

## Stakeholder Analysis Report



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## Introduction TEACHER Project

This report has been written as part of the EU Erasmus+ funded project entitled, *TEACHER*. It is a three year Erasmus+ funded project, with seven higher education institution partners from Bosnia and Herzegovina and four EU project partners from Romania, Croatia, Slovakia and the United Kingdom. The institution that won the bid is the University of Travnik from Bosnia Herzegovina, and they are the Lead Partner and Co-ordinator of the overall project. The goal of TEACHER, is to innovate and modernise Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) undergraduate (first cycle) studies in Bosnia and Herzegovina by introducing a competence-based curriculum. The project strives to identify competences that the Early Years labour market requires in Bosnia and Herzegovina and then introduce and embed these into University curricula. In addition to this, the project seeks to improve the interactive teaching methodology and the academic staff's transversal and transferable skills needed to modernize the study programme as a whole. The project target group consists of the partner institutions' academic staff and students and stakeholders include Early Years teachers in practice, other professionals who work with Early Year Children, parents/guardians of children and educational policy makers at all levels. In the broader educational context, education institutions and the Early Childhood Education and Care System in Bosnia and Herzegovina will also benefit from the TEACHER project. Children are another key beneficiary group and we discuss their views on Early Year education in a separate short report. This report focuses upon a qualitative analysis of stakeholder views about Early Years education and the role of Early Years teachers.

In accordance with the aims stated above, the project attempts to harmonise and modernise the heterogeneous ECEC curriculum and improve the teaching methodology through developing the capacities and curriculums of seven Bosnian and Herzegovinian University providers of Early Years degrees. The project contains eight work packages, which are led by one partner each, with support from the rest of the project teams. This report presents an analysis of stakeholder views, which is part of Work Package 1: *Developing a curriculum in accordance with the labour market needs (assessing competences the labour market requires)*. This package included plans for the design and implementation of an analysis of stakeholder's views on Pre-school teaching, to capture what is currently on offer and stakeholder views on the requirements and personal attributes of a teacher within these contexts. The report elaborates on the stakeholders' roles and responsibilities in ECEC in the country, and their relevance in the TEACHER Project as key stakeholder groups. The report integrates pictures, drawn by children who were interviewed separately as beneficiaries of the project, to represent some of the ideas that stakeholders had about teaching in pre-school contexts.

### Stakeholders: Who did we define as a stakeholder in the analysis?

Prior to explaining analysis methodology and outlining the findings, it is necessary to clarify the terminology that has been used in this report. There are diverse interpretations and understandings of the term stakeholder. For the purposes of our analysis, the following definition from the research support website, Vitae (2017), was used:

*‘Stakeholders are people or organisations who have an interest in your research project, or affect or are affected by its outcomes. Stakeholders include those who are both supportive of your research, as well as those who may be less supportive or indeed critical of it’.*

A stakeholder analysis is different to a baseline study as it is the identification of a project’s key stakeholders, an assessment of their interests and concerns. The analysis discussed in this report, includes varied groups of stakeholders from across the cantons (administrative areas) of Bosnia and Herzegovina that the project partners were located within and these groups were:

- *Preschool Teachers*
- *University and College Lecturers*
- *Associate Professionals*
- *Local Authority Representatives and Policy Makers*
- *Parents*

The report outlines and discusses the findings in relation to Professional Stakeholders and Parents in separate sections, as we utilised slightly different questionnaires for parents, to make them user-friendly and easy to understand for non-professionals.

## Section One: stakeholder analysis, methodology

Manchester Metropolitan University TEACHER project team, using data gathered by members of the Bosnian Herzegovinian higher education TEACHER Consortium project teams wrote this report. The teams that contributed data, which could be used for analysis purposes were:

- *University of Travnik*
- *University of Banja Luka*
- *University of Bihac*
- *University of Mostar*
- *Association of Preschool Institutions Employees.*

Each institution was responsible for identifying respondents and conducting the survey based on the questionnaires, which were designed by the Manchester Metropolitan University team (Lee-Treweek, Kardas and Leydon). Then each institution team wrote a report on the findings of their surveys and this report is an amalgamation of the data from these reports.

There were two separate questionnaires created, one for parents of pre-school children and the other version for all of the other stakeholder professional groups: Associate Professionals, Local Authority Representatives and Policy Makers, Preschool Teachers and University and College Lecturers in Early Years. The short surveys contained quantitative 'yes', 'no', 'not sure' questions and also qualitative question boxes, which were designed to explore the views of the interested parties (stakeholders) about early years teaching and learning. The questionnaires were designed in such way to ensure capturing of qualitative sets of understandings to clarify answers to the 'yes' 'no' Likert scales. The aim of the analysis was to find and present typical views, common answers, words and ideas from stakeholders to inform the project development of TEACHER. It is vital to explain that the stakeholder analysis presented is not based on representative samples and it is not designed to be indicative of every stakeholder view, but the methods are used to capture some typical ideas in the data. In other words, this is not a quantitative analysis; it is a snapshot of how some stakeholders perceive the issues. This will guide the project team in thinking about stakeholder perspectives, when we create a set of shared competencies later in the project.

