

Local mapping – what are we learning from the local contexts in terms of challenges for the workforce?



INTESYS

TOGETHER / Supporting
vulnerable children
through integrated early
childhood services

Slovenia

- Persistent **prejudices and stereotypes** towards Romani community
- **Holistic view of a child and a family** should be considered as a baseline of all integrated initiatives *(to enable service providers to address problems from a holistic perspective)*
- **Collaborative work, power sharing and joint decision making** is necessary
- Need to develop a **shared understanding** about the image of the child, the family, and what kind of ECEC services we should develop and promote
- **Outreach activities** should be an obligation of all sectors, working with families with young children
- **Involvement of Romani community** needs to be **reinforced**
- **Confidentiality of information**
- More **combined strategies for M&E** should be used

Portugal

- Difference in quality of ECEC services both crèches and pre-schools: the levels of quality vary considerably, despite teachers' high qualifications (Masters) and the implementation of quality insurance framework (crèche) and quality development programmes and inspections in pre-school. There is **a need to support ECE institutions** to enhance quality at the same time that the Central government or the local authorities give incentives to quality development
- The **good examples** of ECE services that adopt a clear pedagogical approach based on values of participation, inclusion, active and purposeful learning activities and valuing diversity, need to be expanded and assumed as the right of children and families to quality education
- Relationships between ECEC professionals and the families need to improve. **There is a clear need for training** in certain areas to address problems such as professionals' lack of soft skills to work closely to families; lack of flexibility and of responsiveness of services/professionals; a form of despotism by services/professionals; and families' lack of power to influence services and practices
- Perceived inflexibility of **ECD services in adapting rules/policies to the needs of families** e.g. services' schedules vs families' schedules. Services close more than a month per year whereas vacation and other leave is 1 month
- Children have not enough time to play, especially free play and outdoor play
- There is still a lack of **intercultural awareness** in the services related to children and families demanding for professional development and training to enhance services valuing intercultural diversity

Belgium

- Need to learn about each other and grow together towards integrated working
- Move together towards a **shared vision** and work towards the same goals
- Need for time, continuous **coaching and support**
- **Role of a coordinator/coach**: set out the pathways, keep noses in the same direction, listening, giving input, mediating...not easy
- Create and strengthen the will to cooperate and the **mutual trust**, feed into the **commitment** of every partner
- Invest in Continuing Professional Development on specifics of integrated working
- **Different** services, **different** cultures and work methods, **different** qualifications

Italy

- At the **professional level** (between knowledge and abilities of professionals)
 - **A single professional** should be seen as an agent of integration otherwise there is a lack of shared information, timely communication, combination of different sources of professional knowledge
 - **Lack of knowledge-sharing among professionals** in relation to the operational models adopted. This is difficult because it is necessary to overcome the lack of trust among professions and to facilitate mutual interactions among professionals but also among their representative bodies
 - Languages and professional codes are not enough shared among professionals. An ongoing and integrated training could be the first step towards integrated and effective interventions
- At **managerial level** (between public and private responsibilities and resources)
 - Lack of **shared quality criteria**, indicators for monitoring and evaluating, joint training activities among different organizations involved in early childhood services
 - **Gaps in the legislation** concerning the management of human resources, in specific as regards professional profiles and qualifications that are subjected to contractual differences
 - **Gaps in the investments** related to technical, professional and administrative competences for integrating between public and private bodies. It is necessary to invest resources for keeping alive integration and coordination