

LLP Comenius RESCUR Project - First Consortium Meeting

24th -26th January 2013

Location: University of Malta (Education Boardroom)

Attended:

Sweden: Charlie, Birgitta

Italy: Roberta, Assunta

Portugal: Celesta, Paula

Greece: Anastasios, Marisa

Coatia: Renata

Malta: Carmel, Paul

Introduction of Members:

- Prof. Carmel Cefai (Malta) - Head of Department of Psychology and Director of the EuroCentre for Educational Resilience at the University of Malta. Main role for this project comes from the Euro-Centre for Educational Resilience.

- Prof. Paul Bartolo(Malta)- Department of Psychology University of Malta, Main interest is in inclusive education . Trained teachers as inclusive educators (produced a teacher's handbook).

- Celest (Portugal) - Faculty of Human Kinetics (Dept. of Education) Research Centre for Health Promotion, Worked on Resilience. Quantitative and Qualitative study (funded by the National Foundation for Research) developing a program for the promotion of resilience in the lessons with special educational needs.

- Paula (Portugal) - Works a lot with Celest and was also involved in Peer Mentoring Programs.

- Anastasios (Greece) - University of Crete. He is a School Psychologist, implementing socio-emotional learning, involved with parent- training, kindergarten prevention problems, in socio-emotional learning. Working on a new model for training school psychologist, how to consult with teachers in terms of consultation and student problems. In the last couple of years was also involved with parent training.

- Marisa (Greece)- Child psychologist, dealing with kids with socio-emotional problems and

provides counseling sessions. Currently providing Socio-emotional learning among kindergarten children.

- Renata (Croatia) - Head of Psychology Department at Zagreb University, Psychologist, Chair of ENSEC, Chair of ENSEC (ZAGREB) Conference

- Charlie (Sweden) - Professor in Public Health, Main interest: implementation research, Socio-emotional learning very much linked to this, 'Health & Learning' in Sweden.

- Birgitta (Sweden)- Orebro University, Psychotherapist and Psychologist and Special Health teacher. Conducted Qualitative & Quantitative Evaluation, been working on Socio-emotional problems for the past 20 years.

- Roberta (Italy)- University of Pavia, Researcher & Family Psychotherapist, Coordinator of Italian Lab of Giftedness. Worked on Emotional Development and to support families of these children. Worked on Resilience with family. Work with addicted people by using a resilience framework

- Assunta (Italy) – Professor of Developmental Psychology, Pavia University; areas of specialisation: developmental psychology, Social Emotional development, Language Developmental and Speech Comprehension.

Main Project Deliverables:

- 3 sets of programs (each one building on each other- interrelated)
- Curriculum (spiral & developmental) – to create 1 UNIVERSAL curriculum with addition OPTIONAL curriculum (ex: specifically targeting ROMA people – focused specifically upon a social context).
- Each set will include a teacher handbook (the idea is that the teacher will be teaching the curriculum), classroom resources and as well as a parent's handbook.
- The idea is that the Resilience curriculum will be a core part of the school curriculum. Each week a lesson will be held (based on the resilience curriculum).

Project Plan:

Year 1: Development of the program. A tentative draft will be developed of the following:

- a. The Universal Curriculum
- b. Optional Curriculum
- c. Parents' manual & Class room resources (will be developed at a later stage)

Year 2:

- a. Piloting of the project
 - b. Translation of the draft into our own purposes (for EU purposes)
- Each country will be implementing

- Translation
- Training of trainers (Greece) where 1 member from each country will go to Greece for training.
- Each trained person will then train 20 teachers (to implement within 6 weeks). After the training there will be the evaluation.

Year 3:

- Continuing finalizing the piloting
- Evaluation of all countries together
- Once we do that we translate it and produce it in various forms.
- Each country will organize a national conference in order to promote the project in their country.
- Finalizing the curriculum and present it to the EU Commission.

