilingual environments (Turkish and English) between the ages of 4 and 6 have taken part in the semi-structured interviews carried out in the home environment of children. During the interviews, the children were asked to identify their feelings when speaking their home language (Turkish) and the language of the school environment (English) in different situations by choosing a facial expression card. Following the initial answers of children, the researcher posed supporting questions to enhance the information provided by the interviewees. The findings suggest that older children are more competent in talking about their linguistic and cultural identities. Many children connected their identity-related experiences or feelings to particular individuals or locations. Some children expressed more profound feelings towards their linguistic or cultural identities, which are also linked to their language attitudes. These feelings are, in most cases, triggered by discussions at home or encounters at school. Negative feelings towards the home culture or language (Turkish) or the school language (English) are related to attempts to refrain from using the language and children's discomfort in using Turkish or English in some situations. The report provides more in-depth information on the methodology, the results and the discussion of the study. The implementation of the research is discussed in relation to ethical issues and limitations encountered during the fieldwork.

keywords: minority children, bilingualism, cultural and linguistic identities of children, interviewing young pupils, England, ISOTIS project

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study relates to ‘Children’s views on inclusion at school’ within the European Project ISOTIS and carried out in England as for the Task 2.5 of the ISOTIS project in line with the theoretical framework and study guidelines provided by the ISOTIS child study manual and presented in the Technical report (see

D.2.5: Pastori G., Pagani V., Sarcinelli S., Technical report on the Child Interview study. Children's views on inclusion at school' - digital source available on Isotis.org). The design and methodology of the study were adjusted to capitalise on the doctoral project of the author researching bilingual language acquisition in migration context. The fieldwork was carried out from January to July 2019. The aim of this qualitative study is to understand how children feel when speaking one language or another in different contexts and with different people with whom they have a significant relationship (mother, teacher, peers). The research addresses the aspects (in reference to the environment and/or to personal characteristics) affecting children's language practices, attitudes and emotions ascribed to languages and their linguistic & cultural identity in relation. For the research inquiry, the main researcher interviewed 25 bilingual children at their homes in London. The children are raised by at least one minority parent with a Turkish background. The families come from differing socio-economic and cultural backgrounds (e.g., ethnic, religious and migration-history). The main focus of this study is to understand the relationship between the language identities of children and their language acquisition and use.

1.2 PRESENTATION OF THE SITES

1.2.1 SELECTION

London was chosen as the main research site of this study as, in many aspects, it is different to the rest of the UK. It is the most populous city, with a high proportion of young people, more ethnic diversity, higher levels of education, less unemployment, and higher incomes than in any other region in England. It also has the highest cost of living, and there is wide variation of families' socio-economic circumstances. Another reason for the choice of London was the fact that approximately 90% of the population with Turkish background living in the UK lives in London, particularly the North and North-East of London. Turkish is one of the six largest language groups in London. Furthermore, London has been one of the main research sites for the ISOTIS project, where research connections have already been made.

1.2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITE

The Turkish-speaking community in the UK is from three ethnicities, namely Turkish, Kurdish, and Turkish Cypriot. Among these ethnic groups, the majority are Turkish people with a number of 83,116 residents according to the 2011 Census in the Britain (1.5% of the population of England and Wales according to 2011 Census). The Kurdish population follows with 40,339 residents (0.7% of the population of England and Wales according to 2011 Census). Finally, the smallest group are Turkish Cypriots with 15,891 people living in the UK (0.2% of the population of England and Wales according to 2011 Census). These groups mostly live in the boroughs of North London such as Enfield, Haringey and Hackney. The majority of the Turkish-speaking community is Alawite/Alevi (name endorsed by the Shia community in Turkey) (Enneli, Modood & Bradley, 2005).

1.2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The study focuses on a sample of four- to six-years old Turkish-English speaking bilingual/bicultural children, who were born in the UK. Children were first recruited through the parents, who participated in the ISOTIS survey. The parents, who have four- to six-year-old children and participated in the ISOTIS survey were asked if they wish to be contacted again at the end of the interview. If they agreed, they received an invitation letter on the study. The parents, who have shown interest in the research, received a follow-up call for further information and eligibility check. The eligibility criteria were set as having Turkish as one of the spoken languages at home and the index child having no history of language-related or developmental problems. The parents of eligible children were asked if the researcher could visit the home. The families were mostly from low-income backgrounds with years of education varying from 5 to 18 years. The

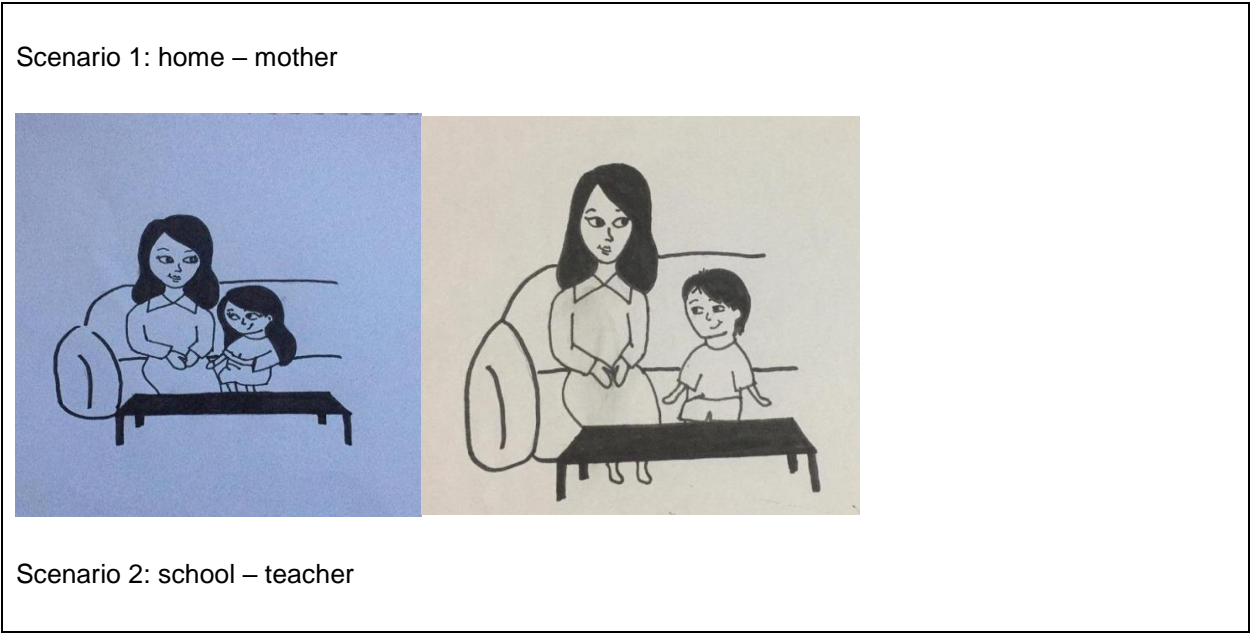
languages spoken at home were similar, although the language skills of parents differ. The majority of the parents use Turkish in their daily life (~90%), whereas a minority of the parents use English in their daily life (~10%).

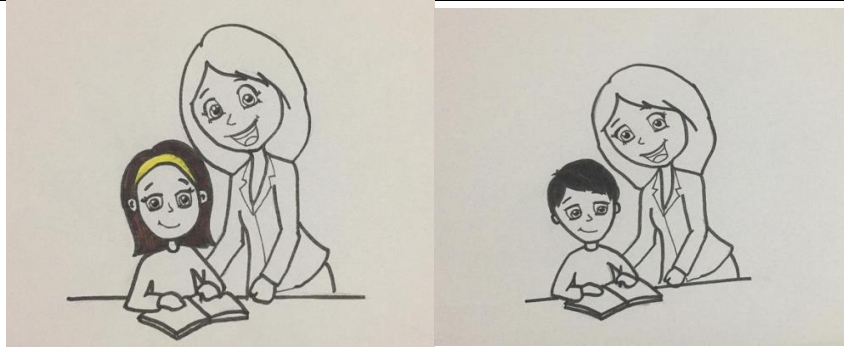
1.3 METHODOLOGY AND PHASES OF WORK

An experimental pictorial method was used for this assessment (e.g. Jean, 2011), as it facilitates interviews with children (Greig & Taylor, 1999). The literature shows that preschool-aged children are capable of answering open-ended questions as much as older children although their answers are usually shorter and less detailed (Hershkowitz, Lamb, Orbach, Katz, & Horowitz, 2012). In fact, the research on forensic interviews shows that children are more likely to give inaccurate information when they are given close-ended questions (Lamb, Orbach, Hershkowitz, Horowitz, & Abbott, 2007). For these reasons' children were interviewed using semi-structured interview method involving open-ended questions accompanied with visual materials depicting situations and multiple-choice questions using a facial expression card depicting three emotions (happy, sad, neutral).

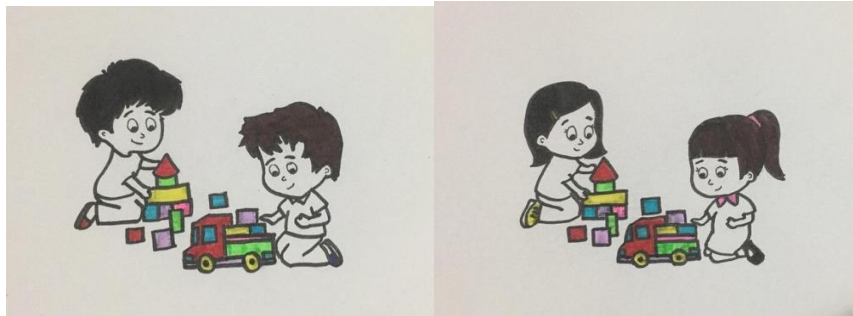
As the study is part of a doctoral project, the interviews were carried out during the second home visit that was made for the language assessment of children. By the time the researcher visited children for the interview, the children were already accustomed to spending time with her, which eased the interview process for both parties. Children were interviewed on their language behaviour and attitudes in three different contexts (school, home, playground) with different actors (scenario 1: home – mother, scenario 2: school – teacher, scenario 3: playground – (1) Turkish and (2) English peer). These contexts and actors were chosen as they are the primary sources of language interaction for children. They involved both private and public spaces as the language preference and use by bilingual children tend to differ in these settings (Jean, 2011). For the open-ended questions, a set of visual materials, depicting a child in three different scenarios, were prepared (see Table 1). The protagonist child in the visual materials was prepared separately for boys and girls to maximize the similarity between the protagonist in the picture and the participating child. See Table 2 below for the summary of the interview process.

Table 1. Visual Materials for Open-Ended Question





Scenario 3: playground – peer



Note: The pictures are prepared by Hazar Kolancali for the purposes of this study.

Table 2. Interview Procedure

INTERVIEW SUMMARY		
HOME VISITS	Introduction of the study	<p>Step 1 Target child is introduced to the “games” they play with the researcher through a Zoe card. In the beginning of the home visit the language assessments are completed for the doctoral work of the author. At the end of the assessment, researcher asks the child if they are interested in talking about their life at home and school with the researcher.</p> <p>Step 2. Researcher prepares the interview materials and sets up the voice recorder and explains the child the purpose of the materials.</p>
	Picture cards	<p>Step 1. Researcher presents the first picture depicting the child at home with their mother and asks in which languages they speak to each other and how the child feels about it. Emoji card and prompt questions follow up to support the interview.</p> <p>Step 2. Researcher presents the second picture depicting the child at school with their friends and asks in which languages they speak to each other and how the child feels about it. Prompt questions follow up to support the interview.</p> <p>Step 3. Researcher presents the third picture depicting the child at school with their teacher and asks in which languages they speak to each other and how the child feels about it. Prompt questions follow up to support the interview.</p> <p>Step 4. Researcher ask the child if they want to add anything else and thanks the child once the interview ends.</p>

In the beginning of the interview the child was introduced to the task in the following way:

“You know that I do speak Turkish and English like you do. Now, me and you will talk about our languages. I will show you some pictures and ask you how you feel about speaking Turkish and English. We can always give a break whenever you want and play games or do anything else.”

The child was first introduced to facial expression labels (see Picture 1) and they were asked to identify these facial expressions as in the following:

“You see three faces in this card. I want to ask you what you think of them. (Pointing at the first facial expression on the card) What kind of face is this?”

Following that, the child was introduced to the facial expressions to obtain information on the feelings that the child attributes to each expression on the card. This provided time for children to prepare for the forthcoming questions and it provided the researcher with an initial context to understand the meaning of the answers given by the children. Following this introduction, children were interviewed about their language use, which was followed by their language attitudes in each context. First, they were introduced to the context with a picture (see Table 1) in the following way:

“This picture is drawn for you and it shows you talking about your day with your mother. Do you speak Turkish or English?”. If the child indicated only one language over the other they were asked the following question: *“Why do you use X but not Y?”*. Following to their answer they are asked how they feel about speaking Turkish and English in that context by using the facial expression card (see Picture 1): *“Okay now looking at this card can you tell me how you feel when you speak Turkish at home? Can you show me the face?”*



Figure 1. Facial Expression Card

After the introduction the child was asked to indicate how would they feel in the scene depicted in the picture by pointing at one of the faces in the picture below. After the child points at a face, they were asked about their reasons with prompting questions such as: *“Tell me what makes you feel like that (pointing to the positive emotional expression on the visual stimulus) when you speak in Turkish at home?”*. In order to support children to elaborate on their answers a set of prompt questions were asked such as *“What do you*

mean” and “*Tell me a bit more*”. The children were voice recorded during this task and additional observational information was recorded in the fieldwork notes. After the completion of the first context, the child was given a break and provided with colouring materials and other entertaining games. The methodology of the task was piloted with 4- to 6-year-old Turkish-English speaking children before the start of the study, before finalising the methodology described here.

1.4 METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES

One of the important methodological challenges faced in this study was the content validity of the answers provided by children. In order to ensure this, initial questions on children’s attitudes towards a language answered through the facial expression card were compared with the answers given to the open-ended questions. For instance, if the child picked the neutral expression to define their feelings towards a language and explain their feelings in speaking a language with a non-neutral emotional expression in the open-ended question, the latter was considered to define their emotional attitude towards the language. Similarly, in some cases children were playful with their answers. In these cases, the researcher tried to understand the child by re-asking the questions through the facial expression card and open-ended questions. Another limitation to this study was the nature of conducting interviews with children. The research shows that children understand how and why questions better as they grow older (Malloy, Orbach, Lamb, & Walker, 2017). Although there is evidence for the effective use of how and why questions in evaluative contexts (Lyon, Scurich, Choi, Handmaker, & Blank, 2012), it has not been shown how bilingual children respond to this type of questions.

On ethical issues, a few instances were raised concern during fieldwork, although, the ethical codes have been followed. Following the approval by the Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee and Fieldwork Safety Office, the main researcher started the interviews with children in accordance with Oxford University Ethical Guidelines (CUREC 2018). In some cases, children have had hard time separating from the researcher or had difficulties with answering the questions and continuing the interview. In order to minimise the effects of such instances, the researcher made sure to be attentive to children’s needs and ensured that the children enjoy their time with the researcher by regularly checking how they feel and reminding that they can stop the task at any time. Similarly, the participating children were informed on the procedures in the beginning of each day and their parents were provided detailed information on the study and the researcher to prepare their children before the home visits.

1.5 CODING AND ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

For the initial part of the analytical process, the main researcher transcribed the voice recordings of the interview. Following the transcription work, the answers of children were examined for reliability through fieldwork notes and children’s answers using the emoji card. Fieldwork notes included information on children’s behaviour (e.g. playfulness, interest, responsiveness...etc.). Two interviews were excluded from the analysis. In one of the interviews the child was being playful with the researcher by changing their answer repetitively and in the other case the child was unresponsive. After the completion of transcriptions and reliability check, a top-down coding strategy was used following the coding manual provided by the leading team. As the aim of the current study was adjusted for the doctoral work of the author, the coding strategy focused on the four main themes in the coding manual that would suit the aim of the study.

Following the coding exercise provided by the leading team the interviews were coded under the following themes and sub-themes that relate to children’s language behaviour and attitudes: identity (linguistic, cultural, somatic, social), social relationships (family, friends, teachers), well-being (factors promoting well-

being, factors undermining well-being, transformative factors), and school context (teaching approach, learning, rules, play) using NVivo 11.

1.6 MAIN FINDINGS

The findings provide evidence on how children's language use and preferences interact with their perceived identity, social-relationships, well-being and school context. Interviews took 8 minutes on average and were coded by the main researcher following the project guidelines under four main themes: identity, social relationships, well-being, and school organisation. See the frequency table for more information on the occurrences of themes and sub-themes.

Table 3. Co-occurrence table of Factors influence children's language use and preference

Themes	Sub-themes	Re-occurrences	Overall occurrence re-
Identity	<i>Linguistic</i>	19	% 14
	<i>Cultural</i>	14	% 10
	<i>Somatic</i>	3	% 1.5
	<i>Social</i>	23	% 17
Total		59	%43
Social Relationships	<i>Family</i>	13	% 10
	<i>Friends</i>	27	% 20
	<i>Teacher</i>	8	% 6
Total		48	%35
Well-being	<i>Factors promoting well-being</i>	8	% 6
	<i>Factors undermining well-being</i>	3	% 1.5
	<i>Transformative factors</i>	3	% 1.5
Total		14	% 10
School Context	<i>Teaching Approach</i>	2	% 1.5
	<i>Learning</i>	4	% 3
	<i>Rules</i>	4	% 3
	<i>Play</i>	5	% 3.7
Total		15	% 11

Overall		136	
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1.6.1 IDENTITY AND LANGUAGE ATTITUDES

The most frequent theme that emerged in the interviews was child identity. Children often talked about their linguistic identity in relation to their attitudes towards Turkish and English. They mostly used their language skills as explanation to their positive and negative experiences with speaking a heritage language at school while learning a new language. Many children expressed difficulties with speaking English and described themselves as new learners, while a number of children mentioned losing their heritage language skills and experiencing confusion with maintaining conversations in only one language. There were only a few children who expressed positive feelings towards both Turkish and English. These children also mentioned that they were comfortable in both languages and they did not struggle with their speaking.

Excerpt 1. Losing the heritage language

P: Do you sometimes wish you could speak Turkish to them (friends)

C: Yeah

P: Why?

C: I like speaking in Turkish to people, just lot of words to say in Turkish, I don't know a lot of words that are English

P: So you know a lot of words in Turkish and you want to say it, right

C: yes

P: I see

C: sometimes I forget Turkish words

P: Really why?

C: Because sometimes I don't remember

Excerpt 2. Having better English skills

P: Yeah, I know but when someone who can speak English and Turkish like I do, why do want to speak to them in English

C: Because I want to speak in English

P: But why, I wonder?

C: Because I'm better in English

P: you are better in English?

C: Because I sometimes don't know words in Turkish.

P: Okay

C: How do you say rainbow in Turkish?

P: Gökkuşaağı. So, you find it difficult in Turkish and you prefer English, is that the case

C: yeah

Excerpt 3. Confusion with two languages

(translated)

P: So you like speaking English? Do you get shy at all?

C: I don't get shy. I only get shy when I ask questions to my friends in Turkish.

P: Why?

C: Because they speak English and they don't know Turkish at all.

P: And it makes you shy when you speak Turkish. Do you ever speak with your friends in Turkish?

C: I get confused and when I'm confused I don't want it at all

P: What is that you don't want?

C: Speaking Turkish

Excerpt 4. Balanced language skills

P: And how do you feel when you speak Turkish with her

C points at happy face

P: Happy...But what about when you speak English with her how do you feel?

C points at happy face

P: Happy, equally?...So, as far as I understand you like Turkish and English equally... What do you think about them? Do you find one more difficult than the other or easy?

C: Easy peasy

P: Which one is easy peasy

C: Both of them

P: You like both of them?

C: Yes

P: Do you have a preference...do you prefer one over the other

C: ummm... nope..

Excerpt 5. Interests of the child

P: But you know sometimes I see Turkish-speaking children speaking English with each other. Do you ever do that with your Turkish friends?

C: Yeah

P: Why?

C: Because I get bored talking in Turkish sometimes and I tell them English stuff

P: But do you think Turkish is boring?

C: No but I get bored sometimes when I talk English as well

P: Oh okay so you like speaking languages

C: yeah

Another subtheme that emerged was the relationship with the cultural identity. Children mentioned their perceptions of English and Turkish frequently in relation to their perceptions of the language and the ethnic identity. Many children depreciated Turkish while favouring English over Turkish. Only a few children talked highly of Turkish and expressed joy in being bilingual. In a number of cases children described themselves as either Turkish or English to justify their language behaviour. In one case, a child justified her language behaviour with her somatic features and described herself as English. See the excerpts below for examples.

Excerpt 6. Depreciation of Turkish

P: So do you like Turkish

C: No

P: Why?

C: I love this language

P: English you mean?

C: Yes

P: What about Turkish

C: Hate

P: You hate it why?

C: Because it's the worst language ever in the world

P: Why do you think so

C: Because I hate it

P: But why would you hate it?

C: Because I don't like talking it

P: Do you think it's about how it sounds?

C: It sounds, I hate it sounds

P: The sounds are different? The sounds are bad?

C: Sound is bad

P: Would you be happier if you speak English with your mum?

C: Yes

Excerpt 7. Appreciation of Turkish

P: and how do you feel about speaking Turkish at home

C: happy

P: why? Why does it make you happy?

C: because it makes me feel excited

--

P: so you just have English friends, would you like to speak Turkish with your friends?

C nods

P: why

C: because then they can learn some Turkish too

P: why do you want them to learn Turkish?

C: so that they can teach it to their parents

P: you want people to speak Turkish, why? You like it?

C nods

P: you like Turkish?

C nods

Excerpt 8. Cultural identity and languages

P: I have one more question, do you think you are Turkish or English

C: I'm both

P: You are both how come?

C: Because my dad... My mummy made me born in England and my dad taught me words in Turkish cause he was from Turkey.

--

P: so you think you are both Turkish and English. Do you like being Turkish and English, which one do you like the most

C: English is this side and Turkish is this side (shows that bigger part of her body as the English side)

P: How come, can you explain? What do you mean this side English and this side Turkish?

C: So I like English more

P: You like English more, why?

C: Because I know more words in English and I don't know some words in Turkish

Excerpt 9. Somatic features

P: what about you, which languages do you speak

C: uhmm... I don't know what kind of skin I've got

P: hmm?

C: I don't know if I'm English because I was born here

P: yeah

C: so I'm English not Turkish

P: yeah

C: I'm learning Turkish

P: what did you say about the skin?

C: is it an English type of skin?

P: what about Turkish type of skin?

C: My mum's type of skin is darker

P: and it's Turkish, do you think you have it?

C: I don't know if we turn the lights on we will see

Turns on the lights

C: I have no idea if I have dark skin... I have light skin, I'm an English person

In a few cases, children referred to their social identity in explaining their attitudes towards languages. In these cases, children emphasised on their interest in languages and their fondness of switching between languages. See the excerpts below for examples.

041

P: But you know sometimes I see Turkish-speaking children speaking in English with each other. Do you ever do that with your Turkish friends?

C: Yeah

P: Why?

C: Because I get bored talking in Turkish sometimes and I tell them English stuff

--

P: But do you think Turkish is boring?

C: No but I get bored sometimes when I talk English as well

P: Oh okay so you like speaking languages

C: yeah

1.6.2 SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Another frequently emerging theme was social relationships. Children explained their preference over one language in relation to different characters in their social environments. Similarly, their positive attitudes towards a language mostly stemmed from constructive experiences with their family and friends. Children only mentioned their teachers if they wished to speak Turkish at school rather than English or if they had Turkish-speaking teachers at school.

The majority of children explained their preference in one language with the prevalence of people speaking it in their family or social environment. Many children preferred English over Turkish. Schools and their classmates being 'English' was the reoccurring explanation for their preference in English. In some cases, children mentioned actively avoiding speaking Turkish at school to hide their ethnic identity. These children deliberately used English as the communication language with their Turkish friends. See the excerpts below for examples.

Excerpt 10. Favouring English over Turkish

P: which language do you like the most

C: English

P: Why?

C: Cause when I talk English my friends understand

P: but do you think it's a better language than Turkish

C: little bit

P: why?

C: cause when I speak Turkish to XXX, he don't really understand

Excerpt 11. Lack of Turkish-speaking friends

(translated)

P: I don't know... Do you like speaking Turkish

C points at sad face

P: Why are you sad when you speak Turkish?

C: Because I don't like it

P: why don't you like it?

C: Because I have a few friends

P: You mean friends who speak Turkish?

C: Yes, only one

P: Would you like Turkish if you had more friends?

C: Yes I would

Excerpt 12. Deliberately avoiding Turkish

P: Oh okay but you speak English to her why not Turkish

C: sometimes I do because then everyone will look at us they will say 'hey now we know you guys are Turkish' because we want to keep it secret that we are Turkish because our whole school is English. I have two friends that are Turkish and some more friends and my brother's friends some of them are not my brother's friends

P: okay so you don't speak Turkish to XXX because you want to keep it secret

C: yeah because I told if kids hear us they will say 'now we know they are Turkish'

P: and what happens if they know that

C: ... mmm they will tell our friends that we are Turkish

P: and is this a bad thing?

C: No - I just want to keep it a secret, so let's keep it a secret

In many cases, the home environment played an important role in children's efforts to maintain Turkish. Most of the children expressed their affection for their parents in explaining their preference in speaking Turkish or mentioned their parents' inability to communicate in English with them. In a few cases, children mentioned their parents' active involvement to keep them speak Turkish. In only one case a child mentioned distress in speaking English as a result of the pressure on speaking Turkish at home. See the excerpts below for examples.

Excerpt 13. Speaking Turkish at home

(translated)

P: hmm...Would you like to speak English with your mum?

C: I would but it's better if I speak in Turkish

P: why?

C: Because I learnt Turkish first and now I speak English but still I don't speak English because my mum goes to school and learns English, but she can't learn very well so that's why I don't really speak English at home.

Excerpt 10. Affection towards parents

(translated)

P: Okay how do you feel when you speak Turkish?

C: Good

P: Why do you feel good?

C: Because my mum makes me soups that I like

P: And what else?

C: And she got me my favourite toy and I see it in the films and I feel happy

Excerpt 14. Parents urge child not to speak English

(translated)

P: How do you feel when speak English with your teacher?

C points at sad face

P: Sad, why?

C: Because my dad tells me 'never speak English'

P: He tell you not to speak English, why?

C: He doesn't want me to go with English kids when I grow up

P: You mean he doesn't want you to become like English kids when you grow up?

C: No he doesn't want me to go after English people and he doesn't want me to learn English

1.6.3 FACTORS AFFECTING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL

Children discussed a number of issues regarding their well-being that interact with their language behaviour. Various topics were brought up regarding their experiences with fitting into the school environment. The topics varied from their experiences with making new friends to their skin colour. In few cases, children mentioned their comfort with having Turkish-speaking teachers at school. Some children indicated their wish to communicate in Turkish with their teachers. Similarly, acknowledgement of child's ethnic identity at school was described as a constructive experience. In only one case adaptation problems were mentioned in relation to discrimination and this issue emerged as a threat to child's well-being. See the excerpts below for examples.

Excerpt 15. Ethnic identity acknowledgement

P: I didn't understand can you say it again

C: My teachers didn't know that I talk Turkish and I told them. Now they know.

P: Oh your teachers didn't know that you spoke Turkish and now they know. How do you feel that they know you speak Turkish?

C: Happy

--

P: have you ever tried to speak in Turkish at school

C: My teacher asks how you say words in Turkish and I say that

P: How do you feel when you talk about Turkish at school

C: Happy

Excerpt 16. Turkish-speaking teachers

(translated)

P: That's why you feel sad when you speak English. What about the turkish-speaking teacher you mentioned, what's her name?

C: Miss XXX

P: Miss XXX, how do you feel when you speak Turkish with her?

C points at happy face

P: Happy, why?

C: Because she gives me stuff every day and calls me over and helps me with my homework

--

P: how do you think of yourself so for instance I speak Turkish and English

C: or sometimes my teacher speaks Turkish

Mum giggles

C: muuum!... sometimes my teacher can speak Turkish

Mum interrupts: she has a teacher who is Turkish

P: do you like when your teacher speaks Turkish

C: yeah

Excerpt 17. Children's wishes

P: So you like languages that's what I get from you...Okay I have one more question for you. This is your teacher. What's the name of your teacher

C: X and there is another one called Y

P: do they only speak English?

C: They speak English only

P: Do you like speaking English to them

C: Yeah

P: Would you wish if they spoke Turkish as well

C: Yeah

P: Why?

C: Because any..some of them..all of the teachers doesn't talk Turkish so I wish they did

P: yeah so you wanted – you wish that your teachers actually spoke a little Turkish, why would it be nice?

C: Because sometimes I want to change languages and I told them they didn't know Turkish and I told them I talk Turkish

--

P: do you sometimes wish you could speak Turkish to them

C: yeah

P:why

C: I like speaking in Turkish to people, just lot of words to say in Turkish, I don't know a lot of words that are English

Excerpt 18. Experiences with discrimination

(translated)

P: Why do you think they don't like you?

C: because I'm a beginner and they don't like it because I'm brunette and their skin is whiter I think that's why

P: Do you feel that way really?

C: Yes, that's how I feel (points at sad face)

P: You mean sad?

C: Sad

P: Why do they say to you? Did they say anything about your skin colour?

C: No not really, I was dressing up once and they laughed at me, you know we do sports, and we change outfits, and I have a primary school t-shirt and I was wearing it and they flicked my head with a paper

1.6.4 SCHOOL CONTEXT

Another emerging theme was the school context. The statements under this theme include behaviours of teachers, school environment, learning and playing at school. Many children distinguished school as an English-speaking setting. This perception prompted children to restrain themselves from speaking Turkish. In some cases, children mentioned their struggle with understanding their teachers as they speak English in class. Playing with friends emerged as a positive experience in speaking English and enjoying school time.

Excerpt 19. School as an English-speaking setting

P: What about at school? Do you only speak in English or do you speak in Turkish too?

C: At school I only speak English

P: Why don't you speak Turkish at school

C: cause if you know a different language you can't speak in school different language cause people don't understand

Excerpt 20. Restraining from speaking Turkish

(translated)

C: Because I have a friend at school called X

P: And you speak Turkish with her?

C: Yes

P: Then when the teacher comes and you get confused?

C: Yes

P: Do you try to speak Turkish then?

C: Yes

P: And is it bad?

C: Yes

C: Once I was about to say something in Turkish

P: then what happened?

C: Then instantly I shut my mouth

P: why?

C: Because I was about to speak Turkish

Excerpt 21. Struggling with lessons

(translated)

P: Do you struggle with English at school? Do you think it is easy?

C: Teacher sometimes says easy stuff but when I study I copy my friends at school

P: Do you?

C nods

C: because sometimes I don't understand the teacher

P: How do you feel when you don't understand?

C: Normal

P: Why normal?

P: Because I speak Turkish with my friends which feels normal to me. And I confuse Turkish and English, like, my friend like, that's why normal

C: What are you confused with?

P: The teacher and my friends

Excerpt 22. Playtime

P: why do you feel happy when you speak English with your friends

C: because I do like to play with my friends

P: okay you play with your friends and you like English because of that

C: I play with my friends and I share

P: and you share and you like speaking English when you play

C: yes

1.7 DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate the importance of early childhood experiences in language acquisition and identity construction of children growing in an ethnic minority. The preliminary finding of the study suggest that identity is a dynamic construct, which develops in early childhood in relation to everyday experiences and social environments of children. The salient themes suggest that children are profoundly influenced by their social environments, although the outcomes of these interactions depend on the content. While constructive experiences at home and at school bolster the coexistence of children's dual identity, negative experiences may impede embracing one or the other. The findings suggest that both home and school environments play an important role in the construction of children's identities.

Although the findings might suggest that family provides the ground for children to build their identity and embrace their heritage culture, experiences at school can support this ground or hinder it. Positive experiences with the presence of Turkish-teachers and/or peers provide children a safe space to cultivate their dual-identity. Similarly, negative experiences with peers or/and unavailability of teachers/peers from similar backgrounds at school might lead to feelings of detachment, sadness, and shame. In many cases, children's self-awareness in their English skills, mainly incompetence, aggravate these negative feelings. Isolation of these children or practice of mocking between children in the classroom or in the playground aggravates feelings of sadness and shame (see Zembylas, 2010). In turn, these experiences may cause children to avoid speaking their home language and lead to detachment from the heritage culture, hence the family.

Drawing on the findings of this study, two recommendations can be made for institutions (e.g. schools) and organisations (e.g. community centres) working with minority families. For institutions, it is of the utmost importance to acknowledge diversity in learning environments to initiate healthy interactions between children from different backgrounds and to recognise negative experiences of minority-children in order to protect their well-being. Schools may introduce classes for children and teachers to teach diversity and inclusiveness. For organisations, it would be beneficial to support families with social skills training programs to build cultural awareness within the family and provide tools for parents to support their children's dual identity.

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2. NORWAY

Friendship as key for inclusion in pre-school and primary school in Norway

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ABSTRACT

This case study is part of the ISOTIS-WP2 Task 2.5 “Children’s views on inclusion at school” (Pastori, Pagani, & Sarcinelli, 2019). The activities are conducted in one pre-school and one primary school in the same municipality. The early childhood institution is a municipal Kindergarten¹ for 106 children aged 1–5 years organized in six units. Six children in three units were target children. About 30 employees are working in the institution that has a high proportion of children with migrant background (>75%). The Primary school (grades 1-7) has around 500 pupils (aged 6-14) organized in classes of 20-30 pupils and about 80 employees. The proportion of pupils with migration background is larger than 75%. The target class (5th grade) has 20 pupils of which 18 participated in the study. Data collection took place in May and June 2019. The findings emphasize the prominence of friendship in both pre-school and primary school. In pre-school, play turned out to be a key factor for children’s experience of well-being. The pre-school children considered inclusion in play, places for play both indoors and outdoors and material support as important prerequisites for the well-being of “new” children that are non-native speakers. The pre-schoolers also emphasized the importance of support in language learning and everyday routines. In addition to friendship, respecting and expressing respect for each other was an important element for the primary school students. The pupils had many and varying proposals on how to welcome a new child, covering suggestions for teachers, teaching and learning, extra attention and care, emotional and social support as well as environmental and contextual conditions. In addition, “normalization” was addressed, i.e. the importance of not to overload the new child based on assumption about his/her needs.

Keywords: pre-school; primary school; child-interview; children’s views on inclusion; ISOTIS-project; Norway;

¹ The term “Kindergarten” denotes in Norway an optional pedagogical provision for children aged 0-5 years. Children, aged 1-5, are entitled to get a (full time) place in kindergarten (EURYDICE, 10.12.2018). Children start primary school the year they turn six.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports on the Children Study conducted in Norway as part of the subproject 'Children's views on inclusion at school' within the European Project ISOTIS. The Technical report on the Child interview study (Pastori, Pagani & Sarcinelli, 2019) provides in depth information about the study as a whole and specific aspects of the Norwegian study. The aim of this study is to investigate children's perspectives on barriers and facilitators of well-being in (pre-)school, and their experiences regarding inclusion, cultural and ethnical diversity and social and cultural identity. In this context, a particular focus was on children's proposals to make their school more welcoming and inclusive. In the Norwegian case, we explored the perspectives of children in one pre-school and one primary school with a high proportion of multilingual and multicultural children.

2.2 PRESENTATION OF THE SITE

2.2.1 SELECTION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITE

Selected site and selection criteria. The site, an urban municipality in southeastern Norway, has been selected because we already were familiar with it through the implementation of parental interviews as part of the ISOTIS WP2 quantitative and qualitative interview study. The availability and agreement from the leaders in the municipality has been important for this choice, as well as convenience for the researchers in terms of distance from the university. The municipality could provide a pre-school and school located in an area where a large proportion of the population has mixed sociocultural and ethnic background.

Procedures. The selection has been a time-consuming process and required a number of subsequent steps to prepare the implementation of the study in the two institutions. The first step was to obtain the permission from the Norwegian Center for Data Research. After receiving the formal approval, we had to follow formal procedures in accordance with national requirements and regulations. This included contacting the responsible leaders of the municipality, followed by the leaders of the local community and the leaders of the participating pre-school and primary school. The information provided at all levels included a description of the aims of the project, the target groups as well as the agreement templates.

The information process provided for the pre-school and school consisted of both folders and flyers, oral information and face-to-face meetings with the headmasters and pedagogical leaders of the institution. We had two meetings with the management, the schoolteachers and pedagogical leaders of the departments in pre-school to inform about the project. The insights gained in the considerations with management and pedagogical staff in the institutions initiated the process of getting informed consent from the parents. In that regard, adjustments of the tools were provided.

Recruitment in the pre-school was particularly challenging. One reason may have been the high proportion of parents not having Norwegian as their mother tongue as well as skepticism against research due to former experiences with other research projects. Another reason mentioned by the staff was that many of the parents did not see our study and the issues addressed as important.

Even though the teachers were positive and encouraged the parents to let their children participate, we got only six children, two in each of the three pre-school departments. However, these children were very eager to participate. They were informed about their rights, especially their unconditional right to withdraw at any time. The staff provided information to the children before the project started and, again, when the researcher entered the field. The researcher reminded the children about their rights on each day of their presence in the institution.

Characteristics of the site. The selected site belongs to a primarily urban area in the southeast of

Norway, with about 150.000 inhabitants, whereof almost half of the population are living in the region's central urban space. The largest groups of inhabitants with immigrant or multicultural background are from Turkey, Poland, Pakistan and Iraq.

The particular neighborhood of the pre-school and school has a large proportion of immigrant population (approx. 50%). Immigrant families with children in pre-school and school are partly third generation, as the first immigrants settled in this area in the 1970s. However, there is also a significant proportion of immigrants that have arrived later in the neighborhood and there are still new-arriving immigrants settling today. As such, there are both first, second and third generation families.

The public pre-school and school included in this study are located in a mixed urban/suburban area, not far from the city centre. The institutions are located in the area of the municipality with the highest proportion of low-income families. There the municipality has initiated and implemented a number of projects aiming to develop this neighbourhood, due to its socio-demographic challenges. For this reason, there are some construction zones close to the schools.

Pre-school. The 106 children enrolled in the pre-school (aged 1-5) are organized in six departments. Departments consists of groups of children aged 0-2 and 3-5. This corresponds with the most prevalent size and organization of Norwegian pre-schools. The three departments (aged 3-5) included in this study had some differences in physical design (e.g. size, room organization) and in what material was available for the children. Department 1 and 2 were on the first and second floor of the same rather traditional pre-school building, while department 3 was located in another, newer building, with more open designed areas. There is a distinct difference between Norwegian pre-school (called Kindergarten) and the primary school, starting at the age of six. There are no classrooms, and even if the departments are separated, they do cooperate on different topics and projects. The children spend much of their time outdoors together (Moser & Martinsen, 2010). About three-quarters of the children in this pre-school are of multicultural or multilingual families. National regulations did not allow us to ask for ethnicity of the children enrolled.

The pre-school follows the national "Curriculum Framework for the Task and Content of Kindergartens" of 2017, characterized by holistic pedagogy (Educare): a child-centered approach aiming for an integration of play, care and learning, as a core value. This strongly characterized both content and (pedagogical and educational) methods applied in the institutions (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2018).

Primary school. Primary school in Norway covers grades 1 to 7 (aged 6 to 14 years). The target school in this study has around 500 pupils, organized in classes of 20 to 30 pupils. The school has about 80 employees and a high proportion of pupils with migration background. In the particular class included in this study (20 pupils), the pupils' informed us during our presence, and without being asked about it, that all but three were Muslims, and that the three non-Muslims were either Orthodox or Roman Catholics. This indicates that all pupils in this particular class have an immigrant background.

The school has long experience with, and a good reputation, for having developed and implemented a successful multicultural pedagogical approach. Recently, a new management at the school intended to give a higher priority to results (learning outcomes), wanting the school to be visible, not only because the plurality of pupils and the (good) way in which the school is dealing with it, but also because of their achievement. The main teacher for the target class included in this study agreed with the headmaster upon this strategy, but at the same time emphasized that good results did not exclude an awareness of the multicultural fellowship. The pedagogical profiling of the school has in that regard been somewhat adjusted, from primarily focusing on its multicultural character, where the school still is very ambitious, to an increasing focus on outcomes in terms of grades in school subjects.

The public primary school follows the national act and regulation for schools in Norway (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2006; 2012).

2.2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Teachers and classes. Approximately one third of the staff in pre-school are educated as pre-school teachers, which is a three years university or college degree on bachelor level. Additionally, there are assistants educated on a vocational (higher secondary) level and assistants with and without relevant formal education. Teachers in primary school normally have at least 4 years higher education on a university or college level.