## **Survey participants**

In total, there were 216 respondents who participated in the surveys. As has been mentioned above, they were randomly selected from various relevant groups. The table below presents the numbers of participants from the respective groups of stakeholders.

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Associate professionals	27
Teachers from the University and College staff	45
Preschool Teachers	40
Authority Representatives	20
Parents	84
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>216</b>

The ***Associate Professionals stakeholder group*** included diverse professionals such as:

- *Pedagogues working in the preschools*
- *Psychologists working in the preschools*
- *Preschool Directors*
- *Nurses working in the preschools*
- *Associates: Interns working in the preschool.*

The ***Stakeholder group of the University and College Staff*** included respondents from different staff groups across hierarchies:

- *Professors and Associate Professors*
- *Assistants and Senior Assistants (these are also teaching staff).*

The ***Local Authorities and Policy Makers stakeholder group*** consisted of respondents representing various institutions such as:

- *The Bosnian and Herzegovina Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports*
- *The Pedagogical Institute*
- *Children's Kindergartens*
- *The Department of Social Affairs*
- *General Administration Office of Social Affairs.*

The Professional Stakeholder groups were contacted and recruited through self-selection in the following ways:

- Pre-school Teachers, were recruited from within preschools linked to the projected partners, staff chose whether to fill out the questionnaires,
- Associate Professionals were professionals, such as Psychologists or Nurses, working within and/or regularly visiting pre-schools, who chose to take part,
- Policy Makers and Local Authority personnel were working within national, regional or local contexts, organising and structuring pre-school learning through policy implementation, analysis or writing. They were sent questionnaires and responded through self-selection,
- In the case of the Association of Pre-school training staff, this group was recruited through their employment in the Association, and again, taking part was a matter of individual choice.

Therefore, none of the professionals who undertook the survey were under an obligation to take part and all were self-selected. Their answers, therefore, represent a 'snap shot' of professional views, rather than being a representative sample. However, it can be argued that these views will most likely share commonalities with understandings and knowledge from within other similar groups of professionals working in the field.

Similarly, parents who took part were recruited through preschools that were local and known to the project partners. This was a self-selected group and so again, it cannot be said that these were a representative sample of parents in the Cantons included in the analysis. However, the parents' answers can be taken as providing indicative answers, which might be typical in these contexts.

## Section Two: stakeholder analysis findings for the Professional groups

The analysis findings are presented here for the professional stakeholder groups, which consisted of the Associate Professionals, National and Local Authority Representatives and Policy Makers, Preschool Teachers and University and College Lecturers. In a separate later section, the analysis from the parents stakeholder group is presented. The decision to present the study findings in this way is because, as has been explained previously, two different questionnaires were used in the study, the latter one being more parent-friendly to encourage engagement in the project.

### **Study Findings: the Professionals' stakeholder group**

Questionnaire for the professional stakeholder groups consisted of seventeen questions in total, from which fourteen were directly related to the preschool teachers competencies. The original questionnaire used in the research can be found in Annex A. This section will deal with the answers provided, question by question.

### **Question One: Is preschool education adequate for the task?**

Respondents were asked whether, in their opinion, they thought that preschool education is adequate for the task of educating young children in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Across all the stakeholder groups, common themes could be identified, with nearly half of the participants agreeing with the statement that 'preschool education is adequate for the task'. The reasons respondents gave for this view were typically that:

- *Preschool is based on the needs and capabilities of children*
- *Preschool is based on holistic development*
- *Preschool helps employed parents*
- *The primary goal of the preschool education is met*
- *Preparation for the future education for children is met.*

Those who agreed only **partially** with above statement gave typical reasons such as:

- *Poor working conditions in the pre-school*



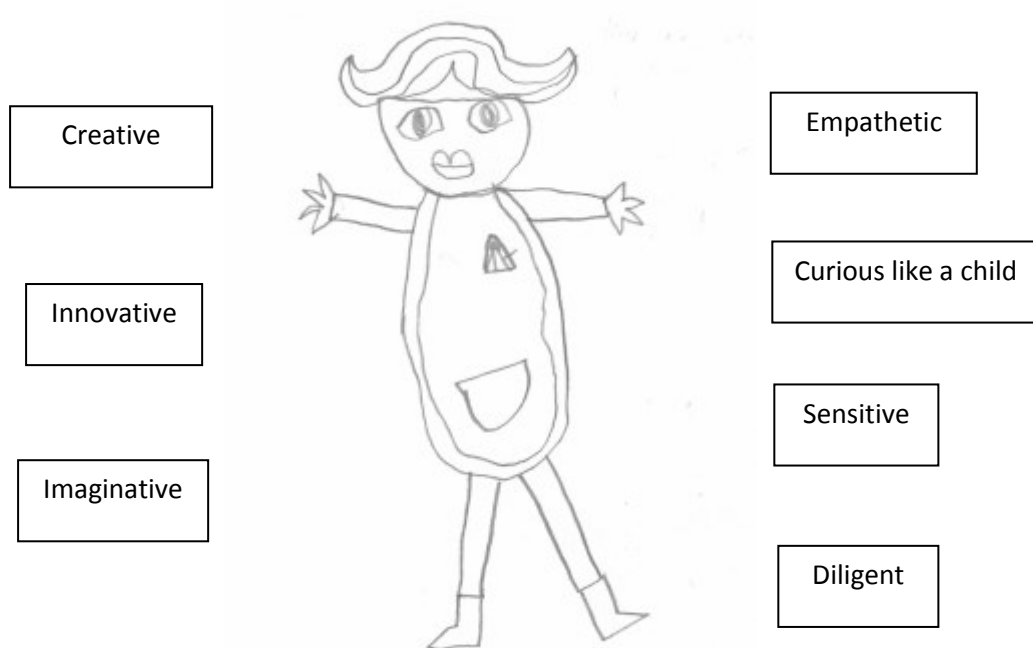
- *Attitude of parents: some parents perceive the preschool as a substitute for the upbringing of a child instead of it being a supplement*
- *There are too many children in groups*
- *Government support is inadequate*
- *Gaps in the communication between preschool and other groups and vice versa*
- *Low take up*
- *No holistic approach in child development.*

As can be seen here, some of these 'reasons' given in the qualitative boxes on the surveys, are hard to see as related to whether pre-schools are doing what they should. The identification of parents attitudes as a problem or low take up, does not relate to issues to do with pre-schools but would seem to be more socially structured 'issues' in wider Bosnian and Herzegovinian society. The last reason '*No holistic approach in the child development*' deserves special attention, due to contradictory views visible in the data between Professionals. Some of the respondents, primarily the stakeholder group of the University and College staff, stated that the preschool education is only partially adequate for the task because of a lack of holistic approach to child development. However, in comparison, some of the respondents (in particular, the Preschool Teachers stakeholder group) stated that preschool education is adequate for the task because 'It is based on holistic development'. This seems to indicate that different sectors within the stakeholder groups need to engage in dialogue to examine these divergent views and understandings. It is possible in addition, that University and College lecturers do not have a great deal of practice experience in pre-schools and the work that is carried out with children within them. This issue needs further investigation and these different stakeholders must work together. At present, we cannot tell from the data whose view on this matter is more likely to be correct.

**Question four: which areas did the respondents think preschool teachers need to understand and have knowledge of to be able to organise learning and teaching?**

Preschool Teachers whilst answering this question referred, first, to the teacher's personality and personal qualities and only after mentioning these they mentioned professional competencies. Interestingly, the Associate Professionals referred to the personal qualities and professional competencies as well but they mentioned professional competencies first and only then personal traits of the preschool teachers. For the University and the College staff theoretical learning, early years pedagogy and curriculum knowledge were given more weight in their answers and, importantly, personal qualities did not have significant presence in the university personnel's responses.

Personal qualities of a preschool teacher mentioned by the Professional Stakeholders survey respondents recognised a diversity of personal qualities that a pr-school teacher needs, which suggest a need for versatility. Attached to the child's drawing below are the main personal qualities identified by the Preschool Teachers and the Associate Professionals working in pre-schools.



#### **Personal Qualities of a Pre-school teacher (from Pre-school and Associate Professional Data)**

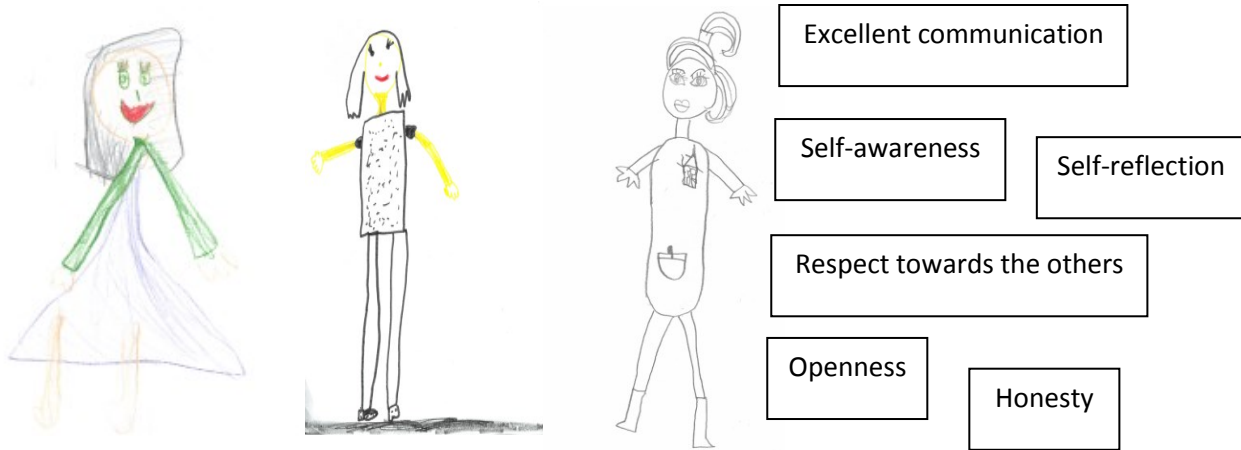
#### **Question Five: which areas did the Participants think Preschool Teachers need to understand and have knowledge of to be able to work in teams within the workplace?**

All of the stakeholder categories reported that the knowledge of teamwork is important. In the respondents understanding such knowledge would include:

- *Team building*
- *Principles of partnerships*
- *Functions of small groups*
- *Group work theories.*

It is important to state that teamwork is understood as not only being within the preschool environment but with also with wider professionals and the community.