Each country will have €500 for resources expenditure (i.e. handbooks, packaging & materials).

Work Packages:

• **Work Package 1: Project Management**

Coordinator – Malta, Greece Critical Friend¹ (CF)

• **Work Package 2: Curriculum**

2a) Core Universal Resilience Curriculum

Overall Coordinator – Malta, Sweden (CF)

2b) Early Years Curriculum

Overall Coordinator - Greece, Croatia (CF)

2c) Primary School Curriculum

Malta, Sweden, Italy (Early Primary), Portugal (Late Primary)

• **Work Package 3: Optional Resilience Curriculum**

Overall Coordinator- Italy, Portugal (CF)

3a) ROMA students

¹ Role of Critical Friend – will be providing consultation and reviewing/ providing feedback.

¹The Coordinator – will be having the main role of the activity.

Overall Coordinator– Croatia, Portugal (CF)

3b) Refugee students

Overall Coordinator – Malta, Sweden (CF)

3c) Disability & Learning

Overall Coordinator – Greece, Portugal (CF)

3d) Gifted students

Overall Coordinator – Italy, Malta (CF)

- **Work Package 4: Parents' Handbook**

Overall Coordinator – Croatia, Portugal (CF)

4a) Early Years

Overall Coordinator – Croatia, Italy (CF)

4b) Primary School

Overall Coordinator – Greece, Sweden (CF)

4c) Optional Manual

Overall Coordinator – Italy, Malta² (CF)

- **Work Package 5: Curriculum Piloting**

5a) Translation of Curriculum

Overall Coordination - All Partners will be involved

5b) Training of Trainers

Overall Coordinator – Greece, Croatia (CF)

5c) Training of Teachers

Overall Coordination – All Partners will be involved for the training of 20 teachers for each country. Teachers must be from a combination of both Early and Primary. Training for teachers

² The number of days for this work activity may be distributed/coordinated among the four (4) sets of partners (OPTIONAL).

should ideally be staged/process training.

Deadlines / Target Dates:

- **31st December 2013:** First draft of the Universal & Optional curriculum must be ready. (The Universal and Optional Curriculum must be created at the same time). (The Parents' Manual can be created at a later stage)
- **January –February 2014:** Translations ready
- **February 2014:** Piloting and Training of Trainers
- **April 2014:** Training of Teachers (staged approach)
- **August – September 2014:** Implementation & Piloting (Pilot will take 6 weeks i.e. till end of November 2014).
- **February 2015:** Evaluation of the Pilot
- **June 2015:** Each Work Package must be ready and finalized (i.e. Curriculum modified, evaluation etc.)
- **September 2015:** External Evaluation
- **September / October 2015:** National Conference to be held in each country to promote the Project.
- **December 2015:** Submission of all products to the EU Commission

The project will adopt a holistic approach and a multi-level framework: child-class/teacher – whole school – family.

The General Framework for the curriculum at both Universal & Optional levels:

3 sets of programs (Each program will have a curriculum):

- 1) Kindergarten
- 2) Early Primary
- 3) Late Primary

Despite the fact that the emphasis and rationale of the project is on disadvantaged children everybody agreed that the argument is based that all children need the skills (Resilience & socio-emotional) to navigate in today's society.

Hence the Resilience Curriculum will be a mainstream curriculum. The project will not be targeting specific groups of children. Rather everyone agreed that this is something which all children in Europe need.

Sense of coherence/ sense of belonging:

- Comprehensiveness
- Meaningless
- Manageability

(These 3 components must be coherent)

The program will be universal, but flexible to address particular needs, by allowing different emphasis upon the different parts of the curriculum – depending upon the social context in which this curriculum is being adopted.