The most important person for the implementation of the study in the primary school was the main teacher of the chosen class. She had worked at the school for many years and stood out as a professional with extensive experience and very positive attitudes when it comes to working in multi-cultural classes. She shared the abovementioned revised approach introduced by the new management of the school (see 11.1.1). The teacher emphasized the importance of combining the positive focus on inclusion and multicultural pedagogy, which had a long tradition at this school, with an increased focus on the pupils' learning and learning outcome.

Procedures of contacting practitioners. After deciding the target area, we first contacted the administrative leaders of education in the municipality, thereafter the leaders of the schools and pre-schools in the area the institutions are located. It has turned out to be very important to involve all levels of stakeholders and leaders before asking for consent in the pre-school and school. As already mentioned, this was a very time-consuming, but essential process.

At the contact meeting with the pre-school, we met staff from all departments. Because the target group was children 3-6 years, we selected the three departments covering children at this age. Thus, of the 106 children in the preschool, about 60 children were in the targeted age group. Even though not all departments participated, all practitioners got information about the project.

At the primary school, we first had a meeting with the headmaster. This meeting was crucial because the implementation of the project would depend on the headmaster's support. We agreed to collect data in one fifth grade class with 20 pupils. The main reason for choosing this class was that an experienced teacher with particular interest in this topic led the class and that she knew the pupils very well. It turned out later that the good relationship between teacher and pupils made it easy to take care of organizational and practical challenges related to the researchers work in the classroom. All parents (except for two) in the target class gave their informed consent allowing their children to participate in the study.

Table 4. Overview of the sites and participants involved

Name	Sites			Number of professionals involved	Participants	
	Context type	Age	City/area		Number and age of children involved	Division in groups
Public preschool	Formal	0/1-5	Urban	4	6 (4-5 years old)	3 departments (2 children pr. department)
Public primary school	Formal	6-14	Urban	1	18 (11-12 years old)	1 class

2.3 DAYS AND PHASES OF WORK

Data collection took place in May and June 2019 in both pre-school and primary school. We had a number of phone meetings and e-mail conversations with the school management, staff and finally the target teacher in the selected class in April and the beginning of May. After these meetings, we adjusted the tools for data collection in accordance with these conversations.

In both pre-school and primary school, the professionals got the role of facilitators and advisors, and cooperated with the researchers in the different steps of the implementation. One researcher was responsible for (and conducted) the data collection. The researcher met the staff for the first time in the planning phase, followed up with further preparation meetings, and finally conducted the data collection. It might have been even better to have two researchers present all the time in some regards, but due to the resources available and the timeline of the project, this was not possible. For the direct collaboration with children and staff during data collection, only having one researcher might even have been beneficial. We consider that relating to only one person made the children even more confident and cooperative and, by that, strengthened the quality of the data generation. In elementary school, the classroom teacher was a valuable facilitator and supporter throughout the entire process of data collection. She facilitated the activities, followed up the two of the twenty pupils who did not participate in the study itself and provided a seamless workflow.

Timeline pre-school

Day 1. Inform the leaders. The researchers met the headmaster of the pre-school and the leaders of departments and provided information about the background, purpose and content of the project. This meeting was crucial for the pre-school leaders to decide about their participation.

Day 2. Inform the entire institution. The researcher met all departments' pedagogical leaders and pre-school teachers as well as other staff. In addition, we discussed a proposal for creating a narrative for the children about how to receive children coming from another country, not having Norwegian as their mother tongue. This was a way to make the children bring in what they considered as important for inclusion and well-being.

Day 3. Meeting with assisting headmaster and member of staff. Collection of consent from parents and presentation of the final version of the "letter from a foreign country" as a preparation of the children for the first conversations. Six children got their parents written consent to participate, two children in each of the three departments. All children knew each other well and they used to play together both in- and outdoors. The pre-school is organized with a flexibility according to work across departments. The joint activity that took place outdoors was well prepared, and it was seemingly unproblematic for the children to be and act together with the children from the other departments. The children were 3-5 years old and there was an equal number of boys and girls. At this preparation day, the researcher also got to know the buildings hosting different departments/classes of the pre-school, the physical environment indoors and outdoors as well as the local area around the pre-school.

Day 4. In phase 1 of the fourth day, child interviews and conversations walk and talk were conducted, inside both the departments and outdoors (play areas). We did the walk and talk interviews first with two children at a time in their respective departments.

The second phase (phase 2) on this day contained a group-walk outdoors with all six children involved at the same time and the puddles of water had a great affinity to the children, splashing and playing. However, they also presented their preferred play areas.

Day 5. Activities in phase 3, drawing identity cards took place in the children's departments with two children at a time. We had copied the identity cards so the children could use a full format A4 page. In phase 4, the children labelled places and material with Smileys (smiles and dislikes). This was a necessary

adjustment to the Norwegian context, as it was hard for children in Norway to relate sun and rain to like and dislike, i.e. to what is positive and negative. Children in Norwegian pre-schools are used to play outdoors in all kind of weather conditions. For that reason, it would not have made sense to them to equate clouds with something negative.

Timeline primary school

Day 1. Meeting with headmaster. Two researchers presented the project and received information about the school. It was important for the headmaster to explain for the researchers how and why the school had adjusted the public profile from a strong focus on its multicultural profile to also focus explicitly on learning outcomes, a recent development we already mentioned above.

Day 2. Meeting with the main teacher who helped us during the entire process, e.g. with organizational adjustments, and, when necessary, explanation regarding some of the pupils' background. Meeting with the pupils (two researchers, 10-15 minutes). The researchers presented themselves and informed about the planned activities in collaboration with the pupils. Furthermore, we informed about the intention of the project and which countries participated. The pupils got the opportunity to ask about the project and tell us about their expectations. Most of the participating pupils appeared somewhat flattered. The class as a whole appeared very open and we experienced no inhibition to talk to us. For example, some pupils stated that we did not look like real researchers (i.e. scientists).

Day 3. On the third day, two researchers conducted three focus group interviews, documented by audio recording. We got help from the main teacher who sat up the groups and took care of the practical organization of the interviews. She also had prepared a plan for how to take care of the two pupils who would not participate in the project. We audio recorded the interviews which lasted between 30 to 60 minutes. We started reading the letter from Valentina, the researcher from Milan, addressing some of the possible problems she took up in connection with migration, such as language, Ramadan and poverty. The pupils broadened the perspectives as they were talking about the use of ICT, especially "snap" and other forms of internet-based communication in a social context of friendship. One interesting problem addressed by the pupils was how to contact each other after school, when nearly all used Snapchat, while some do not have the opportunity to do so.

Day 4. The fourth day was devoted to individual work with the ID-cards and the "sun & cloud" activity. One researcher led these two activities. The pupils got two hours to fill in, draw and produce texts for the "ID-card". This process opened for both serious thinking and some fun regarding the issue of friendship. A parallel activity was to write some keywords on small pieces of paper looking like suns (symbolizing positive experiences at school) or clouds (symbolizing negative experiences at school). In this activity, the pupils were encouraged to share their work with each other and help each other.

Day 5. The last activities, on the fifth day, was a meeting and a speech. Since only one researcher could be present, we kept this activity simple. The pupils were asked to address the school and propose activities or arrangements that would make it easier to be new in an unknown country and school. Four pupils participated in each group, two secretaries and two speakers. Notes from the meeting and the speech plus sound recording documented the process and outcome of this activity.

Table 5. Summary: days and phases of fieldwork and data collection in pre- and primary school.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Pre-school	Informing headmaster of the pre-school and the leaders of departments	Informing all staff and discussing the study design and methods	Meeting with assisting headmaster and members of staff	"First aid kit"; Phase 1: Conversations walk and talk inside; Phase 2: group-walk outdoors-preferred play areas	"First aid kit"; Phase 3: Drawing identity cards Phase 4: Labelling smileys on places and materials (likes and dislikes)
Primary school	Meeting with headmaster	Meeting with main teacher Meeting with pupils	Phase 1: "Letter form a foreign country" Focus group interviews	Phase 2: Drawing self-portraits, writing about oneself ("ID-cards") Phase 3: "Suns & clouds"	Phase 4: Pupils had meetings to prepare next phase Phase 5: Each group presented their demands

2.4 METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

2.4.1 METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS

Methodological challenges due to the context. There were challenges due to the timing of the study, as we had a late start due to a long non-response period from the municipality. When all the formal issues finally were solved, the time before and around Easter turned out to be very inconvenient for the (pre-)school and the start of data collection had to be further postponed. Accordingly, we could not finish data collection before end of May (pre-school) and June (school).

The formal demands to the information provided for the parents according to the national regulations in Norway (NSD/data protection services) were extremely complex and demanding. The version of the information letter to the parents, which finally was accepted by the NSD, communicated rather badly, according to the teachers' and our own appraisal. The researchers and, not least, the teachers feared that the letter was too difficult to understand for parents, many of which did not have Norwegian as their mother tongue. In collaboration with the staff, we therefore made some adjustments in the information form, not changing the content, but making it easier to read. In addition, after the first meeting in the pre-school and the primary school both the headmasters and the staff were very helpful and contributed in motivating and recruiting parents to let their children participate.

The staff and the researchers expected language to be the biggest challenge in the pre-school. However, this challenge turned out to be less than expected. It was sufficient to make the children feel comfortable and meet them in a warm and friendly atmosphere to get them motivated for the conversations and the drawing task. The latter turned out to be a good measure to overcome or even avoid the expected challenges due to poor language skills. Providing the children with sufficient time, and supporting verbal communication with the children through drawings enabled communication with the researchers in a very informative and comprehensive way, presenting their own opinions, and bringing up their own thoughts about what is important to them. Taking into consideration the short period of time when the researchers were present, the confidence from the children was crucial.

Only one researcher collected data in the pre-school. Yet, in two of the three target departments, a pre-school teacher was together with the researcher during the whole time of presence. These teachers, trained on a bachelor level, had several years working experience from pre-schools, and were valuable facilitator to create an appropriate context for data generation and a valuable contributor for clarifying uncertainties. The teachers had a high awareness of the children's need to feel safe and to be understood,

though some of them had a limited verbal language or even developmental speech problems. The interviews, walk and talk situations and drawings were prepared and organized well. As the children in this pre-school often are divided in groups for different tasks and activities, and due to the flexible organization of the departments and groups, the participating children seemed to be comfortable doing the activities without the whole group of familiar children. Overall, children in these two departments were well prepared to meet the researcher.

However, due to absence of a pre-school teacher following the children in the third department, these children were not as well prepared for the researchers visit. Consequently, their commitment to participate was poorer compared to the two other departments. In this department, there were also more frequent interruptions from non-participating children, many activities were ongoing around the “walk and talk” conversations, which drew their attention. The lack of a confidential adult person became obvious in terms of a lower quality of data collection.

There were some problems recognizing and separating the children’s voices in the audio recordings. This meant that the children could not always be identified individually. Furthermore, there were some deficiencies regarding the inclusion of notes in the transcriptions, which were not available for the student assistant when transcribing. These notes have been included later in the final version of the transcripts.

Methodological challenges with professionals. There was an outspoken concern among staff whether participation in the study would be too time-consuming, however this could be sorted out early during the information meetings and the further planning process.

In the pre-school, another challenge was that one department was not staffed with the regularly professionals working in this unit, due to sick leave and participation in external courses. This may have influenced how confident the children appeared to be with the situation where unknown adults were present in the institution. It became particularly evident on the last day of the data collection. A lack of involvement of the (substitute) staff had, in our opinion, a negative impact on creating high quality data. Thus, for two groups the sessions went very well and the children made huge efforts to draw, were eager to show the like and dislike places and further talk about their judgements as well. In the third group, the activities were conducted in spaces where all non-participating children also had access. Children not participating joined and interrupted quite often and recording the conversations with the target children became difficult, as we were not allowed to tape utterances of children not participating in the study. This led to a, both methodologically and ethically, challenging situation for the researcher in terms of to what degree the children should be kept on track regarding the research activity as well as how explicit other children should be held out of these activities. Therefore, in this department, this session became very short. As the children always were free to leave the activity at any time, the two children in this group took advantage of this opportunity.

2.4.2 ETHICAL CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS

Ethical reflections in research with children. A main challenge for the current study was that there has been conducted research in the municipality earlier, where the target population (multicultural and multilingual families) felt that they were featured in an unfavourable way in the findings and conclusions of the study.

A continuous ethical challenge, especially in the pre-school, was that there were parents and children who had difficulties with understanding Norwegian. Therefore, we had to pay particular attention to making us and the purpose and content of the study well understood for both children and parents.

Some of the children did not come forward without being individually addressed and directly asked. Children that remain silent are a well-known concern in early childhood research (Harcourt & Einarsdottir, 2011; Palaiologou, 2016). According to the pre-school staff, the participating children mainly belonged to the group of children at risk of being overseen, as they were quite shy and two of them even had a rather poor verbal language. Addressing these children required particularly caution and continuous self-

monitoring in terms of inviting and encouraging but not pressing them. Thus, our sample may have a particular strength in bringing forward voices of “silent children”. In any case, the staff was very surprised that these children had so much to say.

Beyond the formal requirements for research with young children, the researchers tried to be as sensitive as possible to understand the situation and perspective of each individual child during the activities and data collection. If there was any indication that a situation became unpleasant for the children, the researchers considered carefully whether it was justifiable to continue. The considerations included reflections on whether the child should be made aware that it could leave the situation, and the activity or adjust the activity without any problems.

Ethical reflections in working with professionals. In general, the professionals had fairly positive or neutral attitudes to the study and we received valuable support in conducting the interviews. The professionals expressed concern about what light the study's findings may throw at their institutions. Therefore, protect anonymity of all participants was an important issue.

Furthermore they were reflecting on how to communicate the intentions and content of the study to parents, i.e. how the intentions of the study should be presented and explained in a trustworthy way, so that the parents did not get misleading, too little or incorrect information and impression about the project. We were very concerned about the information routines that clearly expressed for the parents what their children would be exposed to when participating in the project.

We met, somewhat surprisingly to us, an outspoken skepticism from both the municipality, the staff and partly the parents concerning research activities on this topic, focusing on ethnicity and multiculturalism. It turned out, that there has been conducted a study exploring multilingual children's language development, among other in relation to families and home environment, which led to negative experiences that had to be overcome.

2.5 THE ANALYTICAL PROCESS

Data analysis has been undertaken based on transcriptions of the recordings from group- and individual conversations at day 4 and 5. A student assistant and the researcher who has collected the data have partly conducted the transcription. The researcher that has collected data also did the coding. Data was analysed in line with the provided coding tree for all participating countries (see table 6).

Categorizing the issues brought up by the children was partly somewhat demanding since the themes discussed often overlapped each other and changed frequently, sometimes there were also parallel discussions going on.

In preschool, in addition to the recordings, the children's drawings and photos of places as well as talks about them, their considerations about places they liked and disliked as well as field notes are part of the empirical material that has been analysed. There are also parts of the recordings where children are on the move, drawing or playing with and in water. To some extent this is included in the transcripts, as it may have influenced the children's conversations.

As the empirical material analysed for pre-school, parts of the material from primary school consists of drawings (“self-portraits”) and symbols (“suns and clouds”). Thus, for the pupils in primary school the analysis of the drawings could be combined with their transcribed commentaries and explanations. In that way they participated in the interpretation of their own texts. Another distinctive trait for the analysis of the material from primary school lies in the notes and recordings from day 5, where the pupils were asked to address their critical questions directly to the leadership of the school.

Altogether, transcripts consist of about 200 pages (80 from pre-school and 120 from school), including notes. We applied a manual coding system. In the first step of the analyses, the common coding references provided for this study were used (labelled with different colours). In the second step, specific

themes has been identified. Table 6 provides an overview over categories and themes.

Table 6. Categories and themes that arose in different phases of the data collection in pre-school and primary school.

		PRE-SCHOOL					PRIMARY SCHOOL				
		P-D4_Ph1_T	P-D4_Ph2_T	P-D5_Ph3_T/N	P-D5_Ph4_T/N		S-D3_Ph1_T	S-D4_Ph2_T	S-D3_Ph3_T	S-D5_Ph4_T	S-D5_Ph5_T
Diversity D	D1 Social inequalities	V ⁵					V ^a		V	V	V
	D2 Language	V ³					V ^a		V	V	V
	D3 Culture			V ⁶			V ^b				
Social Relationships SR	SR1 Inclusion/acceptance	V ⁶	V ⁶		V ⁶		V ^a			V	
	SR2 Discrimination						V				V
	SR3 Conflict		V ³				V ^a			V	
	SR4 Friendship	V ⁶	V ⁶		V ⁶		V ^b		V	V	V
	SR5 Behaviour	V ⁴					V ^a				
	SR6 Emotional support/empathy	V ⁵		V ⁵	V ⁵		V ^b			V	
Identity I	I1 Cultural identity										
	I2 Linguistic identity						V ^a	V		V	
	I3 Social identity			V ³							
	I6 Somatic features										
	I5 Myself in the future			V ²				V			
School organization SO	SO1 Space		V ⁶	V ⁶	V ⁶		V ^a				V
	SO2 Time	V ⁴									
	SO3 Rules	V ⁵	V ⁴		V ⁴						
	SO4 Play	V ⁶	V ⁶	V ⁶	V ⁶						
	SO5 Learning	V ³							V	V	
	SO6 Food	V ⁴	V ⁴								
	SO7 Teaching approach										
Factors influencing inclusion and well-being F	F1 Promoting well-being	V ⁶	V ⁶	V ⁶	V ⁶					V	
	F2 Undermining well-being		V ⁵		V ⁴		V ^a		V	V	V
	F3 Transformative factors	V ⁴	V ⁵	V ⁴			V ^b			V	V

Legend of the columns: P=pre-school; S=school; D=day; Ph=phase; T=transcript; N=Note;

¹⁻⁵)Pre-school; Approximated frequency of the codes applied in the phases of the study: ¹Seldom, ²Sometimes, ³Frequently, ⁴Very frequently, ⁵Allways

^{a,b})Primary school; ^a Mentioned in 2 of the 3 focus groups; ^b Mentioned in 3 of 3 focus groups; no superscript: mentioned in only one focus group.

Table 6. Continued.

		PRE-SCHOOL					PRIMARY SCHOOL				
		P-D4 Ph1 T	P-D4_Ph2_T	P-D5_Ph3_T/N	P-D5_Ph4_T/N		S-D3_Ph1_T	S-D4_Ph2_T	S-D3_Ph3_T	S-D5_Ph4_T	S-D5_Ph5_T
Representation R	R1 Image of child(-ren)			V ⁵							
	R2 Image of teacher									V	
	R3 Image of school			V ³					V		
	R4 Image of society			V ³							
Complementary codes Cc	Cc1 Peers		V ⁵	V ⁵	V ⁵						
	Cc2 Teachers						V ^a			V	
	Cc3 Family	V ³		V ³			V ^a		V		
	Cc4 Religion						V ^b	V	V	V	
	Cc5 Health-differences						V ^a		V		
	Cc6 Mobile phones, computers, etc.						V ^a				
	Cc7 Meet each other after school						V ^b				
	Cc8 Girls vs. boys						V ^a				
	Cc9 National day (17 th of May) and birthdays						V				
	Cc10 Many languages is cool								V		
	Cc11 World situation disturbs (Syria etc.)								V		
	Cc12 Human rights at school									V	
	Cc14 Sports (handball, football) after school						V	V			

Legend of the columns: P=pre-school; S=school; D=day; Ph=phase; T=transcript; N=Note;

¹⁻⁵)Pre-school; Approximated frequency of the codes applied in the phases of the study: ¹Seldom, ²Sometimes, ³Frequently, ⁴Very frequently, ⁵Allways

^{a,b})Primary school; ^a Mentioned in 2 of the 3 focus groups; ^b Mentioned in 3 of 3 focus groups; no superscript: mentioned in only one focus group.

2.6 FINDINGS

In general, the results of the Norwegian study confirm that children, even at a young age, are capable of contributing relevant, reliable and valuable information when it comes to their experiences regarding well-being and welcoming new children in their institutions. As a main overall finding, we can identify friendship as a key prerequisite for wellbeing in both pre-school and primary school.

In the pre-school group the conversations and walk and talk in groups revealed a number of common aspects regarding the children's' considerations about facilitators of well-being. These were aspects such as material for play, places to play together and making meals together. When it comes to factors undermining well-being, greater individual variations between the children's utterances emerged. Limited access to spaces and materials was frequently stated. Weather conditions (rain) was mentioned by some children, but soon after the conversation, those children played happily outdoors, in the rain. A lack of appropriate clothing as a cause for getting wet or freezing represents an unpleasant factor that undermines wellbeing and should be emphasized specifically when welcoming new children.

In addition to the verbal utterances, there was also a substantial number of non-verbal expressions such as nodding, pointing, mimics and leading. Children wanted to show activities in the pillow room, and took the researcher by the hand and led her to the room to tell her what they liked to do and what new children should be prepared to participate in. When one child was talking about the importance of the posters showing activities another child smiled acknowledging and ran off to find this poster. To take the observations of non-verbal aspects into account, notes has been added to the transcripts, as we considered them as substantial for understanding children's voices and expressions of meaning, particularly in in pre-school. We also included photos of places that children captured as important for play and well-being. These additional data are not referred in this report.

In primary school, the reflections and discussions among pupils were heavily influenced by the topics introduced in the letter from Valentina, namely language, Ramadan and fast as well as poverty. A possible explanation for this was probably not that the pupils considered these topics more engaging than other topics, but rather that they felt a certain responsibility to answer the questions raised by the letter.

In the following, we present first the co-occurrence of factors promoting and undermining well-being as well as transformative factors for pre-school and primary school respectively.

Thereafter we provide concrete examples for factors promoting and undermining well-being for preschool and primary school respectively as mentioned by our young informants. Thereafter we present their proposals regarding how to welcome a new child arriving from a foreign country. We close with a short discussion of our findings.

As shown in table 7, we found 154 coded quotes and other expressions in the activities of the children that indicate promotion of well-being in pre-school while 170 reflected undermining of well-being. The children provided 30 proposals for welcoming a new child.

Table 7. Co-occurrence of factors promoting (F1) and undermining (F2) well-being as well as transformative factors (proposals, F3) in pre-school.

	PRESCHOOL (Formal 3-6)				
Codes	F1. Factors promoting well-being	F2. Factors undermining well-being	Total F1 + F2	F3. Transformative factors (proposals)	Total F1 + F2 + F3
Subcodes					
Diversity (sum)	15	8	23	4	27
Social inequalities	1	4		2	7
Language	8	4		2	14
Culture	6				6
Social Relationships	46	7	49	15	115
Inclusion/acceptance	12		12	5	29
Discrimination					
Conflict		3	3		6
Friendship	18		18	5	39
Behaviour	10	4	10	5	29
Emotional support/empathy	6		6		
Identity (sum)	5	3	6		14
Cultural identity	1	3	4		8
Linguistic identity					
Social identity	2				2
Somatic features					
Myself in the future	2		2		4
School organization	88	4	92	11	103
Space	16	2	18	2	20
Time	10	0	10		10
Rules	14	0	14	3	17
Play	20	2	22	2	24
Learning	10		10	4	14
Food	18		18		18
Teaching approach					

Table 8 reveals that 91 coded quotes and other expressions in the activities of the pupils indicated promotion of well-being in primary school while 50 reflected the undermining of well-being. The pupils provided 72 proposals for welcoming a new child.

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Table 8. Co-occurrence of factors promoting (F1) and undermining (F2) well-being as well as transformative factors (proposals, F3) in primary school. Based on three focus groups (Phase 1, Letter from Valentina) and the activity “Suns & Clouds” (Phase 3).

	PRIMARY SCHOOL (Formal 11-12)				
Codes	F1. Factors promoting well-being	F2. Factors undermining well-being	Total F1 + F2	F3. Transformative factors (proposals)	Total F1 + F2 + F3
Subcodes					
Diversity (sum)	20	19	39	17	56
Social inequalities	8	6	14	7	21
Language	6	1	7	7	14
Culture	6	12	18	3	21
Social Relationships	43	15	58	29	87
Inclusion/acceptance	11	4	15	6	21
Discrimination	2	3	5	5	10
Conflict	2	3	5	1	6
Friendship	11	1	12	6	18
Behaviour	8	3	11	6	17
Emotional support/empathy	9	1	10	5	15
Identity (sum)	12	5	17	5	22
Cultural identity	5		5	2	7
Linguistic identity	6	5	11	1	12
Social identity					
Somatic features	1		1	2	3
Myself in the future					
School organization	16	11	27	21	48
Space	1		1	1	2
Time					
Rules	4	7	11	5	16
Play	1	2	3	1	4
Learning	4	2	6	6	12
Food				1	1
Teaching approach	6		6	7	13

2.6.1 FACTORS PROMOTING AND UNDERMINING WELL-BEING

The presentations for pre- and primary school will be slightly different. In pre-schools well-being and

including new children were discussed alongside in the same activities and are therefore difficult to disentangle.

Factors promoting well-being in pre-school

Play (SR4) and being with friends (SO4) as core elements in children's everyday life in pre-school

According to the children's reflections, it is important for including new children arriving from another country to show them where to play and what to play with as well as to get them involved in construction play, movement-play such as balancing and hurdles and role-play.

These aspects have been frequently mentioned in all three departments of the preschool and, by that, emphasizes the importance of play for children's wellbeing.

Places to introduce newcomers and to be with friends

One play space particularly relating to well-being was the 'pillow room', a room with big soft blocks and bricks that were popular for play and relaxation. There were pillow rooms in all departments. During the first walk and talk situation indoors, all six children introduced the researcher to the pillow room, presenting them as important spaces in their institutions. The children explained that they used these rooms for several purposes, such as role play and tumble play as well as for resting and to be read for. All activities in these particular rooms were together with others, the social relations in playing together had an important role in all narratives.

Researcher: "Is there one place you would like to take the children that are newcomers?"

The children are nodding, and lead the researcher to a room with a lot of soft bricks and huge pillows.

Researcher: 'Do you think they [new children] would like to be introduced to the pillow-room?'

Child: "(nodding) Mhm. And then we have. Wait a moment ..."

Child: "We have some children ..." *The child is climbing inside a circle of pillows.*

To show how they used the room the children starts to jump and balance on the blocks obviously showing the researcher what they would like to do together with the new child.

In another department, the children demonstrated how they could use the room to be together and rest.

Child: "Come on, and then the pillows and the blankets. Come on, aaand... The mattresses are here. And here."

Then they laid down and showed how they used the pillows and mattresses for resting in the middle of the day.

In one of the departments, the children were very clear that rest was accompanied by reading. Each child had its own blanket and the children emphasized the importance of introducing a new child to this situation as well as to assure that the new child gets his/her blanket.

Other construction materials important for the children to include others and promoting well-being were Lego and empty milk boxes that were used to build an indoor hurdle activity and equipment for role-play and drawing as well as the "pillow-room".

The importance of food and meals (SO6) corresponds to F1 promoting wellbeing

Another factor promoting well-being as well as inclusion mentioned by the children was food. One important question in their reflections on food situations was how to overcome the language barrier. Food was a topic the children frequently talked about in two of the three departments. The children demonstrated how they

could use drawings and images of different kinds of food to communicate with a new child, and they considered this as helpful for a new child who cannot speak Norwegian. The children showed the researcher a poster with drawings of different kinds of food that would make it possible for children that do not speak Norwegian to understand what kind of food they are eating each day. They can also mark what will be the meal of the day.

Conversations around food started with the child showing what food they ate and one bringing in her yoghurt, and what food they wanted to tell new children about:

Researcher: "What do you eat?"

Child: "We have a lot of food."

Child: "We eat soup and warm food and lunch."

"We eat soup when we are together with another department."

They also had a system throwing a dice with drawings of food and activities for outdoor tours. This has been used for both planning purposes, i.e. what to do, and for language training, i.e. talking about what the dice is showing. This indicates that the children consider the ability to communicate with other children as an important prerequisite for well-being.

Food was also a part of the themes for the children's role-play outdoors, e.g. when playing with sand and water:

Child 1: (announcing to all the others): "We have made chocolate – milk"

Child 2: "I make fish food."

As they played, they shared and invited each other for meals.

Both real food situations as well as play situations around food revealed a significant potential for inclusion and a main theme in the children's social play. It is worth mentioning that both boys and girls were involved in food related activities.

Rules (SO6) were discussed in a positive way as important for inclusion and well-being (F1)



When it comes to rules about how to behave in pre-school the children showed informative pictures and drawings hanging on the walls that, according to their opinion, would be important to show and make understood for new children. These were pictures of the toilet and labels with images of the child on their place in the wardrobe. They also had several loose stickers on the fridge with drawings of food, materials and kitchen tools to prepare food. The children mentioned that it would be important to say words in Norwegian as they showed the pictures to the new children, so that they could learn the language.

Figure 2. Poster for washing hands and outdoor activities

Factors promoting well-being (F1) outdoors in pre-school

The outdoor area is used every day, and the walk and talk session phase 2 took place outdoors. According to the children, clothing suitable for all weather conditions, 'rain and shine', is an important prerequisite for

wellbeing in the pre-school and new children have to be aware of this.

Researcher: "If the children are not used to the weather, what do we tell them then?"

Child: "They only will sit like this and cry and cry."

Researcher: "Yes, that must be quite sad."

Child: "And then they need new clothes."

Researcher: (nodding): "mhm."

Child: "Take on jacket or outdoor suit, you need to use an outdoor suit!"

Children in all departments mentioned this aspect.

Play with water

The rain was pouring down; all children were dressed for this weather so it seemed not to bother them as they all were outdoors. Their favourite play was with water.

Researcher: "What do you like to do most?"

Child: (answering while jumping with four of the other children in a small pond, splashing water): "Jump".

These two outdoor examples are, in our opinion, clear indicators of the awareness of young children regarding this somewhat specific attitude and value in Norwegian and Nordic pre-schools when it comes to the outdoors as an important space in terms for children's well-being, learning and upbringing. These values are summarized in the saying that there is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothes. In terms of cultural perspectives, these young children have seemingly already made up their opinion, it is a requirement to be well prepared mentally and by proper clothing, for outdoor activities. Thus, this seems obvious as a prerequisite for wellbeing and inclusion.

Activities – movement and play

The children particularly liked movement play such as swings (they addressed the pleasure of swinging together with other children), climbing a rock, places to balance, running in stairs and building with water and sand. Furthermore, social and inclusive play activities, such as collaborative building and making mud cakes and mud soups together, are highly appreciated. The opportunity for physical active play seems to be an important prerequisite for the children's experience of well-being.



Figure 3. Drawings – "What we like to do". Playing outside with friends (left) and playing football with my dad and friends.

Factors undermining well-being in pre-school

Limited access to places and materials in the pre-school as well as not being equipped for Norwegian weather conditions turned out to be undermining factors identified by the children.

Weather is an important subject for the children and for some of them expressed, when asked about it indoors, that going out in the rain was undermining their well-being (F2).

Researcher: "How do you find it to go outdoors while it rains?"

Child 1: "No, indoors"

Child 2: "No not good outdoors, like that." (Pointing towards the window).

However, when playing outdoors later this day, both children seemed to be very happy outdoors and did not complain at all about the weather conditions. An obvious explanation was that the children were appropriately dressed for playing in the rain.

When it comes to undermining factors (indoor), space was also addressed. Limited space could be an obstacle for well-being when it led to limitations in how many children were allowed to play together in the 'pillow room'.

Child: "We have the new children, and we can only bring three. That is the most you can look after."



Furthermore, some children complained about the fact that materials and toys sometimes are not accessible because they are locked in a closet or a room. Children are quite clear that they want all materials and toys available at any time.

Figure 3. Labels with an unsatisfied face on a locket closet.

Factors promoting well-being in primary school

Almost all pupils in the class expressed the conviction that friendship is a key to well-being. Therefore, they wanted the school to facilitate the development of friendship. The following examples based on focus groups and observations illustrate the pupils' opinions:

Pupil: "The school should organize learning activities that at the same time are creating and strengthening friendship".

As examples, they mentioned counting on different languages, making small dictionaries together, and activities that stimulated peer learning (learning from each other).

Pupil: "The school, mainly the teachers, should respect the pupils, meaning to treat them as equals."

In that regard it was surprising to see how many pupils have chosen to follow up the themes from day 1 (the letter from Valentina: language, religion/fast, poverty) on the subsequent days. It was seemingly easy for the pupils to identify three positive moments related to the well-being in school.

The common belief in friendship also generated some very concrete ideas, like this:

Pupil: "The school should place a certain bench for newly arrived pupils who have no friends yet, in the schoolyard."

The idea here was that then other pupils could go to sit beside the "lonely one", propose things to do together and, maybe, establish new friendships.

In the interviews, the idea of friendship appeared as a main quality was sometimes discussed in a rule-governed and normative way, almost like a creed, as the following example illustrates:

Pupil 1: "We never exclude."

Researcher 1: "Oh, no?"

Pupil 3: "We don't bully and we don't exclude, because we come from different countries, so we respect each other even if we are different from each other."

Researcher 1: "How do you manage that?"

Pupil 3: "We have worked and we have not given up, we have been friends and thought a lot about how it could have been and how other classes are when... And we have had some lessons about the milieu in the class, we have been reading from a book that is about exclusion and bullying."

The crucial role of friendship also emerged, both explicitly and implicitly in the pupils' ID-cards, where they portrayed themselves in drawing and writing. Four examples on illustrate the significance of several aspects of social relations and friendship when they fulfilled the sentence "When I think of school, I think about ...":

Pupil : "... good thoughts, homework and friends"

Pupil: "... joy of learning and work together with the others"

Pupil: "... my other home"

Pupil: "... play football after school"

Actually, these utterances reflect the answers of all pupils; they seemed to be happy with their lives and appreciated school.

Three examples for the pupils' utterances from the activity suns and clouds further illustrate that also place of birth, family and religion can be sources for their well-being:

Pupil 1: "I am born in Norway, and I am happy for that. I love to dance. I have a nice family, and that also makes me happy"

Pupil 2: "I am happy because I have managed to fast sometimes"

Pupil 3: "It is good for children to try to fast, but not at school"

Factors undermining well-being at primary school

According to the notes taken during the discussions in phase 4, where the pupils worked in groups to prepare presentations (see table 2), they partly repeated what they had said in the first interview (phase 1).

"We propose that the school respect the meanings of [newly arrived] pupils. Pupils should be treated as all the other pupils. Pupils should have a friend. They [newly arrived pupils] should start in a class where they think and proclaim that all are unique. They should be treated well, so that they feel safe. PS: Keep away from 7th grade at our school". (Group 2)

Here the pupils first repeated themselves, talking about friendship and other qualities that may help creating a school where everybody feel safe. However, different from the initial interview (phase 1), by adding new information, they pointed out a challenge that really represented a difficult problem, which probably cannot be solved by friendship alone: hostility and violence in the schoolyard. This also indicates that what seems to be very well functioning within this particular class is not necessarily valid for all classes at this school.

In general, an often-mentioned aspect that negatively affects children's well-being in school was if they experienced organizational aspects related to school that undermine social relations or made the children feel unfairly treated because of their cultural or religious background. We asked the pupils to provide us with examples on what was difficult in their school in terms of well-being. In spite of their generally rather positive staging of their own class and community at school, the following quotes from the suns & clouds

activity, where they addressed challenges at school, revealed that they also have negative experiences:

Three examples from the suns & clouds activity illustrate this preliminary observation:

“It is a little foolish that we learn so few languages; if we learnt more, we could maybe help new pupils in a better way.”

“It is a little scaring that we (sometimes) are not allowed to use our own language.”

“It is not fair that there is no school at Christian holidays like Pentecost, but ordinary school at for instance id. Muslims must ask for free from school, but the teachers’ continue working even if there are no Muslims at school.”

These apparently minor problems are nevertheless serious. However, they are difficult to handle in a friendly and positive way, which may have been the reason for not addressing them before the very last day of our visits at school. These examples can be considered as discriminating against languages and religions by regulations and traditions. From our point of view, it is possible that a strong, almost ideological, focus on friendship may draw attention away from other problems and challenges. In the context of friendship, many pupils were proud of themselves and their friends because they knew many languages, but in the classroom, they were, at least on some occasions, not allowed to use them.

2.6.2 CHILDREN'S PROPOSALS

Preschool: Three children’s proposals for an inclusive pre-school can be summarized as follows:

- Take the new child to all the places they themselves like to be and to play.
- Inform about rules and make them understandable for all through drawings and labelled photos visible for new children when they arrive.
- Teach new children Norwegian words in by repeating them when they look at the drawings and images.
- Learn children to dress for outdoors, especially for rain and cold weather
- Take new children to nice places outside the pre-school area such as the soccer-field, public play-areas and the woods.

Interestingly, all these proposals were to some extent implemented in the children’s pre-school. However, both the staff and the children expressed that, by reflecting about these issues, they were reminded of the importance of these factors. As an extension of already implemented routines, attention was directed to the importance of knowing the rules of everyday activities as, for instance, washing hands and using the wardrobe. Playing outdoors is an important part of everyday life in Norwegian pre-schools and children have usually much autonomy when it comes to dressing themselves. Therefore, it is important to store clothes and boots so that they are easily accessible. Both in the drawing sessions and in the walk and talk sessions outdoors, the children talked about the importance of showing newcomers places of significance for their play and outdoor trips. We interpret these as expressions of culturally embedded practices. The children’s suggestions of including new children in the community, of sharing these places, indicates the significance of places for well-being and inclusion.

Primary school: At the last day of the researchers’ visits, the pupils worked in groups of four to propose measures to make it easier for a new child from abroad to settle well in their school. The pupils wrote notes and presented their suggestions for each other, the teacher and the researchers.

Eight pupils had prepared short speeches on behalf of their groups, addressing the entire school as an organization, the school’s teachers and other staff as well as pupils. In all speeches, there was a tendency to address pupils to a higher degree than the staff, probably because of the strong focus on friendship in the class.

The following is an example for a typical communication from this final meeting (phase 5):

Pupil 1: "Shall I begin?"

Researcher: "Yes".

Pupil 1: "Eeh...the teacher should choose three or two willing pupils who can spend time with the new pupil and have fun with the new pupil."

Pupil 2: "The school should give the newly arrived pupil a free trip...if he is poor.² Even if he is poor, he can make friends and enjoy school (...)"

Pupil 1: "Oh, it's me again? Eeeeh ... - we can help new pupils in our group, teach them...(looking at the manuscript, holding it close to her eyes)... what is written here? ... teach the pupil exciting things to do, so that he will have a good time here."

Researcher: "This sounds as an exciting school. Is it usually exciting?"

Pupil 1: "I don't know."

Pupil 3: "I do not want to propose anything, because we all have the same values. We are all like each other and at the same time different from one another. We are all worth the same and perfect."

Researcher: "But we will make this idea bank? Take the proposals from you and give them to other schools?"

Based on their notes, our field notes and audio recordings we got a number of varied suggestions, which we preliminarily categorized in six groups that include all utterances provided by the pupils:

Teacher related proposals:

- The teacher should choose two or three willing pupils who can be with the new pupil and have fun with the new pupil
- Show he/she might get an extra teacher
- An extra teacher that helps him/her with the Norwegian language

Proposals focusing on teaching and learning:

- Teach the person to say "hello and goodbye"
- Tell what things are called, teach the pupil
- Teach the pupil the alphabet and how to count
- Help them understand what they has been said [of others; in the classroom]
- Provide a Dictionary
- A book with a translator should be provided.
- Teaching little by little so it does not become too much, that not so many things have to be kept in mind

Proposals for providing extra attention and care:

- Take extra care of the pupil
- Ask the person if he/she needs help
- Write a kind note to the person
- We can give them enough food and care
- Show a little more care
- Show helpfulness and be helpful
- The pupil should be respected and not teased; because there are many different religions in our school that we respect and treat well.

Proposals to support emotions and relations:

- We can help the children and we can make the children happy.

² In our opinion, poverty was not an actual problem for most of the pupils in this group, however it was presented as one of three main difficulties in the letter from Valentina (see above)

- We can teach exciting things to make the kid feel good.
- We can help children feel safe.
- Be kind to that person.
- They have to be treated/welcome well, so that they feel good.
- Pupils should make a good friend.
- What should be done is that there should be set up an “alone bench”. If you are alone [i.e. sitting on the bench] others can ask for whether she/he wants to play.

Proposals for contextual and environmental conditions:

- Get to know the school.
- Provide a school uniform
- Show the person around the school
- The school should give free tours for him/her. When going on a class trip.
- After school can be free.
- A new religion

Proposals aiming at “normalization”:

- I would not suggest anything because everyone is of the same worth so much and I want everyone to do well.
- We suggest that the school should respect the pupils’ opinions and treat them like any other pupil.
- The pupil should start in a class that is thinking and saying that everyone is unique. (PS: Stay away from the 7th grade at our school)
- Not everyone should go to (run on) the person to avoid that she/he becomes stressed or scared.
- Maybe he/she is doing well, is happy at school, and has many friends.