Personal qualities of an individual were mentioned as important factors contributing to teamwork. The most commonly mentioned features are presented below:



#### **Personal qualities that are individually helpful/advantageous in a teamwork**

#### **Question Six: which areas do they think Preschool Teachers need to understand, and have knowledge of, to be able to plan, monitor and maintain documentation about preschool work?**

Interestingly, whilst analysing answers given by the respondents it became apparent that there were some very opposing views with regards to the teachers role in the documentation and monitoring processes. For example, majority of the respondents from the ‘Authority Representatives and Policy Makers’ stakeholder group viewed documentation as a very functional process with little teacher involvement beyond the functional tasks:

*“they [preschool teachers] have to possess knowledge of other areas complementing the profession like information technology, keeping pedagogical documentation and general literacy because they are the ones who educate and provide care”* University of Travnik report

On the other hand, the other group of stakeholders, the University and College Lecturers/Staff, noted the importance of self-reflection in the process of documentation and monitoring:

*“Teachers are to be able to visualise learning and developmental process through different ways of documentation and to be able to express and communicate it in a form that children understand, as much as, to those ways closer to parents, too. This implies a reversal in*

*understanding documenting as a tool that describes everything that happens around the teachers, are they successful or not, but to the children, to be a good mirror for processes of development and learning for all.” University of Banja Luka report.*

It may be important and advisable to investigate further the opinions of the respondents on the matter above and seek the reasons of such a difference in the views held by some of the stakeholders groups.

**Question Seven: which areas did the participants think Preschool Teachers need to understand and have knowledge of, in relation to classroom organisational systems and pedagogical work with groups of children?**

What should be noted is that two groups of stakeholders, namely Preschool Teachers and Associate Professionals (thus, both groups that include practitioners), expressed an opinion that preschool teachers should be able to recognise children with difficulties and they should establish working relationships with other professionals:

*“teachers have to know how to approach children with behaviour problems and to be enough sensitive to recognise when the child’s behaviour is extremely different from the behaviour of most children of that age and when they should talk to and indicate parents to the experts to seek professional help: from the psychologist, speech therapist etc.” Associate Professionals report, University of Banja Luka*

All members of the stakeholder groups agreed that when it comes to classroom organisational systems and pedagogical work with groups of children, it is important for the Preschool Teachers to:

- *Treat children as individuals and be aware of the diversity among children*
- *Be able to manage behaviour – especially inappropriate one*
- *Ensure that all of the children feel included and are included.*

Thus, according to our respondents Preschool Teachers should be familiar with developmental and individual needs, interests and the abilities of every child. It was a general view that this could be achieved by them having a good understanding of theoretical concepts, which then could be applied in practice.

**Question Number Eight: which areas did Participants think Preschool Teachers need to understand and have knowledge of, in relation to child developmental needs?**

All of the Professional stakeholder groups noted that knowledge of child development and theories were crucially important. However, it is vital to mention that the Preschool Teachers were the only group that identified that the individual knowledge of each child as crucially important for each child's developmental needs. They argued that Preschool Teachers should monitor each child's personality development, be able to detect changes in child behaviour and recognise difficulties in child development. Moreover, these respondents forwarded the view that it is necessary for the Preschool Teachers to notice the children who are advanced and/or gifted and cater to their needs as well.

**Question nine: in which areas did Participants think Preschool Teachers need to understand and have knowledge, in relation to ability to use information and communication technologies (ICT)?**

The majority of the respondents stated that it is necessary for the preschool teachers to have knowledge of, and ability to use, ICT systems in their work with children. However, most of the respondents focused on the Preschool Teachers own ICT competencies. Preschool Teachers themselves typically argued that efficient use of ICT could:

- *help them in their work in the process of preparation and planning of the activities*
- *enable them to access learning materials and information related to the pedagogical issues and education*
- *enable them to communicate with colleagues not only on the national level but as well, internationally.*

However, it was also noted by respondents that:

*"Now teachers use ICT for getting hands-on materials and that it is easy way for educational process preparation. But, at the same time, that prevents teachers from using other materials with children such as: sand, water, glue etc."* [Quote from Local and National Authority Representatives and Policy makers report, University of Banja Luka]

This quote demonstrates a concern that ICT should be balanced carefully with use of more 'traditional' methods of working with children, which was a typical concern across the Professional groups.