Main focus of the curriculum is the child:

- The skills children need to adopt in order to achieve
- Handling changes
- Problem-solving (effective of cumulative risk)
- Efficacy – high levels of efficacy
- Empathy – moderate levels of empathy
- Cooperation
- Handling strong emotions
- Humor / optimism
- Sense of belonging / school attachment
- Stress management for pupils, teachers & parents
- Skills process
- Train the teacher to build the processes

We need to have both: **skills & pedagogy** (Skills development & Attitudes – for the children and the teacher). The teacher needs to create a ‘climate’ in which the skills are learned by the student

We need to keep in mind the developmental stage of the children. We need to take into consideration **2 types of challenges:**

1. Situational Challenges
2. Developmental Challenges
 - Focus on risk and protective factors for Resilience
 - Help teachers to raise awareness in the classroom of risk and protective factors
 - An umbrella definition of Resilience: risk & protective factors; socio-emotional learning (SEL); stress management (mindfulness).

A broad-based approach to Resilience:

1. Resilience skills (the attitude towards life)
2. Socio-emotional skills
3. Attitude skills /mindset
4. Self-efficacy, optimistic thinking, philosophy resilience
5. Reforming perception/cognitive skills
6. Self-awareness

We can combine all the knowledge and skills and transmit them to students through stories and similar activities (ex: creating a giraffe mascot and different stories are created based on the giraffe).

We can include this bottom-up approach in the piloting.

Through the evaluation we can ask which areas are most relevant. Once the draft is ready we can distribute it to teachers to check whether it is valuable. We will take the teachers' feedback and then it is up to us to decide. (feedback from teachers by creating a questionnaire and send it via email).

Focus groups with:

- Kindergarten
- Early Primary
- Late Primary

A focus group with among the selected 20 teachers and one focus group will be conducted in every country. Focus group must be done in order to get their feedback, to help us build on the curriculum.

Training the Trainers/ Deadlines:

- We will have the manual ready – we give it to an expert and expert will do the training on how to implement this manual to us. Then we adopt this training and train the teachers.
- The decision will be taken around March/ April (after all suggestions and referees are provided).
- By the end of this year (31st December 2013), the first draft of the curriculum must be ready.
- Translation – one (1) month

Issue about criteria of how to select the trainer – the profile of trainers:

- Expert in resilience yet at the same time trainer
- Trainer must be European since the curriculum will be based upon a European framework.
- Important – teachers need to know how to implement the resilience curriculum into their classroom and to their schools.
- Queries about whether to involve an external trainer/expert.

Suggested Reading:

- a. Sweden – Manual (which was translated in English)
- b. Prof. Carmel Cefai (Malta)– working on a book – that can also be used in the project
- c. Anastasius (Greece) – Curriculum that he was working on in Cyprus
- d. Portugal – Journal on Self-efficacy and life impact
- e. Italy – Book – ‘ La Resilienza’
- f. Bounce Back Manual – a resource guide to develop activities, resources etc.

Project’s Budget:

Project Support personnel from the University of Malta were invited to this meeting in order to explain the Project’s budget. The Project Support personnel explained the financial procedures associated with the project.

At the end of each year, all partners must provide the Projects Office with original receipts of the Project costs. In case when original receipts cannot be provided, certified true copies (stamped and signed) will be accepted.

The Project Support personnel agreed that all documents relevant to the project (i.e. receipts) may be send via email as a scanned document. It is important that when communication via email takes place, all partners should include the Project’s name and country in the ‘Subject’.

Initially, each country/partner will be receiving 40% of the total budget. The remaining 60% will be received by the partners later on throughout the project.

Prior to any changes/amendments made to the project, these are to be communicated and approved by Malta (UoM) first.

Any time the partners request a change in budget etc. they should make a request via an email to the Project’s Office and to CC Prof. Cefai.

Communication:

- Until Google Drive is ready – all partners will communicate via email
- Then partners will communicate via Google Drive, until website is ready

Summary of what was done in yesterday’s meeting:

Yesterday the meeting ended with a discussion about various models that can be adopted to construct and deliver the curriculum.

Model 1: A general framework of Resilience (proposed by Italy)

Resilience is referred to as a Process.