The pupils had a number of innovative proposals such as school uniforms, alone bench, providing a dictionary or a book with a translator. These go beyond good behavior and customs as well as beyond what is common when a new student enters a class, regardless whether she/he is coming from abroad or from Norway. To the best of our knowledge, few of the innovative proposals are implemented systematically at the school. However, the school has very high awareness when it comes to inclusion, friendship and positive attitudes and relations. Thus, the 5th grade pupils had a rich pool of experience to base their suggestions on.

2.7 EDUCATIONAL AND FORMATIVE IMPACT

Professionals. In pre-school, the teachers had doubts, concerning both the age (3-4 years) and language difficulties of the children as an obstacle for achieving the goals of the study. However, these elements turned out not to be a barrier at all; the children’s ability to communicate impressed even the teachers. Several of the factors the children pointed out as important for their well-being and as significant for welcoming new children represented issues that the pre-school already was working on. The children’s utterances rose the staffs’ awareness of the importance of these factors and of further developing them.

The staff in two departments was well prepared and present during the researchers visit. This had a positive impact on the children’s engagement and motivation to share their experiences and thoughts with the researcher. This emphasizes the importance of safe relations and situations for giving children voice and release their potential as serious informants. The teachers, as eyewitnesses, were surprised about how much the children had to tell, and how much they wanted to and were capable to show to the researchers. They were also impressed about how much effort the children put into the drawings.

Children. The children came up with many reflections and suggestions for inclusion and factors of importance for constituting friendship with new children. They were also quite conscious about factors they experienced as positive and negative in terms of well-being. Due to the holistic approach and the

importance of care and play in Norwegian pre-schools, a significant impact of this study is to confirm the children's capability to contribute meaningfully to the organization of pedagogical practice. If they are listened to in an appropriate context, they can, based on their experiences, take an active part in orchestrating the conditions for well-being for all children in pre-school, also when it comes to the inclusion of new children. For instance, were drawings of everyday activities as tools for including non-native speakers highlighted by children themselves. This reminded other children and the staff of the potential of visual communication and the importance of the availability and accessibility of visuals and materials to create them.

2.8 DISCUSSION

A major limitation of this study is a lack of generalizability of the findings. There are two main reasons: Firstly, it is obvious that a case study cannot provide data that are valid for the entire population but at best allows transferability to comparable contexts. Secondly, these two case studies are conducted in a highly experienced, competent and passionate environment regarding multicultural and multilingual education. So, one may possibly draw a general conclusion that it is in principle possible to strengthen the well-being of children and create inclusive classrooms for highly diverse groups in terms of language, cultural or ethnical background.

One minor limitation in the empirical material created in pre-school is a lack of specific information about the children's ethnicity. About 80% of the children in this pre-school had a non-Norwegian ethnic background. However, the staff did not want us to focus on specific ethnicities or address ethnical characteristics, which is in line with official Norwegian policy. The background for the teachers' reluctance was an earlier research project in their institution that, according to the teachers' experience, labelled (potential) participants as "others", e.g. different from the normal population. In this perspective of otherness, parents perceived the interpretation of their own language and cultural community as biased in a way they did not recognize. This was a severe reminder for continuously appraise ourselves in terms of how we understand, construct and approach multicultural groups and communicate with both parents and children. We consider that it is necessary to gain more research-based knowledge about this research related challenge in the future, both in ethical and methodological perspective.

The children showed an astonishing capacity to reflect on and practice inclusion and well-being in their everyday situations. However, an important and partly limiting factor regarding preschoolers as sources for research based knowledge is verbal language. The children used in a "natural way" verbal as well as non-verbal language when expressing themselves. For this reason, it was important to document what and how they presented in a non-verbal manner (e.g. pointing, gesturing, nonverbal vocal utterances, body language). The non-verbal orchestration turned out to be of great significance to identify what children considered as important.

Most of the children drew themselves in activities together with their family, outside the pre-school and in the local community. The family appeared to be most significant for their own identity. There was little response when we tried to inspire them to draw themselves without parents or siblings. This indicates the importance of the family situation for their identity development and that family should be mentioned with caution and awareness of its importance in the children's everyday life in (pre-)school.

The audio recordings documented fragmented conversations, and there were definitely limitations in doing data collection as a single researcher since it was demanding to cover the significant in-between movements, gestures and meaningful body language. However, the surprisingly rich information the children came up with indicates that the negative consequences of being only one single researcher were not too severe.

Play, friendship and how to relate to each other in everyday activities was regarded as most important. The children also had a high awareness of the position of language to communicate with and include non-native speakers. Finally, Norwegian pre-schools seem to be very aware of the challenges regarding

activities outdoors and see it as very important that all children are dressed appropriately in terms of the varying weather conditions.

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3. GERMANY

A case study in a preschool in Berlin

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ABSTRACT

Childhood today is embedded in a changing society, characterized by pluralization, diversification and individualization. This also poses new challenges for early childhood education and child [ECEC] daycare. Considering that there is a strong connection between the socio-cultural origins of children and their educational opportunities in Germany (Bos et al., 2007), early childhood education should be of the highest quality. The present article ties in with this state of research. Ten children between the ages of 4 and 6 were asked about their perception of themselves in their setting. The settings were located in Berlin and includes a high proportion of children with an immigration background. In this case, 7 out of 10 children had an immigration background. With regard to the question of well-being, it can be assumed that the children surveyed feel emotionally well and integrated into a social context. The results show what an important role participation in the pedagogical everyday life seems to play for the well-being of children. Freely accessible play opportunities and materials for creative design, co-determination in the design and use of rooms, as well as a daily routine that largely permits individual design are aspects that the children describe as important for them.

Keywords: children, immigrant background, diversity, inclusion, identity, well-being, focus groups, Germany, ISOTIS project

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study is part of the international research project 'Children's views on inclusion at school' within the European Project ISOTIS (see D.2.5: Pastori G., Pagani V., Sarcinelli S., Technical report on the Child Interview study. Children's views on inclusion at school' - digital source available on Isotis.org). The present study aims to examine the perspectives of children as to how they can facilitate elements (resilience factors) to feel comfortable in their differences at school. The aim was to enable children to express their perspective on what they think about their differences (cultural, somatic, linguistic, socio-economic, etc. level), about their social and cultural identity and about their school context in relation to integration, as well as what they identify as quality indicators of integration into school and what they propose to make their school more welcoming and inclusive. The present case study took place from 12.02.-15.02.2019 in an ECEC setting with a high proportion of children and families with an immigrant background. The results show that the surveyed children feel emotionally well and integrated into a social context. They do not seem to define

themselves through their cultural backgrounds or family languages, but rather through what they have experienced with their families. The opportunity to participate in the pedagogical everyday life seems to be very important for them.

3.2 PRESENTATION OF THE SITE

Table 9. Overview of the target group, site and contexts involved

COUNTRY	TARGET GROUP	CONTEXT TYPE	AGE	SITE		PARTICIPANTS	
				CITY/AREA	NUMBER OF PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED	NUMBER AND AGE OF CHILDREN INVOLVED	DIVISION IN GROUPS (IF ANY)
Germany	Immigrant background	Formal, Preschool	1-6	Berlin	1 (+1)	10 (4-6 years old)	No

3.2.1 SELECTION

The ECEC setting was selected on the basis of several criteria. A district in Berlin with a high proportion of children and families with an immigration background was selected. In addition, there had to be a large number of children from families with a low socio-economic status. Using the most recent census (Berlin-Brandenburg Statistical Office, 2017), we found a site in a district in the North of Berlin.

3.2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITE

The ECEC setting was located in a district of Berlin with a high proportion of families with an immigrant background. Seven out of ten children participating in the study had an immigration background³. According to the head teacher, the majority of children in the setting come from families with a low socio-economic status. However, children with a possibly higher socio-economic status are also involved in the sample. The ECEC setting looks after 60 children aged between one and six years. There are age-heterogeneous groups: 1 - 3 year olds who are cared for together and the 3 - 6 year olds (or until primary school enrolment). The pedagogical approach follows the Berlin education programme, which is mandatory for all ECEC settings in Berlin. The setting also attaches importance to individual promotion of age-appropriate (social) development, education for independence, promotion of creativity and diversity of movement, excursions/project work and language education integrated into everyday life. Children with special physical or psychological needs are welcome as well.

3.2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The team of pedagogical staff consists of 5 female preschool teachers with a training as state-approved educators. Three of them look after children from the group who took part in the study. One of them has an additional qualification as an expert for integration and has 5 years of professional experience. According to the head teachers, the multilingual team of pedagogues (Turkish, Arabic, English) is able to address parents and children in their family language as well: in fact, every preschool teacher speaks another language, for example Turkish, Arabic and/or English in addition to German. In addition, there is one social care assistant who supports children with special needs and has 5 years of professional experience. The

³ Immigrant background in this study is defined by the federal ministry for migration and refugees: "A person has a migration background if he or she or at least one parent was not born with German citizenship" (Federal Ministry for Migration and Refugees, 2019).

head teacher has 37 years of professional experience as a preschool teacher and has been working as a head for about 15 years in different preschools. The 10 children who participated in the research were 4 to 6 years old (Table 10). Seven children had an immigration background. There was one Syrian child with escape experience (5 years old, female) who spoke German very well. There were also two children with a Turkish background, one child with an Arabic background, one child with a French background, one child with a Japanese background, one child with an English background and three children with a German background. According to the head teacher, most of children in the setting come from families with a low socio-economic status. For the study, we tried to recruit children with an immigration background and a low socio-economic status.

Table 10. Overview of the sites and participants involved

Target group	Name	Context type	Age	City/area	Number and age of children involved
Immigrant background	Public preschool	Formal	1-6	Urban (Berlin)	10 (4-6 years old)

3.3 METHODOLOGY AND PHASES OF WORK

The case study was designed as an investigation with methodological triangulation ("between-method" design) (Denzin, 1970; Flick, 2011) to give children as many options as possible to express their thoughts, feelings and perceptions. In total, the focus was on four dimensions of content: identity, dealing with diversity, well-being and demands on good child day care. These dimensions were reflected in the individual instruments as follows:

Identity Cards

The children were asked to issue their own identity card, with which they can introduce themselves to children who are new to the setting (Pastori, Pagani & Sarcinelli, 2019). The contents of this identity card were, among others, their own portrait, their name, their age, their favourite food, their family and their best friend. After completion, the identity cards were discussed with the children in a focus group, i.e. the children introduce themselves to each other and the investigators ask questions. The aim is to learn how children define their social and cultural identity.

Circle-time

The discussion serves as a form of focus group to find out how children deal with diversity (Pastori et al., 2019). We asked them to reflect on how they would welcome a new child to the ECEC setting who both does not yet know the institution and has a different cultural and/or social family background.

Inclusion first aid kit

Following on from the circle time, the aim of this focus group is to get children to think about how they deal with diversity and what they think, where their institution could develop even further in the direction of an inclusive ECEC setting (Pastori et al., 2019). Together, the children and surveyors think about what material they could produce so that a new child who does not yet know the institution and has a different cultural and/or social family background would feel comfortable in the new ECEC setting.

Sun & Clouds

As part of this guided survey, the children receive yellow suns and grey clouds cut out of clay paper (Pimlott-Wilson, 2012) and are asked to paint on the suns the things they like and feel good about at their setting.

The children can paint on the clouds those aspects that they do not like at their setting or what makes them sad or what causes them to feel uncomfortable. The aim is to find out what children expect from good day care.

PRESCHOOL		
Day 1	Introduction of the study	<p>Step 1 The researchers introduced themselves and explained the goal of the visit.</p> <p>To get to know the children better, the researchers played with them. After a while, the researchers gave information concerning the documentation of the activities within the study and agreed upon the rules of involvement in the activities.</p>
Day 2	Circle time Inclusion first aid kit/brainstorming	<p>Step 1 Together with the ten participating children, a morning circle ("Circle-time", Pastori et al., 2019) was held in a creative and relaxation room, in which the study, the role of the researchers (a research assistant and a student assistant) and the children were discussed again in a playful way.</p> <p>Step 2 Following the morning circle, the children were asked what they would do if a new child with a different cultural and/or social family background came to the setting and how they would help this child feel comfortable in the centre ("Inclusion first aid kit/brainstorming", Pastori et al., 2019). The ideas were collected and it was decided in the group that the children wanted to make a doll ("human being") to comfort the new child. Together a list was made of all the materials the children wanted to use to make this doll.</p>
Day 3	Inclusion first aid kit/implementation	<p>Step 1 On the third day, the children and researcher met again in the same room and discussed the collection of ideas and materials from the day before. One researcher read the list of materials again and, together with the children, they thought about who could collect which material and which part of the doll could be made. The researchers divided themselves among the groups and talked to the children about their ideas and thoughts when making the doll ("Inclusion first aid kit").</p>
Day 4	Identity Card Sun & clouds	<p>Step 1 On the fourth and last day, children and researchers met again in the creative room. Researchers presented their own ID card and explained the activity. The children could draw their favourite toy, their own portrait, their boyfriend/girlfriend on the ID card.</p> <p>Step 2 During the activity the researchers encouraged children to talk about their ID cards and to document their work.</p> <p>Step 1 Afterwards, researchers explained the second activity, "Sun & clouds" (Pimlott-Wilson, 2012). Researchers encouraged children to paint what they like at their setting on the suns and what they do not like or what they miss on the clouds. Here, too, the researchers always asked about the children's motives for their drawings and thoughts.</p>

3.4 METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES

With regard to ethical challenges, attention was paid to compliance with current standards (Technical Report). During the study, head teacher, educators, parents and children were informed in advance. The accessibility of the consent form for all parents was ensured. This means that we ensured that parents fully understood what the study was about and what happened to the data before they signed it. For illiterate people, we gave consent in the form of an audio recording instead of a written consent. In addition, the anonymity of each participant had to be guaranteed. Methodological challenges in researching with children is in not being able to use video recordings. Additional field notes were made, which were then included in the analysis.

3.5 CODING AND ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

Although different data were collected from different sources, it was required that the individual countries evaluate only verbal data, i.e. transcripts of the audio recordings. The aim was to connect the national and international levels of analysis. Based on the research questions, the project leaders Pastori, Pagani and Sarcinelli (2019) developed a coding tree with the four thematic codes identity, dealing with diversity, well-being and demands on good child day care. This contained several subcodes which were supposed to reflect the possible different influencing factors on the four core themes. The coding system should be a common scheme of themes, but flexible and open to additional new subcodes proposed by the project partners of the countries. In addition, ethnographic field notes (Sanjek, 1990; Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995; Breidenstein, Hirschauer, Kalthoff & Nieswand, 2013) were evaluated as part of the present case study. The audio recordings were transcribed literally and in the original language. Both the observation protocols and the transcripts were evaluated using the qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2010). In order to work more deeply with the material, inductively won categories were also created (Gläser & Laudel, 2010, 2013) in addition to the predefined analysis categories ("identity", "social relationships", "factors influencing integration and well-being"). With regard to ethical challenges, attention was paid to compliance with current standards. Both the European General Data Protection Regulation (Reg. EU 2016/679) and the relevant national legal and ethical requirements as well as the standards described in ISOTIS data management applied.

3.6 FINDINGS

The results are presented below. The table shows the subcodes used, which are factors that promote children's well-being and inclusion. Subsequently, factors are presented that inhibit children's well-being and inclusive pedagogy. Following on from this, implications for better practice are derived.

3.6.1 FACTORS PROMOTING WELL-BEING AND INCLUSION

Table 11. Co-occurrence table of Factors promoting well-being and inclusion

Codes	Subcodes	Target 1 - Formal 3-6
Identity	cultural	5

	Social	7
	Somatic features	4
School Organization	Space	6
	Time	4
	Rules	3
	Play	6
Social relationship	Inclusion/acceptance	7
	Friendship	2
	Emotional support	4
Complimentary Codes	Family	9
		Tot. 57

One of the factors promoting well-being and inclusion seems to be identity, especially w to culture, social relationships and somatic features. It could be found that children do not seem to define themselves primarily through their cultural backgrounds or family languages. In the process of thinking about what could help a new child to feel comfortable in the ECEC setting, it became clear that age, origin and language do not seem to be this relevant for children, rather they focus on gender. With regard to the "human being" which the children prepared, it became clear that girls were particularly interested in jewelry and "make-up" as well as earrings and "mascara". Boys supplemented body parts such as "knees", "arms" or the "mobile phone" as a technical device that was supposed to give this "person" identity. Preferences in the design of the "human being" may suggest that he or she understands his or her own identity. During the common reflection and production of the "human being" conversations arose around the topic "What have I ever eaten and with whom have I eaten or prepared this food". Foods like "Marshmallows", "Cakes" or "Pizza" as well as memories of common preparation with relatives were reported. Here references to the importance of involving family within the pedagogical everyday life could be found. Stories about eating and/ or cooking with relatives seem to have been thematized for reasons of relationship experience. Children reported decorating a cake together with their sister or dyeing the cake glaze with their grandmother. Even more often the children talked about their "Papa" and their "Mama", with whom they "baked pizza in the forest" or "fried marshmallows" together. A child with an Arab background reported: "We had guests before, then they ate everything and my father, mum and I ate nothing, only the guests ate something". This quotation could point to a reference to the cultural background of the child with a view to hospitality in large Arab families and could be interpreted as an orientation towards culturally coded rules and customs. In general, social relationships seems to be an important factor promoting well-being and inclusion. It has been shown that the children interviewed present themselves as a social group and seem to perceive themselves as a community within their setting. This became clear, among other things, with regard to text passages in which the children spoke of the "we". For example, they set out with the investigators to find the individual materials to make a "human being": "Look, and we still have glittering stones! The "we" can also indicate that this child identifies with the setting by evaluating the things it finds

there as its own and by feeling emotionally comfortable in the group of children and possibly in the setting as a whole. It could be observed that two boys were playing in the corner of the building and noticed that other children were playing football outside in the garden. They finished their game and went outside. Both boys were immediately accepted into the playing group. The situation of getting involved seemed to be a matter of course for the children. Furthermore, two children were observed, who towards the end of the last common activity ("Suns & Clouds") expressed the need to want to play outside. With the saying "We go out to play" they naturally went outside. All in all, the data show that diversity was not explicitly raised by the children as a topic. Rather, it seems that they have a need to be able to move freely in space and to perceive themselves as part of a community.

With regard to the question of what promotes the well-being of the children, it became clear how important participation in the pedagogical everyday life is for the children. Aspects that the children repeatedly describe as important for them are, not only freely accessible play possibilities and materials for creative design, but also co-determination in the use of rooms and a daily routine that largely responds to individual needs. Corresponding text passages were assigned to the categories of freely accessible play options, materials for individual design and individual use of space. For example, the relevance of freely accessible materials becomes clear, among other things, in how enthusiastically the children report on all the utensils they are allowed to find and use in the room as they go through the list of materials for making "human beings".

In the following, factors are presented that inhibit children's well-being and inclusive pedagogy.

3.6.2 FACTORS UNDERMINING WELL-BEING AND INCLUSION

As can be seen in the table, only a few factors have been identified that seem to inhibit well-being and inclusion from the children's perspective.

Table 12 - Co-occurrence table of Factors undermining well-being and inclusion

Codes	Subcodes	Target 1 - Formal 3-6
School Organization	Space	4
	Time	2
Social relationship	Inclusion/acceptance	5
		Tot. 11

The school organisation seems to be important for promoting well-being and inclusion as well as for undermining it. Children feel restricted in their well-being if there is not enough room for individual play. They want to use rooms the way they need them in spontaneous fantasy. The importance of self-determination in the use of rooms for the children interviewed was demonstrated by the example of two children who, on the first day of the survey, were observed trying to furnish an apartment in the movement room with blankets and a box as well as a few utensils from the children's kitchen. They were reminded by a preschool teacher that this room was a space for movement and thus were restricted in their need for self-determination. The children finished the game and went outside. This also includes the time factor. Children want to have a say in their daily routine and also want to play a game longer than expected. Social relationships also play an important role. Children want to perceive themselves as competent, not only in dealing with things, but also with regard to conflict resolution. If a child is perceived as difficult and a specialist does not help them sufficiently in conflict resolution, the children describe this as disturbing.

3.6.3 EDUCATIONAL/FORMATIVE IMPACT

The preschool teachers and the head teacher were pleased that the children were able to contact the researchers so quickly. They thanked them for the uncomplicated nature of the study and were amazed at how enthusiastic the children were to be allowed to participate.

Looking at the children and the context, it was surprising to see how touchingly most children took care of their "human being". The next day, when asked where he should be kept (15.02.2019), the children thought about "sleeping" him under a table. Therefore, they made a plan to determine the task that each child would have to make sure that their "human being" was comfortable e.g. blanket, pillow.

It became clear how important it seems to be for children that the preschool teacher involves them in decision-making processes in everyday pedagogical life. This applies both to spatial design as well as to the design of social relationships and free play. Children want to be actively involved in spatial and time planning in order to consider themselves to be competent members of a social community.

3.7 DISCUSSION

The present study was able to show that children seem to have a need to perceive themselves as part of a community and to be able to participate independently in day care life. This makes it clear that participation, inclusion and well-being should be core aspects of high-quality child day care. This finding coincides with the results of the "QuaKi" study (Quality from children's perspective) (Nentwig-Gesemann, Walther & Theginga, 2017), which made it clear that it is important for children to belong to a community and to feel valued in their own individuality. In this case study, the children seemed to identify emotionally with their ECEC setting and, for example, evaluate material things as their own. Another result that shows similarities to the "QuaKi" study is the aspect of self-determined handling of materials and spaces. Here, too, it became clear that children need to experience themselves as competent. Among other things, children experience themselves as competent when they are allowed to move freely and expansively and when they can show outsiders that they know their setting well (Nentwig-Gesemann et al., 2017). In the present study, the children also seemed to feel the need to move freely and independently in the individual rooms and to be allowed to use the available materials as they are needed in the respective play situation. With regard to the question of how children deal with diversity, it can be interpreted that it seems less important for them to address social and/or cultural differences among themselves. Rather, it seems that they feel a need to be accepted in their individuality as part of a community and to be perceived as competent members. These results coincide with the findings of Sheridan and Samuelsson (2001), who found in their study with 39 children that it is important for them to be able to play without constant interruption, but at the same time also to get inspiration from professionals and access to materials and activities. Einarsdottir (2005) also showed that children's social relationships and peer interactions seem to be special needs.

For the discussion on the quality and quality development of child day care, this leads to the demand to focus even more strongly on the opportunities for children to help shape pedagogical spaces. This applies both to the material design and to opportunities for co-determination in the design of the daily routine. Sheridan and Samuelsson (2001) found that children from institutions with a high pedagogical quality were more likely to assume that the professionals looking after them knew what they wanted to do. With this in mind, the presented results serve in particular the discussion about the professionalisation of the preschool teachers and their role as development companions. They are responsible for actively involving children in the design and exploration of pedagogical spaces. The aim is to sharpen the awareness of the importance of participation for the well-being of children and to allow it to flow into the educational policy discussion on inclusion as well as questions of the quality of child day care in general.

With a view to the quality of the study, non-verbal data should be included even more strongly in the next study design, which could, for example, be captured via video recordings. In the international research

context, the focus has for some time been on the narrative potential of children (e.g. Einarsdottir, 2011; Puroila, Estola & Syrjälä, 2012). Implications for research arise on the one hand from the need for further testing of approaches that offer children a framework for individual forms of expression. Innovative approaches with potential for further development have already been presented in this article ("Inclusion first aid kit"). On the other hand, the competence of the researchers should above all else be understood as an essential condition for the success of research situations with children and should be considered and reflected upon more closely in the course of the study (Brooker, 2007).

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4. ITALY

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ABSTRACT

The present chapter focuses on the qualitative Children Study conducted in Italy as part of the ISOTIS cross-cultural study. The main aims of the Children Study were to explore children's views on inclusion, well-being at school and to elicit children's proposals to make their school (more) inclusive. In Italy, the fieldwork was carried out in two preschool classes, one primary school class, and in an after-school educational program run by Save the Children Italy. High levels of cultural and social diversity characterized all the three sites. This chapter will provide an overview of the characteristics of each site, the participants and the research procedure in the all three contexts, but the initial tentative data analysis will focus only on the study conducted with preschool children. The preschoolers were highly engaged in the research and advanced several proposals to make their school more inclusive and welcoming. Some of those proposals were actually implemented, showing children that their voices were taken into account seriously, and contributing to give visibility to multilingualism in their preschool context. Besides this educational impact, the study had also a formative impact on the teachers involved, who became more aware of children's competencies and experienced the value of participatory methodologies.

Keywords: children's voice; participatory research; well-being; inclusion; multilingualism; preschool

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Italy the Children Study was conducted between November 2018 and June 2019 in three highly culturally diverse settings in the city of Milan:

- one preschool (two groups, respectively, of 4- and 5-year-old children);
- one primary school (one group of 10- to 11-year-old children);
- and an after-school educational program run by Save the Children Italy (two groups, respectively, one with 10 9- to 10-year-old children and the other with 21 10- to 14-year-old children).

4.2 PRESENTATION OF THE SITES

4.2.1 SELECTION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITES

4.2.1.1 FORMAL CONTEXT 4

The **preschool** and the **primary school** involved in the study (which took also part to the WP3.4, WP4.4, and WP5.4 VLE intervention) were both part of the same Institution (i.e., *Istituto Comprensivo*) and located in the same building. The *Istituto Comprensivo* was selected for the following particular characteristics. First of all, the **super-diversity**: the Institution is located in a culturally highly diverse neighborhood of Milan (the biggest city in the North of Italy) with a significant percentage of disadvantaged immigrant families (mainly Arabic and North African families, but not exclusively; see. Tab 10.1) and very few middle-class Italian families;

Table 13. *Istituto Comprensivo* demographic data - School Year 2018/19

	N. OF CHILDREN ENROLLED	N. OF NON- ITALOPHONE CHILDREN	% OF NON- ITALOPHONE CHILDREN	MAIN NATIONAL ORIGINS
Preschool	113	69	61%	Egypt, Philippines, Peru
Primary school	525	372	62%	Egypt, Philippines, Morocco

Secondly, **for the motivation and availability to participate to the research**: an early connection was made during the application phase of the ISOTIS project with the principal who had stated his interest in participating in the research and an initial letter of intent was signed in January 2016. Afterwards, in 2017 in a meeting with the principal and the teachers, the ISOTIS project and the activities were presented. The participation of each class was negotiated with the assistant principal and the teachers.

4.2.1.2 INFORMAL CONTEXT

The children study in the informal context was carried out at the educational center Fuoriclasse (literally “Out-of-school”) in partnership with Save the Children Italy, first a non-profit organization and then an OGN that has been operating since 1998 both abroad and in Italy. Fuoriclasse is part of an integrated program carried out by Save the children Italy in cooperation with local schools and local organizations⁵. The program, founded in 2011, involves students, teachers and families and aims at contrasting school drop-out through early prevention. It offers several activities with the aim of **supporting the motivation to study and learn**. Among the different activities, there are informal educational centers and camps. Between 2012 and 2015 Fuoriclasse involved 92 classes and 14 Comprehensive Institutes in 6 Italian cities: Bari, Crotone,

⁴ For additional information on teacher approach and school organization, see Report D4.4 Chapt. 3.

⁵ There are national (Cooperativa E.D.I. Onlus and Panda Adventures) and territorial partners such as Association Acli Milano, Association Kreattiva, Cooperativa Sociale CISV Solidarietà, Associazione EaSLab. The evaluation of the program is carried out by Foundation Giovanni Agnelli and the financial support is given by the Bolton Group and Bulgari.

Milano, Napoli, Scalea, Torino⁶. The project was extended to the city of Milan in 2013/14. The after-school Fuoriclasse center chosen for the children study is situated in a polyfunctional center that is experimenting with new forms of welfare in a very poor, segregated and multicultural neighborhood in the outskirts of Milan.

Table 14. Fuoriclasse demographic data - School Year 2018/19

	N. of children enrolled	N. of non-italophone children	% of non-italophone children	Main national origins
Informal context	31	28	87%	Morocco, Egypt

This educational center also proposes activities for parents, mothers, mothers with very young children etc. The education center Fuoriclasse is attended by children from two primary schools and two junior high school nearby. At the center it is possible to study, but also to play and learn while having fun: during the week homework is done and school subjects are studied in-depth, while on Saturday morning there are workshops aimed at strengthening basic skills. It is open to primary school children every Wednesday and Friday from 4.30 p.m. to 7 p.m. and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.; for secondary school children it is open every Tuesday and Thursday from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m... The educational center Fuoriclasse targets students in the last 2 years of the Primary school and in Junior High School (Middle School). Among the extra-curricular activities for students, there is a “motivational workshop”, “school camps” and “after-school study program”. The children study was realized during a “motivational workshop” whose general objectives were to: a) promote the motivation to study; b) valorize children’s competences; c) augment children’s self-esteem; d) augment their capacity to overcome difficulties found at school.

The practice of active listening to children’s voices and their protagonism are thus central to the methodological approach. The structure of each workshop (4 meetings of approximately 1.5 hours) is organized in three phases: 1) a “theoretical part” for in-depth examination of the themes of the project, 2) a more practical phase where the theme is developed in concrete products made by the students 3) the third phase is a moment of peer education, that is to say a presentation of the work done to their classmates, aimed at transmitting the beauty and the importance of going to school.

4.2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

4.2.2.1 FORMAL CONTEXT

Two female preschool teachers participated in the study, both of them with over 20 years of teaching experience: the first teacher was the main teacher of the Orange Class, with 23 children (13 4-year-olds and 10 5-year-olds) who has had managerial responsibilities within the *Istituto Comprensivo* for over 15 years (she became the preschool coordinator the year before, and she has been assistant principal since April 2019); the second teacher was a special education teacher with a supporting role in many classrooms, including the Orange Class and the Red Class.

Three female primary school teachers participated in the study: the main teacher in the class who taught Italian, History and Geography. She also worked as Vice-Principal of the primary school for 3 years, but she resigned in April 2019 due to contrasts and tensions with the School Director; a special education teacher, friendly and supportive to the children; the Religion in the class who was the teacher responsible for welcoming newly arrived pupils, especially those with culturally diverse backgrounds.

⁶ An impact assessment is available at the following link: <http://goo.gl/JwJaub> and for a report on the first five years of Fuoriclasse, see <http://goo.gl/IR3Utx>.

4.2.2.2 INFORMAL CONTEXT

The professionals at the informal context were: 2 young educational workers trained in pedagogy and social services and one volunteer, a retired lady.

4.3 METHODOLOGY AND PHASES OF WORK

4.3.1 PRESCHOOL

In order to present the aims of the Children Study, the methodological framework and the activities planned, we shared the Manual we discussed the proposal during a specific meeting with the two teachers was held in September 2018. The teachers suggested introducing some changes and adaptations to the methodology, described in detail below. Some of the adaptations were decided beforehand (for instance, teachers suggested conducting two parallel studies: one with 10 4-year-old children of the Red Classroom and one with the group of 23 5-year-olds of the Orange Class). Others adaptations were negotiated step-by-step, to better follow children's ideas and proposals.

All the activities (that were audio and video recorded) were co-conducted in order to lessen any possible intimidating effect of our presence as 'strangers' and to ensure children a familiar environment, with trusted adults, where they would feel at ease and free to express their opinions. We considered the presence of the teachers as co-conductors crucial, especially during the opening circle-time, since they knew important information about their class that could help to better address each child individually and stimulate discussion, making reference to concrete episodes of the children's experience. The teachers could also provide useful support in making children respect the class rules. Finally, this choice could contribute to preserving children's perception of our role as people who were authentically interested in hearing children's points of view, neither judging nor evaluating their opinions or behaviour.

Table n. 15: Overview of the workflow in the preschool context

PRESCHOOL		
Day 1	Introduction to the study	We spent a few days in the classroom with the children, to let them familiarize and feel at ease with us. We presented our role as researchers and the aims of the Children Study, using simple words they could understand. Each child signed a digital informed consent form that was presented through the ISOTIS VLE.
	First focus group	<p>Step 1. We involved all 33 children participating in the study in a circle-time discussion about how to welcome new children who would start preschool the following year. We invited the children to consider that the newcomers would not know their new teachers, classmates and the spaces at the school, and that some of them would not even speak Italian.</p> <p>Step 2. Following the children's leads, the researchers asked them what they proposed and what materials they could prepare to welcome the new children and make them feel comfortable in their school.</p> <p>Step 3. Two separate circle-time discussions were conducted, respectively with the 4-year-old group and with the 5-year-olds, in order to deepen the content that emerged during the first plenary discussion. From this point forward, the two groups of children followed 'parted ways'.</p>
Day 2	ID cards	<p>4-year-old children In the circle-time discussions, among other themes, the children suggested that it could be important for the newcomers to have some friends at the new school and to know its spaces and its rules. Hence, with this group, the study continued with the creation of the ID Card. We added the section "My favorite game/toy at preschool" which was proposed by the teacher, who thought it was more concrete and related to the welcoming framework proposed rather than asking them about what they wanted to be when they grew up). . During circle-time, children were asked how they would present themselves to the newcomers. Step 2 Each child completed their ID Card and presented it (their verbalizations were collected).</p> <p>5-year-old children During the circle-time discussions, the children suggested many ways to welcome the newcomers.</p>
Day 3	Sun&Clouds	<p>Step 1. Since the children had suggested that it would be important for the newcomers to know the new school and its rules, the teachers proposed customizing the Sun & Cloud activity, focusing on the school environment. Pictures of the various rooms/spaces taken by the teachers were projected on a whiteboard one by one, and the children engaged in a group discussion on each of them.</p> <p>Step 2, Children were asked what they liked/disliked in each space and why, and the rules for each space were elicited.</p> <p>Step 3. Large pictures of the spaces were printed and placed on the floor, and the children were asked to indicate their favorite and least favorite ones using emoticons (happy or sad faces) cut from cardboard.</p>

	Inclusion first-aid kit	<p>4-year-old children The 'inclusion first-aid kit' (to make the new children feel comfortable and welcome in their school consisted of a multilingual, digital mixed-media (visual and audio) tour of their school to present the different spaces/rooms and the rules to the newcomers. Following the children's proposals, their parents were actively involved the realization of this artifact.</p> <p>5-year-old children Step 1. The teachers told us that one of the infant-toddler centers in the neighborhood planned to visit their school with a group of 10 2-to 3-year-old children who would start preschool the next year. They thought that this occasion could represent a unique, interesting opportunity to make the activities proposed to the class 'real and concrete'. The 5-year-old children welcomed the younger ones and they made use of the artifacts produced in the previous step.</p> <p>Step 2. A final circle-time discussion was used to reflect on this experience with the children.</p>
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4.3.2 PRIMARY SCHOOL

In order to present the aims of the Children Study, the methodological framework and the activities planned, we prepared a brief description of the study in Italian and had a specific meeting with the main teacher in November 2018. The teacher agreed to realize the study in her class during her teaching hours. The teachers were not involved in the research design and did not propose any adaptations, but she gave some advice on how to create small groups. The researcher and the research assistant introduced all adaptations described in detail below. Some of these adaptations were decided beforehand (for instance, to use a Virtual Learning Environment, designed by the Italian team in collaboration with ISOTIS partners, for Tasks 4.4). Others were planned step by step, to better follow children's ideas and proposals (e.g. Step 3, inclusion kit). All the activities were audio and/or video recorded, although we respected the request of some children who asked not to be video recorded. During the first part of the study, each research session lasted 2h, but step 3 (the preparation of the inclusion kit) lasted for 4 hours and the implementation of one proposal lasted for three 2-hour meetings. All the activities were entirely conducted by the two researchers with the presence of a teacher for children with special needs (who was there for a student with a disability), except for the implementation of a proposal that was done in cooperation with the religion teacher (since the implementation concerned a topic connected with her discipline).

In May, 2018 (Step 0), the researcher spent a few days in the class with the children, to let them familiarize and feel at ease with her. The researcher presented herself and her role as a researcher. In the middle of the following school year, in January 2019, the Children Study was executed. The Children Study was introduced to children using the ISOTIS VLE through a notifier for the class group at the VLE noticeboard. The class met in the computer lab with the research assistant.

All the activities were co-designed with the teachers and the children during the following meetings (see Table below):

Table 16: Overview of the workflow in the informal context

SITE: PRIMARY SCHOOL		
Day 1	Letter from Martine	<p>Step 1. The researcher's letter was presented through a PowToon animation. The sender of the letter was a researcher from the Netherlands and all the examples were adapted according to cultural references from the Netherlands;</p> <p>Step 2. Each child received in their personal VLE space a part of the letter and some questions to answer individually on the VLE using the "Answer a question" tool, choosing whether to answer through a video or audio message, with a written text or with a drawing realized on the VLE;</p> <p>Step 3. Children with the same topic were invited to work together in small groups and asked to provide a group answer to the researcher who wrote the letter. The answer could take the form of a video, audio, written text or drawing. All answers were then posted on the VLE, watched together and discussed through a focus group discussion with all class members.</p>
Day 2	Sun&Clouds	<p>Step 1. The evaluation of the school was realized on the VLE through the "Answer a question" tool. In this case, children worked in pairs. The activity was presented in the computer lab, but the children were then free to choose where to plan and compose their answers according to the language they chose (video, audio etc.);</p> <p>Step 2. All of the answers were presented to the class in a plenary session.</p>
Day 3	Inclusion first-aid kit	<p>Step 1. The children were asked to think about suggestions on how to make their school more welcoming and inclusive, in order to inform the Dutch researcher who would be collecting suggestions from children in different European countries in order to send them to the European Union to improve school inclusiveness in Europe;</p> <p>Step 2. The researchers asked the children to make concrete proposals that could be directly implemented in their own school;</p> <p>Step 3. After giving a concrete example of a letter written by another class of 9-year-old children from another neighborhood on the outskirts of Milan (these children wrote a letter to the Mayor of the city who answered the letter and implemented one of the children's proposals in the following months). children were asked to prepare proposals on how to make their school (more) welcoming and inclusive. Children were free to form small groups (2-6 members) and choose the form their proposal would take.</p> <p>Step 4. The outputs of this activity were: posters, letters to</p>

		the School Director, video clips and video interviews of other children in the class, short video clips where the children acted or simulated an information campaign, video messages to the teachers, a protocol on how to welcome newly-arrived students.
Day 4	Digital, multi-religious calendar	Step 1. The last phase of work lead to the implementation of one of the students' proposals after negotiation with all the teachers of the class. In continuity with a video prepared by one of the groups on different religions, the children opted to create an awareness-raising project about religious diversity in the school. To do so, the class made a digital, multi-religious calendar on the VLE to be posted on the school website: the calendar contained videos, information, pictures and explanations collected among the school personnel and the families regarding special dates and celebrations for different religions.

4.3.3 INFORMAL CONTEXT

In order to present the aims, the methodological framework and the activities of the Children Study, the manual was shared and the proposal was negotiated with the coordinator and the educators of the after-school center. A specific meeting with the coordinator of the School Area and with the coordinator of the educational center *Fuoriclasse* was scheduled in September 2018. We shared the Manual with them beforehand, and we discussed the proposal with them during the meeting. The professionals expressed their interest in the study, but first they wanted to share it with the professionals in charge of the educational center. In fact, a crucial point was the possibility to customize the research process so that it made sense in terms of the goals of the center and the annual program. We then met the team of the *Fuoriclasse* center in November, 2019. During this meeting, we presented the Child study design, the team presented us the structure of the center and proposed to introduce some changes and adaptations to the methodology, that we discussed and agreed upon, described in detail below.

Some of these adaptations were decided beforehand: for instance, educators suggested conducting two parallel studies with the two groups of children: the primary school group (10 children, aged 9-11 ys. old) and the middle school group (21 children, 11-14 ys. old). Since the team insisted on the importance of the educational objective of making the participants understand the path and the process behind the data collection they were involved in, a meeting for restitution was planned to be carried out at Bicocca University. Others adaptations were negotiated step-by-step, to better follow the children's responsiveness to the methodology, as well as ideas and proposals. Special attention was paid to adapting the method for the 9-11 year-old group given that the research protocol for the informal context was meant for older children. All the research steps were carried out in 5 1.5-hour meetings for each group. The middle school group was held one afternoon a week on a weekday from 15-16:30 and the primary school group between 17.00-18:30 pm, right after school ended.

Following professional advice, to avoid being too intrusive, video recording was gradually introduced. The activities carried out in the presence of one researcher, one research assistant, two educators from the after-school program and one volunteer. The activities were mainly lead by the researchers, although the two educators intervened on some occasions to clarify some points or recapture the children's attention. This mode allowed researchers to keep the objectives of the research in mind and educators to "translate" the researchers' questions using language / through examples closer to the universe of children, who they knew well. The educators also had the role of following the children who needed individual attention or who "provoked"/"disturbed" during the activities. The educators did not interfere negatively with the research process (trying to take "control" of it) and were always supportive. They seemed as interested as we were

in the success of the data collection. There was excellent collaboration and a good division of roles both in the customization of the research process and in the preparation for each meeting (materials etc.), both in terms of conduction and documentation (we were in charge of the video and audio documentation while they were in charge of photographing) and during the evaluation of the course, in progress and a posteriori (sending us feedback between one meeting and the other). The presence of a high number of educators allowed us to give strong support to the children, especially for the activities that required greater concentration.