**Question Ten: which areas did the Participants think Preschool Teachers needed to understand, and have knowledge of, in relation to their ability to plan their own professional development?**

All of the stakeholder groups mentioned the importance of reflexivity and continuous and ongoing professional development. Reflexivity is taken to be the ability to reflect upon one's own practice and make changes and modifications to that practice to enhance one's work with children. It can involve a number of features, including reflection on daily practice and ways of doing things, identifying and developing one's own set of skills and abilities (recognising gaps in competence and seeking further training, for instance) and acting to put into place changes that will make practice of others in one's workplace better. It is not a one-off activity but a constant and ongoing recognition of the need to update oneself through reflecting on practice. This constant focus upon individual and professional development was recognised by all Professional Stakeholder groups:

*"Teachers are not only the professionals who teach others but also themselves – as teachers are the active participants in the learning process"* [Preschool Teachers report, University of Banja Luka.]

*"the development of science in all areas, as well as in social ones, requires from the preschool teacher to follow up on accomplishments in their own profession by exercising lifelong learning, cooperation with non-governmental organisations supporting preschool education as well as keeping contacts with higher education institutions educating this type of professions and attending professional training."* [National and Local Authority Representatives and Policy Makers report, University of Travnik.]

Stakeholder group of the University Professionals identified the importance of engaging with the scientific literature and research ability. Respondents from this group mentioned that in relation to professional development the following elements are vital and necessary:

- *awareness and ability to plan lifelong learning*
- *ability to plan to see what their needs are and find appropriate course/knowledge*
- *ability to use informal strategies of lifelong learning such as: following up scientific literature and ability to seek out other means of heightening their practice.*

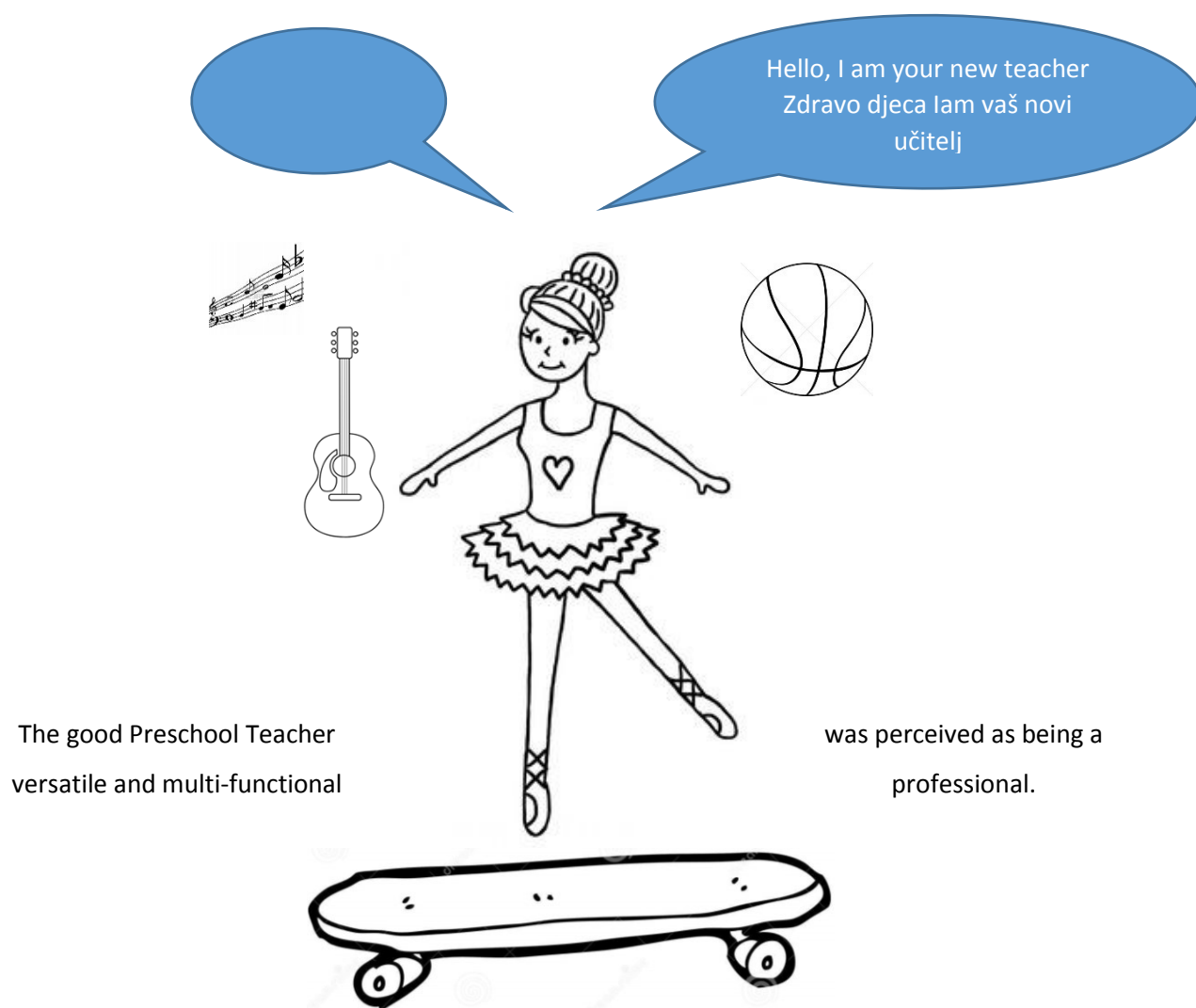
Preschool Teachers are expected to be pro-active concerning their professional development and to constantly review their practice and knowledge. They should be able to assess the effectiveness of their actions and take appropriate changes if needed.