Each of the following steps (see table 17) was introduced by playful warm-up activities involving children, differentiated among the two groups. Both educators and researchers participated in the warm-up activity along with the children.

Table 17: Overview of the work flow in the informal context

INFORMAL AFTER SCHOOL SITE		
Day 1	Introduction to the study (Dec, 2018)	<p>Step 1. The researchers participated in a workshop organized by Save the Children and attended by the research participants. During this session, the researchers introduced themselves to the children, letting them familiarize and feel at ease with them. They presented themselves, their roles as researchers and the aims of the Children Study using simple words they could understand (not only age-appropriate language, but also easy to understand because of the high number of non-native speakers not always at ease with Italian).</p> <p>Step 2. Each child signed an informed consent form and was given a consent form for their parents.</p>
	Video-cued focus group (Jan, 2019)	<p>Step 1. Both groups were involved in the activity called “Something about me that you don’t know”: in a circle, each child was asked to go to the center, say the sentence “Something about me that you don’t know is...”, complete it and then go and touch another group member.</p> <p>Step 2. A video-cued focus group was carried out in both groups: two clips were used as stimuli for the video-cued focus group: the first focusing on newly-arrived students unable to speak the national language (‘Immersion’ (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6Y0HAjLKYI), the second focusing on the exclusion of second generation immigrants because of the inability to speak their parents’ mother tongue (an extract of the movie “Almanya. My family goes to Germany”).</p> <p>For the primary school group, free discussion was held after watching both clips. For the middle school group, after each clip children were asked to write their impressions and personal experiences related to the topic raised by the clip on a post-it. The children were asked to share what they wrote on the post-it afterwards.</p>
Day 2	My school autobiography (Jan, 2019)	<p>Primary school group: we adapted the ID card template from the formal research protocol, creating different sheets, each exploring a specific aspect of their school biography (e.g. the first day at school what made them feel good at school, etc.). Children were invited to fill out sheets that they could choose and verbalizations were</p>

		collected by audio or video recording an interview on this topic. Middle school group , Step 1. The researcher drew a line on the floor and explained to the students that they would hear a number of statements about things that they themselves might have experienced at school to some degree. Participants (both children and adults taking part in the activity) were asked to get closer to the line the more the statement matched their own experiences (e.g. on the line if they had experienced exactly the same situation, very far from the line if they had not experienced it at all). The statements were meant to help children reflect on their school experience. Step 2. the autobiography was created as suggested in the manual ⁷ , but participants could also carry out an audio or video interview.
Day 3	A message to the authorities (Jan, 2019)	Primary school group : all of the children contributed their ideas on how to make school (more) welcoming and inclusive on a big poster with drawings, collage and writings. Middle school group : each child created a message in a different way (drawings, videos, letters, etc.).
	Final party (Feb, 2019)	In both groups, the research process ended with a small celebration, following the suggestions made by some of the participants who had underlined how food was a form of socialization that brings people together. A video clip of the results of each of the two research journeys was edited by the research team and presented to the children who then decided whether they wanted to present it in their own school.
Day 4	A trip to the university (June, 2019)	A further meeting for restitution of the research results took place in the beginning of June and was held at the University of Milan-Bicocca: Step 1. The children visited Hangar Bicocca, a contemporary art institution connected to the Department; Step 2. The researchers and the groups shared lunch in the university canteen; Step 3. The researcher showed the children the results and outputs of the research conducted in other contexts and countries and discussed them with the children; Step 4. A guided visit of the Department and the library was conducted.

4.4 METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES

4.4.1 METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES

4.4.1.1 METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES DUE TO THE CONTEXT

In the **preschool**, the two teachers who took part in the study were highly committed and engaged.

⁷ See D2.4 Technical Report, paragraph 3.4.3) available at http://www.isotis.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/D2.4_Technical-Report-on-the-Child-interview-study.pdf.

However, since 4- and 5-year-olds from the Orange Class were involved separately, it was necessary to schedule the activities during the hours when the other class teacher was present so that while one group of children was busy with the Children Study, the other group was engaged in regular activities with the second teacher. Hence, at times it was quite difficult to schedule the activities without letting too much time to pass between one meeting and another.

In the **primary school**, because of the lack of teacher commitment, at times it was difficult to schedule the activities without letting too much time to pass between one meeting and another. Another challenge was the lack of computers to carry out the activities on the VLE.

In the informal context, the main complexity concerned timing, as motivational labs were organized during the week during after-school hours. The middle school group met weekly in the early afternoon (15-16h30) after spending the morning at school, while the primary group met weekly after school (17-18h30). For this reason, both groups (in particular the elementary group) always arrived tired from a whole day spent at school, the children wanted to play and had little desire to carry out activities that they perceived as "too scholastic" or not playful. The 90 minutes were at the same time very short for completing the activities and too long for the concentration of the children involved.

4.4.1.2 METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES WITH PROFESSIONALS

In the **preschool context**, there were some downsides of letting the teachers play an active role in conducting the activities. For instance, we noticed that the teachers were very interested in exploring the theme of rules. Although this theme emerged spontaneously during the first circle-time discussion, during the subsequent activity the teachers went back to this topic more than once and tried to stimulate children to discuss this topic further. Once we shared our concerns with the teachers, they became aware of their tendency and agreed that was important to follow all the leads children provided with an open attitude and not to focus solely or mainly on those topics that they, the teachers, were interested in.

In the **primary school**, it was difficult to obtain the active participation of some teachers, who allowed only a few hours of lesson time for it. The implementation was (almost) entirely conducted by the researchers, often without the presence of the teachers.

In the **informal context**, a very fruitful collaboration was established. The only slight divergence (which however did not hinder the implementation of the activities) was due to the fact that the operators were more reluctant to carry out more individual work, their working methodology being that of a group, while for our part we noticed the difficulty of the children to work in groups and the richness of the interviews and individual moments.

4.4.1.3 METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES IN RESEARCHING WITH CHILDREN

In the **preschool**, the stimuli provided were effective and the children were highly engaged during all of the activities. Particularly, the introduction used in the first circle-time discussion as a starting point to involve the children in the research powerfully impacted their experience, addressing a concrete issue they were able to relate to. Although some interesting data emerged during informal moments, the most significant data were gathered during the 'formal' research activities.

In the **primary school**, the intervention had an extremely positive effect on children who showed a high level of interest, participation and motivation, initially due to the use of non-ordinary communication channels, and certainly closer to the world of "digital natives" and, later, to the possibility of telling about themselves, both elements which we could observe the effects of at the end of the experience.

In the **informal context**, both groups generally appreciated the activities, although they showed signs of fatigue and difficulty concentrating. A first element of difficulty was the choice to involve the elementary school group, despite the fact that the research protocol for the informal context was designed for older

children. This led to a higher degree of customization on several occasions during the data collection process, as it the demands were too high for the level of the group. A second difficulty was the low socio-cultural level of the group and the high degree of fragility of the participants on cultural, cognitive, linguistic, socio-economic and behavioral levels. The students met had a very low level of concentration, poor ability to work in groups and in circle-time mode. However, it was possible to find effective customization strategies, minimally differentiating the activities for each group and adapting times to the levels of concentration and the types of response of the participants. With the middle school group, the methodology worked, involved them, intrigued them and resulted in good levels of participation and reflection. The experience with the primary school group had a more uncertain outcome, both because of the fragility of the individuals and because of the activities (sometimes "too high" a level for their ability to concentrate and their relational and linguistic skills, etc.). According to one of the operators, not even using other tools would have facilitated the outcome, due to their difficulty in working together.

4.4.2 ETHICAL ISSUES

4.4.2.1 ETHICAL REFLECTIONS IN RESEARCHING WITH CHILDREN

In the **preschool context**, we presented the informed consent form for children to the teachers who suggested creating a shorter, simpler version of it that, while including all of the core elements of the original one, was more accessible to young children. We presented a digital, interactive version of the revised consent form through the ISOTIS VLE. Most of the children completed the consent individually. Following the teachers' suggestion, the shyest children went through the process together with one or two peers. The digital presentation of the consent form was quite engaging, and some of the children asked us questions regarding the various passages of it and its implications (e.g. if we planned to share the video recordings on YouTube). Still, we noted that some children signed the consent form without understanding – despite our efforts to provide further explanations using simple language – regarding what we were asking them and why. The consent form was designed after an extensive literature review on the topic (see Chapter 4) and following the guidelines provided by the Ethical Research Involving Children (ERIC) project (Graham et al., 2013). However, the fieldwork observations made us question the validity and the significance for children of proposing an informed consent form to children that young, and raised interest in exploring alternative solutions.

In the **primary school**, children received a video-message in the VLE class noticeboard from the researcher asking for permission to come back for some help to better understand their point of view on their school, in order to contribute to the European study ISOTIS. The researcher waited for the response in the school building without the children being aware of her presence at school. Once the children authorized her to come by answering through the noticeboard, the researcher joined and explained the aims of the Children Study using simple words they could understand. Before starting the activities, each child signed a digital informed consent form, presented through the ISOTIS VLE. Although the procedure was successful, the researchers faced ethical challenges: some children, who consented to photos and video recordings in writing subsequently changed their minds when they saw the tools; some children gave their consent but their parents did not or viceversa.

In the informal context, some ethical challenges emerged related to the sharing of difficult, sometimes painful experiences:

1. Emotions: on many occasions the children expressed negative emotions, difficult to manage, in one case during an audio-recorded interview the interview was interrupted because the interviewee started crying. After this episode, it was decided together with the educators to include the presence of an educators during the interviews (initially conducted only by researchers);
2. Privacy: the space available for the individual interviews was not a completely closed and separated space (the room was separated by a mobile partition). Thus the location was changed to an office usually not accessible to the children and not used to carry out activities with them;
3. Confidentiality and stigmatization: during some moments, the children (in particular the elementary

school group), were not very aware and attentive to the emotions of their classmates, sharing facts where other members of the group were protagonists (e.g. a classmate treated badly by a teacher or another classmate), without giving the possibility to the protagonists themselves to decide whether to share them or not, or they shared their stereotyped opinions about the categories of participants present (e.g. the "Chinese who are closed") creating further difficulty for the children belonging to the categories in question;

4. Linguistic-cultural barriers: in the elementary group there was a child who was in great difficulty both with the language and with the way of expressing his or her experiences, who tended to respond to monosyllables. After considering whether to involve a linguistic-cultural mediator to facilitate his participation, this possibility was discarded, because having an operator present "only" for him would have put him in even more difficulty, since he was already sufficiently shy and unwilling to be the center of attention. It was decided that the operators/researchers/volunteers already present would give him more support during the "individual" activities.

4.4.2.2 ETHICAL REFLECTIONS IN WORKING WITH TEACHERS

In the **preschool context**, if the choice to let teachers co-conduct the activities was more respectful at the ethical level, since it contributed to ensure a familiar, reassuring environment where children could more easily express their ideas, it also raised the issues of losing control of the guiding the activities.

In the primary school context, the only ethical challenge was with a teacher who decided to punish one of the newly-arrived students by preventing her from participating in the research activity. We were therefore faced with the difficult choice of contradicting the teacher or preventing the student from participating in a moment that proved to be very important and significant for her. It was therefore decided to ask the teacher for an explanation and persuade her to retract her position by allowing the student to participate.

In the informal context, the only ethical challenge arose after an interviewee who shared with us her state of suffering began crying. It was decided not to reveal the details of what the girl shared to the professionals, but to inform them in such a way that attention could be paid to the situation and taken care of by them. This situation was followed by the request that an educator be present during the interviews with the children. We agreed with some perplexity. However, the relationship between the professionals of the afterschool center and the participants seemed to us sufficiently free, open, not judgmental and not "scholastic" to be able to agree to this request of theirs that, perhaps, made some participants feel even more comfortable.

4.5 CODING AND ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

The analysis of the data was carried out using the international procedure described in Chapter 1. To carry out the data analysis, the texts of the children's outputs and the video-audio recordings of the focus groups and the conversations that took place during the experience were used. All the audio-recordings were integrally transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were coded according to the common coding procedure and codebook. All the transcripts were imported into the CAQDA (Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis) software NVivo 12, that supported the analysis of the data set. During the coding process, it proved necessary to create extra sub-codes to better capture the viewpoints of the participants and thus analyze the data (specifically, data gathered in the primary school and in the informal context). The analysis focused on the most recurring or salient themes, presented in the following sections divided by age group.

4.6 MAIN FINDINGS

To provide an initial overview of the main issues faced by children, we present a table that illustrates the

occurrences of the thematic codes used for the analysis:

Table 18. Occurrence of thematic codes in the 3 contexts

Site typology Codes	Formal 3-6	Formal 8-11	Informal 9+	Total
Diversity				
Social inequalities	0	1	1	2
Language	48	6	22	76
Culture	0	25	10	35
Representations				
Images of the child-student	0	1	4	5
Image of the teacher	0	3	36	39
Image of the school	0	1	27	28
Image of the family	0	5	4	9
Identity				
Cultural i.	0	7	5	12
Linguistic i.	23	12	4	35
Social i.	0	1	6	7
Somatic features	0	9	2	11
Myself in the future	0	0	6	6
School Organization				
Space	2	5	12	19
Time	6	0	13	19
Rules	6	4	4	14
Play	5	0	10	15
Food	1	2	8	11
Learning	1	2	26	29
Teaching approach	2	7	21	30
Social relationship				
Inclusion-acceptance	4	11	47	62
Discrimination	0	13	11	24

Conflict	0	3	10	13
Friendship	6	6	27	39
Behaviour	1	19	16	36
Emotional support/Empathy	11	0	35	46
Total	116	143	334	622

As see in Table 18, the most common category of codes in the set of 3 contexts were language (coded 76 times), followed by inclusion/acceptance (coded 62 times) and emotional support/empathy (coded 46 times).

The most recurrent category of codes for preschool concerned **diversity** and **identity**, in particular with reference to the linguistic dimension. This data is not surprising, considering the methodology adopted with this age group. In fact, in order to make the research questions more concrete and understandable, the participants were asked to concretely imagine how the children who would enter kindergarten the following year and who might not know Italian would feel, what would make them feel good or bad, and how they could help these newcomers feel welcomed. In the words of the preschool children, there are also other themes linked in particular to the relational dimension, especially in its positive connotation (there are never stories or episodes of conflict or discrimination), and, albeit to a lesser extent, to the organizational dimension of the school.

The most recurrent category in the codes for primary school concerned **diversity** in the cultural dimension and social relationships. It was understandable that cultural diversity emerged predominantly due to the combination of two factors: the high presence of Arab children and the teacher's mostly discriminatory attitude towards their culture and religion, which centered on the issue of Ramadan in many discussions with parents. The other issues that emerged in social relationships mainly concerned positive behaviour. This was not surprising either, since the very first year the children were educated in care and empathy, in order to create a climate of acceptance in favor, above all, of a classmate with a serious disability.

As far as informal context was concerned, the most common codes were **inclusion/acceptance** (coded 47 times), followed by image of the teachers and emotional support/empathy (coded respectively 36 and 35 times). This was in-line with the central theme of research (inclusion and acceptance), but it also revealed the two central macro-themes that emerged: on the one hand, the issue of emotional support both by teachers and peers and, on the other hand, all issues related to the approach of teachers in terms of teaching methods but also their relational approach and capacity to accommodate diversity and new arrivals (in terms of communication and language). In the following paragraphs, we will focus on the three main codes (namely factors influencing well-being at school, factors undermining well-being at school and transformative factors/proposals), analysing their co-occurrence with the other codes, as we report in Table below.

Table 19. Co-occurrence of the thematic codes for the 3 contexts

Over-codes	FACTORS PROMOTING WELL-BEING AND INCLUSION				FACTORS UNDERMINING WELL-BEING AND INCLUSION				TRASFORMATIVE FACTORS			
	Sch ool 3-6	Sch ool 8-11	Infor mal 9+	Tot.	Sch ool 3-6	Sch ool 8-11	Infor mal 9+	Tot.	Sch ool 3-6	Sch ool 8-11	Infor mal 9+	Tot.
Site typology												
Codes												

DIVERSITY												
Social inequalities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Language	1	1	2	4	0	0	14	14	20	0	14	34
Culture	0	2	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	4	4
REPRESENTATIONS												
Images of the child-student	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	1
Image of the teacher	0	0	4	4	0	0	6	6	0	0	25	25
Image of the school	0	0	6	6	0	0	5	5	0	0	12	12
Image of the family	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
IDENTITY												
Cultural i.	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
Linguistic i.	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	2	8	0	0	8
Social i.	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Somatic features	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
Myself in the future	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
SCHOOL ORGANIZATION												
Space	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	9
Time	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	11	11
Rules	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	4	8
Play	1	0	1	2	1	0	0	1	2	0	6	8
Food	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	7	8
Learning	0	0	1	1	1	0	3	4	0	0	13	13
Teaching approach	0	0	1	1	0	0	6	6	0	0	16	16
SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS												
Inclusion-	1	7	6	14	0	0	16	16	2	1	17	20

acceptance												
Discrimination	0	1	1	2	0	0	6	6	0	0	1	1
Conflict	0	0	1	1	0	0	4	4	0	0	0	0
Friendship	5	2	8	15	1	0	9	10	0	1	2	3
Behaviour	0	2	2	4	1	1	3	5	0	0	5	5
Emotional support/Empathy	7	0	6	13	0	0	5	5	3	0	14	17
TOTAL	17	16	42	75	4	1	89	94	38	6	164	208

4.6.1 FACTORS PROMOTING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL

In general, the co-occurrences were concentrated in the **proposal factors** with 164/208 co-occurrences versus 75/208 in **factors promoting well-being** and 94/208 in **factors undermining** it. Within **factors promoting well-being**, the codes that appeared the most were "Friendship" (15/75 co-occurrences), "Inclusion-acceptance" (14/75 co-occurrences) and "Emotional support/Empathy" (13/75 co-occurrences). Within the **factors undermining well-being**, the codes that appeared the most were "Inclusion-acceptance" (16/94 co-occurrences), "Language" (14/94 occurrences) and "Friendship" (10/94 co-occurrences). As for transforming factors, the codes that appeared the most were "Language" (34/164 occurrences), "Image of the teacher" (25/164) and "Inclusion-acceptance" (20/164 co-occurrences).

In the **preschool**, the co-occurrence between the codes and the factors promoting well-being at school were 17 whereas there were 4 for undermining and 38 for the proposals. The social and relational dimensions therefore played an important role for preschool children in ensuring well-being at school. In fact, the main co-occurrence among the factors promoting well-being and inclusion were Emotional support/Empathy (7 co-occurrences) and Friendship (5 co-occurrences). This data, besides emerging from Table 19, also appears in the following extracts. Children, in fact, talking about well-being at school, often tended to refer to the themes of friendship and emotional support.

More precisely, among the elements that children recognized could contribute to influence a child's well-being at school were the following:

- teachers and peers could play a crucial role in ensuring that a child felt welcomed and at ease at school, by introducing the school, its spaces and its rules to the newcomers;
- the opportunity to see their mother tongues used in the school environment could contribute to making a child 'feel at home' in the school context;
- peers and parents could act as linguistic mediators and help non-Italian speaking children overcome the linguistic barrier. Moreover, peers could teach them Italian.

These two excerpts, taken from the circle time discussions conducted with the 4 and 5 ys old children and from the observations made in class that were audio-recorded, highlight these aspects:

Extract no. 1 (Circle time discussion):

Teacher 1 - Do you remember how you felt when you first came [to preschool]?

Child 1 - I felt happy because I was in a school and I could play with my new friends.(...)

Child 2 - I wanted to be with my mommy.

Teacher 1 - Did you have some difficulties during the first few days, saying goodbye to your mommy?

Child 2 - Like today.

Teacher 1 - Did you struggle today too?

Child 2 - Yes.

Teacher 1 - What helped you say goodbye to your mommy?

Child 2 - Giusy [another teacher], [helped] me to relax.(...)

Child 1 - [From my first day at school] I don't remember anything anymore. I just remember that I had fun with my friends, that they consoled me when I cried, that I asked for my mommy.

Teacher 1 - They consoled you. And how did they console you? Can you tell us about it? Because it's a bit difficult to console someone, eh.

Child 1 - They told me that my mommy was coming soon, after the snack she was going to come.

Extract no. 2 (Circle time discussion):

Teacher 1 - Do you remember when *Child 3* came to school? Is that what you mean? And what do you remember?

Child 4 - He cried.

Teacher 1 - And what did you do?

Child 4 - I consoled him.

Teacher 1 - How did you console him?

Child 4 - I don't remember.

Teacher 1 - With your voice? Or did you do something?

Child 4 - With my voice. (...)

Teacher 1 - What did you do with your little one⁸? Besides comforting him, did you do anything else?

Child - I used to cuddle him.

Teacher 1 - And how did you cuddle him?

Child - With caresses. (...)

Child 5 - I played.

Teacher 1 - Here, you play with him. Well. So is it important to have a big one to help us play when we're little?

Children - Yes, yes, yes. Yes, yes, yes.

Child - And also cuddles.

Teacher 1 - Cuddling, playing...

Child - Hugging.

Teacher 1 - ... hugging. And then what? How else can a big person help us?

Child - To make houses [constructions].

Teacher 1 - To play games a little difficult, eh?

Children - Yes, yes, yes.

Teacher 1 - Then?

Child 6 - Cuddles.(...)

Teacher 1 - And? Anything else? Try to remember.

Children - Accompany him. (incomprehensible, many children speaking at the same time)

Teacher 1 - But do they know the way?

Children - No, no, no, no. (incomprehensible, many children speaking at the same time)

Child - We didn't know the way.

Teacher 1 - You had just arrived and didn't know all the spaces in the school.

Although the code "Representations" was never used to encode specific portions of the transcripts, the children's words clearly suggest their image of school, seen as a positive context, in which they feel good. An idea of an inclusive and welcoming school, in which diversity is not only accepted but is also considered an element to be valued, emerged.

The positive experience at school was also reflected in the absence of episodes of discrimination or conflict in the children's stories and in the fact that diversity was not considered by them to be a possible factor undermining well-being at school (Table 19).

In **primary school**, there were 16 co-occurrences between the factors influencing well-being at school, a

⁸ At the beginning of last school year, each 4-year-old child in the class was assigned a 3-year-old 'baby', who had just arrived at school, to take care of. This peer-tutoring and accompaniment process remained in place during the following school year, the year in which the research was carried out. Child 4, 5 years, in this excerpt remembers the first days of school of Child 3, 4 years, the 'little one' that Child 4 still supports

total absence of factors undermining it and 6 for the proposals. The main co-occurency for the factors promoting well-being and inclusion was Inclusion-acceptance (7 co-occurencies), which concerned in particular the reception of newcomers from Italy and abroad, the enhancement of languages and cultures present in the context. The main topics covered by the children were:

- The relational dimension: friends and teachers
- A translator for new arrivals
- Talking about one's religion
- The spaces that allow you to move and have fun
- School trips

The importance of the relational dimension for the children was striking. This was in fact the most recurrent factor among those that guaranteed well-being at school:

- Child17, child18 - "There are a lot of beautiful places, such as the garden, the class, the gym, but the most important thing is our class because there have been so many events, such as quarrels, peace, the various peace. And also our snacks, our parties."
- Child5: "I feel good with someone who is always by my side and is child11".
- Child11: "The place at school that makes us feel good is the class, because we feel protected and the people around us as well as our classmates and teachers make us feel good".
- Child13: "The people who make us feel good at school are: our classmates, because when something happens they are with us".

The relationship with classmates was such an essential element that the only important factor for making a newly arrived child feel welcomed was to ask him or her "What do you like/don't like? Who's your best friend?" and "What team do you care about?"

One curious observation is that the linguistic difference was not considered limiting in making friends, but rather the way of being of the new friend is important ("If he or she is shy, cheerful, lively, without fear"). However, the role of "translator" played by some classmates to support newcomers is positively remembered.

Researcher: "What's the best thing that made you feel better?"

Child6: "When I arrived I didn't speak Italian well and child18 translated for me".

In addition to friendships and translators, the discussion with the children highlighted a third factor of well-being, namely the possibility of talking about one's religion. This was demonstrated by the curiosity of the whole class towards religious diversity and the enthusiasm with which they accepted the proposal to create the multi-religious calendar.

Moreover, the words of a Muslim mother during the final focus group were a clear confirmation of this:

"The teachers asked him about the Koran, to pray, to show how to pray and he felt at home (...) they talk and share and it is a beautiful thing for them".

The role of the teachers was also considered a factor in promoting well-being, in fact they helped to resolve conflicts when they arose and taught the students to respect each other. As a child confessed during a discussion:

Child6: "I was practically racist when I arrived...but I wasn't. [...] My father, like, he was a racist. And then I learned that from him. It hurt a lot to learn that, but as soon as I got into this class, I learned that you shouldn't do it. [...]"

Researcher: "So you, you don't make fun of each other because...? What is it that you managed to...what is it that helped you to be like this?"

Child7: "Thanks to the teachers".

Finally, factors promoting well-being included the use of certain school spaces (computer lab, garden and gym), science labs and school trips.

In the **informal context**, by far the most cited factor promoting well-being fell in the category of "Social relationships" (32 co-occurrences out of 42) in particular in the sub-codes "Friendship" (8/42 co-occurrences), "Emotional support-empathy" (6/42 co-occurrences) and "Inclusion-acceptance" (6/42 co-occurrences). Participants cited their classmates and friendships as factors of well-being at school, which they also identified as important factors for newcomers. However, empathy and inclusion on the part of teachers was also considered an important factor for well-being, particularly for newcomers. At the same time, the school model was identified as an important factor: one is comfortable in a school that offers less "traditional" school activities and teaching models not only through books, but also through trips, activities in the garden, in the gym and that promote being together.

4.6.2 FACTORS UNDERMINING AND PROMOTING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL

The children from the **preschool** spoke little about the factors undermining well-being (4 co-occurrences), perhaps also because of the approach of teachers and researchers in addressing the research-question that had a strong focus in particular on positive and transformative factors. Undermining factors did not focus on a single aspect, but were codified as "play", "learning"; "friendship" and "behavior". Among the factors that emerged as undermining well-being:

- missing their parents and friends may contribute to making a child feel sad at school;
- not knowing the school environment, its spaces and rules may make a child feel lost and uncomfortable;
- the linguistic barrier may be an obstacle that made it difficult for children to make friends and communicate at school.

Also in the **primary school**, few factors undermining well-being (1 co-occurrence) emerged. The only undermining factor spoken of was behavior. A negative attitude that hindered well-being could come from both classmates and teachers. **The most common themes that emerged were: bullying and racism**, some teachers' behaviors and dirty and chaotic spaces.

The children were particularly concerned about bullying in schools, in fact it was the engine that triggered the creation of many outputs (video interviews, billboards, video documentaries).

The sensitivity of the children led them to show solidarity with the victims of bullying, (from "Answer a question" on the Virtual Learning Environment in the discussion on "CLOUDS", "if we have to say something (an insult) our friends would be offended") but also with children considered "bullies".

In fact, as they explained in a focus group, according to the class group, bullying certainly comes from factors external to the bully, "usually the child has no bad ideas, tends to make friends with everyone", it is "everything he sees around him: his parents, and even normal people, brothers, all the people he knows" that make him into a bully".

The bully lives in a state of malaise, child5 explained that he "feels so sad that he vents all his sadness and anger inside by manipulating others.

Moreover, among the factors that hinder well-being, children often mentioned "bullying" and "racism" in an equivalent way, alluding to a general lack of respect for classmates that led to social dynamics that excluded

and offended in relation to aspects such as sex, religion and language (Child15: "We don't like bullying in schools and racism and then when they make fun of us, we're offended").

With regard to gender discrimination, for example, child5 underlined how uncomfortable a child could feel when judged by the choices he or she makes:

Child5: "That is, if a child likes to dance and pink, you don't have to judge him or her because that's what he or she likes. There are people who look from head to foot and then go away and for me that feeling is not very pleasant".

Also in the video "Bullying seen from 5C", children associated bullying with offenses related to the religion practiced by classmates and answered the question "What do you think about bullying?":

"You're Hindu, you know that Hindus are stupid? That's what bullying is from my point of view."

Ultimately, when friendship and respect are replaced by offenses, school becomes a place that needs to be improved.

The second factor indicated as an obstacle to well-being was **the prohibition to speak in one's own language of origin**. Although children did not explicitly mention this in focus groups and in the "CLOUDS" forum, it is possible to assume that this prohibition was perceived as a discriminatory limit because it emerged in more disguised forms during other times of the study. For example, in choosing words to refer to situations in which they happened to speak with peers in their own language of origin ("Sometimes speaking the mother tongue slips out"), it could be understood that we were not able to curb this forbidden impulse. The participants of the informal groups make a video made to raise awareness of the issue of linguistic diversity, highlighting that some people cannot feel free from judgment in contexts they live in because of the language they speak to be an indicator of racism.

The third obstacle to well-being highlighted some of the teachers' attitudes: favorites, homework that was excessive or a punishment.

On preferences, Child6:

"...something that should not be at school, but there is, is favorites" - "In school there are teachers who have favorites in the classroom".

On punishment homework, child10:

"It's not nice being in school, it becomes an environment you don't like even if you get too much homework sometimes" - "Here, one thing I don't like at all is that only a few individuals in the class behave badly, they often punish everyone. You already have to suffer from the chaos of some classmates, then that of the teachers and in addition the punishment of all classmates".

Finally, the spaces could be improved, in particular the bathroom that "has to be fixed/it's dirty/it looks like a storm" and the canteen that "sucks".

5. In the **informal context**, the main co-occurencies were found in the macro-section Social relationships (43/89 co-occurencies), in particular in the sub-code **"Inclusion/acceptance"** (16/89 co-occurencies) followed **by Friendship** which was an important factor both as an element of well-being and lack of well-being. Another of the most cited factors among those undermining the well-being at school were **language barriers** (language ha 14/89 co-occurencies). These three aspects are linked: in fact, inclusion is understood as the school's ability to welcome newcomers both from the linguistic point of view (looking for channels of communication to overcome the language barriers) and from the relational point of view (friendly attitudes towards newcomers).

4.6.3 TRANSFORMATIVE PROPOSALS

Despite their young age, the **preschool children** were able to take on a different point of view from their own. They contributed a great deal of proposals (38 co-occurrences), a lot more than the co-occurrence for the factors promoting and undermining well-being. Their proposals were mainly about the **linguistic aspects of the school experience** (20 occurrences in language and 8 in linguistic identity). Some children raised the issue **about how to comfort the newcomers or explain the classroom rules** to them if they could not speak Italian. To overcome this issue, the children proposed:

- using what they considered *universal gestures* (e.g., hugs, kisses, caresses) to communicate with and comfort the new children feeling sad

Teacher 2 - And what can we do if the little children who are here want their Mommy? What can we do for them?

Children – They cry.

Teacher 2 - And do we do?

Child 15 - We console them.

Teacher 2 - And how do we console them?

Child 6 – Like this. [mimicking a hug]

Teacher 2 - So with a hug, Genesis?

Child 6 - Yes.

- teaching the newcomers some words and sentences in Italian and using their mother tongue - if they shared it - to overcome the linguistic barrier. Some of the preschool children with immigrant backgrounds recognized that they did not fully master their first language. Thus they suggested involving their parents as linguistic mediators:

Child 7 - If someone speaks Arabic *names some companions who know Arabic* can help us, in another language

Child 17 [knows the language of] Philippines...

(...)

Child 15 - I help those who can't speak Italian.

Teacher 1 - Do you help us too? How?

Child 15 - I say words and they repeat them.

Teacher 1 - Ah. So, Giulia says that to teach Italian we can make them repeat the new words they don't know. (...)

Child 3 - Or we can ask our mommy what it means.

Teacher 1 - And we can also ask for help from mommies who know other languages.(...)

Child 1 - Yes, I wanted to say something to their mommy in Italian and she understands what it means.

Teacher 1 - So we can ask mommies for help. Yes.

Child 1 - We can ask what it's called and everything. If we say so (inc.) they repeat it in Italian.(...)

Child 6 - I speak to them in Spanish.(...)

Child 3 - Then if someone speaks Arabic, I understand it and I can tell them what it means.

Child 16 - We learn to talk to him... to make him talk...

Child 11 - ...to speak in the language as we speak.

- celebrating a party singing songs in various languages, to offer everyone the chance to 'feel at home' and express themselves even in their home language.

The children were involved in realizing some of their proposals. For instance, with teachers' assistance, they proposed:

- creating a multilingual poster to welcome newcomers (with the word 'welcome' written in different languages);

Child 12 – Possiamo mettere un cartellone per dire "benvenuto".(...)

Child 14 – Con le faccine sorridenti, così e diventano felici;

- decorated their classroom using bright colors and smiling emoticons, that in their opinion could reassure the newcomers;
- realized a digital mixed-media (visual and audio) tour of their school to present the different spaces/rooms and the rules. They suggested involving parents with immigrant backgrounds in providing a written and audio translations (incorporated in the digital artifact) of the sentences they selected to present each space/room, in order to make the tour accessible also to children who did not speak Italian.

A second very salient aspect from the point of view of pre-school children concerned **relational aspects**. In fact, they pointed out that newcomers would be excited about the new toys at preschool, but they might also feel sad and lonely, miss their parents and their friends and need to be comforted. Hence they proposed:

- letting the newcomers play with their toys, hiding those that could be harmful to younger children (for instance, small LEGO blocks)

Child - [we can] Make them play [the new kids] with what we have, with the big Lego.

Teacher 1 - *So big Lego can be a game for the little ones, in your opinion? All right? Do we all agree?*

Child - If not they get hurt, with others [the little Lego].

- reading the newcomers a book they liked

Child 12 - I have an idea. If [the newcomer] cries we can calm them down with a story.

Child 7 - If they cry we can cuddle and kiss them.

Child 13 - Or we can sing them a song.(...)

Child 12 - Or even the books we have here we can read to them.

Child 14 – Or give them some biscuits;

- making friendship bracelets to make them understand that they already had some friends in the new school;
- decorating their classroom to make it more welcoming and joyful.

Secondly, they pointed out that the new children would not be aware of the **rules** of the class/school and, consequently, remarked on the need to teach them those rules.

Child 3 - Of course, because if a child understands Italian, we can all ask him not to do it, if he doesn't listen to the rule, and one of our friends sees it, he can tell him the rule we said.

Teacher 1 - *Okay. So *Child 3* said something important, that if you see a child doing something he should not do, you must remind him of the rule. Do you agree?*

Child 8 and 9 - Yes.

Primary school children made interesting, albeit limited (6 co-occurrences), contributions to increasing the level of well-being at school. The most interesting aspects had to do **with friendship** and **inclusion**, as well as with school organization, spaces, rules and food.

The main initiatives concerned the reception of new arrivals and linguistic support offered to them:

- Have a welcome party for the newcomer;
- Choose a child who is the "translator" for the newcomer and
- Choose a child "tutor" to accompany the new child to learn about the spaces of the school, teachers and friends Establish a course "Children at school" to teach Italian to new arrivals;
- Add books in different languages and about classmates' countries of origin to the school library.
- Other proposals concerned times and spaces:
- More varied lunch: also cook kebabs and couscous to feel at home;

- Fix up the bathroom and plant more trees in the garden;
- Lengthen the break time.

The proposals were published on the Virtual Learning Environment in the group "La 5^aC incontra il Dirigente" ("5th grade class C meets the school Director"), some in the form of texts, others through short videos.

In the mini-videos, the children asked to start school at 9:00 a.m., to extend the break to 30 minutes and to insert kebabs in the lunch menu.

Finally, activities were proposed to raise awareness on the theme of religious diversity and discrimination. The children themselves created tools for this purpose (see Activity 5).

What they wanted to highlight on the poster on bullying is that in addition to the victims, even the bully is unhappy, in fact he actually feels anger, jealousy, fear and that is why he should be welcomed and not referred to as "bad". Child5 suggests taking care of the bully so that he can find affection and heal his suffering:

"Someone begins to talk to him and go out with him like friends and then the others gradually become friends with the bully," so he can stop acting like a bully to be "a normal friend who only has had a sad past".

The other tools were a video/interview on bullying and a video-recorded sketch on racism. Both of these outputs were used as a channel to launch an anti-bullying message:

"In our class, there has never been a bully attack and hopefully it will never happen. Listen up, no bullying!".
"Bullying is a bad thing for the other people: stop it!".

The children thought of these concrete proposals to be implemented at school and delivered them to the School Director by means of mini-videos and letters published on the platform, on the created specifically group ("La 5^aC incontra il Dirigente ") to put the students in contact with the Director.

The Director read the proposals and responded to the entire class.

In the **informal context**, transformative factors were the most applied over-code with 164 co-occurrences with the various thematic codes. The proposals were divided into **two main sections**, one concerning the **school/teaching approach** (sub-codes "teaching approach" 16 co-occurrences, "image of the teacher" 25 co-occurrences, "image of the school" 12 co-occurrences), the other concerning **social relationships** (sub-codes "inclusion/acceptance" 17 co-occurrences, "language" 14 co-occurrences, "emotional support&empathy" 14 co-occurrences). Regarding the teaching approach and being a teacher, the participants suggested having younger, more competent teachers and that there be teacher continuity without too many changes over the years as well as the possibility to choose some subjects and more variety (e.g. foreign languages). They suggested:

- ways that were less focused on the traditional methods (encouraging trips, computer science, the gym, the swimming pool where you can *"learn by playing (...) all in a circle" "learning lessons through games and not through the usual lessons"*, *"Because in class sometimes we are divided into pairs and only during the break we can all be together. Instead when you go on a trip, you stay in line in pairs and we are all close"*;
- increasing the moments to socialize;
- giving the opportunity to do homework at school instead of having to do it at home alone.

Regarding the inclusive school environment, from the linguistic point of view, the students suggested

- having translators at school and
- increasing the language and communication skills of the teachers, so that the teachers could show

- more attention and flexibility and devote more time to the new arrivals, but also more solidarity and mutual help between classmates ("*that among classmates we can help each other*").

From a relational point of view, participants thought that teachers should show more kindness, wisdom, empathy, listening skills, understanding and attention to the relational difficulties of their students and their needs, as can be seen from their words:

"But also trying to communicate, even without speaking languages, for example. That is, it's enough that to understand what a person needs. As I said before, put yourself in their shoes. Not only knowing a language (...) you have to always put yourself in the shoes of that person and understand what they're saying, in that moment.

"I have the right to be listened to, to make myself... That is, (the professor) must be in my shoes. And then she has to look at me, because it seems that she doesn't give a damn about me".

"The teachers comfort us when we're down.

"If the teachers are kind to me, I'm... mh... that is, I don't feel anxious, so I can do something".

The focus on relational aspects and mutual respect (in particular for diversity) applies to teachers and students: the hope is for a school that is "more respectful, in the sense that the students are all respectful and also the teachers".

4.6.4 EDUCATIONAL/FORMATIVE IMPACT

The Children Study had an impact at various levels.

On professionals. Even though the two preschool teachers involved had high consideration of their children's competences, they were surprised that they had such clear ideas about complex issues and advanced such sophisticated proposals. Moreover, they experienced a participatory methodology involving children that they had not practiced before and appreciated its value.

In **the primary school**, if on the one hand some teachers considered the path too demanding and disconnected from the "program", for other teachers it was an opportunity for professional development and personal enrichment and stimulus to reinvent their teaching continuously.

Religion teacher: "... I went to a refresher course... for Religion teachers and there was this Trainer who said (...) "it is you who have to make different proposals, innovative proposals, so you have to connect with experiences", and while they was talking, I made an association with this work and I said "look, my interreligious work with the 5th graders has found the right conclusion, a path", in a different way, innovative, very different, very new. And this opened me up as a teacher, to say that you can find a way to do the lesson in a different way."

And again:

"There is also an openness... Also for me, knowing some things, taking care of the integration of immigrant students when they arrive at school, who do not know how to speak a word of Italian, "what should I do?" "Lots of television" I recommend to everyone, "lots of television in Italian", in the sense that they associate with images anyway. But it also made me reflect a little on the importance of one's own origin, of preserving one's own origin, of preserving one's own language, which is a means of communication and this made me feel a bit...".

In addition, some teachers attended the focus groups and saw their teachings recognized in the students' words on diversity and equality. This was a source of personal pride and satisfaction for them. In addition, the path and activities proposed allowed some children often recognized by the teachers as negative leaders to be put into a good light and valued for their qualities.

In the **informal context**, the educators very much appreciated (and in some moments were surprised) the fact of being able to hear emerging thoughts and reflections on how school is experienced, which otherwise perhaps would never have come out, especially with the Middle school. In fact, an effect on the educators

was greater knowledge and awareness on their part of the experiences of the children outside the context of Fuoriclasse, which gave them additional tools and knowledge for working better with the children.

On children. Some **preschool and primary school children**, usually shy and bashful ones, started to actively participate in the activities proposed and freely expressed their ideas after the first few meetings. In the **preschool context**, at the beginning some children with immigrant backgrounds were shy about speaking their home language and talking about them; gradually, seeing their peers' examples and the general climate established where linguistic diversity was appreciated and valued, they started to be prouder of their origins and share some words or songs in their mother tongues. In the **primary school**, children appreciated the non-judgmental moments of dialogue numerous opportunities for discussion where children felt free to share happy or unhappy episodes from their past and space was given to dialogue on the theme of diversity and inclusion: "In my opinion this is also about diversity, because it made me understand that although you are a different color, you are not different from the others because you are still a person like everyone else" [child22, final focus group]. Telling about one's own culture and having space and time specifically dedicated to it was the motivation that moved some children beyond the barrier of shyness and the fear of not being accepted. We noticed this in Child1 who joined the class group the previous year and was not particularly talkative. When the time came to talk about her religion, she showed her exaltation and strong initiative.

On the context. Some proposals made by the **preschool children** were actually implemented. On the one hand, this outcome contributed to showing children that their voices were not only listened to, but also taken seriously into account. On the other hand, their ideas contributed to changing the preschool context, characterized by dominant monolingualism, giving visibility to home languages, not only during a one-time event (i.e., Mother Tongue Week), but in everyday life.

In the **primary school**, the greatest impact on the context was represented by the publication on the school's website of the digital multi-religious calendar created in collaboration with the religion teacher. As well as being a valuable documentation for school children and parents visiting the school's website, the calendar is a witness to the children who realized that the Director and the entire teaching staff took their point of view seriously, as they considered it worthy to be heard. In addition, the calendar is a tool that can be complemented with additional content and may have the power to involve new families and new pupils by engaging them in its renewal.

In the **informal context**, the educators realized the extreme difficulty of the elementary group to work in a group and to have a group vision. They decided to work on this in the following months. Even if the educators did not find any "concrete repercussions" on the children themselves in the very short term, from their words prospects for medium-term repercussions on their professional practice and on the context emerged. As a consequence, one impact on the context was to have opened a reflection on well-being at school that the educators intended to carry forward, giving more space to the experience, dynamics and discomforts at school with the aim of giving greater awareness to the reflections of the children. The educators' idea was not to dedicate another workshop to this theme but to make it a transversal reflection, putting it into a system, perhaps through a device to be introduced in the Fuoriclasse environment such as a "Suggestion box for well-being at school" to collect their experiences / ideas / proposals. In order to implement the proposals, the professionals had the idea to contact the Fuoriclasse Council located in one of the middle schools (who was managed by the same organization Save the Children) to share with them the proposals for improvement of the school such that emerged during the course of research so that the Fuoriclasse Council could implement them in the school. The idea was to send a letter to the Fuoriclasse Council bringing together the various proposals collected during the data collection or in a small booklet to be delivered to the School Directors of both schools, teachers and parents. These outputs were due to the fact that the operators were very sensitive to the question of being able to show their students that if their voices are collected, it was to do something concrete.

4.7 DISCUSSION

From all the 3 studies carried out in 3 separate contexts with 5 groups (2 in a preschool, 1 in a primary school and 2 in one informal context), we identified a number of limitations, lessons learned and recommendations that we will develop separately in the following paragraphs.

4.7.1 LIMITATIONS

Although the 5 research paths in the 3 contexts were considerably different, we located 3 main limitations to the study carried out in Italy which relate to timing, professional engagements, size of the sample and the language of the research:

Timing and engagement of professionals: The first limitation of this study was related to time and the availability of the professionals. In both formal contexts, we had difficulty negotiating appropriate and necessary timing with the teachers to ensure that the children would have a good research experience. At times, several days or weeks passed between one meeting and another, and this was a real limitation especially in the preschool, where children needed more continuity. In the primary school, this was coupled with the very little investment and interest on the part of the teachers, as opposed to the high level of enthusiasm and participation of the children. We presume that this limitation was mainly due to the fact that the objectives, goals and methodology of the research were not well explained to the teachers.

Sample size: Another limitation was the limited size of the sample. Although it was a qualitative study, a higher number of research participants would have provided more solid material and more variability: with greater resources, the study could have been carried out in 2 classes/informal groups in 2 schools/afterschool centers.

Language of the research: Last but not least, the limitation of the majority language as children's mean of verbal expression (including foreign and newly arrived children). The study was carried out in the majority language, thus creating an imbalance between native speakers/children with good competence in the majority language and newcomers.

4.7.2 LESSONS LEARNED

The lessons learned from these variegated research experiences were related both to methodological aspects and concerned children's perspectives and proposals on well-being and inclusion in multicultural and multilingual environments:

4.7.2.1 LESSONS LEARNED: METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

Time as crucial to access to the world of children: There were different levels of lessons learned, namely at methodological and ethical levels and concerning the children's perspectives. As illustrated in Chapter 3 (paragraph 3.3.2.2), time was crucial for accessing the world of children. This was true both at methodological and ethical levels. It was thus necessary to have the time to prepare the research, spending a great deal of time to share the objectives of the research with the professionals and training them in the use of participative methodologies, especially in the preschool context where teachers were key-figures to mediate with and reach the children.

Multilanguage research technique: Another lesson learned at the methodological level was to further develop research techniques that could enable research participants to express in the language they felt most comfortable with. Researchers, using participatory methods, could adopt more "multilingual" techniques such as using the VLE developed in WPs 3-4-5 (which resulted as a positive instrument in the primary school context), more particularly the multilingual tool Beeba and recruiting bilingual/multilingual

researchers who spoke the languages of the research participants.

4.7.2.2 LESSONS LEARNED: CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVES AND PROPOSALS ON WELL-BEING AND INCLUSION IN MULTICULTURAL AND MULTILINGUAL ENVIRONMENTS

Respect was the first premise for children's well-being: Concerning the children's perspectives, the data collected showed clearly that the basis for children's well-being was respect and children of all ages and contexts talked about respect and were against discrimination, albeit in their own terms.

The importance of the socio-relational dimension of the school experience: All the research participants in the preschool, primary school and informal contexts highlighted the importance of the socio-relational dimension of the school context as a main factor promoting well-being: this referred both to the teachers (i.e. the teaching approach and the relationship with the students) and to the peer group. The socio-relational dimension included the importance of inclusion, emotional support and empathy both from teachers and peers and friendship between children.

The place of student cultures, languages and food at school: To promote inclusion, children from different contexts stressed the importance of the enhancement of cultural, linguistic and food traditions. On the one hand, children stressed the importance of showing the majority culture and language and the institutional culture to newcomers, by presenting them the school organization, spaces and rules. On the other hand, pupils underlined the fact that the culture, language and food of all children needed to be present in everyday life at school. Not only was the prohibition of speaking in one's own language of origin a factor that strongly undermined children's well-being in the school environment, but the absence of the language, culture and food from students' origins was seen as a negative aspect in the long-term and their enhancement was present in children's proposals in all contexts.

4.7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Italian participatory research led us to develop the following recommendations for schools, institutions involved with teachers training:

Giving space to cultural and linguistic diversity: The recommendation to schools was to take care, not only of teaching L2 to newcomers, but also to give more space to the cultural and linguistic diversities of the school by giving them visibility.

The active involvement of students in welcoming newcomers: We also recommend that schools actively involve students in welcoming newcomers, namely letting the students introduce newcomers to the spaces and the rules of the school, both through materials (e.g. first-aid dictionaries, maps of the school, multilingual video-presentations of the school) and thanks to peers who speak the same language.

The renewal of teaching approaches: We also recommend teacher training (both during university and at long-life learning) to focus more on teacher approaches based on socio-relational dimensions.

Include participatory methods to improve the school environment: Finally, we recommend that preschools and schools adopt participatory methods to evaluate the school environment and to collect and implement the children's proposals. We recommend that institutions organize training for teachers in order to enable them to use participatory methods and to adopt student voice perspectives.

4.7 REFERENCES

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5. GREECE

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ABSTRACT

The goal of the WP2 “Children interview study”⁹ was (a) to explore children’s perspectives regarding the elements that make them feel good at school despite their differences and social and cultural identity, and (b) to record children’s proposals for making their school more friendly and inclusive. The chapter presents the Greek case of this particular study and describes the characteristics of the selected sites and participants, the procedures that were followed during the implementation of the study, the methodological and ethical considerations that emerged, as well some of the most critical initial findings. Three groups of Roma and non-Roma children participated in the Greek study from two municipalities of the Attica Prefecture: one formal group with 22 children aged between 4-5 years registered in a municipal child-care centre (Aghia Varvara), and two informal groups with 8 children each aged between 9-14 years old attending after-school programs of municipal community centres. Based on an initial analysis it became evident that the majority of the children had a good relationship with their teachers, and they enjoyed school while emphasising on the learning process of new things/experiences. However, especially in the informal groups, complaints about teachers’ rigidity for all the children in the class were recorded. Finally, some of the children’s proposals referred to the improvement of school structural facilities and to the needed support of the newcomers which can be achieved by teaching them the Greek language while assisting them to accommodate to their new context especially when issues arise. This could be achieved through the educational system, namely with the use of individualized instruction to foreign students, led by specialized teachers.

Keywords: children’s perspective, well-being, inclusion, Roma, preschool, informal context

⁹ This study is part of the international research project ‘Children’s views on inclusion at school’ within the European Project ISOTIS (see D.2.5: Pastori G., Pagani V., Sarcinelli S., Technical report on the Child Interview study. Children’s views on inclusion at school’ - digital source available on Isotis.org)

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The study was undertaken, involving three groups of children and more specifically, one “formal” group of 4-5 year-old children registered in a child-care centre in the municipality of Aghia Varvara, one of the two selected sites for the accomplishment of the WP2 studies (see Broekhuizen, Ereky-Stevens, Wolf, & Moser, 2018) and two informal groups of 9-14 year-old children: one in the municipality of Aghia Varvara and one in the municipality of Athens. Both of them had been set up by the relevant Community Centres. The necessary meetings with the authorities, the arrangements, the scheduling of the visits were undertaken between November 2018-February 2019.

5.2 PRESENTATION OF THE SITES

5.2.1 SELECTION OF THE SITES

The selection criteria of the sites were the same as the ones used for the interview studies of WP2 (Broekhuizen, Ereky-Stevens, Wolf, & Moser, 2018), namely: West Athens Sector and West Attica Sector. However, for the Children’s Study in particular, we decided to focus only on the first site of West Athens Sector and specifically on the municipality of Aghia Varvara. The decision was based on the constable and sound cooperation that had been established between the local authority and the project team, and a continuity could be ensured between all the other parts/tasks of the WP2. The municipality of Aghia Varvara was selected because the major part of the WP2 interview studies with parents had already been conducted there. The specific child-care centre that was selected was one of the centres, along with the municipality’s Social Service bureau that provided the “informal” group of children, that the project team had collaborated with to approach parents who would be positive in participating in the interview study.

Nevertheless, during the organization of the study of the informal group in Aghia Varvara, several problems were raised such as delays in collecting the parents’ consent forms and a low, non-stable, number of participant Roma children. Therefore, it was decided to collaborate with the Community Centre of the municipality of Athens maintaining a branch for the Roma community, as well. Moreover, we proceeded with this decision since a Roma mediator that worked within the ISOTIS project for the parent interviews had been transferred to that particular centre. In addition, the teacher of that particular centre (municipality of Athens) was highly interested in the ISOTIS project and agreed on ensuring the participation of a group of Roma children, especially for this particular task. Finally, it should be mentioned that there were strong kinships between the Roma communities living in these two areas of Athens. The researchers decided to conduct the Children Study in both areas in order to obtain complementary information. More specifically, the informal group of Aghia Varvara had only one Roma child that was the target group. However, most of the children were immigrants or had immigrant background which would enable us to collect information for other groups as well. The informal group of Athens had only Roma children which was our target group. However, this means that we would have only one case representing Roma children’s views.

5.2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITES

In the current project, the “West Athens sector” is represented principally by the municipality of Aghia Varvara –among others- and, to a minor degree, by the municipality of Ilion. According to Strategic Plan of the Attica Prefecture 2014-2019 (2016), the Unit of West Athens Sector is densely populated with 487.730 inhabitants living in 7 municipalities. West Athens is a territorial unit of the Attica region with major and chronic problems of poverty, social inequalities and marginalization.

Regarding the Municipality of Aghia Varvara, it was officially established as a discrete municipality in 1963, and in the 2011 census, 26.550 inhabitants were recorded. The city of Agia Varvara has the 3rd highest

unemployment rate among the municipalities of Attica prefecture with 24,60% (Developmental Agency of West Athens-General Directorate, 2017). According to the UN's human poverty indicators that capture the human poverty of the population of a municipality in relation to the rest municipalities based on their socio-economic profile, the municipality of Aghia Varvara is one of the six municipalities where 21% of the Attica Region's population with the greatest human poverty live (Prefectural Strategy for Social Inclusion and The Fight Against Poverty, 2015). The Roma population of Aghia Varvara is estimated at 6.000 people (Prefectural Strategy for Social Inclusion and The Fight Against Poverty, 2015).

We had two groups from this municipality. The first one was the formal group of 3-6 years old registered in a child-care centre. In total, 85 children were registered in the childcare centre grouped in 4 groups. The second was the informal group of 9-14 years old registered in the supplementary teaching programme that currently is running by the community centre at the Town Hall. The child-care centre is situated in a neighbourhood close to the Town Hall in the centre of the municipality. The area around the Town Hall is considered as safe and quiet with friendly people who are close to each other and with a big Roma community. Nonetheless, they mention that there are great discrepancies among the streets. Some blocks away there is drug dealing or children driving cars at the age of 14. Mothers also complaint about the lack of community resources such as swimming pool, theatres, or sport centres. Also, there is construction work of a metro station.

According to Developmental Agency of West Athens-General Directorate (2017), the municipality of Athens is one of the oldest municipalities of modern Greece and in the 2011 census, 664.046 inhabitants were recorded. The unemployment rate is 20,38%. The Roma population of the municipality of Athens is 1.500 people. Around 800 Roma people live in the area of Votanikos and 500-800 Roma people in Kolonos. The Roma people who live in Votanikos area stay in rented houses or shacks, they do not have access to social commodities and basic needs or services. They also have major problems regarding housing, education, employment and health. The Roma people who live in Kolonos area own their houses or they rent, they have access to social commodities, and they face problems in employment and education.

We had one informal group of 9-14 years old from this municipality. The children were registered in the after-school lessons of the Community Centre of municipality last year. However, the after-school lessons did not continue this year due to budget difficulties and lack of available space. Therefore, the study took place in one of the rooms that the Community Centre uses for activities like teaching Greek to immigrants. The building is some blocks away from the Community Centre in an area which is considered as dangerous. In terms of population, it is inhabited by Greek, immigrants and Roma.

5.2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Formal group of 3-6-year-old children. The Children Study was undertaken with one of the four groups/classes of the childcare centre. Twenty-two children (22) aged between 4 to 5 years were registered in that particular class. Six (6) of them were of Romani background (see Table 1). Their main educator was holding a bachelor's degree from a higher level Technological Educational Institute's department of Early Childhood Education and the assistant a post-secondary vocational school (non-tertiary) diploma.

1st informal group of 9-14-year-old children (Community Centre, municipality of Aghia Varvara). Eight (8) children (the number was ranging within the 4 days of the study) aged between 9 to 13 years participated in the study. Only one of them was Roma and two children were of Albanian origin. Another eight-year-old Moroccan student who had arrived by that period from Norway with his family participated regularly in that group. In that particular group a primary school teacher had been assigned by the municipality holding a bachelor's degree in Primary Education.

2nd informal group of 9-14-year-old children (Community Centre, municipality of Athens). Eight (8) children (the number was ranging within the 4 days of the study) aged between 8 to 13 years participated in the study. All of them were of Romani origin living permanently in Greece or (3 of them) had migrated with their families from Albania some years ago. A primary school teacher had been assigned by the municipality holding a bachelor's degree in Primary School Education. In addition, a Roma mediator, holding a bachelor's degree as a Social Worker, was present during all the activities to assist in the discussions and make the children feel more comfortable.

Table 20. Overview of the target groups, sites and contexts involved

		Sites			Participants		
Target group	Name	Context type	Age	City/area	Number of professionals involved	Number and age of children involved	Division in groups
Roma	-	Formal, preschool	3-6	municipality of Aghia Varvara	2	22 (4-5 years old)	2 groups of around 11 children
Multi-ethnic	Community Centre	Informal, After-school program	9-14	municipality of Aghia Varvara	1	8 (9-13 years old)	No
Roma	Community Centre	Informal, After-school program	9-14	municipality of Athens	2	8 (8-13 years old)	No

5.3 METHODOLOGY AND PHASES OF WORK

Formal group of 3- to 6-year-old children. Following the appropriate research ethics considerations and clarifications that were provided to the local authorities and the relevant approval, the research team collaborated with the child-care centre in the municipality of Aghia Varvara. First, the researchers had a meeting with the head-teacher of the centre to inform her about the aims and content of the Children Study and to provide her with the necessary information concerning the anonymity and other personal data security issues/procedures. In another meeting, the researchers met the educators¹⁰ of the centre to inform them about the goals and procedures of the Children Study and the activities that would be conducted. During that meeting, they shared their thoughts and suggestions regarding the proposed activities. They also discussed the time that would be most convenient for them to conduct the study. In addition, the head-teacher made the first contact with the parents of the group of children that would participate in the study in order to provide the necessary explanations and clarifications concerning the study and research procedures. After collecting the consent forms, the final dates of conducting the study was decided. Table 2 presents an outline of the activities that were implemented for this group. All the activities were audio recorded.

¹⁰ Due to the divisional ECEC system in Greece, the educational staff working in childcare centres are recognised as “educators” or “pedagogues of early childhood”, whereas the educational staff working in kindergartens are recognised as “kindergarten teachers”.

Table 21. Overview of the main steps and activities for the formal group of 3-6-year-old children

Day	Activity	Description of implementation
Day 1	Introduction of the study	<p>Step 1. The two researchers presented themselves and explained to children's group the reason they would be in the classroom for a week.</p> <p>Step 2. The researchers conducted field observation as non-participants by observing the "circle time". During the rest of the day, the researchers conducted field observation as participants, as well, as they assisted in the implementation of the activities. In both cases, researchers gathered information about the children and the teaching methods.</p>
Day 2	Introduction of the activities - Division of groups	<p>Step 1. The researchers explained the goal of the two activities.</p> <p>Step 2. The children were split into two groups to make an inclusion first aid kit. This division was kept during the entire study.</p>
	Circle time	<p>Step 1. The first group of nine children worked in circle time with one researcher. They discussed what they could propose and what materials they could prepare to welcome the "newcomers", i.e. children arriving from another country, and make them feel as good as possible in their new school.</p>
	Child-led tour	<p>Step 2. Their final decision was to make a cake and have a party to welcome the new children. During the activity, the assistant was present to take care of one child who had behaviour problems.</p> <p>Step 1. In the meantime, the second group of 11 children had the child-led tour with one researcher and the educator who was assisting in the discussion. During the tour, the children were slightly disoriented, and they did not decide what to do for the "inclusion first aid kit".</p>
Day 3	Inclusion first aid kit/ implementation – 1 st Group	<p>Step 1. The researcher introduced again the goal of the activity and summed up what the children did the previous day. She also introduced the material that the children would use for making the cake and the cupcakes.</p> <p>Step 2. The group made a cardboard cake and some cotton cupcakes (see Appendix, Figure 1) under the supervision of the first researcher. Also, the assistant was present to take care of the child who had behaviour problems to accommodate the activities of the rest of the children.</p> <p>Step 3. After the suggestion of one of the centre's educators, it was decided to have a mask party where all the children would wear a monkey mask and one would wear a lion mask. The monkeys would be the old students and the lions would be the new students.</p> <p>Step 4. One of the researchers prepared the masks.</p> <p>Step 5. Unfortunately, it was not possible to have a party as it was planned because of the constant disruptive behaviours expressed by one specific child.</p>

<p>Inclusion first aid kit/ implementation – 2nd Group</p>	<p>Step 1. The researcher introduced again the goal of the activity and summed up what the children did the previous day.</p> <p>Step 2. The group drew something to welcome the new children under the supervision and cooperation of the second researcher and the educator of the class (see Appendix, Figure 2).</p> <p>Step 3. Following the suggestion of the educator, two photos of two children, randomly selected, were used to show to the students how the new children would look like. In this way, it was considered that the students would get more engaged/committed to the goal of the activity and make it more realistic.</p> <p>Step 4. At the end of the drawing activity, each child described to the researcher what they drew.</p>
<p>Day 4 Identity cards</p>	<p>Step 1. The researchers presented their own ID card explaining in detail all the elements of the template as well as the idea behind the activity.</p> <p>Step 2. Both groups drew their identity card (see Appendix, Figure 3) which included their portrait, what they would like to do when they grow up and their favourite toy. Before drawing, the children stood with the researchers in front of a mirror and had a small discussion about what characteristics they see and how they differ.</p> <p>Step 3. After drawing each part, the children described to the researchers what they drew (see Appendix, Figure 4).</p> <p><i>Note:</i> During the activity, both the educator and the assistant were present. The assistant was taking care of a child who excessively displayed disruptive behaviour during all the tasks.</p>
<p>Day 5 Sun & Clouds</p>	<p>Step 1. The researchers explained the goal of the activity and presented the material that the children would use.</p> <p>Step 2. Each group had a small discussion about what they liked or disliked about their school and then they drew the suns and clouds (see Appendix, Figure 5).</p> <p>Step 3. After completing their drawing, the children explained to the researchers their drawing.</p> <p>Step 4. At the end of the study, all the drawings and the materials that were produced during the activities were displayed on a wall in the centre of the day-care centre (see Appendix, Figure 6).</p> <p><i>Note:</i> During the activity, both the educator and the assistant were present. The assistant was taking care of the child with disruptive behaviour.</p>

1st and 2nd informal group of 9-14-year-old children: The research team followed the analogues initial procedures as described for the formal group of young children regarding the research ethics considerations and approval by the local authority. The research team collaborated with the Social Service bureaus of the two municipalities and more specifically with the teachers who were responsible for the implementation of the supplementary teaching programmes. Several meetings were taken place. First, the researchers had a meeting with the teachers and the Roma mediators to inform them about the aims and

the content of the Children Study and to provide the necessary information, clarifications and details of the tasks giving particular emphasis to the anonymity and personal data security procedures. For the 1st informal group (Ag. Varvara), researchers discussed with the Roma mediators the possibility of calling more Roma children that had not participated in the supplementary teaching programme. For the 2nd informal group (Athens), the principal difference was that during the year of the study the supplementary teaching programme was not running due to non-availability of appropriate space. However, an effort was made to call some of the children that had participated during the previous year in the programme. The teacher in charge, due to her role in the centre, had kept contact with the Roma families since she had been assigned a duty as an “agent” between the families and the schools, as part of the broader educational strategy for minimizing the school dropout rates. At another meeting, the researchers met only with the teachers to discuss about the students that could participate in the study and the activities that would be conducted. In addition, the teachers shared their thoughts and suggestions regarding the proposed activities. The parents of the students that would participate in the study were informed about the aims and the relevant procedures by both the teacher and the mediators. After collecting the consent forms, the final dates of conducting the study were scheduled. Tables 3 and 4 present the outlines of the activities that were implemented for each group. All the activities were audio recorded.

Table 22. Overview of the main steps and activities for the 1st informal group of 9-14-year-old children (Community Centre, municipality of Aghia Varvara)

Day	Activity	Description of implementation
Day 1	Introduction of the study	Step 1. The researcher presented herself and explained the reasons she would be in the classroom for the four following days.
		Step 2. The researcher conducted field observation both as non-participant by observing the lesson, and as participant to gather information about the children.
	Presentation of the research + Ice-break activity*	Step 1. The researcher introduced the first "ice-breaker" activity. Step 2. All the children participated and presented themselves. Step 3. The children discussed what they would do to survive on the island.
Day 2	“Do I feel good at school? A video-cued focus group”	Step 1. The researcher introduced the activity with the two videos. The first video that was used was from a research project entitled “Local Engagement for Roma Inclusion” ¹¹ (LERI) that was conducted in a school of the municipality of Aghia Varvara. In this project, the students of the school were presenting areas of their school where conflicts between the students take place and areas where the students may be amused.
		Step 2. After watching a small part of this video, the children discussed whether there are similar places at their schools, what they like or dislike about their schools, what makes them feel good or not at their school setting. The lack of time did not permit the accomplishment of the activity which was continued the third day.

¹¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vB88z4tjA_g

Day 3	“Do I feel good at school? A video-cued focus group” (Cntd)	Step 1. The children watched the second video ¹² about multilingualism and multiculturalism from the short movie “Immersion” proposed by the manual of the study.
	+ Warm-up activity	Step 2. The children discussed about similar experiences they had in the past regarding inclusion or language, experiences of other students that they have heard of, how they consider a new student would feel at their school and what they could do to help a new student feel well, and what languages do the students speak at school. The warming-up activity itself was not implemented due to lack of time.
Day 4	My school autobiography	Step 1. The activity of school autobiography was introduced.
		Step 2. The children decided to write some things about their school autobiography and talked a little about it to the researcher.
	Warm-up activity	The children participated in the warming-up activity about the effectiveness and appreciation of the activities.
		Step 1. Then, the researcher introduced the final activity of writing a message to the authorities.
Day 4		Step 2. Initially, the children were supposed to work in groups of two but in the end, each child wrote his/her letter about what they would like to change at their school.
		Step 3. After finishing the letter, each child talked about it to the researcher.
	“Feel better at school”- a message to authorities	Step 4. The children made by themselves envelopes where they put their letter in. At the same time, the teacher, for supporting them, combined all the ideas of the children and wrote a new more refined letter.
		Step 5. Since the lessons of the group took place at the town hall, the teacher and the students decided that it would be a great opportunity to write a letter to the mayor and deliver it to him. Unfortunately, we don't have any information about the delivery of the letter and its impact.

Table 4. Overview of the main steps and activities for the 2nd informal group of 9-14-year-old children (Community Centre, municipality of Athens)

Day	Activity	Description of implementation
Day 1	Introduction of the study	The researcher presented herself and explained the reason she would be in the classroom for four days. She didn't conduct field observation because the children were gathered voluntarily only for conducting the Children Study.

¹² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6Y0HAjLKYI>

	Warm-up activity	The researcher directly introduced the first ice-breaker activity of "lost in a deserted island". The researcher presented herself and then encouraged the children to do the same. Unfortunately, only a few children did so, because the majority was feeling bit awkward or shy. So, the researcher started discussing with the children to receive some information about them.
	"Do I feel good at school? A video-cued focus group"	Step 1. The researcher introduced the activity with the two videos. The first video was the same that was used for the 1 st informal group of 9-14-year-old children.
		Step 2. After watching the first video, the children were hesitant and not very talkative, something that was interpreted as a response to unfamiliarity with the researchers and the research procedures. Also, most of the children reported that everything was fine at their school and didn't share more information.
	"Do I feel good at school? A video-cued focus group" (Cntd)	Step 1. The children watched the second video about multilingualism and multiculturalism.
		Step 2. Then, the children discussed about similar experiences they had had in the past regarding inclusion or language, experiences of other students that they had heard of, how would a new student feel at their school and what they could do to help a new student feel well, and what languages do the students speak at school. In this way, this activity included part of the warming-up activity which was sharing experiences of inclusion.
Day 2	Warming up activity	The warming-up activity itself was not implemented because of the limited time available.
	School autobiography	Step 1. Finally, the activity of school autobiography was introduced.
		Step 2. The children decided to have a small personal interview and talk about their school autobiography to the researcher. It was not possible to write it, because many children did not prefer it or feared their writing was of poor quality. The children were considered to be more open and talkative in an interview situation.
Day 3	A message to authorities	Step 1. The researcher introduced the final activity of writing, "a message to the authorities".
		Step 2. It was not possible to do it in written form as was planned, because many children did not prefer to write or possibly feared their writing was of poor quality. Therefore, they decided to talk to the researcher about what they would like to be changed at their school. This day the children were even more open and talkative.

5.4 METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.4.1 METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS

Methodological challenges due to the context. During the study of the formal group at the child-care centre, there were no particular problems regarding the time spending on the activities or the number of participant children. With regard to the 1st informal group in Aghia Varvara, there was a number of problems during the organization of the study, such as delays in collecting the consent forms and finding Roma

children to participate. In the end, only one Roma child participated and some children that were immigrants or had immigrant background. One warming-up activity was not implemented due to lack of time, but its topic was discussed during the main activity. In the 2nd informal group (Athens), only Roma children participated and as a consequence the views of non-Roma children could not be collected. One weakness for the progress of the tasks with this particular group was the fact that it was not possible a full observation task to be implemented. Another critical point regarding the whole procedure, refers to the fact that due to the temporary setup of the group the children did not have the time to get familiar with the researcher and were more sceptical to openly express their thoughts. This may partly explain that the children were hesitant and not much talkative during two out of three days of the study.

Methodological challenges with professionals. There were no methodological challenges with the professionals in none of the three studies. On the contrary, all educators collaborated very well and assisted during the implementation of the activities. Especially the educators of the younger children were helpful and supportive by proposing strategies to make the children more engaged.

Methodological challenges in researching with children. It was a challenging task for the researchers to cope with the misbehaviour of some young children of the formal group, partly due to the timely limited period of contact with these children and the quality of relationship that was different than the one they had with their educator. The time period for conducting the study was very short to ensure that the children would feel comfortable enough with the researchers to share their views. Therefore, potentially it could be recommended that it would be more effective the educator of the group to be part of the research team and the person that would conduct the activities instead of the researchers. This would be particularly useful, especially during the activity of "circle time", because the children would be already more familiar with their teacher in the class and s/he could have a better overview and management of the class. Moreover, the educators commented that the concept of "new children coming to school" was quite abstract for so young children to work on the relevant concepts and situations.

Regarding the informal groups with older children, the topic of inclusion and relevant experiences was a very sensitive and personal issue. It was important to ensure that the children would feel comfortable enough with the researcher to share such information and experiences in a limited period and with no prior knowledge of her. As an example, during one activity two children of the 2nd informal group reported that there was no problem with their school as far as language is concerned. However, the teacher informed the researcher later that it has been almost a month that these children did not attend school possibly because they had difficulties with the Greek language as used in the courses in the first grade of lower secondary school. In another example, two girls participating in the 2nd informal group felt more comfortable to share their views in Romani language to the mediator. Based on these , it could be considered that in this particular type of research children's L1 and language background and the potential difficulties to participate in tasks like the ones used during the study could be connected with children's language proficiency and the perceived or objective weakness, fear, ambivalence or resistance to express themselves in a foreign language.

Another common issue is related to competence in writing. This was true for both the formal group (due to their developmental stage) and informal groups (due to either insufficient school attendance, language acquisition problems, fear of judgement etc). In these cases, only the graphical mode (e.g. picture drawing) and the oral mode (e.g. presentation, discussion and interview) could be considered as the most appropriate strategies for extracting information, views or perceptions from the informants.

5.4.2 ETHICAL CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS

During the three sub-studies, the children were given the option to stop participating in any activity at any time and without asking them to give any explanation at all. This was important especially for the young children who would get tired easily. Also, the presence and assistance of the educators of their class was

essential for the management of children's misbehaviours, behavioural concerns or discomfort. With regard to professionals, a more active role in the study may provide them the opportunity to suggest adaptations or alternative strategies regarding the activities and their overall participation.

5.5 CODING AND ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

The first step of the analytical process was to fully transcribe all the audio recordings which ended up in three transcripts, one for each study. The next step was to code the transcriptions using the qualitative data analysis software Nvivo 11. Thematic analysis was applied based on a coding system that was common for all the participating countries (Pastori, Pagani, & Sarcinelli, 2018). Two researchers of the Greek team coded the transcripts. During the coding process, extra sub-codes were created to better describe and analyse the data. The analysis was focused on the most recurring or salient themes.

We should note once more that the formal group participated in our study was consisted of children between 4-5 years of age and the total number proposals-suggestions-responses were extremely limited; most of the times the children repeated a view or a response of a child following a standard pattern of responses. Due to these facts, we have serious concerns that for this young age group of children it is very difficult to extract concrete conclusions from their responses based on temporary and short period tasks unless the researcher spends a considerable amount of time in the same context and in a variety of activities adapting an action research methodology. Therefore, we decided to focus mainly on analysing the two informal groups (extracts/quotes from the formal group of young children were sporadically presented in the report).

5.6 MAIN FINDINGS

In this section, there is a presentation of the main findings on factors influencing inclusion and wellbeing, and children's proposals.

5.6.1 FACTORS PROMOTING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL.

This subtopic includes the elements that make children feel good at school. 64 occurrences in total for factors promoting wellbeing were coded. . As presented in Table 5, 43 quotes were coded as School Organization and there were 22 references coded as Social Relationships. These figures indicate that many of the responses reflecting the promotion of the wellbeing are related to the way that the school is organized, especially in terms of Space, Learning and Teaching approach.

Table 23. Co-occurrence of Factors promoting well-being at school per group

Codes	Subcodes	3-6 formal group	1 st informal group	2 nd informal group	Total number
Diversity		0	1	0	1
	<i>Social inequalities</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Language</i>	0	1	0	1
	<i>Culture</i>	0	0	0	0
Identity		0	0	1	1
	<i>Cultural identity</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Linguistic identity</i>	0	0	0	0

	<i>Social identity</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Somatic features</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Myself in the future</i>	0	0	1	1
Representations		-	2	10	12
	<i>Image of the child-student</i>	0	0	1	1
	<i>Image of the teacher</i>	0	2	6	8
	<i>Image of the school</i>	0	0	7	7
	<i>Image of the society</i>	0	0	0	0
School organization		5	16	22	43
	<i>Space</i>	3	5	6	14
	<i>Time</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Rules</i>	0	0	1	1
	<i>Play</i>	1	9	5	15
	<i>Learning</i>	0	4	16	20
	<i>Food</i>	1	0	0	1
	<i>Teaching approach</i>	0	2	2	4
Social relationships		-	11	11	22
	<i>Inclusion-acceptance</i>	0	0	2	2
	<i>Discrimination</i>	0	0	1	1
	<i>Conflict</i>	0	0	2	2
	<i>Friendship</i>	0	11	7	18
	<i>Behaviour</i>	0	1	0	1
	<i>Emotional support-empathy</i>	0	0	1	1

The findings revealed that a factor that promotes the wellbeing of children at school is physical education (gym class). Almost all the students of both informal groups mentioned that the gym class makes them feel more relaxed and they would like to have more sessions/classes of it.

Based on the repeated mentions of physical education as a subject they liked more, we could conclude that the structure of the curriculum and the teaching approach may reflect a negative approach of the current educational strategies applied to a number of the Greek elementary school classes. More playful or play-like educational/teaching strategies could be more appropriate for inspiring and supporting students to remain in the class and, consequently, minimizing the drop-outs.

Moreover, some children mentioned that they enjoy school by emphasising the learning of new things or having new experiences. Another factor that was revealed is the time they share for playing with other children in the school context. Many students of both informal groups enjoy hanging out with their friends at school and getting involved in a variety of playful activities/games.

“Child – Yes, it's a place like a garden and it has plants and two trees, an olive tree and such, and nearly no one comes there and we sit with my friends and we play, chase each other and next to it there is a green wall and there, we play the house, it's the house.

Researcher - And why do you like this place there?

Child – Because no one comes, it's quiet. It has a large tree and we can hide and then it is better.”

The findings indicate that the relationship of the students with the teachers is important. Most of the students reported that they did not have any problem with their teachers and that they have a good relationship with them. One child from the 1st informal group mentioned that she likes a certain class because of the teacher:

“Child – The place I like is music, it's a hall and it also has a microwave inside, because there is a kind teacher who has never yelled to us, not once in three years now.”

Furthermore, the school climate and facilities appeared to play an important role for the children. A number of children responded that they enjoy the fact that their school has facilities for playing sports:

“Child 1 – I would like to say that my school is very big because I like it to be very big.

Child 2 – We have a place to play football and basketball, and volleyball and tennis. And basketball is together with football.”

Another child mentioned that he likes the fact that the schoolyard is not full of stones that he could get hurt:

“Child – (...) my school is beautiful, it's beautiful very beautiful, it has no stones down to hurt us, the first time I went, there were many stones down, they fixed it, they made it normal, when the first time I was in the first grade, I fell and hurt, that is, I have fallen a thousand times at school now that the floor is nice and I haven't been hurt. It has no stones now.”

Moreover, the way that a school is decorated seems to affect the way the children feel at school. Many children in both informal groups reported that they would like the building of the school to be decorated with graffiti or that they are happy because their school is decorated:

“Child 1– (...) The colours are very nice, they have painted them and they are nice, they have (there are) paintings, in the past it wasn't so nice, there weren't colours, but they have painted it now and it is better.

Child 2– In the past, it was something, there was painting like a lady and beneath her, there was the sea and a boat, and the lady had an open mouth like a Romeo and Juliet, now they have changed it. Now, they have something like bears.

Child 3– No, it has numbers where it used to be, now it has 1,2, 10,20,30,40,50, up to 100

Child 4– Triangles, like triangles and there are 1,2,3

Child 5– It has different colours

Child 6–Outside, the school has a big owl.”

One student mentioned the issue of security expressing by that that he feels safe at school. The school is

a well-guarded area and the teachers can monitor students for avoiding fights or other misbehaviours. Overall, the findings revealed that the school facilities and climate, the learning subjects, the student-teacher relationship, the ability to play and the feeling of security are factors that promote the wellbeing of the children at school.

5.6.2 FACTORS UNDERMINING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL.

The total number of coded quotes for factors that reflect undermining wellbeing was 61. As shown in Table 6, 40 out of 61 of the references were also coded as School Organization. This may reflect that many of the things that undermine the wellbeing of the children are related to the way the school is organized, especially in terms of Space and Teaching strategies applied in the classroom. In addition, 33 out of 61 responses were coded as Social relationships.

Table 24. Co-occurrence of Factors undermining well-being at school per group

Codes	Subcodes	3-6 formal group	1 st informal group	2 nd informal group	Total number
Diversity		0	10	1	11
	<i>Social inequalities</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Language</i>	0	10	1	11
	<i>Culture</i>	0	0	0	0
Identity		0	1	2	3
	<i>Cultural identity</i>	0	1	1	2
	<i>Linguistic identity</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Social identity</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Somatic features</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Myself in the future</i>	0	0	1	1
Representations		0	4	7	11
	<i>Image of the child-student</i>	0	0	1	1
	<i>Image of the teacher</i>	0	4	5	9
	<i>Image of the school</i>	0	0	2	2
	<i>Image of the society</i>	0	0	0	0
School organization		2	24	14	40
	<i>Space</i>	1	11	1	13
	<i>Time</i>	0	1	0	1
	<i>Rules</i>	0	0	2	2
	<i>Play</i>	1	0	0	1
	<i>Learning</i>	0	5	7	12
	<i>Food</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Teaching approach</i>	0	11	7	18
Social relationships		0	26	7	33

	<i>Inclusion-acceptance</i>	0	2	3	5
	<i>Discrimination</i>	0	2	1	3
	<i>Conflict</i>	0	11	4	15
	<i>Friendship</i>	0	5	3	8
	<i>Behaviour</i>	0	10	2	12
	<i>Emotional support-empathy</i>	0	3	0	3

It is important to mention that the children of the 2nd informal group described their schools as “perfect” and they could not mention anything negative about them. The researcher attempted to discuss with them this topic during the three days of the study but there was no change in their perceptions. More specifically, two children reported that everything was fine at their school. However, the teacher informed the researcher that these particular children gave up school for almost a month. The teacher further explained that the lessons in lower high school get more difficult and a reason they stopped could be the problems with the language of instruction and their comprehension of the subjects. It has to be noted that these two children were Roma. This difference between the answers of the children and the actual situation as described by the teacher participated in the current study could be attributed to the lack of trust among the children towards researcher.

As mentioned earlier, the factors undermining the wellbeing of the children were related to the topic of Social relationships. Particularly, with regard to the subtopic of Conflict, many children of both informal groups stated that the negative peer relationships affect the way they feel at school, mentioning especially the fights between them:

“Researcher – What doesn’t make you feel good in your school?”

Child – When the others are fighting.

Researcher – Do you know why they are fighting?

Child – I don’t know.

Researcher – And why does it bother you?

Child – Because I don’t like it. The school says not to fight but play.

Researcher – And what do you do when they start and fight? What are you doing?

Child – I’m leaving. I play more with the girls that play calmly.”