**Question Eleven: which areas did Preschool Teachers need to understand, and have knowledge of, in relation to specific subject areas in the curriculum?**

According to our respondents, the good Preschool Teacher should be versatile, multi-functional actor who need to possess variety of skills and abilities, such as:

- *ability to use arts, music, speech and drama*
- *knowledge of science disciplines*
- *knowledge of local/national and foreign languages.*

Generally, in the opinion of the respondents preschool teachers should possess a wide and general knowledge, be informed, culturally aware and have a good literacy level.



Importantly, respondents from the University and College Staff stakeholder group noted that there is some misbalance with regards to certain subjects, for example in their opinion arts are now neglected and there is more focus on the science subjects, languages and literacy.



The expressed concern and recommendation by participants that preschool education should be balanced more carefully, could be investigated further, in order to establish whether the respondents from the other stakeholder groups shared this opinion.

**Question Number Twelve: what areas Preschool Teachers need to understand and have knowledge of in relation to social inclusion of children in the classroom and in society?**

The majority of the respondents from the Authority Representatives and Policy Makers stakeholder group presented the view that diversity should be perceived as a treasure and should be cherished. However, it can be noted that diversity and difference it is a very complex issue in the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its history, diverse cultures and various ethnicities, perhaps indicating a policy focus upon emphasising the importance of integration of diverse groups.

In relation to social inclusion, a typical quote representing the views of the majority of the Preschool Teachers opinions is that the preschool teachers role is to:

*“Unite the children to be equal and make no distinction among children, because these differences do not exist, a child is a child” [University of Banja Luka report]*



What is visible is that the respondents from the Preschool Teachers stakeholder group believe that in order to be able to promote social inclusion it is necessary for the Preschool Teacher to work outside the preschool institution, in the local community.

Interestingly, respondents from the University and College Staff Stakeholder group perceive social inclusion even broader – not only on the local level but on the global one:

*“Education for a pluralistic society as a basis for participation in a global society”* [University of Banja Luka report]

It may be worth starting a dialogue between various stakeholders groups, so they could discuss practical ways of implementing social inclusion not only in the classroom but, as well, in the wider community.

### **Question Thirteen: what areas Preschool Teachers need to understand and have knowledge of in relation to transferable and transversal skills?**

Some of the respondents did not understand the difference between transferable and transversal skills. Transversal skills is a broader concept than transferable skills and takes into account skills gained in numerous contexts.

Skills most frequently mentioned by the respondents were:

- *critical thinking*
- *analytical skills*
- *self-reflective practice*
- *ability to communicate clearly.*

Interestingly, the understandings and perceptions in relation to transversal and transferable skills differ within the particular groups of stakeholders. Therefore, within the responses of Associate and University professionals' stakeholder groups, a dominant theme was their view of teachers' knowledge as the basis for transversal skills. However, respondents from the Preschool Teachers stakeholder group focused instead on their skills and abilities, which were not necessarily linked to knowledge..

**Question Fourteen: what areas do preschool teachers need to understand and have knowledge of in relation to practical and professional skills to work in education?**

Practical and professional skills that the Preschool Teachers should possess respondents said, included:

- *Health and safety skills*
- *Safeguarding and child protection*
- *Wellbeing*
- *Paediatric first aid*
- *Ability to recognise and address bullying issues.*

Apart from the University and College Professionals stakeholder group, all of the other stakeholders' groups mentioned that in relation to practical and professional skills of Preschool Teachers it is important for them to be able to liaise and cooperate with other experts who could provide support:

*"During their education teachers have to be trained in recognising problems with children and participate in solving them in a team with other associates: social worker, pedagogue, health care provider, psychologist and others"* Association of Preschool Institutions Employees report

It is important to note that respondents from the University and College Professionals stakeholder group focused heavily on knowledge and pedagogical approach. The respondents from the Preschool Teachers and Associate Professionals stakeholder groups also agreed, that in relation to the practical and professional skills of Preschool Teachers, knowledge is definitely necessary. However, importantly, they reported that they felt a good teacher's ability is more about the Teacher's attitude and perception of their role as a Preschool Teacher:

*"(...) future teachers should develop knowledge but, first of all, awareness, responsibility and seriousness starting from university education. This competence is equal to methodological ones"* [University of Banja Luka Preschool teachers report]

*"From the very beginning of the study students must recognise the responsibility, liability and seriousness of their future work."* [University of Banja Luka Associate professionals report]

It may be interesting to investigate further the views of the University and College Professionals stakeholder group on this matter and encourage them to work with other stakeholder groups. This may allow them to learn from the others practical experience and find out why the cooperation with the other professionals is perceived as vital in regards to the professional and practical skills of Preschool Teachers.