Regarding the subtopic of Behaviour, during the activity of the “school autobiography”, two students of the 1st informal group mentioned that, when they started school, the rest of the students were making fun of them because of their low proficiency in the Greek language. Nonetheless, by the time of the study they reported that they did not have any problems and, instead, they were enjoying school. Also, a student of the 2nd group described that two students from Syria in his school had a similar experience.

“Researcher – Well, we saw in the video that, at some point, because the kid was saying 40, 40, the other kids started mocking him. Have you ever experienced this?”

Child - Yes, I made a mistake and the other children were laughing, and I wanted to tell them “what’s your problem?” Then, I learned a little Greek and I talked.”

Another factor undermining the well-being of the children were the skills or the rigidity of some teachers, an issue that is linked to the subtopic of Teaching approach. In the 1st informal group a child reported that his teacher was not good as she did not make any teaching at all:

“Researcher – What makes you feel beautiful in your school now?”

Child – Nothing, because we have a very good teacher who is teaching us all the time (ironically), I mean she doesn’t do any lesson, the teacher is taking us out, we don’t have any lesson in this school.”

Also, in the 2nd informal group, some children mentioned that there was a teacher who was very strict or who yelled at students.

“Child – *What I don’t want is Mr F., the most (...) because when he yells, I run.*

Researcher – *Why does he yell?*

Child – *I don’t know, because we’re playing, because we run a lot so as not to slip, he tells us*

Finally, during the discussion on the factors undermining the well-being at school in the 1st informal group, some children referred to the subjects. Specifically, one child reported that he would like to have less homework because now he does not have enough time to spend on his extracurricular activities like taekwondo.

“Researcher - *Why do you want to just play and not have lessons?*

Child – *Because we don’t like the lessons(homework) they give us because we have other things, too, I have two activities every day, I have taekwondo and English.*

Researcher – *That is, you don’t want to have lessons so that you can do the activities?*

Child – *Yes, because sometimes I don’t make it and it reaches 00:00 until I study and I don’t like History, because it is a lot to learn and she gives us around 2 chapters and it is not a very nice subject.”*

In both informal groups, children talked about difficult subjects. For instance, one child from the 1st informal group mentioned that the subject of Religion includes very difficult words. The child mentioned that she needs assistance to learn them. However, when she doesn’t have any help, she ends up learning them by heart (mechanically) without understanding the content:

“Researcher – *Is there anything that you don’t like at your school?*

Child – *I don’t like the lesson, English, Religion, and Mathematics.*

Researcher - *Why don’t you like them?*

Child – *Mathematics because we learn something difficult and History in Religion because it has many words that I don’t understand.*

Researcher - *What do you do when you don’t understand them? Do you ask someone?*

Child – *Yes, I ask my dad and my sister. If they don’t know it, I learn it as such and I say it without knowing it.*

Researcher – *So, you learn it by heart.*

Child – *Yes.”*

Also, one student from the 2nd informal group reported that the procedure of the subjects’ evaluation tests makes him anxious:

“Child – *Miss, I am very stressed during the test.”*

Finally, it was revealed that the school facilities affect children’s wellbeing. It seems that the current facilities do not only need improvement, but they put children at risk concerning their physical and psychological health. Specifically:

“Child – *If it is possible to change the classroom, it is too small. It is like a hut, that is, like a caravan. It’s kind of like a house and it’s small, that’s why. It’s cold and hot. Yesterday I was cold because the window was open.”*

5.6.3 TRANSFORMATIVE FACTORS

The total number of occurrences coded as transformative factors (proposals and wishes) was 66. As presented in Table 7, 41 of the proposals and wishes of the children were also coded as School

Organization. This means that many of the children's proposals to change are related to the way the school is organized, especially with regard to the available Space (quality, quantity).

Table 25. Co-occurrence of Transformative factors (proposals & wishes) per group

Codes	Subcodes	3-6 formal group	1 st informal group	2 nd informal group	Total number
Diversity		0	6	0	6
	<i>Social inequalities</i>	0	3	0	3
	<i>Language</i>	0	3	0	3
	<i>Culture</i>	0	0	0	0
Identity		0	0	0	0
	<i>Cultural identity</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Linguistic identity</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Social identity</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Somatic features</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Myself in the future</i>	0	0	0	0
Representations		0	1	5	6
	<i>Image of the child-student</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Image of the teacher</i>	0	0	4	4
	<i>Image of the school</i>	0	1	1	2
	<i>Image of the society</i>	0	0	0	0
School organization		4	21	16	41
	<i>Space</i>	2	15	9	26
	<i>Time</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Rules</i>	0	2	3	5
	<i>Play</i>	2	3	2	7
	<i>Learning</i>	0	4	1	5
	<i>Food</i>	0	4	0	4
	<i>Teaching approach</i>	0	4	4	8
Social relationships		0	5	2	7
	<i>Inclusion-acceptance</i>	0	0	1	1
	<i>Discrimination</i>	0	0	0	0
	<i>Conflict</i>	0	0	1	1
	<i>Friendship</i>	0	3	1	4
	<i>Behaviour</i>	0	3	1	4
	<i>Emotional support-empathy</i>	0	0	0	0

Regarding the proposals of the formal group of children, many children involved in the activity of “tour”, did

not decide as to how to welcome the new children. Therefore, it was decided to draw something for them. However, the rest of the children participating in the activity of the circle decided to make a cake and have a party so as to welcome them. The next day, this group of children made a cardboard cake and some cotton cupcakes under the supervision of the first researcher. After the suggestion of one of the centre's educators, it was decided to have a mask party where all the children would wear a monkey mask and one would wear a lion mask. The monkeys would be the old students and the lion would be the new student. However, it was not possible to have a party as it was planned, because of the constant disruptive behaviours of one specific child. During the activity, the assistant was present to take care of this particular child to accommodate the activities of the rest of the children.

Concerning the School Organization and particularly the subtopic of Space, some of the informal groups' proposals referred to the improvement of schools' structural facilities. One proposal was to paint the building of the school to make it beautiful.

“Researcher – *What do you want your school to have?*

Child –*My school I would like it to have paintings, to be more beautiful.*

Researcher – *Paintings, would you like to have them on the outside or on the inside?*

Child –*On the outside”*

Another proposal from the 2nd informal group was to change the old-style toilets (squat toilets) that are not very convenient for the children.

“Child –*Ah, to make more beautiful toilets because the toilets are like the toilets in the primary school, it's not with the toilet flush that you push. It's that on the floor.”*

Other proposals included improvement of the school facilities like having more space for football and basketball or a swimming pool. It is important to mention that in the first informal group some children proposed to have free lunches from the school canteen so that their parents would not be tired because of preparing their food. This proposal may reflect the financial difficulties that the families of the children have.

“Child –*I would like (the school) to have a pool and everything in the cafe to be for free, the pool because if it is a hot day and the pool gets warm, we can swim, and I would like the canteen to be for free instead of our mom getting tired to make food for us, to get it from there for free, fine, not to waste a lot of money.”*

Additionally, the children suggested having a playground area and more bins to keep their schoolyard clean.

“Child – *Mr Mayor. In the X primary school of Aghia Varvara, put a pool and a playground, also there should be many bins so that the children don't throw the trash on the ground, and put a football field. With love B.”*

A child requested not to allow the older children to enter their school since they cause problems such as destroying facilities.

“Child – *(...) and not to have spoiled children come there because they paint the walls, throw paper where we eat. Please fix it.”*

Some proposals were related to the subtopic of Learning. The children proposed to change some subjects as they find them difficult. Specifically, children would like to have easier subjects or change entirely the way of learning and make it more playful.

“Child –Dear Mayor, in my school that is the X, I would like a change, like having a small change in Religion being in the third grade. Not to have unknown words (....).”

“Researcher – And why don’t you want to have lessons?”

Child –To play and although, with the lesson, our mind wakes up (...) while with play (...) I wanted to be the opposite.

Researcher – That is, to wake up our mind with play?

Child –Yes, and never have lessons.”

Other proposals were related to the subtopic of Language that is under the topic of Diversity. During the discussion about what to do to welcome new students that come from another country, the children from both informal groups proposed to support them by teaching them Greek, making them friends and helping them when they face a problem. It seems that, for the children, it is essential for a newcomer to learn the language to communicate, but also making friends.

“Researcher – What could the school do to help?”

Child –Well, to teach him Greek, to talk and so we could be friends with him and teach him.”

It has to be mentioned that the ideas and proposals of the children could not be implemented. Nonetheless, the teacher of the 1st group promised to deliver the proposals to the Mayor hoping that the children’s ideas will be taken into consideration.

5.7 EDUCATIONAL/FORMATIVE IMPACT

On professionals. Concerning professionals, there were rare comments on the activities or the responses of the children in any of the groups. One characteristic comment was expressed by the childcare centre’s staff about the fact that the activities were quite abstract for the children’s age range and probably this was the reason for the restricted quantity of responses. One more issue emerged by the teacher of the informal group in the municipality of Aghia Varvara. More specifically, he commented that through the activities he managed to learn about the children’s background and history that he would not know of otherwise.

On children. The restricted time for observation and, principally, the way of constructing the informal groups did not allow for the extraction of valuable observations concerning children. Especially for the informal groups the short duration of the activities (less than 2 hours) and the lack of consistent communication between researchers (or even teachers) and the children are considered a significant odd for the appropriate recording of any significant impact on the children.

On the context. Regarding the formal group of children in a centre-based care and education provision, a visible product showing children that their voices were seriously taken into account would bethe teachers’ decision to present all the material that was produced by the children during the entire study on a wall at the centre of the building. In this way, they informed the rest of the classes and the parents about the ways that they could welcome new children to the centre, like having a welcoming party, as well as about what they like or dislike regarding their school.

The teacher of the informal group in Aghia Varvara, ensured that he would pass the children’s letters together with their proposals on to the municipality’s Mayor himself as they were situated in the same building. This made the students very enthusiastic about the activity and the fact that their proposals and ideas would really be read and taken seriously into account by a very important person in the community they live in.

In both cases mentioned above, the teachers assigned value to the children’s ideas and proposals by

presenting them to other people as well as to authorities so that they would be inspired by them.

5.8 DISCUSSION

To sum up, the goal of the present study was to explore children's perspectives regarding the elements that make them feel good at school despite their differences and their social and cultural identity, and to record children's proposals for making their school more welcoming and inclusive. The findings revealed that the school facilities and climate, the learning subjects, the student-teacher relationship, the ability to play and the feeling of security are factors that promote the wellbeing of the children at school. The repeated mentions of physical education as a favoured subject showed that a more playful or play-like educational strategy could be more appropriate for approaching students and making them to stay in the class happily.

Many of the things that undermine the wellbeing of the children are related to the way that the school is organized, especially in terms of space, teaching methodology and social relationships. Negative peer relationships and the teaching approach (e.g. strict teacher) affect the way children feel at school. Another undermining factor was the quality of the school subjects; children need help to understand topics such as Religion that have complicated language. Also, high amount of homework results in spending less time on extracurricular activities.

Regarding the children's proposals, many of the things they proposed are related to the way that the school is organized, especially about the available space (quality, quantity). The children of the informal groups reported inadequate conditions and suggested that the school infrastructure should be more friendly and warm to children. Another important issue that was revealed is the power and the need of a network among children as a kind of support system to each other with the aim to overcome the difficulties of the new educational, cultural and language context. Also, children's views showed that there is a need for more informed teachers who can speak their language. It seems that continuing in-service training and the use of the native language in classroom are critical factors for the students' wellbeing.

Finally, with regard to the representations that children have for their teachers – an issue that was revealed during the conversations with the students - was that the children have both positive and negative images of the teachers. The positive image was about teachers who have a positive relationship with the student, whereas the negative image was about teachers that exhibit teaching of a low quality.

There are some limitations to the current study that should be taken into account when interpreting the findings. The formal group participated in our study consisted of very young children and the total number proposals-suggestions-responses was extremely limited. Most of the times the children repeated a view or a response of a child following a standard pattern of responses. Therefore, we have serious concerns about extracting concrete conclusions from their responses. Another issue was the large number of children in one space, and the task was getting more difficult when there were one or two children with misbehaviour.

The study conducted with the informal group of Roma children did not provide any comparative perspective. It would be more informative if this kind of tasks were to be performed in mixed groups with reference to one or more criteria (e.g. ethnic origin, language background). Also, children with different language background may become a potential problem for the researcher since the whole communication context may not work well due to difficulties in comprehension or discussions.

Another important issue was the lack of familiarity between children and researchers for all three groups. The time of conducting the study was too short to ensure that the children would feel comfortable enough with the researchers to share their views. Time is a critical factor since this kind of tasks need a longer period of presence of the research teams in the educational context so that both researchers and

educational staff and children can get to know better each other, and especially for the research team to get a better view of the psychological/educational dynamics of the group.

Despite the limitations, the findings of the present study provide a first insight in the children's perspectives with regard to the elements that make them feel good at school. This study advances our understanding of the things that should change in Greek schools in terms of facilities or teaching approach to make them more welcoming and inclusive. Through the experience obtained by our researchers we recommend a kind of action research where the teacher or a member of the educational staff will be part of the research team so that the potential biases either by the children the staff or the researchers would be overcome.

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6. POLAND

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ABSTRACT

This study is part of the international research project 'Children's views on inclusion at school' within the European Project ISOTIS (see D.2.5: Pastori G., Pagani V., Sarcinelli S., Technical report on the Child Interview study. Children's views on inclusion at school' - digital source available on Isotis.org) and was conducted in Poland based on the manual developed by the task leaders. This case study involved two groups of children recruited via Warsaw formal educational settings, more specific a public preschool and a primary school. In total 28 children took part in the study (thirteen 4- to 6-year-olds and fifteen 8- to 10-year-olds). Both groups included pupils of socially disadvantaged background. In both contexts within two days children participated in several individual, small group and whole group activities. The general goal of the research was to learn about children's perspectives on inclusive aspects of their educational settings facilitating well-being of all pupils. The following summary of the technical report presents the context and implementation process of the study. Moreover ethical challenges encountered by the research team are outlined. The findings revealed that children relate their well-being in the educational setting to: having the possibility to choose what, where and with whom they want to play, tasty food, setting openness for parental involvement, warm relations with teachers and peers as well as attractive outdoor and indoor space and toys.

Keywords: socially disadvantaged children; Poland; ISOTIS project, children wellbeing; children views on inclusion

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents Children Study conducted in Poland (part of the ISOTIS Task 2.5). The study was based on the theoretical framework and implementation guidelines included in the manual "Feel good: children's views on inclusion", draft proposal - June 22, 2018 by Giulia Pastori, Valentina Pagani, Alice Sophie Sarcinelli. The general aim of the study was to explore children's perspectives on facilitating elements (resilience factors) to feel good at school within differences; more specific to allow children of the selected sites to express their perspective about what they think about differences (at cultural, somatic, linguistic, socio-economic etc. level), about their social and cultural identity and about their school context in terms of inclusion, what they identify as quality indicators of school inclusiveness and what they propose to make their school more welcoming and inclusive. The main focus of the Polish research group was to explore perspectives of children from native socioeconomically disadvantaged families.

6.2 PRESENTATION OF THE SITES

6.2.1 SELECTION OF THE SITES

The sites taken into consideration for the Children Study were consistent with those selected for the purposes of the Polish part of the ISOTIS project, namely the cities Warsaw and Łódź. Ultimately, the decision on conducting the study in Warsaw was taken on the basis of the following factors: well established contacts of the Polish researchers involved in the ISOTIS project with educational institutions across the city, positive experiences of collaboration with potential partner institutions (the ones providing services to disadvantaged children) within the CARE and ISOTIS projects, and, lastly, favourable organizational aspects (all members of the Polish research group work in Warsaw on a daily basis, which enabled greater flexibility in adjusting the organization of the study to the institutions' preferences).

6.2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITES

Warsaw is the capital of Poland and the biggest and most populated city of the country. According to the Polish Central Statistical Office the population of Warsaw is estimated at 1.760 million residents, and it is rising. The unemployment rate in Warsaw is one of the lowest in all cities in the country and the average salary is the highest. Warsaw is divided into 18 administrative districts. The most socially disadvantaged areas of several districts are involved in the city revitalization program (projects aimed at providing children and young adults at risk of social exclusion with a developmentally supportive environment). The settings selected for the study are located in two different districts of the city.

The selected preschool is situated in the Żoliborz district. Żoliborz is one of the central areas of the city and is located on the left bank of the Vistula river. It is the smallest borough of all 18 in the city, with approximately 50,000 inhabitants. The selected preschool is situated in the neighbourhood which used to be considered the most disadvantaged part of the district; however, due to good transportation and favourable location (closeness to the city centre; well-established infrastructure; several well-kept parks with play areas for children) the interest of investors has increased, which has resulted in attracting new inhabitants. Currently the neighbourhood, as well as the whole district, is considered safe and rather wealthy. Nevertheless, several blocks of social flats are located in the neighbourhood. Regarding the population the locality it is rather homogeneous, more specifically inhabited by Poles.

The primary school is situated in the Praga-Północ district. The area is separated from Żoliborz just by the Vistula river. The neighbourhood where the selected school is situated is full of contrasts. On the one hand, due to its central location and well developed transportation, it is attractive for investors and old tenement houses and abandoned factories are being restored and turned into art galleries, art centres and lofts. On the other hand, the new investments may be about properties in a very bad technical condition and low standard (e.g. with a shared toilet for inhabitants of several flats; without hot water supply; without central heating). The neighbourhood is commonly regarded as dangerous and its inhabitants as socially disadvantaged (it is involved in the city revitalization program), having problems with the law and with drugs and alcohol abuse. A lot of artistic, educational and social programs dedicated to children and youth at risk of social marginalization have been implemented in the area.

The area where the school is located is rather homogeneous in terms of population - it is inhabited by Poles, though there is a considerable Roma group.

6.2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

In the preschool 3 teachers were directly involved in the study. All the professionals were women of Polish origin. Within both days of the study three researchers were accompanied by two teachers (two teachers took part only in one day of the study; one teacher took part in both days of the study).

In the primary school as a rule the class was supposed to have a class teacher and an assistant teacher (specialist responsible for supporting the children with special educational needs and the work of the class

teacher). However, at the time when the study was conducted the class teacher was on extended sick leave. Due to the staff shortage the responsibilities of the class teacher were divided between two teachers, hence as a result three teachers were engaged in the study, namely two substitute teachers exchanging the role of a leading teacher and an assistant teacher. However, the involvement of one of the teachers was limited and concerned only the organizational support.

Table 26. Overview of the target groups, sites and contexts involved

Target group	Context Type	Age range of children in the institution	City Area	Number of professionals involved	Number and age of children involved	Division in groups
Low-income	Formal, Pre-school	3-6	Warsaw, Żoliborz	3	13 (4-6 years old)	NO
	Formal, Primary school	6-15	Warsaw, Praga Północ	2	15 (8-10 years old)	NO

6.3 METHODOLOGY AND PHASES OF WORK

In both contexts two main types of actions took place. Firstly the preparatory actions concerning activities such as settings selection, establishing contact, elaboration of rules of cooperation (including adjustment of the study scenarios according to the professionals' suggestions) and completion of formal requirements concerning the case study implementation were taken (these actions lasted approximately 6 months in terms of the preschool and 8 months regarding the school). Secondly, the actions related to the implementation of the study with children took place. Within the process of negotiations with professionals in both settings it was decided that the research activities would be conducted within two days preceded by Day '0' dedicated to acquainting children with the researchers and allowing the researchers to learn more about the group of pupils. Outline of the actions conducted within the two days of the research is as follows:

Table 27. Overview of research actions undertaken in the preschool

POLAND - PRESCHOOL		
Day 1	Phase 1: Introduction of the study	<p>Step 1. Researchers introduced themselves as well as explained the goal of the visit; gave information concerning the documentation of the activities within the study and agreed upon the rules of involvement in the activities.</p> <p>Step 2. Preparation of the name cards for the researchers and children.</p>

	Phase 2: ID cards	<p>Step 1. Researcher presented her own ID card explaining in detail all the elements of the template as well as the idea behind the activity.</p> <p>Step 2. During the activity the researchers encouraged children to talk about their ID cards and to document their work.</p> <p>Step 3. A group discussion on the activities planned for the following day was held: children and researchers exchanged ideas on what the most welcoming aspects of the centre were.</p> <p>Step 4. After school leaving, researchers visited the centre and took photos of the places and toys mentioned by the children as welcoming and attractive. Preparation of a PowerPoint presentation using photos as well as the documentation of ID cards (photos, audio and video recordings), to show to the children on the day after.</p>
Day 2	Phase 1: Revision of the tasks accomplished on the previous day	<p>Step 1. The researchers showed the PowerPoint presentation consisting of two parts. The first part included the photos of the ID cards made by the children the previous day (and the audio or videos recordings of children presenting their cards).</p>
	Phase 2: Brainstorm - the welcoming characteristics of the centre and fields for improvement	<p>Step 1. The second part of the presentation consisted of photos and very brief descriptions of places, activities and toys mentioned by the children on the previous day. Based on the slides the group continued the considerations on the advantages of the preschool.</p> <p>Step 2. When the children seemed to have exhausted the topic, the researchers redirected the discussion to the aspects of the preschool which the children considered worth improving in order to make the place more welcoming to all.</p> <p>Step 3. The final stage of the discussion was an invitation to the suns and clouds task.</p>

	Phase 3: Suns and clouds	<p>Step 1. During the activity the researchers encouraged children to talk about their works.</p> <p>Step 2. When a child finished the task, he/she had an opportunity to present his/her work to the chosen researcher and document the presentation and/or the creation process.</p> <p>Step 3. Finally, the children could stick their sun(s) and cloud(s) on the 'preschool sky'.</p>
	Phase 4: Trip around the premises	<p>Step 1. The children who had finished the suns and clouds task were invited to guide one of the researchers around the centre (a small-group activity). Photos and recordings were made during the trips.</p>
	Phase 5: Summing up the activities	<p>Step 1. When all the volunteers had completed the trip the whole group was invited to sit on the carpet in order to sum up the activities.</p>

Table 28. Overview of research actions undertaken in the primary school

POLAND – PRIMARY SCHOOL		
Day 1	Phase 1: Introduction of the study	<p>Step 1. Researchers introduced themselves as well as explained the goal of the visit - learning about the children's experiences in their school in order to identify its most welcoming aspects and the qualities which could be improved in order to make it more accessible to all children.</p> <p>Step 2. Next, information concerning the documentation of the activities within the study was provided to the children and the rules of involvement in the activities were discussed.</p> <p>Step 3. The final step of this phase was to prepare the name cards for the researchers and children.</p>
	Phase 2: Discussion on the letter	<p>Step 1. The researcher introduced the activity based on a letter describing other academics' experiences from a visit to a different primary school.</p> <p>Step 2. The researcher read the letter aloud and each part of the letter was discussed with children.</p>

	Phase 3: ID cards	<p>Step 1. First, one of the researchers presented her own ID card explaining in detail all the elements of the template as well as the idea behind the activity (... knowing who the pupils are could make the new students feel more confident and welcome at the new school...).</p> <p>Step 2. During the activity the researchers encouraged children to talk about their ID cards.</p> <p>Step 3. Each of pupils who had accomplished the task was encouraged to document his/her work.</p>
	Phase 4: Summing up the activity	<p>Step 1. Volunteers presented their ID cards to the group.</p> <p>Step 2. Afterwards the researchers briefly presented the activities planned for the following day.</p>
Day 2	Phase 1: Revision of the tasks accomplished on the previous day	<p>Step 1. The researcher asked the class to tell the research assistant who came to the class for the first time about the activities conducted on the previous day.</p> <p>Step 2. Volunteer pupils presented their work.</p>
	Phase 2: Brainstorm - welcoming and worth improving aspects of the school	<p>Step 1. The discussion about the welcoming aspects of the school was initiated.</p> <p>Step 2. When the topic was exhausted the researcher redirected the discussion to the topic of improvements which could be introduced at their school in order to make all children feel welcome.</p> <p>Step 3. Finally, the presentation of the suns and clouds templates and explanation of the task took place.</p>
	Phase 3: Suns and clouds	<p>Step 1. Children and adults together rearranged the tables (making four big tables allowing children to work in small groups). At each of the tables there was a group of 3 or 4 children. Various arts & crafts materials were provided to children as well as the templates of suns and clouds and the 'school sky' template.</p> <p>Step 2. During the task the researcher encouraged children to talk about their ideas.</p>

	Phase 4: Trip around the school	<p>Step 1. Simultaneously to the suns and clouds activity the small groups of children were showing the researcher what they considered the most meaningful places in the school.</p> <p>Step 2. Photos and recordings were made during the trips.</p>
	Phase 5: Summing up the activities	<p>Step 1. Within the whole group the researcher asked the volunteer pupils to share their experiences from the trips around the school and to present their ideas of the school skies.</p> <p>Step 2. The researcher finished the study by acknowledging children's engagement.</p>

6.4 METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES

6.4.1 METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS

The main methodological challenge concerned the sample selection. More specifically, as in the Polish study the focus was on identifying inclusive aspects of educational settings as perceived by native socially disadvantaged children, in our research group occurred questions such as: should settings involving high or low percentage of pupils of such background be included?; in what context (high or low percentage of socially disadvantaged children) it is easier for children to notice inclusive aspects of the settings? As a result the decision on involving one group with just a few and the other with the majority of socially disadvantaged children was taken.

6.4.2 ETHICAL CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS

The main ethical challenge concerned gaining children's consents for documenting their works and utterances (photos, audio recordings, videos). Within the process of establishing the legal framework of the study the rules of children's participation were defined, taking into consideration the suggestions of different professionals (legal advisor, ethical committee members, researchers and practitioners), guidelines provided in the study manual and the research literature.

The following rules were considered:

- the children were to be informed about the voluntary involvement in all activities within the study at the beginning of both days of research activities, and about the possibility to withdraw from or join the activities at any time they wished without any negative consequences (oral consent);
- within each phase of the study the children were to be asked if they agreed to be audio recorded or photographed;
- every participant would be asked each time for their permission to document his/her work with a photograph;
- the children would be given the choice if and which pieces of their work might be kept by researchers and which they would like to keep for themselves (e.g. for the parents, friends);
- the decision of the children who did not want to take part in the study or any of the proposed activities or to be audio recorded would be fully respected, i.e. the researchers and teachers would not try to convince them to change their mind;

- even though the researchers tried to foresee all the possible obstacles within each phase of the study, it was taken into consideration that something might happen that would make the children upset, hence the decision on providing all activities (even small-group tours around institutions) in the presence of at least two adults; this arrangement would allow one of the adults to individually support a child in need while the other would continue the activity with the rest of the group.

The researchers felt that the elaborated rules secured children rights. At the same time the researchers could have noticed that on some occasion children ‘used’ their rights and for example refused their artwork to be photographed without any particular reason (their decision was respected on every occasion). One may say that children were not used to making decisions in such matters and simply had a pleasure of being ‘decisive’.

6.5 CODING AND ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

The first phase of the analytical process was to transcribe the group and individual discussions with children registered in Day 1 and Day 2 of the study in both settings. Moreover, due to the limited amount of transcripts (on many occasion children declined being audio recorded) the decision on including into the analysis researchers notes made in Day 0, Day 1 and Day 2 in both settings was taken. The notes included information on the course of the activities such as teachers’ involvement, class behaviour, especially reactions on the proposed topics and tasks as well as some meaningful utterance of children. After each day of the study researchers involved in the activities exchanged their impressions on the research actions and went through the notes in order to clarify potential inaccuracies. Within some phases of work in both settings the two, namely the audio recordings and notes were made. Both the transcripts and notes were ordered into files according to the phases of work.

Table 29. Overview of the analysed data

	Preschool_Day_0	Preschool_Day_1_phase_1	Preschool_Day_1_phase_2	Preschool_Day_2_phase_1	Preschool_Day_2_phase_2	Preschool_Day_2_phase_3	Preschool_Day_2_phase_4	Preschool_Day_2_phase_5	School_Day_0	School_Day_1_phase_1	School_Day_1_phase_2	School_Day_1_phase_3	School_Day_1_phase_4	School_Day_2_phase_1	School_Day_2_phase_2	School_Day_2_phase_3	School_Day_2_phase_4	School_Day_2_phase_5
Transcripts			v			v	v	v			v	v	v			v	v	v
Notes	v	v	v	v	v	v	v		v	v	v		v	v	v			

The following step was the coding of the transcriptions as well as the researchers notes. Coding of the documents was conducted using the qualitative data analysis software ATLAS. ti 8. The data was analysed using top-down approach, more specific it was coded based on the coding book developed by leaders of the task. The coding process was initiated with a coding exercise, common to all participating teams (researchers from Italy- leader of the task; England, Norway, Germany, Greece, Czech Republic and Poland), which resulted with some adjustments of the codes according to the suggestions of the involved academics. In Poland coding of the data was conducted by one researcher (involved in both studies - in the school and in the preschool). If any doubts concerning coding occurred the other researchers involved in the task were consulted.

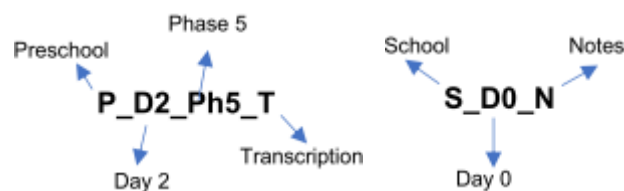
On many occasion it was impossible to identify voices of children on the recordings and assign them to particular pupils. Moreover researchers’ notes taken into consideration within the process of analysis did not always include the precise number of children who for example mentioned a particular topic during a

group discussion or the number of children who mentioned the same factor undermining their well-being at school several times. As a result it occurred not possible to calculate the precise number of participants who mentioned different topics and frequency of the topics occurrence. Hence, researchers decided to focus on the (prevalent) occurrence vs not occurrence of the topics across phases of the study instead of exact frequency of each theme occurrence or presentation of the Word Cloud. Table 30 presents the results of the analysis.

Table 30. Overview of the topics occurrence within each phase of the study

		P_D0_N	P_D1_Ph1_N	P_D1_Ph2_T/N	P_D2_Ph1_N	P_D2_Ph2_N	P_D2_Ph3_T/N	P_D2_Ph4_T/N	P_D2_Ph5_T	S_D0_N	S_D1_Ph1_N	S_D1_Ph2_T/N	S_D1_Ph3_T	S_D1_Ph4_T/N	S_D2_Ph1_N	S_D2_Ph2_N	S_D2_Ph3_T/N	S_D2_Ph4_T	S_D2_Ph5_T
Diversity	Social inequalities											v	v	v				v	v
	Language											v							
	Culture											v	v						
Social Relationships	Inclusion/ acceptance	v		v					v			v							
	Discrimination											v							
	Conflict									v				v				v	
	Friendship			v	v					v			v	v				v	
	Behavior	v	v		v			v		v		v		v				v	
	Emotional support/ empathy	v	v						v	v		v				v			
Identity	Linguistic identity											v							
	Social identity													v					
	Myself in the future			v									v						
School organization	Space	v			v	v		v				v	v					v	
	Rules	v	v	v		v		v											
	Play	v		v	v			v				v	v					v	
	Learning	v	v		v													v	
	Food	v	v		v							v						v	
	Teaching Approach			v						v								v	
Factors influencing inclusion and well-being	Factors promoting well-being	v	v	v	v	v	v	v				v					v	v	v
	Factors undermining well-being									v		v			v		v		
	Transformative factors			v		v	v	v				v		v		v	v		v
Representations	Image of the child(ren)						v	v		v	v	v	v	v			v		
	Image of the teacher	v					v			v								v	
	Image of the school	v						v			v		v	v				v	
Complementary codes	Peers				v	v		v	v										
	Teachers	v						v											
	Family	v	v	v	v	v		v		v		v		v					

*v- the topic occurred prevalent



6. Lastly the co-occurrence of factors influencing inclusion and well-being with thematic and complementary codes was investigated. This exploration was focused on (prevalent) co-occurrence vs lack

of co-occurrence of codes at preschool and primary school separately.

Table 31. Co-occurrence of Factors influencing inclusion and well-being with thematic and complimentary codes

		Preschool			School		
		F1. Factors promoting well-being	F2. Factors undermining well-being	F3. Transformative factors (proposals and wishes)	F1. Factors promoting well-being	F2. Factors undermining well-being	F3. Transformative factors (proposals and wishes)
Diversity	Social inequalities				V	V*	V
	Language						
	Culture						
Social Relationships	Inclusion/acceptance	V					V
	Discrimination						
	Conflict				V		
	Friendship	V					
	Behavior				V		
	Emotional support/empathy	V			V		
Identity	Linguistic identity						
	Social identity						
	Myself in the future						
School organization	Space	V		V	V		
	Rules	V	V				
	Play	V		V	V		
	Learning	V			V		
	Food	V					
	Teaching Approach				V		
Representations	Image of the child(ren)	V				V	
	Image of the teacher	V			V		
	Image of the school	V					
Complementary codes	Peers	V					
	Teachers	V					
	Family	V				V	

*v- the topic occurred prevalent

6.6 MAIN FINDINGS

In this section of the report we present a brief synthesis of the analysis conducted on themes and subthemes referring to the thematic codes and subcodes which occurred the most frequently across the phases of the study and were the most meaningful in regard to the study goals. Moreover, some exemplary excerpts from transcriptions and notes are provided.

6.6.1 FACTORS PROMOTING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL

Most of the factors promoting children well-being at (pre)school in both settings concerned different aspects of the premises organization. Moreover, especially at school children seemed to discuss and reflect on the physical characteristics of the premise more easily than about for example rules or teaching approach.

School organization; Space & Play

Attractive play areas. In both sites this factor was mentioned as one of the key characteristics making the

children feel good on the premises (the children were very keen to describe the different places which they liked; they mentioned many different examples; the topic turned up several times on both days and was mentioned by most of the children). In the preschool the following places were mentioned: two outdoor playgrounds - the small one in front of the centre and the big one combined with a big open space at the back of the centre; the plastic balls pool; the space in the class with gymnastics ladders and mattresses; the sofa corner in the corridor, where individual children or small groups could spend time with parents or members of the staff; the art room; the exhibition space, where volunteer children placed their art works.

'a playground because I can be there and play with my friends'

'I like the corridor because children might 'drive' toy vehicles there'
(P_D2_Ph1_N)

R: ...And what is in here (pointing to the area with children-sized cars)

C: Here we can drive those cars around the corridor.

R: And is it fun that you can drive these cars in the corridor?

C: Well, yes, but, only for me they are too small - because they are for smaller children. And this one is too big for me... (child walking from one vehicle to the other).

C: And this one is perfect!

R: Oh, some vehicles are too small, some are too big and some are perfect.

C: This one is perfect for me. And that one.

(P_D2_Ph4_T)

R: Here, is the pool with balls, how cool. Is this a place where you play every day?

C: Yes, in our preschool we can all play wherever we want (children show excitement).

(P_D2_Ph4_T)

R: And can the parents take a look at your artworks?

C: Yeah, and that's why we have these boards here, because we want to show them what we're doing.
And this is my artwork.

(P_D2_Ph4_T)

At the school the children mentioned: the library, where children might read books, but also do some arts & crafts or use the computers; the playground; the corridor on the first floor with gymnastics ladders; the after-school centre rooms; the locker room, which was appreciated:

R: Wait a minute. The Child 1 has an idea about a welcoming place.

C 1: Yes, because yesterday I drew the library.

R: You drew the library. Why?

C 1: Because it is a nice place for me. I like the library!

R: You drew a place in which you feel good in?

C 1: Yes! I drew nice floor, colourful books on the shelves I drew.

R: I remember that. You drew it on your ID card. It was your favourite place at school!

C 2: You saw that drawing?

R: Yes, of course. I saw it because Child 1 drew it on the ID card I gave you. I remember what the picture was. And Child 1 tell me, why is it nice in the library?

C 1: Because the books are nice.

(S_D2_Ph4_T)

C 1: That when we come here we can go outside. So maybe we can show our outside playground?

R: It is a bit too cold to go outside. Tell me what do you like about the playground?

C 1: The backyard and the playground! And we're playing there.

C 2: And the swings! And the ship!

R: *The ship? You have a ship?*

C 1: *Yes, it was renovated.*

R: *And what can you do on the ship?*

C 2: *You can steer it, and there is a tunnel and you can go down, climb up, and there is a small red balcony on it.*

(S_D2_Ph4_T)

C 1: *And this is our locker room.*

R: *And why is it important?*

C 1: *Because we come here when it is time to go home!*

C 2: *Because the smell is nice in here! It reminds me of the smell of the subway!*

R: *Oh, so we feel good not only in places where our friends are, but also in places where there are nice smells that remind us about something, is that right?*

C 2: *Yes, and because it is downstairs.*

R: *Aha, just like the subway?*

C 2: *Yes, like the subway.*

C 1: *Only the subway is underground, and the cloakroom is downstairs.*

(S_D2_Ph4_T)

School organization -> Rules

Choice in terms of where children spent time. The factor turned up on several occasions in both places. However, in the preschool, where the children are used to considerable freedom in terms of visiting friends/siblings in other groups and inviting other pupils into their own class, the topic was more strongly highlighted (it turned up on more occasions and more children mentioned it).

T: *Who wants to say what is fun about our preschool put your hand up and tell us about it.*

C: *That you can go to other groups where there are other children. And it's fun there.*
(P_D1_Ph2_T)

Moreover, this factor appeared in the context of the younger children as something that they appreciated in their preschool and would like to stay as it was, whereas at school the children referred to this aspect as visible to some extent, though they would appreciate having more occasions to make decisions on where they spent time during breaks and within afterschool time (the majority of the children were enrolled to the after-school center- *świelica*, organized at school).

Factors promoting well being at school -> Complimentary code- Family

& School organization -> Rules

Preschool as a welcoming environment for parents. This aspect turned up only in the preschool. On several occasions the children mentioned different contexts of the parents' involvement in the life of the preschool, for example while talking about the sofa corner where they could spend time together, or about their parents' visits in the preschool to read books or talk about their profession.

'I like it (the outdoor area) because my mummy and my brother sometimes visit us when we are playing on the preschool playground'

(P_D2_Ph1_N)

'about the pool with balls: I like when my mummy brings me in the morning to preschool, because I can play in the pool with balls and she waits on the couch close by'
(D2_Ph1_N)

Moreover, the researchers observed a few situations of parental involvement in the daily life of the preschool. For example, during one of the visits of the researchers preceding the study, one mother, who had walked her children to the centre, came with the younger son, who was eager to have breakfast with the group, which teachers agreed to. During the meal the mother helped and talked not only with her own children, but also with other pupils. The group was very positive about the presence of the mother, they asked her questions about the baby brother of their friend. The comfortable, positive atmosphere in this situation, but also in others, clearly indicated that parents were frequent guests in the preschool and that the children appreciate their presence.

School organization; Teaching approach

Individual and small group educational arrangements. In both places the children indicated that they appreciated individual and small-group activities organized in places other than their classroom. More specifically, the school children stated they enjoyed working in the pedagogue's room or in the room for sensual integration classes because it was quiet there, they were alone with the adult (or with just a few pupils) and could talk with him/her, and they regarded the activities as attractive.

C: *It is cool in here because we color our own coloring books and we can be here alone only with the pedagogue or a friend.*

(S_D2_Ph4_T)

The preschool pupils mentioned that they enjoyed reading books in small groups on the sofa in the corridor. One may say that the children appreciated the friendly and intimate atmosphere of individual and small-group activities.

Representations; Image of the teacher

Positive relations with the practitioners working at the institution. Positive relations with different members of the staff were pointed out by the children at both places. Importantly, in both groups the children most often mentioned the teachers who were present during the research actions. The children indicated that they liked the aforementioned professionals in general because they were nice or because they organize attractive activities.

C: *And here is the library and it is cool, because the librarian works in here.*

R: *And what do you do in here?*

C: *We are borrowing books in here.*

R: *And is there something else happening in here?*

C: *Yes, once with the Librarian we had classes in the room next door, it was very fun with her, and because we were working in small groups...*

(S_D2_Ph4_T)

R: *And what is on your sun*

C: *Teacher*

R: *Why the teacher?*

C: *Because I like her a lot!*

(P_D2_Ph3_T)

Pedagogue from the after-school center (the pedagogue was met on the corridor during one of the trips around school): *Oh, xx, I haven't seen you in a long time!* (the pedagogue spontaneously hugs one of the children who is smiling and they start to chat).

T: *That's right, the ladies (the after-school pedagogues) in here know the children and it's nice, it's a nice*

atmosphere...

R: *Do you like to spend time in the after-school center?*

C:

Yeees!

(S_D2_Ph4_T)

School organization; Food

Availability of tasty food. The children did not refer to the topic directly, but the situations observed by researchers clearly indicated that the availability of tasty food was an important factor making children feel good on the premises. During the snack break at the school the teacher gave the children small cartons of milk. All the children were very eager to get the drink. When one of the girls realized that there were some cartons left (some children were absent that day), she asked the teacher if she might take the milk home for her parents. Before the assistant teacher answered another child approached and said that he would also like to take some more milk home for his brother because there wasn't any at home. As it seemed that more children wanted to ask for the milk, the assistant teacher said that there were only two cartons left, and more children would like to take an additional carton of milk, hence none of children would get one. The assistant teacher was very sensitive explaining the situation and children seemed to understand her decision. Afterwards the teacher explained to the researchers that it was a frequent situation for some children to take the food available at school for their parents or siblings and that she sometimes noticed that pupils came to school without anything to eat. Moreover, the snacks (fruit) and drinks (milk, apple juice) provided at school on occasion are very attractive to children.

R: *Ok... and what's in here?*

C: *Lunches.*

T: *Girls, are you eating lunch in the cafeteria?*

C: *Yes*

T: *Do you like coming in here? Are the lunches tasty?*

C: *Very much, they are tasty, all the dishes, because sometimes I don't have lunch at home.*

(S_D2_Ph4_T)

6.6.2 FACTORS UNDERMINING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL

All the factors undermining the well-being of the children presented below were mentioned solely by the school pupils.

Social relations; Conflict and Behavior (negative)

Negative experiences with another pupil. On several occasions a few pupils stated that they had had negative experiences regarding relations with classmates. For example during the snack break, when one of the boys was drawing, two other boys approached him and started to tease him about his picture. When the researcher reacted the boy said that this was normal and that the boys in the class often mocked him and that is why he did not like school. One may consider that the boy would mention it as the reason for not liking school when the topic of the factors undermining the children's well-being at school was discussed before the break; however, the boy had not mentioned the issue then. On a different occasion, one of the girls talking about her ID card stated that she would not like to be aggressive anymore and that her classmates often made her very angry, for example by laughing at her weight (the girl had been diagnosed with behavioural disorders). Moreover, a different pupil claimed that children did not want to play with him, though the researchers' observed that the boy's behaviour was extremely discouraging, as he was loud (he often shouted instead of talking), used swear words and was generally overwhelming towards others (also physically). During the sun and cloud activity one of the girls wrote on her cloud, that in their class there aren't any toys, she clarified it was 'because the children don't know how to play with them nicely'. The

researcher sensed, that the child heard that from adults who decided to take away toys from the class as a result of their inappropriate behaviour.

C: *I want new toys.*

R: *To be in the classroom?*

C: [pointing to the back of the classroom] *because there on the shelves is empty, there is nothing*

R: *There is not enough toys in the room?*

C: *It's because we don't know how to play nicely...*

(S_D2_Ph3_T)

Representations; (Self)image of the children & Image of the school

Instability of the staff. Even though the children did not refer directly to the turnover of the staff, there were some situations showing that this was an important issue affecting their well-being at school. For example, even though the class had been informed that the leading researcher would be accompanied by different assistant on both days of the study, the children were particularly interested in the reasons for the change. One may say that the children wanted to make sure that the assistant had not withdrawn because of their behaviour. On another occasion the researcher was present during a conversation of some children who argued who would teach them the following day. One of children said that it did not matter because the person would not withstand their class and leave at some point.

At the beginning of day 1 of the study, the researcher greeted the children and introduced the research assistant. The children asked where was the researcher present at the first day (the children were informed beforehand that only one researcher would accompany them on both days). To this question they found out that she had to travel on business (...). During the discussion, some of the children started to suggest that the researcher did not come on the second day because, like the other teachers before, 'she could not stand us' and had enough of their class, and that did not want to work with them.

(S_D2_Ph1_N)

School organization; Rules

Rhythm of activities incompatible with children's needs. Before the study the researchers learnt from the assistant teacher that children usually 'worked nicely' for the first two lessons during the day, but afterwards it was very difficult for them to stay focused and they would start to misbehave. The researcher's observations from Day '0' confirmed that at about 10am (lessons started at 8 am) the children started to lose interest in the activities, stopped following the teacher's instructions, and an episode of aggressive behaviour took place during the break. Also during the days when the research actions took place the children started to lose interest in the activities after two hours of work. One may say that the group was giving clear signals that they needed a longer break at a certain point, or should switch to physical activity; however, due to the school's organizational framework the children's needs in this matter were not sufficiently considered as the teacher mentioned that 'it is the third grade and the children have to get use to the rhythm of 45 minutes subject lessons'.

Diversity; Social inequalities

Office supplies and arts and crafts materials not available/not sufficient to needs/expectations of all children. During the ID cards activity it happened that a few pupils did not have crayons or that the crayons they had were in a very bad condition. One of the boys stated that he had bad crayons, so he would not draw and it would be good if there were the same crayons available to all children at school.

During the ID task, one of the researchers approached a boy who had not worked on his ID card for a

longer time. Researcher asked what is the reason for that and the boy answered that had no good crayons (in the pencil case he had only 3 crayons of which one was broken). He said “Crayons should be available at school for all children, and the best would be if they were the same for everyone”. During a later conversation with a teacher, the researcher found out that the boy often did not have necessary didactic materials, which was due to the poor financial situation of the family, but also to the neglect of the child by the family.

(S_D1_Ph4_N)

Representations; (Self)image of the children

General malaise. During the discussion on the factors undermining the well-being at school some children referred to out-of-school / general experiences.

R: *Could you tell me about your ID card?*

C: *I like to play football. Others like me, because I am friendly. At school I like to play nothing. I would like to change in myself... I would like to change in myself my life...*

(S_D1_Ph3_T)

The boy quoted above was not open to clarification questions, and was upset when asked; on seeing that the researcher moved on to the further sections of the ID card. Moreover, the researchers observed that most school pupils had great difficulties in saying positive things about themselves. More specifically, the children found it hard to define what others might like about them or to name what they liked about others. One may say that their vocabulary of positive characteristics was much more limited than their vocabulary of critical and negative expressions. Another example of general malaise was when one of the boys wrote on a cloud that what needed to be improved at the school was *lost youth*.

R: *And what is written in here?*

C: *Lost youth.*

R: *And what does it mean “lost youth” for you?*

C: *I’m not gonna tell.*

(S_D2_Ph3_T)

6.6.3 CHILDREN’S PROPOSALS

Making the school (more) welcoming: Transformative factors

In the preschool the children’s proposals of what could be changed in the setting to make it more welcoming to all children turned out impossible to be realized within the research process. For example the pupils proposed to enlarge the building by adding a second floor in order to organize a dancing space with a disco ball, where they could dance to rock and roll music and listen to Michael Jackson’s songs.

R: *Child can tell me what would you like to change in your preschool to make it more welcoming to all children?*

C: *So that on the second floor was disco with a disco ball.*

(P_D1_Ph2_T)

The other idea concerned planting a forest in the playground. The researchers failed to moderate the discussion to other, more ‘down-to-earth’ topics. Moreover, all the clouds in the ‘Suns and Clouds’ activity also referred to the positive characteristics of the preschool (or the disco ball and dancing space which the children would like to have). One may say that the children found their preschool welcoming enough and did not feel any need to introduce changes. The only ‘doable’ proposal that was made was adding the photos from the children’s trips around the preschool (one of the conducted activities) and of the preschool sky (collection of children’s artworks produced within the ‘Suns and Clouds’ activity) to the PowerPoint

presentation made by researchers and showing it to new coming pupils the following year to introduce them to the preschool context and to inform them about all the great things they would experience. However, it was not an original idea of the children, as during the summary of the children's accomplishments on the first day one of the teachers suggested that the presentation should be shown to other stakeholders of their community (parents, other pupils and teachers). Nevertheless, the researchers added the materials collected during the second day of research actions and provided the preschool with the presentation, which the director decided would be used for the new coming group of children the following year.

Regarding the older group, the children came up with just a few proposals of what could be changed or added to the school in order to make it more welcoming to all children. The proposals concerned: developing a more attractive set of extracurricular activities including field trips (children did not specify what kind of activities they would like, they only used general expressions such as *cool, interesting, nice...*). Additionally, the pupils mentioned that children would feel better at the school if *things* (equipment) *worked well*. The pupils explained that the interactive board in their class had been broken for quite a while, and so had some of the computers in the library.

C: *I want to have a new interactive board, because the old one is broken.*

C: *Anyway, you can see for yourself.*

R: *So the new interactive board would make you and other children feel better in school?*

C: *Yes!*

(S_D2_Ph3_T)

Three boys suggested that a quiet rest area would help the children who were tired of school noise to feel better.

C: *If there was a room for relaxation we could...*

R: *If there was a room for relaxation it would make your school even more welcoming?*

C: *Yes, it is much too loud, especially during breaks and it may scare some children!*

(S_D2_Ph3_T)

Lastly, children stated that every child felt better at school when he/she knew where their classroom and other important places at school were, especially in a situation when the child does not speak Polish. The discussion with the children over their proposals did not result in any implementation ideas, except stating that all should help new students by showing them where the important places at school are.

6.6.4 EDUCATIONAL/FORMATIVE IMPACT

On professionals

The researchers asked the teachers about their impressions of the study after the first and the second day of research activities.

Preschool teachers

- The teachers claimed that even though they were aware that children felt well in the preschool, it was valuable to hear them talking with external professionals about which characteristics of the place they appreciated the most;
- The teachers stated that they were surprised how much the children enjoyed seeing their works and listening to themselves and their peers during the PowerPoint presentation.

School teachers

- One of the teachers was positively surprised with the reaction of the children to some questions concerning the letter (the letter was read to the children within the 'Letter' activity), for example when

the children said without any hesitation that they knew that when they had a problem they could share it with the teachers at school.

- One of the teachers stated that due to frequent misbehaviour of the children small group activities were not organized in the class, but seeing that children were very engaged in the suns and clouds task while it did not end in a disaster, she decided she would try to work with the pupils within this organizational arrangement;
- One of the teachers was surprised with the fact that the children said nice things to each other during the activities, for example when some pupils stated that at school they liked to play with their classmates, as she had heard mostly negative comments regarding the relations among them;
- One of the teachers was also surprised that children said so many positive things about her, even though she had worked with the group for just a few months and the teacher was surprised to learn how important the library was for the children;

On children

School pupils

The researchers found out from the teachers about the arrangements in which the class usually worked and were concerned that children were not used to taking part in group discussions or small-group tasks. However, it turned out that putting pupils in the position of experts and the joint work on developing the rules concerning the participation in tasks encouraged the pupils to actively participate in the proposed tasks. But most importantly, children seemed to genuinely enjoy the cooperation with one another.

On the context

Preschool

It is planned that the presentation based on children works will be used as part of the adaptation program for new pupils next year.

School

After the discussion of the study's results with the teachers, the idea to involve the children in creating a framework of extracurricular activities at school was put forward. More specifically, it was decided that the school pupils (not only from the class but from all lower-primary school classes) would be more actively involved in defining topics of extracurricular classes in the following year.

6.7 DISCUSSION

6.7.1 LIMITATIONS

The following study had several limitations of which three seem to be of the greatest importance for its implementation.

Firstly, the researchers involved in the study found the time allocated for the research activities insufficient. During the process of negotiations with professionals in both settings preceding the study implementation the research group was requested to shorten to two days the time in which to conduct the planned activities. The director of the preschool justified the request by indicating that three days of research could have negatively affected the organization of the centre's work. The preschool has an inclusive status and during the day a lot of children participate in pull-out compensatory activities with specialists, so in order for all children from the selected group to be able to participate in the project, the activities for children from the whole facility had to be rescheduled. At school the pedagogue indicated that in the class selected for the study there was a delay with the implementation of the curriculum and some parents were likely to refuse additional three days of 'missing' the regular lessons. Hence in order to avoid problems with getting consents, the decision to shorten the study was taken. As a consequence in both settings researchers had to be very cautious and to some extent directive while conducting the study in order to fit all of the planned activities within the available time. Even though the organizational objectives were met, all three researchers involved felt that having more time could have enhanced participants for more in-depth reflection on the topics discussed.

The second limitation concerned the lack of information on the individual participants' socio-economic background. The main focus of the Polish research group was to explore perspectives of children from native socioeconomically disadvantaged families on facilitating elements to feel good at school within differences. However, due to the legal constraints, professionals from both settings could not provide researchers with information on individual children's family background. As a result, researchers' knowledge about this important characteristic of the children was general, anonymized or of statistical character, for example: half of the children's families use the support of social services. In consequence, on some occasion it occurred difficult to interpret children's opinions or behaviour without the knowledge on this aspect.

Thirdly children involved in the study (as well as professionals) had very limited contact with non-Polish speakers and representatives of other cultures; most probably because of this reason it was very difficult for researchers to enhance participants to reflect on linguistic or cultural diversity and the (potential) experiences of such children at their (pre)school.

6.7.2 LESSONS LEARNED

Factors influencing inclusion and well-being of children were grouped into: *Factors promoting well-being and inclusion at school*, *Factors undermining wellbeing and inclusion at school* and *Transformative proposals*.

Of the three topics, the children in both settings most often and most precisely reflected on the *Factors promoting well-being and inclusion at school*. On many occasions pupils pointed to different physical arrangements which have the potential to enhance inclusion and well-being of all children at the premise.

It may suggest that in terms of such aspects participants have concrete needs and preferences – for example, what they found important was the availability of indoor as well as outdoor play areas. Moreover, especially school pupils reflected on arrangements which could be of particular importance for children of socioeconomically disadvantaged background, more specifically – the common and free of charge availability of school aids, as well as meals. Pointing to these aspects shows that even in a big European city as Warsaw, there are still families who require support in providing children with sufficient developmental and educational conditions. Preschool children on many occasions mentioned their appreciation of time spent together with parents in the setting, which indicates importance of the setting's openness for families presence. Less often than school organizational arrangements (physical and rules of operation), though still considerably frequent, children mentioned the importance of positive social relationships especially among peers. Some pupils indicated that the possibility to play with friends at the premise makes them enjoy the time spent in the setting in general.

Factors undermining wellbeing and inclusion were specified only at the primary school. Pupils referred to negative/violent interactions among peers, which may suggest that the inability to create valuable relations with schoolmates is an important factor undermining children's well-being. Clearly children need some support in developing and sustaining positive relations among themselves, as well as some guidance in terms of strategies how to deal with difficult/conflict situations. Moreover, pupils suggested that their wellbeing at school is influenced by their general malaise and low self-esteem. This may suggest that additional efforts of professionals should be aimed at building children's self-confidence, self-esteem as well as enhancing their interests and talents development.

Even though children did not come up with any *Transformative proposals* which could be implemented within the research process, some ideas of how to enhance inclusion and well-being of all pupils in the settings occurred. Pupils referred to the need for organizing relaxation rooms, small group activities and appreciation of spending time on the corridors where only a few children are playing at the same time. One may say that during the (pre)school day it happens that children feel overwhelmed with noise and the presence of other peers and adults, and they also need time as well as space to regenerate. Participants indicated also that they appreciate extracurricular activities, for example musical ones and, especially at school, they would like to have more impact on the type of activities which are organized. Lastly, some pupils mentioned that they would appreciate having more trees (or even a forest) in the outdoor playground, which may suggest the need of children to spend more time in nature.

6.7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the children's experiences, opinions and ideas shared with researchers within the research process the following recommendations were formulated:

- **Peer relations should be an important concern of professionals.** Attention to the character of children's interactions and support of professionals to build positive and valuable relations among children is needed, as some pupils fail to resolve conflicts with classmates, which causes their frustration and may negatively influence their attitude toward school.
- **Basic school aids should be available to all children at the premise.** Children, especially the ones with disadvantaged socio-economic background, may find lack of required school aids an obstacle to get engaged in educational activities.
- **Food and drinks should be available to all children at the premise.** Tasty food, especially for children with disadvantaged socio-economic background, may be an important aspect positively influencing their attitude toward school.

- **Children should be enhanced to actively participate in taking decisions on the arrangement of play areas at the premise.** Children have specified preferences concerning the organization of play areas, hence in order to make them attractive to all pupils they should be included in the process of the arrangement of play areas.
- **At the premise there should be space for children to relax in peace and quiet, in small groups or individually.** Children feel overwhelmed with the intensity of the large group experiences and need space to calm down and spend time individually or in a small group.
- **Parents should be encouraged to visit the premise and take part in the organization of its work.** Children find it important to share their (pre)school experiences with families.
- **Attractive extracurricular activities should be available at the premise.** Organizing extracurricular activities which would be adequate to the interests and talents of a particular group of pupils may positively influence children's self-esteem and their general attitude toward school.

7. THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

In this case study, we focus on activities conducted as part of the WP2 Task 2.5 “Children Study” within the larger ISOTIS project in the Czech Republic. The study consisted of three activities focusing on the views of children on inclusion and wellbeing in the school environment. Activities were conducted in four classrooms attended by approximately 80 children in two primary schools at two locations. While the classrooms in the city of Brno were attended by 20-30% of pupils with minority ethnic background with only a low percentage of Roma pupils, the two classrooms in Ústí nad Labem included higher percentages (40% on average) of pupils with Roma background. In this country report, we reflect on data collected during this study. We present a detailed characterization of the context, participants and methodological as well as ethical issues we dealt with. At the end, we outline the findings of the study.

Keywords: ethnically minor pupils; Roma pupils; children’s views on inclusion; Czech Republic; ISOTIS project

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This study is part of the international research project ‘Children’s views on inclusion at school’ within the European Project ISOTIS (see D.2.5: Pastori G., Pagani V., Sarcinelli S., Technical report on the Child Interview study. Children’s views on inclusion at school’ - digital source available on Isotis.org). The Children Study was part of the larger WP2 study focusing on “Resources, experiences, aspirations and support needs of families in disadvantaged communities”. While other studies in this work package focused primarily on the views and perspectives of parents from socially disadvantaged families, the main actors of the Children Study were children from ethnic minorities and socially disadvantaged communities, their peers and teachers within the classroom environment.

The Children Study aimed at exploring children’s perspectives on facilitating elements to feel good at school. The goal was to allow children of the selected sites to express their perspectives about:

- what they think about differences (at cultural, somatic, linguistic, socio-economic etc. level), about their social and cultural identity and about their school context in terms of inclusion;
- what they identify as quality indicators of school inclusiveness;
- what they propose to make their school more welcoming and inclusive.

(D 2.5. Technical report, Pastori G., Pagani V., Sarcinelli S., 2019)

7.2 PRESENTATION OF THE SITES

In the next table, you can see the overview of the target groups, sites and contexts involved in the Children Study.

Table 32. Overview of the target groups, sites and contexts involved in the Children Study.

Target group	Context type	Age	City/Area	Number of professionals involved	Number and age of children involved	Division in groups
Romani	Formal Primary School	6-10	Brno	2 (+2)	43 (8-9 years old)	21 (class 3.B) 22 (class 3.C)
	Formal Primary School	6-11	Ústí nad Labem	2	41 (9-11 years old)	18 (class 5.B) 23 (class 4.C)

7.2.1 SELECTION OF LOCATIONS

We selected two schools in two locations in the Czech Republic, in the cities of Brno and Ústí nad Labem. These locations were chosen in line with the general selection criteria defined for the whole ISOTIS project: urban areas with ethnically diverse populations but different social policies. Brno and Ústí nad Labem both have relatively high percentages of people with a minority background and both host the biggest populations of the Roma minority, which was one of the target groups for the Czech Republic in the ISOTIS project. The criterion of increased ethnic diversity was crucial as the Czech society is predominantly ethnically homogeneous (the population of minority background constitutes less than 5%). There were two sub-teams within Masaryk University working on the Children Study in these two different locations who first contacted the two selected schools in these respective cities. Even though the first meeting with the school directors at the beginning of 2018 were very “smooth”, cooperation with the school in Brno (School 1) soon became complicated with regard to the informed consent (see below, Ethical considerations). The collaboration with School 2 in Ústí nad Labem was very successful as ISOTIS researchers cooperated with this specific school on many projects in the past, and what is very important, this school has a good reputation as a “community” school which encourages Roma pupils’ ethnic self-awareness and pride. In the Czech context, this approach is still very rare.

7.2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCATIONS

School 1 located in the Brno inner-city comprises approximately 20-30% pupils from ethnic minorities per classroom. We selected this school as it is a typical urban school with a slightly higher number of pupils with minority background. The school neighbourhood is affluent as it is located in the middle of the city’s historic center; however, the streets inhabited mainly by socio-economically disadvantaged families are not so far away from here. This localization brings a specific social mixture of pupils which is characteristic for this school. The “typicality” of this particular school resonates also in the way diversity is or is not addressed. Although diversity among pupils is apparent and visible once you enter the school corridors, the school’s image is rather neutral or “colour blind” in this regard. There are no clear signs of presence of diverse pupils

on the school websites, notice boards or the walls, despite the fact that the school is indeed attended by pupils with Roma, Vietnamese, Ukrainian, Moldavian or other backgrounds. In this particular school, we visited classrooms on the primary level of education; in the spring 2018 two classrooms from second grade, in autumn 2018 and spring 2019 the same classrooms in third grade. Pupils were 8 to 9 years old on average. Concerning the character of the different projects the school is involved in and the level of support measures targeted on the pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), as many ethnic minority pupils are categorized as SEND, the school can be perceived as average - the teachers often work together with teaching assistants and the school provides out of class-tutoring aimed on pupils with low performance in any subject. This tutoring is facilitated by the Faculty of Education as many tutors are pre-service teachers from the teacher education programme. The school states Dalton plan principles in the School Education Programme, which is an official school-level curriculum document. However, it is not very often applied in first grade on primary level. The same is true about the multicultural education which is a cross-sectional topic in the Czech curriculum system, however again much more applied on lower-secondary level than on primary.

School 2. The school is situated at the edge of Ústí nad Labem agglomeration with a direct connection to the biggest highway in the Czech Republic. The school comprises approximately 40% of Roma pupils per classroom on average, however there was a higher number of Roma pupils in one classroom involved in the Children Study (70%), while there were about 30% of Roma pupils in the second classroom. These were third to fifth graders on primary school level, being 9 to 11 years old. School 2 is an ethnically mixed school with a relatively high percentage of pupils with Roma background and an extraordinary level of support measures targeted on this specific minority group. The commonly used languages at this school are Czech, Roma and the so called Roma “ethnolect”, a mixture of Czech and Roma languages which is widely used in many Roma families living in the Czech Republic. The school is involved in various social projects provided by different actors (state, NGOs etc.), such as “Colourful planet”, “Integra Jam”, “Between Fences Festival”, “Supporting Competences, Literacy, and Executive Skills of Pupils from a Socio-Economically Disadvantaged and Culturally Different Environment” etc. The names of these projects refer to the proactive stance of the school director as well as the teachers in dealing with the issues diversity represents in their daily teaching practice. The head teacher received Alice Garrigue Masaryk Award for Human Rights because the school has been succeeding in inclusive education under her leadership.

7.2.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

School 1. We started to cooperate with two novice teachers (one male, one female) in spring 2018. The female teacher started her maternity leave at the end of the school year (June 2018) and therefore we continued with another teacher who became the class teacher of one of the involved classrooms (2.C). However, this new teacher had an injury and left the classroom for two months. For this period (September-November 2018), he was represented by another teacher who used to work in this very same classroom as a pedagogical assistant in the school year 2017/2018.

In the second classroom (2.B), we cooperated with one male novice teacher. In spring 2018, there was one pedagogical assistant primarily assigned to a pupil with Ukrainian background who was diagnosed with ADHD. The two main male novice class teachers were recommended for the project by the school director at the beginning of our activity in early 2018.

We stress the gender of these teachers as it is not very common that a male teacher works at primary school in the Czech context. We perceived both these teachers as very enthusiastic, cooperative and willing. All of these teachers were of majority ethnic background.

School 2. We cooperated with two teachers. The main teacher of the classroom 4.B, later 5.B Svatošová uses numerous teaching methods (frontal teaching, group work, peer work, games etc.). She supports active teaching so that pupils do not sit only in the benches, but they move around the classroom and often sit on the carpet in the back of the classroom. Discussion is a crucial method used by the teacher – definitely, pupils are not only passive receivers of information; they are actively encouraged to think about various topics, share their feelings and ideas. Pupils who are slower have enough time to come up with solutions of individual tasks. The second class teacher Krátká (the classroom 3.A, later 4.A) also uses many different teaching methods, however frontal teaching is the most prevailing. Despite that, the teacher encourages pupils to stretch or even dance the class dance. Unfortunately, the classroom is not very spacious and there is no carpet on the floor. Several working groups were established in this classroom. These groups had different names and pupils could move from one group to another during the year with regard to difficulties they faced when dealing with specific curricular themes or tasks. Discussions are an important part of the group work and pupils love to present their opinions. Pupils who have already finished their work help their slower mates.

7.3 METHODOLOGY AND PHASES OF WORK

At both schools, we started with getting familiar with context, teachers and children in spring 2018, including participant observations in all classes and interviews with the four teachers. We conducted a fifth interview with the teacher taking over the classroom 2.C (in the autumn of 2018 it became 3.C). In the late fall 2018 we started to discuss the activities we would be conducting in the classes within the WP2.5 Child Study. We continued with the three Children Study activities in autumn and winter 2018. In the following table you can see the steps of the three activities.

Table 33. Steps of the three Children Study activities.

BRNO AND ÚSTÍ NAD LABEM		
Day 1	Introduction of the study	<p>Step 1. Researchers introduced themselves as well as explained the goal of the visit; gave information concerning the documentation of the activities within the study and agreed upon the rules of involvement in the activities;</p> <p>Step 2. Preparation of the name cards for the researchers and children.</p>
	ID cards	<p>Step 1. Researcher presented the activity in detail and explained what is expected from the pupils.</p> <p>Step 2. During the activity the researchers assisted pupils with their ID cards, explained details of the activity if unclear.</p> <p>Step 3. Researchers encouraged children to talk about their ID cards during a group discussion.</p> <p>Step 4. After the activity, researchers took pictures of the ID cards.</p> <p>Step 5. A discussion with the teachers took place. Researchers discussed the process and outcomes of the activity. They also discussed suggestions for improvement.</p>

	Suns and clouds	<p>Step 1. Pre-preparation of suns and clouds.</p> <p>Step 2. Researchers explained the activity and asked children to cut out three suns and three clouds.</p> <p>Step 3. Researchers asked pupils to write down three positives and three negatives they like/do not like about their school.</p> <p>Step 4. Researchers encouraged children to talk about their suns and clouds during a group discussion.</p> <p>Step 5. After the activity, researchers took pictures of the suns and clouds.</p> <p>Step 6. A discussion with the teachers took place. Researchers discussed the process and outcomes of the activity. They also discussed suggestions for improvement.</p>
Day 2	First aid kit	<p>Step 1. Researchers read the first part of the letter to children (letter talking about the imaginary new classmate coming from a foreign country).</p> <p>Step 2. Researchers explained the activity.</p> <p>Step 3. The teacher divided the class to smaller groups.</p> <p>Step 4. Researchers and the teacher assisted pupils with the first aid kit preparation. They discussed potential options pupils can elaborate on.</p> <p>Step 5. Researchers encouraged children to talk about their first aid kits during a group discussion.</p> <p>Step 6. After the activity, researchers took pictures of the outcomes.</p> <p>Step 7. A discussion with the teachers took place. Researchers discussed the process and outcomes of the activity. They also discussed suggestions for improvements.</p>
Day 3	Focus groups (The letter)	<p>Step 1. The teacher divided pupils to groups.</p> <p>Step 2. Each researcher took one group and found a calm space in the school.</p> <p>Step 3. Researchers introduced the activity and explained the rules for the focus group. They also announced that the interview would be recorded.</p>

		<p>Step 4. Researchers asked about the previous activities. They were interested whether the pupils remembered the activities. They also asked about the first part of the letter.</p> <p>Step 5. Researchers read the rest of the letter (one part after another) and they were posing related questions. Thus, pupils were given the opportunity to discuss the letter and its topics. Researchers were also encouraging pupils who were shy or not so dominant in the discussions.</p>
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7.4 METHODOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES

7.4.1 METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS

We did not face any specific challenges/restrictions regarding the timing of the Children Study activities. In discussion with the teachers, we estimated 2 lessons per activity as needed for their conduction and this time frame was followed by the researchers successfully. Although in the informed consent signed by parents, we stated 5 lessons per month as the maximum time spent by researchers in the classrooms, we faced some objections by a parent at School 1 who complained about “losing” too much time in some subjects due to the research project. Therefore, we decided to conduct just 1 Children Study activity per month to dispel parents’ worries.

The mistrust of some parents at School 1 was also a stimulus for adaptation of the sequence of the Children Study activities. We did not conduct them precisely in line with the sequence proposed in the Children Study Manual. As some of the parents in School 1 were cautious about collecting the audio-recordings of interviews with children which should follow the activity based on the Letter, we decided to conduct the focus group interviews with children as the last activity. We started with My Identity Card & Suns and Clouds, continued with the Inclusive First Aid Kit and finished with Focus groups with pupils based on the Letter. As a result, we had to restructure not only the sequence but also the continuity of all three proposed activities in the Manual. At School 2, the timing of activities proposed in the Children Study Manual was followed without substantial changes.

Regarding the roles teachers played during the Children Study activities, there were not any role conflicts or unexpected reactions. From the beginning of our research cooperation, teachers knew that within the Children Study they would give us detailed feedback about proposed activities and suggest specific adaptations with regard to the context of their classrooms, however, during the conducting of the activities in their classrooms, they would take the role of passive observers rather than active leaders. Thus, e.g. focus groups with pupils based on the Letter activity were even conducted without the teachers’ presence. They only recommended to researchers the optimal composition of the groups to facilitate the discussion easily.

Regarding the requests by teachers for specific adaptations of the Children Study activities, the main criteria encompassed the adaptation to the local cultural context and children’s age. Regarding the context-based adaptations, after the discussions with teachers we changed minorities in the focus groups discussions (e.g., we changed Fatima coming from Morocco for Lin coming from Vietnam in 3.B and Luka coming from Croatia in 3.C). These changes reflect the Czech context better concerning the composition of minorities living in the country and the pupils’ ability to imagine and personalise the situation described in the Letter;

or we changed the situation with Ramadan for the situation in which two Muslim boys do not eat pork meat in the school dining room together with other kids. Regarding the age as a criterium for adaptation, we adapted the Letter as pupils in fourth and fifth grade had some difficulties with understanding and remembering all of the information so we made the content of the Letter more simple.

The biggest challenge in doing research with children is always the amount of time spent with them together in the classes, especially if the main topic of the research deals with everyday identities, performing differences etc. The younger the children are, the more serious this imperative becomes. Although we spent some time observing the classrooms during the Exploratory phase of this project (May-June 2018), it was still not enough to know a classroom very well and to be able to trace the peer-relation patterns and interpret what was seen with relative ease. On the other hand, as this research design combines the basic and applied research approaches, we are confident enough to claim that we were able to familiarize with the children well enough to gain their trust and respect during the course of all activities. The restricted time we spent in the classrooms had also an impact on the exploitation of data from informal situations. Unfortunately, we relied mostly on the data gathered during the formal situations, as we did not have many opportunities to spend time with the pupils informally, e.g. during the breaks. However, as especially ethnographers would know, the informal situations can be much richer source of data than the formal ones.

In this report the researchers show excerpts from the interviews with teachers or the pupils involved in the study. We decided to provide their anonymized names as it allows triangulation of ideas and topics targeted within the Children Study. It allows interconnections between teachers', pupils' and researchers' views. Also, especially in the excerpts from the focus groups, where more respondents (pupils) talk, it happened that the interview transcriber was not able to catch the name of the particular respondent. In this case, we use the term --RES--, meaning that we were not able to identify the speaking pupil.

7.4.2 ETHICAL CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS

With regard to the Ethical challenges we faced during this research, we would like to differentiate between the formal and the processual ethics in the research. The formal level of research ethics of the Children Study became complicated at School 1 in Brno.

The class teacher and our gatekeeper from the class 2.C involved at School 1 did not communicate properly the main information about our research project to parents. Therefore, some of them rejected to sign the informed consent forms and one father complained to the Ethical Committee of Masaryk University. In May 2018, we had a meeting with small group of parents who did not want to sign the consent forms. Some of them required specific modifications of the consent form and we also established together a rule that they will be informed at least one week before each activity will be conducted in the classroom about the planned activities and the data to be collected. After many consultations with lawyers from the Ethical Committee of Masaryk University, we submitted the final informed consent forms to these parents during parents meeting held in September 2018. All of them gave us their approval with the exception of one father from the second classroom who was not in line with the inclusive character of the ISOTIS project because he does not want to take part in any kind of project supporting the Roma children. Finally, he agreed with the participation of his daughter under the condition that no data would be collected about her during the activities.

Regarding the processual ethics which is negotiated with research participants on an everyday basis, we faced some obstacles in involvement of ethnically minor pupils during the focus groups. Although one of the aims of the study was to give voice to children as they are often overlooked by the mainstream research, ethnically “other” children were rather silent during the group interviews and they were not very enthusiastic

about sharing their experiences about the country of origin or their cultural habits with the class even during the other Children Study activities. This was interpreted by the teacher of the classroom 2.C as a possible effect of the former teacher's approach - he supposed that these pupils stayed rather shy when being asked about something, than saying something wrong as some of them were still not fluent in Czech language.

The research ethics in collaboration with our teacher participants was not an issue for us at all. As was already mentioned, they were very friendly and cooperative and we did not face any ethical challenges or sensitive issues we would be afraid of sharing with them.

7.5 CODING AND ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

The main research paradigm of this report was qualitative study with participatory elements focusing on giving voice to pupils and their teachers regarding the wellbeing and inclusion in classroom environment. The collected data (fieldnotes, focus groups with pupils, artefacts produced by pupils, interviews with teachers) were transcribed, anonymized and uploaded to the programme for qualitative data analysis Atlas.ti. The data collected by each researcher in the Czech Republic (4 persons) were coded by the coding tree provided by the Italian coordinators of this research study and further developed within the whole international research team (see, the List of codes below). The Czech team did not create any specific local codes as the total number of codes in the shared coding tree (over 70) seemed to be a sufficient number and covered all the potential themes to be followed during the analysis. The main analytical advantages of this strategy are based on the triangulation of diverse data in the whole data set where situations and utterances provided by different actors are at the same place and could be interlinked through specific codes.

The List of Codes (Coding Tree)

- CC1. Peers
- CC2. Teachers/school
- CC3. Family
- D1.1 Economic poverty
- D1.2 Cultural poverty
- D2. Language
 - D2.1 L1
 - D2.2 L2
- D3. Culture
- F1. Factors promoting well-being at school
- F2. Factors undermining well-being at school
- F3. Transformative factors (proposals and wishes)
- I1. Cultural identity
 - I1.1 Cultural identity pos
 - I1.2 Cultural identity neg
- I2. Linguistic identity
 - I2.1 Linguistic identity pos
 - I2.2 Linguistic identity neg
- I3. Social identity
 - I3.1 Social identity pos
 - I3.2 Social identity neg
- I4. Somatic features

I4.1 Somatic features pos
I4.2 Somatic features neg
I5. Myself in the future
I5.1 Myself in the future pos
I5.2 Myself in the future neg
R1. Image of the child/student
R1.1 Image of the child/student pos
R1.2 Image of the child/student neg
R2. Image of the teacher
R2.1 Image of the teacher pos
R2.2 Image of the teacher neg
R3. Image of the school
R3.1 Image of the school pos
R3.2 Image of the school neg
R4. Image of the society
R4.1 Image of the society pos
R4.2 Image of the society neg
SO1. Space
SO2. Time
SO3. Rules
SO4. Play
SO5. Learning
SO6. Food
SO6. Teaching approach
SR1. Inclusion/acceptance
SR1.1 Inclusion pos
SR1.2 Inclusion neg
SR2. Discrimination
SR2.1 Discrimination pos
SR2.2 Discrimination neg
SR3. Conflict
SR3.1 Conflict pos
SR3.2 Conflict neg
SR4. Friendship
SR4.1 Friendship pos
SR4.2 Friendship neg
SR5. Behavior
SR5. Friendship
SR5.1 Behavior pos
SR5.2 Behavior neg
SR6. Emotional support
SR6.1 Emotional support/empathy pos
SR6.2 Emotional support/empathy neg
SR7. Emotional support/emp
T1. Roma
T2. Linguistic diversity
T3. Low income
T4. Formal 3-6
T5. Formal 8-11

7.6 FINDINGS

Table 34. Co-occurrences among main thematic codes and codes Factors promoting/undermining inclusion and Transformative factors.

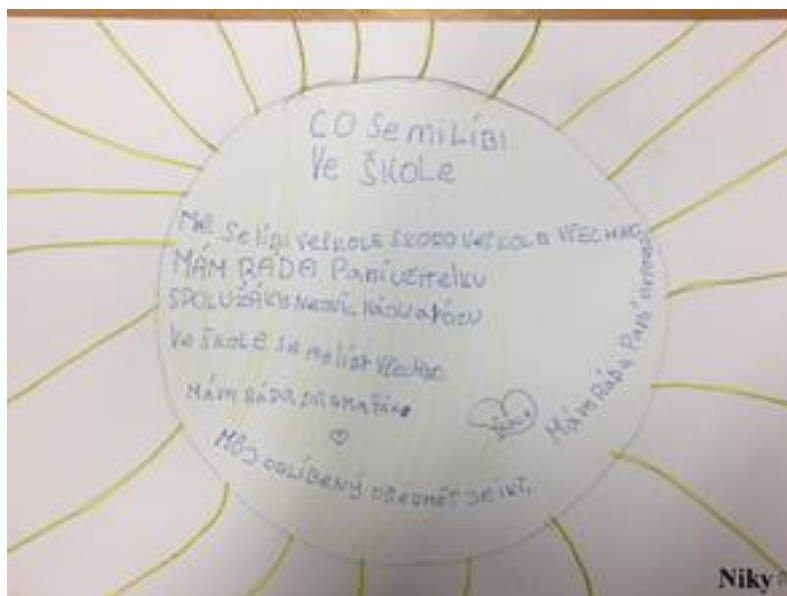
Over-codes	FACTORS PROMOTING WELL BEING AND INCLUSION	FACTORS UNDERMINING WELL BEING AND INCLUSION	TRASFORMATIVE FACTORS
Site: Brno typology Codes	Target 2 Formal 8-11	Target 2 Formal 8-11	Target 2 Formal 8-11
Diversity			
Social inequalities	0	5	0
Language	0	10	9
Culture	0	0	2
Representations			
Images of the child-student	0	4	0
Image of the teacher	1	0	0
Image of the school	0	0	0
Image of the family	0	0	0
Identity			
Cultural i.	0	3	1
Linguistic i.	0	2	0
Social i.	2	1	0
Somatic features	0	0	0

Myself in the future	0	0	0
School Organization			
Space	1	0	2
Time	0	0	0
Rules	0	0	0
Play	2	0	6
Food	0	0	0
Learning	0	5	3
Teaching approach	0	4	1
Social relationship			
Inclusion-acceptance	0	7	12
Discrimination	0	0	0
Conflict	0	4	0
Friendship	0	3	4
Behaviour	3	4	1
Emotional support/Empathy	0	1	1

7.6.1 FACTORS PROMOTING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOLS

One of the main facilitators supporting well-being at school is the **teacher**. At School 1, both male teachers have been mentioned as positive aspects of the children's school attendance. The pupils labelled them as good teachers they like. In one of the after-activity reflections, one girl said that what she did not like about her school was that one of the teachers was leaving. According to some children, bad teachers are the reason why kids leave the school.

In Ústí nad Labem in 4.A in classroom, which has a very positive relationship with their class teacher, teacher is among other things the factor that makes children feel well at school.



Another positive aspect of being at school that the children identified is **friends**. The fact they can spend time with their friends in the classroom or in the after school activities is a strong facilitator. In this regard, children evaluate positively the after-school clubs where they can play with others and meet new kids. Petra from 3.B in School 1 wrote in her sun that she likes friends in her school, because she could not be herself without them. In a similar way, the children from School 2 stated that their classmates are the most important factor influencing their being in the classroom. They mentioned them frequently in their suns, while no one put anyone else from the collective in the cloud.

Time spent together with their classmates in the afterschool club or at the PE lessons seems to reinforce their relationships that are one of the essential factors supporting well-being at school. Friendships are relevant also in relation to inclusion of children with minority background or those who do not speak the local language, which is problematised in the section 6.5.1.

The fact that the children respect each other manifested during our group interviews. When someone talked, the others did not interrupt them, and everyone listened. During the group interview about an imaginary girl Fatima, all children agreed that they would accept everyone disregarding their look, language, or cultural and social habits. And in regard to this, there was a general consent that they would not like it if someone would judge them for what they are. Many of them have experienced it and know how bad it is.

--INT---

And so it happened to you that someone would jeer at you, laugh at you?

--Kája---

Yeah. Unpleasant, and that's why I don't jeer at people because it was horrible, when they jeered at me.

Another girl: I also wouldn't jeer at anybody.

--INT---

And why for example?

--Kája--

For example that I'm fat.