**Question Fifteen: what areas Preschool Teachers need to understand and have knowledge of in relation to educational policy and practice?**

Educational policy was not talked about in any breadth by respondents from the University and College Professionals stakeholder group. Some of the respondents from this group noted that there was a need to understand different educational systems in Bosnia and Hercegovina.

Typical viewpoint of the respondents from the Authority Representatives and Policy Makers stakeholder group is summarised by the quote below:

*“Teachers should have basic knowledge in the field of education policy, to know jurisdiction, procedures, adoption of curriculum and pedagogical documentation, as well as laws and regulations.”* [University of Banja Luka report]

Interestingly, there were some very opposing views amongst some of the respondents from the Associate Professionals stakeholder group and respondents from the Preschool Teachers stakeholder group. Thus, some of the respondents from the latter group mentioned that preschool teachers should understand the importance of public debate about education and that they should actively get involved. In comparison, some of the respondents from the Associate Professionals stakeholder group stated that Preschool Teachers should not participate in public debate:

*“Politics are irrelevant for working with children apart from its relation to the legal aspect of the facility or documentation belonging to the legal domain. So, they should not be bothered by political processes or recent events in order to work with children in preschools”*

[Association of Preschool Institutions Employees report]

Presented above divergent opinions held by our respondents could be examined further and the reasons for this viewpoint could be explored in more detail.

**Question Sixteen: what are any other skills essential for Preschool Teaching and learning?**

Other ideas provided by the survey respondents in relation to other skills for Preschool teacher and learning are presented in the table below:

OTHER SKILLS ESSENTIAL FOR PRESCHOOL TEACHING & LEARNING			
PRESCHOOL TEACHERS STAKEHOLDER GROUP	ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONALS STAKEHOLDER GROUP	UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE STAFF STAKEHOLDER GROUP	AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES AND POLICY MAKERS
Emotional intelligence. Communication skills/non-verbal communication. Child/preschool pedagogy, special education. Personal qualities such as empathy, patience, imagination etc. Recruitment process.	Love for teaching and for children. Perceiving each child as an individual. Willingness to cooperate with other professionals/experts. Ability to recognise needs of children. Getting high quality students through recruitment.	Play. Getting high quality students through recruitment. Research competence. Understanding wider contexts than the physical kindergarten (leading children in outdoors environments and open spaces). Personal skills, such as self-management of stress	Non-verbal communication. Love for teaching and for children. Social and civic competencies. Cultural awareness. Social pedagogy. Knowledge about healthy eating, nutrition.

As can be seen in the table above, some of the ideas given in regards to other skills necessary for preschool teaching and learning are shared across the various stakeholder groups but some notions are markedly held mainly by to particular professional groups.

## **Section Three, Parents' Stakeholder Analysis Findings**

The questionnaire for the Parents' stakeholder group consisted of nine questions in total, from which seven were directly related to the Preschool Teachers' competencies and thus the focus of the TEACHER project. The original questionnaire used in the analysis can be found in Annex B. The section below will deal with the answers provided by the parents in the surveys and examines the questions, and the answers provided, question by question.

Eighty-four parents were randomly sampled from connections that the four University institution partners (Travnik, Banja Luka, Bihac and Mostar) had with preschools and parents in their areas.

### **Question Two: is it necessary for children to attend pre-school?**

Seventy-three out of eighty-four parents agreed that preschools were important and necessary. They key reasons being:

- *It is a preparation for school*
- *It adds to socialisation of the child*
- *It is a place where they learn to play and work with other children*
- *It is somewhere where they learn moral habits and rules of society.*

*"It is the period when children receive the most information, adopt certain concepts and actions. They learn to socialise and prepare for school" [ University of Bihac report].*

A small minority of parents were unsure about the necessity of preschool attendance for children with nine out of eighty-four parents indicating that they viewed preschool as partially important. Interestingly, these responses were not supported by a comments and so it is unclear why the respondents selected that answer.

### **Question Three: what should be the most important purpose of preschool education?**

According to our parent respondents, the most important purpose of the preschool education is for their children to acquire morals and habits for future education and gain skills for work. However, in addition, several respondents expressed an opinion that the key purpose of the preschool is to help employed parents, indicating that practicality does play a role in their views of preschool learning.