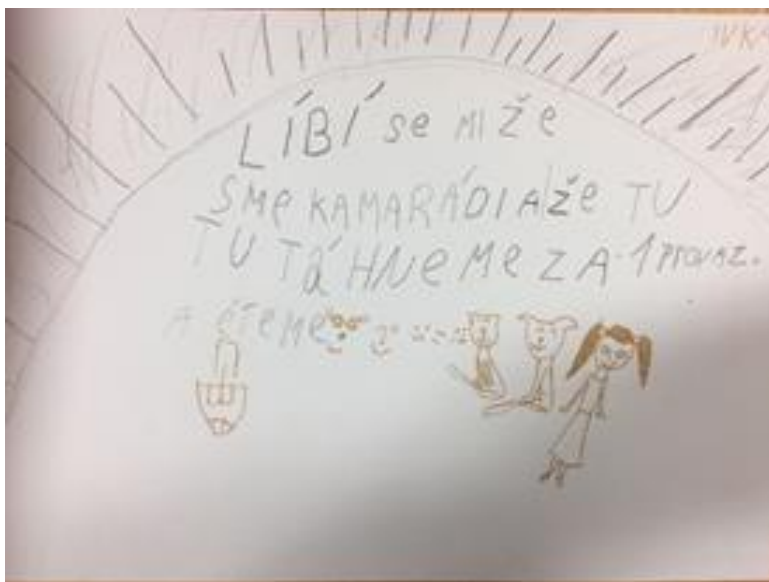
--INT---

Well, it isn't nice, is it?

--Kája---

No. Or for instance that I am a Roma.

(group interview, 4.A, 19. 12. 2018)



One of the factors identified as supporting inclusion and well-being in school is **language**. Here we provide one example but we further discuss language in the next chapter. In School 2 in Ústí nad Labem, cultural diversity and language differences surfaced in interviews mainly in 5.B, which had been attended by a girl from Vietnam until the last school year. She was very popular among the children. During the activities led by the class teacher (activities within Child study), children were asked to remember former classmates that they missed. Most of them mentioned this Vietnamese girl.



The pupils admired her for how fast she had mastered the Czech language, which she learned so well that she soon became better than most of the class. She formed close peer and friendly relationship with the children, she taught many of them some Vietnamese words and offered them home-made Vietnamese food to taste.

--Nela--

We used to have a friend who came from Vietnam.

--Kája--

From Vietnam.

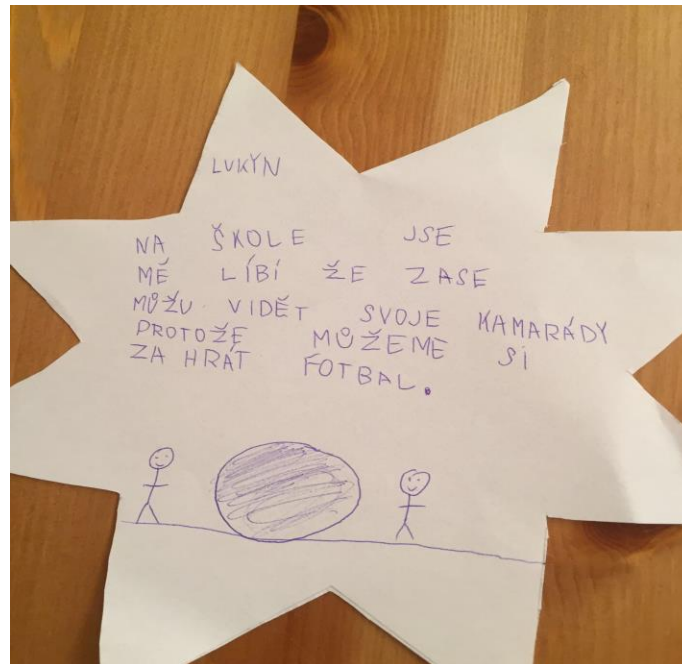
--Peřanec---
 Yes, she was Jitka.
 --Kája---
 Jitka.
 --RES1---
 And then we taught her some words.
 --Nela---
 She could only say "Ahoj".
 --INT1---
 She could not speak Czech?
 --Nela---
 No. We taught her.
 --Kája---
 But then she was best in Maths and Czech from the whole class.
 --INT--
 Also in Czech?
 --RES---
 [children speaking simultaneously] Yeah.

(group interview, 5.B, 19.12. 2018)

The fourth set of facilitators refers to some **curriculum subjects**. Significant number of pupils mentioned PE as a supporting factor because they are allowed to move instead of sitting all the time; or creative education (namely painting) because they learn how to draw and paint, they can create products; music education because they can sing. When looking at the filled in clouds and suns in School 2, it is obvious that children like various taught subjects and after-school clubs that the school offers. Many children mentioned English, IT or PE. It is interesting to make a comparison between the classrooms 4.A and 5.B, when the children from 4.A wrote about the class teacher or their subjects in their suns, while the suns from 5.B abound with the end of school or breaks.

That is to say, another facilitating factor the children stated is **breaks**. They associate them with free time they can spend playing and talking to their friends, eating and not studying. Finally, a small number of pupils named **school environment** as a positive facilitator. To them, big rooms and nicely decorated school hallways and classrooms evoke positive emotions.

Regarding the discussed hypothetical arrival of new children not speaking Czech in the classroom (cf. chapter 6.5.2.), one of the important factors strengthening inclusion and wellbeing was play (for example, playing hide and seek, soccer, double). Playing and games often appeared in suns, in which the pupils were asked to capture things/persons/activities they like in their school. One of the Inclusion First Aid Kits that were created in one of the activities for the imaginary Lin, was a bilingual Czech-Vietnamese board game Ludo (Člověče, nezlob se).



7.6.2 FACTORS UNDERMINING WELL-BEING AT SCHOOL

When the children at School 1 were asked what they associate with the school, majority of them identified the **process of teaching/ learning** (in the Czech language, there is only one term for both). Part of them associates learning with negative characteristics. These children connect it to boredom, testing, bad grades. They do not like exams because they are nervous and fear bad grades. According to some of them, they spend too much time at school learning difficult things. They have to wake up early, they have to sit long hours (some say their backs hurt) and they do not have time for example to read anything else than textbooks.

In this regard, as well as in the previous section, kids name also particular **subjects** they do not like (like the Czech language or Maths, which they consider difficult).

Another set of negative features that children associate with school refers to their **peers**. For example, some do not like when other kids shout, when they make fun of others or when they are rude. Some children added they do not like fights. For example, Jirka from 3.B write in his cloud that he does not like when others lock him in the bathrooms. Except for two boys with concentration difficulties and louder expressions whom other children labelled as “those who mock others and do bad things to other kids”, it did not seem from what children reported that there would be any animosities in the classrooms, gender or ethnic based. However, based on the other data collected, it was obvious that differences were in some situations thematised. One of the Roma girls seemed she has not made any friendships in the classroom. This girl looks shy, she did not speak too much in the interview. One of the teachers called her “Sleeping Beauty” and the other teacher said in the interview:

She will stand where you put her, she will stay there, and what you tell her to do she attempts to do somehow. She will never initiate any friendship, she also actually has friends from other Roma families only. And I think she is not able to extend it further, and she does not wish to, she is ok with that, she is very submissive, so she sticks to the others a lot.

(interview with teacher Černý; 3.C., 29.11. 2018)

During the breaks she used to sit alone just looking at other kids. During the focus groups kids were mocking her about her being quiet and taking a long time to answer the question. They expressed tendencies to talk on her behalf or skip her during answering the questions. In general, the teacher said she is shy and that he wants to motivate her positively in her school performance.

In general, though, the children faced difficulties explaining the reasons why they like or dislike aspects they wrote down. They are able to indicate what makes them feel good or bad at school but when they are asked about justification, majority of them cannot explain why they feel that way.

Pupils from the School 2 shared in one of the interviews that they were afraid to put down their class teacher or the assistant who belong there in their opinion. Most frequently, children from this classroom wrote about sneaking, bad language, thefts, breaking of things, and then about learning and individual subjects taught at school. On the other hand, the children from 4.A wrote about different negatives, such as leaving the school for home, sitting alone in the bench or breaking class rules.

Even if language diversity in School 1 seemed to be more or less a latent subject, **language** seems to be an important factor in learning and in establishing friendships. When asked to reflect about languages and language diversity, pupils as well as teachers identified it as essential.

At the start of the project, teacher Procházka from 3.B associated the issue of language diversity primarily with the Moldavian pupil, whom he thought to have a language barrier that complicated his involvement in the teaching process, mainly in relation to the fact that neither his parents spoke Czech, and the whole family communicated in English and Russian. At the same time, he mentioned that the parents should learn some Czech in his opinion, to be able to communicate with the school. When dealing with concrete pedagogical situations, this novice teacher admitted some uncertainty, wishing to support the boy in positive self-presentation of his mother tongue on the one hand, but on the other hand following his main mission, teaching him the language of the majority.

And now, what we have here new, are the reading workshops... everyone brings their own books... eh... I felt almost sorry for him, when I had to persuade the Moldavian boy tha... he cannot have a book in Russian, that it would be good if he had a Czech book. And he felt really bad about it... that he cannot read the book in Russian, because he was reading it at home... and I was a bit nervous because I did not know how to approach it. The duty tells me that he should ... read his own book... in Czech language... so that he understands the text and acquires some vocabulary and developed some reading habit... which was fulfilled in a way, but on the other hand, I needed him to read in Czech. And was able to relate to it... to the book in Russian, which was a close language for him... and then I wanted him... and he wanted to read and he liked it.. but I wanted him to read a Czech book, which could have had an opposite effect... so I did not know how to approach it, yes. It was the last... eh... the last two hours of reading, when I had it all engaged, but I was nervous about it, since it could have been supported and used, but at the same time it was necessary for him to read in Czech. So it was a kind of paradox.

(interview with teacher Procházka, 11.7. 2018)

In relation to Roma pupils, the teacher applied a somewhat different perspective. We were surprised that he did not know whether his Roma pupils and their parents can actually speak Romani, but at the same time, he considered the way of communication in some Roma families as limiting the chances of his Roma pupils and he was able to recognize a Roma accent in Czech used by these parents. In this way, the teacher indirectly pointed to a restricted language code of some Roma families, which, according to him - mainly in

combination with frequent absence of some Roma pupils - resulted in worse school results and in language difficulties especially in written rather than spoken form.

The group interviews with pupils have shown that language became an important factor of inclusion or exclusion to/from the collective. When the pupils had to consider a hypothetical situation of an arrival of an imaginary girl Lin from Vietnam or boy Luka from Croatia, they mentioned language as the first potential trigger of exclusion. The children problematized the arrival of new pupils not speaking Czech mainly from the point of view of not understanding the majority language, which could deepen feelings of estrangement in the newcomers.

--INT--

If a classmate from another country came into your classroom, do you think she would feel different from the others?

--HONZA--

Yeah. (...)

--INT--

Honza?

--HONZA--

Well, she would feel different.

--INT--

And why?

--HONZA--

She's simply not in her country. So, she is not in her country [he stammers] and now she comes the first day, and it would be difficult for her. Being in a foreign country.

--INT--

And why do you think it is difficult to come to a foreign country? What is difficult about it?

--HONZA--

That she for example would not be able to speak Czech. And if some boys or girls were mean, they could call her names, and she would be sad. Eh.. so (laughter) she would feel sad.

(group interview, 3.B, 18.12. 2018)

When the researcher asked supplementary questions whether someone from their classroom would mock the girl or call her names, the pupils tried to picture their collective in a favourable light and place any potential problems outside - e.g. the new girl, Lin, would face potential attacks from pupils from other class collectives or from outside of the school.

--INT--

Hmm. So she would feel different, because she isn't Czech? Venda, you wanted to say something?

--VENDA--

For example, she would not speak Czech and they might make fun of her.

--INT--

Hmm. And do you think children from your classroom would make fun of her?

--collectively--

No [and interjections signalling "no"].

(group interview, 3.B, 18.12. 2018)

The threat of making fun of someone who cannot speak Czech or uses their mother tongue in class, was significantly thematized in group interviews. Štěpán, a boy from Ukraine, confirmed it based on his own experience and related to the researcher during one interview that children in kindergarten would make fun of him, because he could not speak Czech at the time. At the same time, he highlighted the importance of friends, since one friend in kindergarten helped him to learn Czech (group interview, 3.B, 18.12. 2018).

Thus, many suggestions on how to help new children to become part of the collective focused on helping them to learn Czech. Most of the pupils agreed that it is necessary to teach Lin at least some basic Czech words and gradually help her learn the language. Besides, they were suggesting some activities that they could do with her despite the language barrier.

The subject of **mockery and making fun** was present also in 3.C, and during the group interviews, some children pointed to others, whom they made fun of because they were not able to use correct declinations. In their opinion, it has to be terrible when you come to a school and you do not know the local language.

--Amélie--

I just want to say that when Alan joined us - well he was not the first one, no? - he needed some help with his Czech, he could not speak Czech well [they start to collectively discuss whether it is true]. And he always, when he did something, he would say: "já to nechtěla".¹³ [I didn't mean to with a female conjugation of the verb]. He would say "chtěla" instead of "chtěl".

And you are laughing at it, but you should, you should correct him, you are his friends. When I meet him in the street, and he by mistake says this, and I am next to him, then I correct him, I say Alan, you must say "nechtěl".

(group interview, 3.C., 18.12. 2018)

The children regarded not knowing the language as a significant barrier to acceptance in the collective and understanding in the classes. When the researcher asked in the group interview whether Alan sometimes speaks about Kosovo, I got the following answers:

--Petr--

No. Well, Alan is ashamed because Dan and Hugo, they would laugh at him... They jeer at him, because once he said "já jsem byla" [the verb in female conjugation].

--Janička--

I think that they make fun of him because the country seems very funny to them. The name. Kosovo.

(group interview, 3.C, 18.12. 2018)

On the other hand, some children strongly criticized those whom they saw as "bad", who "did something bad to others" and who "jeer at people".

The fictional stories about Zuna and Lin, which can be seen as sort of projective technique researching how pupils perceive inclusion, not only led the children to an emphatic perspective on the situation, but also to sharing of their own experience with being jeered at and exclusion - which is obvious from the following exchange between two Roma pupils.

--INT--

Never, you do not have a similar experience. And Franta, what about you?

--HONZA--

So, Franta, tell about it.

A girl: Tell it yourself.

¹³ In the Czech language, there is a different conjugation of verbs for male and female gender. Alan used the form "chtěla" or "byla" (female) instead of "chtěl" or "byl" (male).

--INT--

Franta, do you want to say something? Or you don't? This sneering, it can also be because of hair colour, how tall someone is. Yeah, it can have many reasons. In this situation, someone jeered at Zuna because of her cinnamon skin colour, but there are many reasons why someone can jeer at you, mock you. Franta.

--FRANTA--

I was mocked because of my hair colour in the kindergarten, because there was this boy, and he was blonde, and he was in the fourth grade already and I was in kindergarten, and I wanted to be friends with him and I said "Hi", and he said he does not want to be friends with me, because I was not blonde.

(group interview, 3.B, 18.12. 2018)

Franta stated that another boy did not want to play with him because of his dark hair colour. Franta has dark skin and very dark hair, and thus the hair colour can be a euphemism for the skin colour (in other words rejecting ethnicity is played as rejecting a partial somatic feature). Also, in My Identity Card activity, Franta indicated "hair" as something he would change about himself if he could. So, we could say physical features and negative personal experience based on differences in these features can have essential impact on self-perception in childhood. Also the Roma girl Lucka mentioned a similar experience.

--LUCKA--

There was one girl in the fourth grade, who kept insulting me. That I have lice and so on.

--INT--

Yes? And why?

--LUCKA--

She's not here anymore, you go to School 1 in fifth grade.

--INT--

Ehm, and why is it, why do you think she would say these things? It wasn't true, yes, you did not have lice.

--LUCKA--

Hmm, no, I didn't.

--INT--

So yes, it is... and were you sad about it? Unhappy? Or (...)

--LUCKA--

Yes, a bit. [the statement is longer, but there are disturbing sounds and it is not clear what the respondent says] (...) she would jeer at me.

--INT--

A bit. (...) And Lucka, what did you do? Did you tell someone about it?

[Lucka answers with a negative interjection]

--INT--

No? You simply wanted to keep it to yourself, you did not even tell your friends, the girls?

[Lucka stated something about a brother]

--INT--

And? Yes? And now I know, don't I? So you only told to your brother (...).

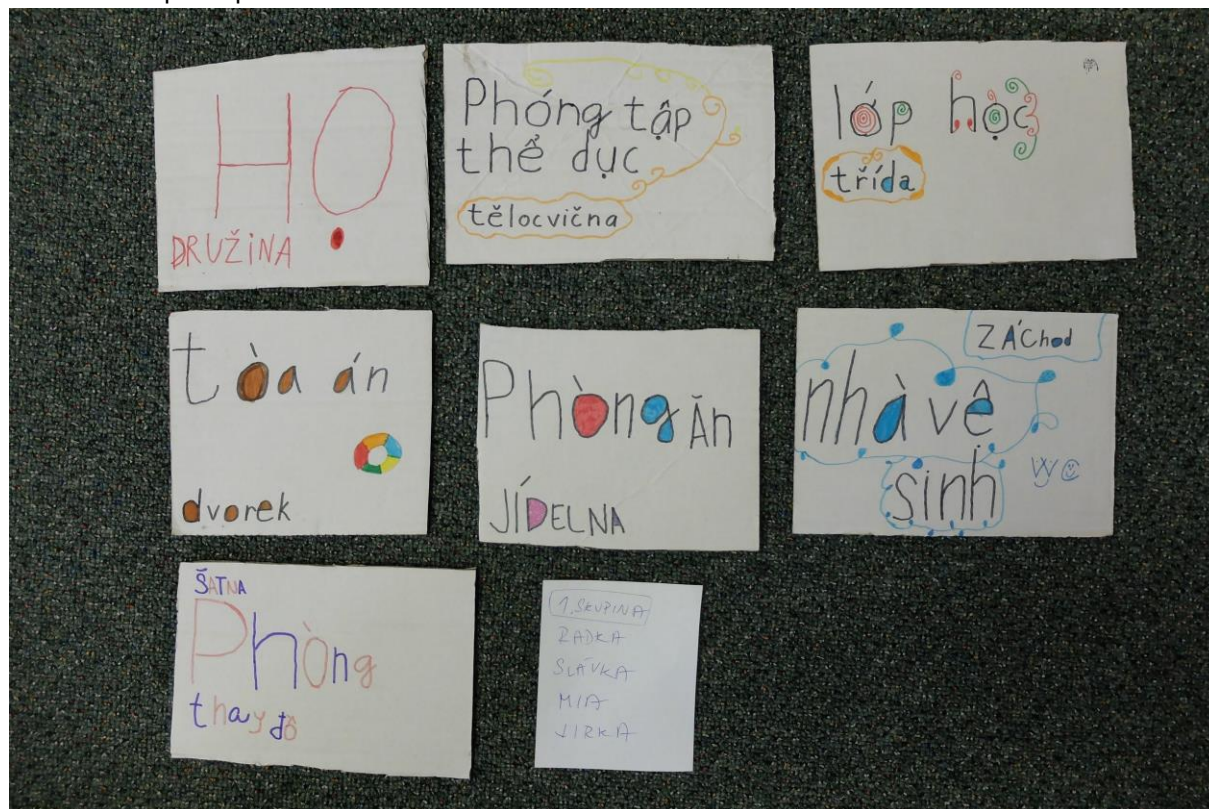
(group interview, 3.B, 18.12. 2018)

Lucka's experience is similar to what her classmate Franta mentioned. In the Czech context, hair full of lice is a symbol of dirtiness, poverty and neglecting parental responsibility of dealing with it. "Neglected" Roma children are very often seen by the "respectable" majority citizens as "full of lice". That is why Lucka met with this jeering, even if, according to teacher Procházka, she comes from a family that takes good care of her, her parents are educated and she has very good school results. However, ethnicity is not the only factor that can spark excluding tendencies between pupils. Other situations mentioned in the group interviews were bodily weight (Denis was jeered at in PE classes because of his being overweight) or the fact that someone does not own a mobile phone.

7.6.3 INCLUSION KIT AND TRANSFORMATIVE PROPOSALS

Generally, the children had difficulties formulating suggestions and proposals for potential positive change regarding inclusiveness of their classrooms. Also, as the majority of undermining factors referred to the content of curriculum, the children would prefer to cancel subjects or make them easier. They would also prefer not having any stressful exams. When it comes to negatives related to the children's own behaviour, for instance in case of fights or conflicts, some pupils suggested talking things out together with the teacher or calling parents to school.

Some suggestions emerged during the first aid kit activity when kids were asked to think about a hypothetical situation in which a new non-Czech speaker kid would arrive to their classroom. Besides dictionaries, with some assistance, they suggested distributing bilingual signs around the school. These labels would include important rooms and places around the school, offering orientation to potential newcomers. During or after the activity we have not implemented the idea of written signs. First of all, it was because of time constraints we faced. We spent the time dedicated to the activity (90 minutes) facilitating students' ideas and trying to guide them through the activity. Also, much time was spent on producing the items, transforming the ideas into tangible articles. However, teachers sounded optimistic about making the idea real. They suggested to propose it in a larger activity involving several classes within different grades of students. In their opinions, it would be a useful collective activity in which the entire school could participate.



The creation of Inclusive First Aid Kit at School 1 was followed by group interviews, in which children discussed how to help the imaginary girl Lin who is new in class and does not speak Czech. The pupils were stressing the need to teach her Czech, become friends with her and play games. In addition to this, they suggested creating a multilingual dictionary and labels on the walls.

Cooperation and friendship were manifested in the topics that the pupils stressed during group interviews. When they were expressing their opinion about the arrival of the new girl Lin from Vietnam, they repeatedly mentioned the need to find friends in the classroom as the most important thing. Also the story of an imaginary girl Zuna who have been ridiculed in the kindergarten for her cinnamon skin with things changing later at basic school inspired feelings of empathy in the children. They reflected on the fact that she must have been suffering in the kindergarten, because she had no friends and, worse, children would jeer at her ("she felt humiliated"), while at basic school, she had more friends, and thus she was able to feel better. In their perspective, friendship was the most fundamental premise for inclusion into collective, while play offered space for its establishing and deepening. Therefore, the pupils were suggesting various games/plays/activities, for which the Vietnamese girl Lin did not need to know Czech (hide and seek, football/soccer, city walks - more in the chapter Factors promoting wellbeing at school) and which could help her after the arrival to a new classroom. During the interview, the pupils discussed who is most friendly and can develop relationships with all classmates, including the new ones.

Similarly as pupils during the focus groups interview, also the 3.B class teacher Procházka from School 1 stressed the topic of cooperation as important. He saw his classroom as a close-knit, and if he should use one word to characterize it, he would say "team". In an informal interview, he stated he does not like any "groupings", since he himself was bullied as a child and he tries to deal with the slightest trace of it (field notes, 23. 4. 2018). He is aware of the fact that not everyone can be friends with everybody else, but it is necessary that children behave nice towards each other and are able to cooperate, when needed.

And more or less, I have been trying to work on this, so that it does not happen... that someone is sidetracked... so that they don't become asocial, but that everyone tries to (...) with everybody, and I have been appealing to it, so that the children take every individual as he or she is and... when someone is not exactly their favourite, they should at least find some common tone, if they have to... and fulfill what they need to do... and it does not have to take longer, but at the same time they should be able to rise above the fact that someone is like this and that, and so on.

(interview with teacher Procházka, 11.7. 2018)

During the third activity in School 2, in which the children were asked to design some aids for newcomers from foreign countries, we started by remembering the previous activities. The pupils recalled the interview and letter about the girl Fatima from Italy who was afraid that she would forget her mother tongue. We used this as a follow-up and asked them to imagine that there is a boy or girl from another country coming to their classroom from another country, like Fatima. Their task was to think about things that might make their life in a Czech school easier. The children were raising their hands and we put the suggestions down on the blackboard. They involved the dictionary of basic words and phrases, a poster with Czech traditions, school plan, city guide and a chart with all classmates. Then they divided into groups according to tasks they wanted to work on. They were supposed to think out their ideas by themselves and come up with some steps and potential results.

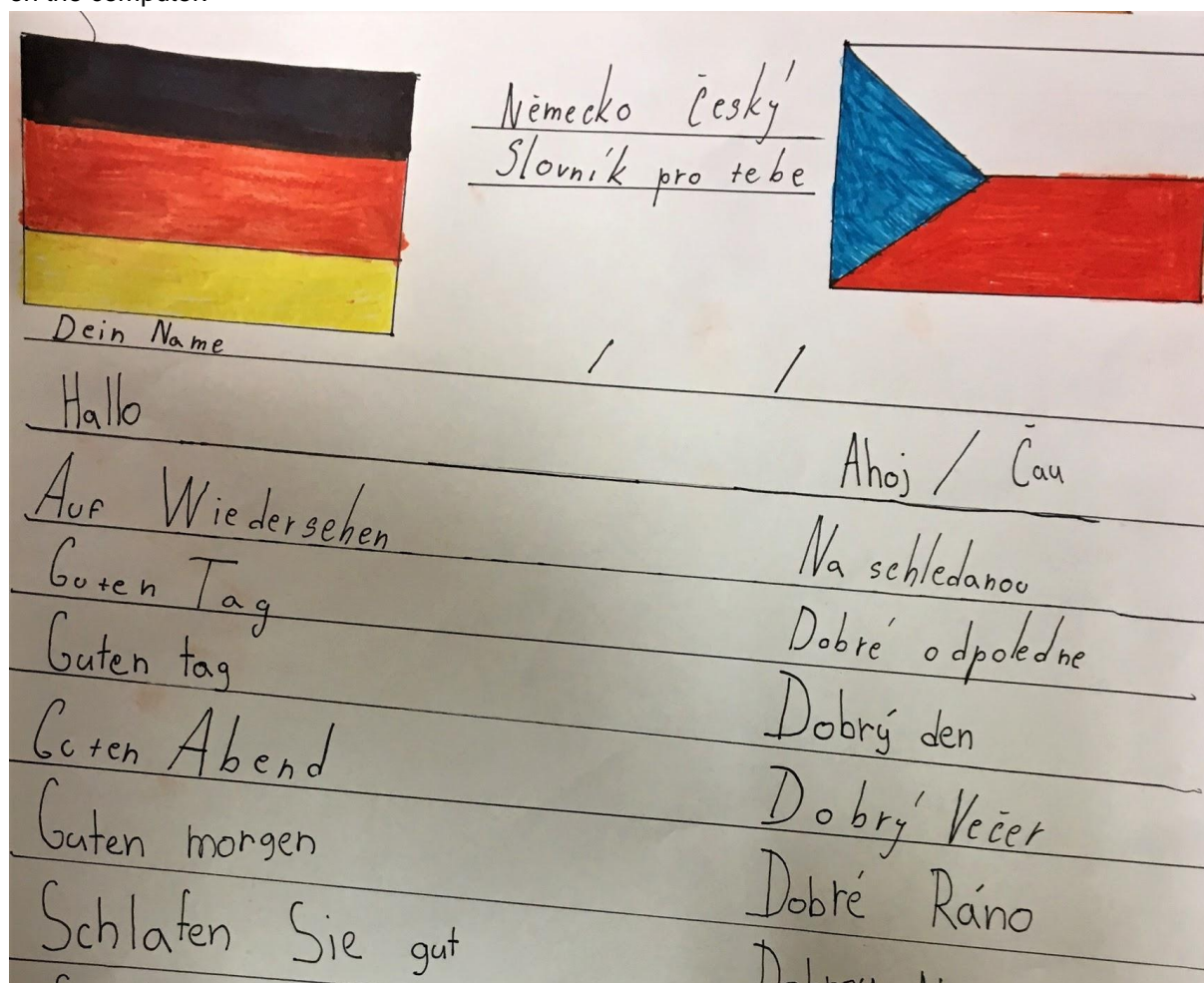
Three girls decided to work on the dictionary. They chose a German-Czech dictionary, because one of them had relatives in Germany and knew some words. The girls worked with an A3-sized sheet of paper, where they drew German and Czech flags, and then they continued by searching various phrases and their translations using a tablet. One of the girls was being pushed away and she had a problem working on this activity; she wanted at least to hold the tablet, but as soon as she got hold of it, she started to search up games and funny pictures.

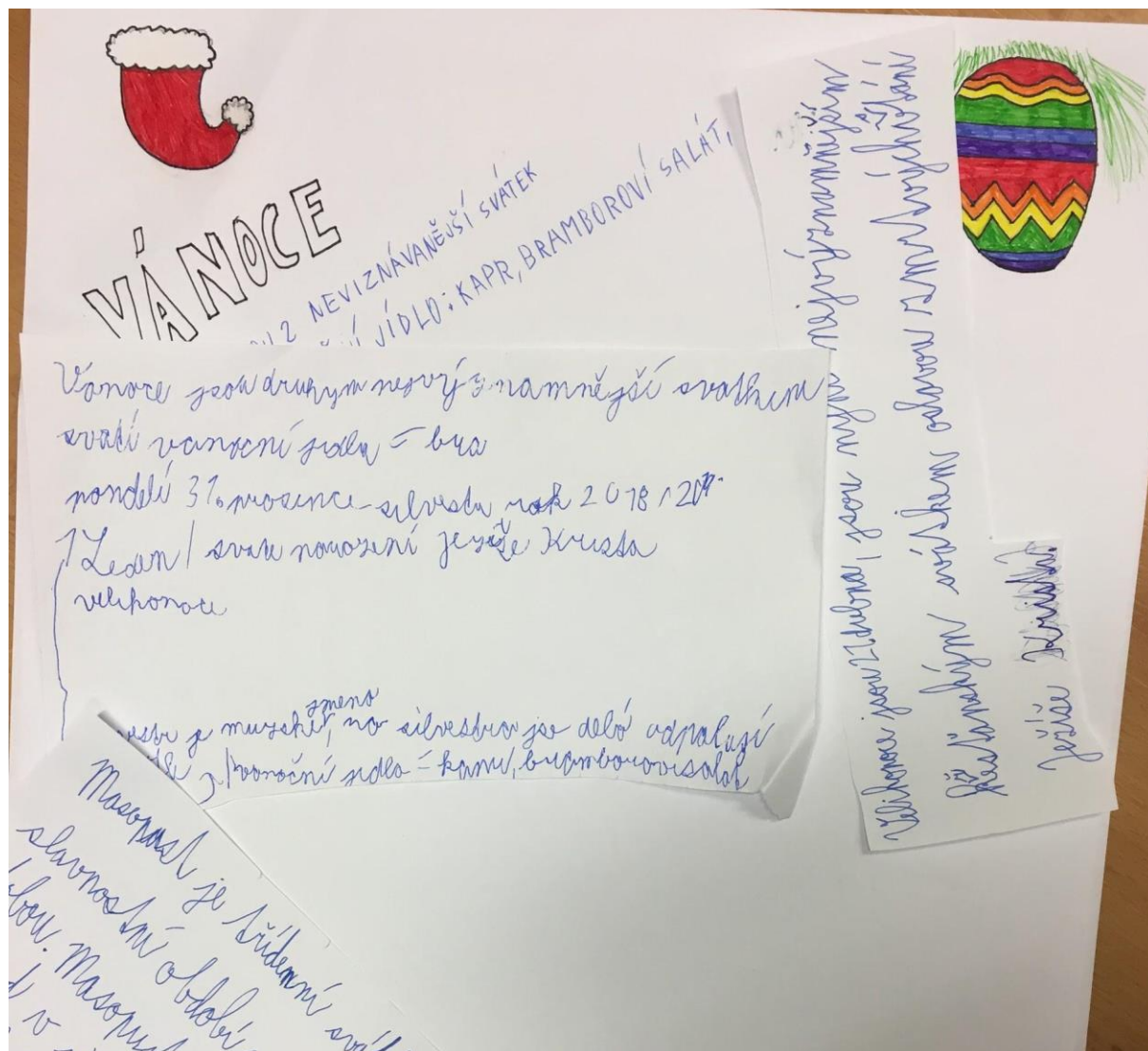
Three boys chose to work on a poster of traditions and customs. The biggest challenge was to decide which

holidays they wanted to write about. The boys opted for Christmas, New Year's Eve, the Lent Carnival, and Easter. One of them drew symbols typical for these traditions on A3 sheet, and the two other boys were searching for information about different traditions on the tablet. The school plan was opted for by other three boys. They spent half an hour searching on the tablet for the plan of their school, but soon they lost interest in the activity and started to play games or search for other things.

Three boys chose to work on the city guide. They searched interesting pictures from Ústí nad Labem using the tablet and inserted them in Microsoft word.'

And finally, three girls worked on the chart with classmates and teachers. They could use tablets, and they took pictures of classmates and the class teacher, and then they started to create a chart named Our class on the computer.





7.6.4 EDUCATIONAL/FORMATIVE IMPACT

Firstly, teachers at School 1 evaluated positively the theme of cultural diversity the activities focus on. According to them, they have not yet included the topic much into the class curriculum. Besides, they all (the first teacher who has left for maternity leave, teacher's assistant and both teachers we worked with) declared they do not include multicultural education into their teaching systematically. Even though multiculturalism is one of the themes required in the national education policy, teachers within first and third grade do not work with such topics. According to them, there is not enough space for it because the schedule is tight and topics they must cover consume almost the entire space they have.

However, at the beginning of our cooperation, neither of the two class teachers from School 1 problematized the diversity in the classroom during our presence. They were aware of children with foreign ethnic background but they did not evaluate the topic almost at all. However, when teacher Černý was asked about how he perceives multiculturalism as a cross-sectional theme, he evaluated it positively as a topic that can be used in different subjects.

--Černý--

For example I am glad that such a cross-sectional topic exists. Well, I have to say that when I teach I am not much in accord with the textbook and here (at the Dubček's elementary) I don't get punished for it too much. And such a cross-cultural topic can be used not only now in the World Around Us (school subject, Prvouka in Czech), but also elsewhere.

--INT--

And so you have been using it?

--Černý--

(...) Well, until now I have not done anything else but for example, in the World Around Us... I brought the textbook and I was supposed to teach... since in the World Around Us there was the Czech Republic and now it is followed by the topic I am an European. So, I often just focus on the topics and I leave the textbook aside... But now the topic, it came in handy, so I would start it, and even if the textbook has a whole exercise Assign state flags to neighbouring countries, well I know that I do not have to stick to the neighbouring countries only, but we can ask who was where on holiday or trip, or whether they have friends in some foreign countries. And now it is great that the second activity mentioned this boy Luka, on which we agreed with my colleague last time.

(Interview with teacher Černý; 3.C. 29.11. 2018)

Secondly, professionals, in our case teachers, were very positive and surprised about what they found out about the pupils in their classrooms. The teacher in 3.B (School 1) was surprised for instance about different languages some of the children spoke. He did not know some of his pupils' background (for instance about a Slovak parent) or about the languages children spoke or learned to speak (Esperanto, Greek). For the teacher in 3.C (School 1), this classroom was new and it was his first year with these particular pupils. Therefore, to him all the activities we conducted brought some new information about the children. Besides his personal involvement in everyday teaching, the Children Study activities assisted him in knowing his students better (in particular their backgrounds, languages they spoke, opinions and communication skills). In this regard, My Identity Card activity was useful and evaluated positively. In this regard, we positively noted that the teacher reflecting on our activities (Suns and Clouds, My ID) we carried out in his class stated that they enriched the class collective, because everyone could get better acquainted with each other. Teachers admitted they found out a lot of interesting information about the children in their classrooms.

Thirdly, teachers evaluated positively the finding that children did have some difficulties explaining their opinions and with working in groups. During the Suns & Clouds and the First Aid Kit activities, teachers recognized these limitations and expressed the interest to develop these skills further and work with children in order to improve these yet underdeveloped skills. As already mentioned, the children were not used to work in groups and they were not usually asked to justify their opinions. And thus, according to teachers, it could be useful for them to try to formulate opinions and provide some reasoning. Also, trying to cooperate while preparing the First Aid Kit was very useful too as they were required to formulate ideas together, to share tablets, to practice some task division and so on. At School 2, children worked independently on some tasks, and in groups on others. They were familiar with working in groups, and had no problem with this way of doing things. The teacher of 5.A, however, noticed that her children find it difficult to express themselves, and so she would like to focus next activities on strengthening this competence.

In focus groups, the pupils admitted that they usually did not learn about different cultures and did not discuss these topics either. We actively brought up the issue of cultural diversity into group interviews with pupils through stories or vignettes, e.g. when they had to relate to the situation of two imaginary boys Mohamed and Nabel who cannot eat pork because of their belief. The pupils were asked to think about

how they would feel in their place, if they had to go to pick a different meal to a special counter. According to several children, these boys would probably feel normal because they have become used to this situation, and one girl stated they could be angry because they were hungry. A significant part of children did not understand why the boys could not eat meat. The researcher had to explain that they are Muslims and it is part of their belief and habits that they do not eat pork meat. When the pupils were supposed to relate to a similar situation from their school, they would mention some of their classmates diet, or vegetarianism. In general, the ability to reflect on the cultural dimension of this situation and sympathize with Nabel and Mohamed was not very strong, which is undoubtedly connected to age (third grade of a primary school) and also to the school curriculum, which touches the topic of cultural diversity only across individual subjects, such as in the cross-sectional topic Multicultural education. However, the Framework educational programme (state curriculum document) for the given level of education, nor the School's educational programme, put accent on multicultural education. Some pupils were not able to state any examples of different cultural traditions or identities or name people from their surrounding who might be their bearers even after explanation. When asked, whether they have learned about other cultures at school, their answer was negative. The discussion was enriched by Štěpán from Ukraine, who explained to his classmates that Easter is celebrated in a different way than in the Czech Republic. Also Slávka, whose mother comes from Canada, mentioned other examples of celebrating Easter or Christmas from North America. Other children with minority background, however, did not share their experiences with traditions typical in countries where they or their families come from.

7.7 DISCUSSION: MAIN LIMITATIONS, MAIN LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In general, the participatory activities which were part of the Children Study enabled the pupils to reflect on relational topics (such as multiculturalism, arrival of a new non-Czech speaking classmate to their school/classroom, factors promoting/undermining inclusion in their classrooms etc.). They also enabled them actively express their opinion, visualise their ideas, think about hypothetical situations, share their own experiences as well as present their own suggestions how to solve concrete situation/problems. Although some teachers perceived these reflective and presentation skills of their pupils as rather underdeveloped, they appreciated that Children Study activities gave space to develop them further. Similarly, in general, the children were engaged in the activities and expressed positive evaluations/feelings regarding the content as well as form of each activity.

We learned that some of these activities definitely need adaptations to the cultural context of the country where they are conducted as well as to the context of each classroom with regard to the age of children, their prior experiences with similar topics, as well as with the curriculum of the respective grade. The need to adapt them could be a good trigger how to involve teachers into the design of the study on more participatory basis.

We further learnt that establishing space for children to reflect on conducted activities requires a lot of time, good cooperation with the teacher and disciplined time-management. In the classroom encompassing 24 pupils on average it is important to dedicate enough time to circles or similar platforms providing children enough and safe space to reflect and talk. Researcher needs to discuss this phase of each activity with the teacher in advance to make clear the decision about responsibilities when facilitating these reflective discussions (e.g., the facilitation of the main activity could be in hands of the researchers, however it is sometimes more appropriate to entrust the reflective part to the teacher, or vice versa).

Even though children, parents or teachers often do not reflect upon multiculturalism and multilingualism being positive resources worth developing, it is important to open these topics and provide support to these actors in activities enhancing the issues. Even the teachers identify it important and interesting.

Unfortunately, the mandatory curriculum is so dense, the teachers at regular elementary schools feel they do not have enough time and space to deal with topics such as multiculturalism and develop skills in appreciating cultural diversity among pupils. Nevertheless, conducting interactive activities with such focus not only develops soft skills and deepens knowledge but it deepens relationships between pupils and teachers.

Good relations among children and between children and teachers are one of the most significant factors supporting or undermining children's well-being in schools. Also, language was another factor children and teachers named as important in inclusion/exclusion of pupils with different ethnic background. Children perceive language as crucial in forming good friendships, and teachers on the other hand, see language as potentially enhancing or undermining pupil's performance at school. Teachers tend to not pay so much attention to the first/second language as to a potential positive resource. They either do not consider it or perceive it rather negatively as an inhibitor in learning the majority language.

Lastly, the communication with parents during the study focused on children's voices is very important. Although most of the parents are not very interested in research activities conducted in their school, there are always some who need regular contact with the research team, detailed explanation of collection and treatment of research data and good enough standard of reporting/sharing the results. Besides that, collecting such data for an international research project requires a lot of preparation before starting with the data collection to negotiate all necessities with Ethical Committees and lawyers in respective countries.

7.8 REFERENCES

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TO TACKLE INEQUALITIES IN SOCIETY**



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