#### **Question Four: what factors determined the choice concerning their child's preschool?**

It was interesting to note that out of eighty-four responses, fifty-five parents mentioned the quality of teaching or teachers as a motivating factor for using their particular chosen pre-school for their child or children. This is a relatively high number, nearly three quarters, suggesting that many parents are concerned about pedagogy, quality of teaching and the impact of this on outcomes for the child. It also suggests that many of this 'audience' will be interested in the findings of the TEACHER Project as a whole, and that dissemination strategies should therefore seek to engage thoroughly with this important stakeholder group, as they are interested in teaching and learning of their children. Thorough engagement with this group will increase the project's impact and multiplication opportunities.

#### **Question Five: does preschool education serves its purpose?**

Sixty-nine out of eighty-four of the surveyed parents said that preschool achieved its purpose, with most of the others stating that it did partially. Those who were unsure stated that teachers needed better education themselves and that the environment in the preschool could be better. This indicates that parents again are well-informed, knowledgeable and interested in preschool issues.

*"Preschool institution fulfils its purpose because it adheres to the standard, has curriculum adjusted to the age of children"* [University of Bihac report]

The parents were indicating that the preschool is not just somewhere they send their children but they have a view on how it should work and over 10% is expecting to see improvements in how preschools run. That said, they were, in general, happy with preschools.

#### **Question Six: what is the role and/or duty of the Preschool Teacher?**

The parent's perceptions of the role and duty of preschool teachers can be divided into a few categories, which are listed in the table below:

<b>ROLE AND DUTY OF THE PRESCHOOL TEACHER</b>	
<b>Emotionally competent</b>	<b>Connects to children, loves or cares for children, shows empathy, listens and watches the children recognising in this what they need</b>
<b>Good behaviour management</b>	<b>Controls bad behaviour, shapes good behaviour, encourages friendship in children, encourages team work and individual work skills</b>
<b>Knowledgeable</b>	<b>In relation to age groups, relevant pedagogy, emotional development, safety and practicalities</b>
<b>Attuned to children's needs</b>	<b>Deals with each child's needs, knows what they require, can create an appropriate pedagogy for each child to support their potential, helps them to get on and play together</b>

According to the respondents from the Parents' stakeholder group, Preschool Teachers should be skilled, developed, experienced and knowledgeable individuals, who are sensitive to children's needs.

#### **Question number seven: what should be the personal qualities of a good preschool teacher?**

The most common feature mentioned by the parents in terms of personal qualities of a Pre-school Teacher, was patience and love for children and their job, followed by skills that could be sorted into these categories:



#### **Emotional skills:**

Patience, empathy, warmth, encouragement, support of the child

#### **Social skills:**

Communication, creativity, ability to co-operate (with other teachers, parents)

#### **Values, ethics and moral aspects/skills:**

Professionalism, integrity, ability to model good behaviour

*“Patience, love for job, consistency, good behaviour which is a model, creativity, positive and encouraging attitude.” [University of Banja Luka report]*

*“Interest and love for pedagogical vocation, intelligence, general manners, knowledge of child psychology, aims and methods of educational framework.” [University of Bihac report]*

According to the Parents who were our respondents, they would like the Preschool Teachers to be skilled professionals and developed individuals who are passionate about their job and love the children.



**Question Eight: how did parents rate the importance of other skills and knowledge from other competency lists, for Preschool Teachers?**

The parents' stakeholder analysis used a matrix of skills and knowledge from other competency lists to see how parents rated their importance. The most important features were identified to be:

- *Skills in and knowledge of safe learning environment*
- *Planning, monitoring and documenting educational activities*
- *Ability to cooperate with broad range of people and groups*
- *Ability to manage group activities*
- *Using arts, music, speech, drama in the classroom for learning needs and physical education*
- *Increasing awareness and appreciation of other cultures and tolerance and difference*
- *Possession of transferable and transversal skills.*

It is clear that parents expect broad skills from teachers but really value health and safety, ability to create planned classes, the capacity to document this and other information about provision, 'people' skills like communication and working with groups. Use of subject specialisms like the arts or physical education (PE) and very importantly value-based learning around tolerance and acceptance. The transversal skills focus shows parents expect teachers to have a broad base of flexible skills that go over and above being able to play with and relate to children. In essence, parents want preschool teachers who are skilled professionals.

## Section Four: stakeholder analysis conclusion

This report examines the findings of the TEACHER project stakeholder analysis surveys, conducted amongst 216 respondents, from five key Early Years stakeholder groups in different Cantons in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This analysis revealed that when it comes to preschool understandings and perceptions, the majority of the respondents valued preschool education and believed that it was vital, needed and should be mandatory. Moreover, in the view of our respondents, quality of teaching and teachers themselves are important factors in preschool education. Good Preschool Teachers are perceived as multi-functional actors with various skills and talents and individual teacher's personalities and personal qualities play a vital role in the preschool education environment. Furthermore, respondents emphasize the importance and need for a multi-disciplinary approach and cooperation in relation to preschools and they would like to encourage the establishment of working relationships with other professionals. As it has already been previously mentioned, the survey respondents are clearly interested in the findings of the TEACHER Project and so the planned dissemination strategy should plan and seek to engage thoroughly with each stakeholder group, to increase the Teacher project's impact and use in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## **Bibliography**

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