Self - efficacy approach: I am – I have – I can

The protective factors will be related / based to the themes of our programs.

BASIC-Ph Model (O. Ayalon & M. Lahad)

(Protective & Risk factors)	B – Belonging
Individual	A – Affection
Classroom	S – Social
Teacher & School	I – Imagination
Family	C - Cognition
Community	Ph – Physical

The BASIC-Ph Model can be adopted as a pedagogical tool whereby activities can be adopted on this model.

It will be a whole process – there will be a very strong link.

Models to adopt for the project:

- Start with self-awareness
- What competences do I have
- What factors I have and need to achieve
- The goal / aim that I have
- What I need to improve in myself
- The stressors that I will face throughout the process
- How I will go over these stressors and attain that goal.

First Process:

- a. Having/Being (and being with others) – I am (I am also in relation with others)
- b. Doing – BASIC-Ph model (upon which activities and pedagogical tools will be adopted)
- c. Becoming – when the child practices at school successfully (in the classroom)

The Model (revised/final) version:

Being ----- Becoming

1. Ecological (Macro Perspective)
2. Transactional – Risk – Resilience (Transversal – Resilience is a process)
3. Generalist (universal)

Level of intervention

I have

I am

We need to propose a new way of thinking of resilience. The curriculum will be a new way to tackle issues of resilience.

Principles to be adopted:

(These principles must be very clear in the handbook)

- Spiral
- Formative assessment of outcomes
- Action involve child / student/ child centered (voice – choice)
- Inclusive of children
- Diversity minded approach
- Experience based/ experiential – active learning, SAFE approach
- Relationship status, rapport, trust, sense of belonging, focus on relationship building
- Developmental appropriate
- Meaningful and relevant to life (practicality)
- European Identity & European diversity (imp. to take into consideration the special context of European countries). Hence this curriculum will differ it from other curriculums (ex. US) since it is context-based.
- User-friendly
- Cross-curricula
- Teacher – taught (school psychologist may be mentors/ supervisors)

During the piloting stage:

- Each country will pilot a particular topic in order to have an idea of all.

Types of Assessment:

1. Checklist – to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum
2. Journal – children provided with a ‘homework’ to draw or write an essay about anger
3. Focus groups with teachers

The schools that need to be selected should have a high probability of students with resilience issues.

Work Package 5:

- Translation of the Curriculum and manuals
- Training of trainers
- Training of teachers
- Evaluation

All partners agreed that the translation in work package 5 will be carried out earlier in the project (throughout Work Packages 2, 3, 4). Thus translation and all resources (i.e. teacher & parent handbook and manuals) have to be ready and available for Work package 5.

Each Partner/ country will be responsible of its implementation and evaluation.

General overview of their Educational System (in order for everyone to familiarize with the different social contexts):

Malta

- 3-4 yrs Kindergarten I, II – 1 teacher (Not Compulsory)
- 5-11 yrs Primary, Year 1-6 – 1 teacher (Compulsory)
- 12-16 yrs Secondary , Form 1 -5 – Subject Teachers (Compulsory) Mostly Single Sex
- 17+ Post Secondary
- University / MCAST
- Physical & Social Development (PSD) – implemented for the last 20 years (especially in secondary)
- Students with special needs are in regular classes. Only 0.3% of children with special needs are in special schools.
- Learning Support Assistants (LSA) help children with special needs
- In some schools/ areas we have children deriving from ethnic/migrant groups:

2/3 attending state schools

1/3 attending church schools

10% attending independent schools

Sweden

- 1-5 yrs Pre-school, 1 teacher/ 12 children per person (Not Compulsory but 80 – 90% attend)
- 6 yrs Pre-school class, 1 teacher (compulsory)
- 7-9 yrs Primary school, 3 teachers for 70 children
Leisure time pedagogues – so half of the day there are 2 teachers
- 9-11 yrs Middle School
- 12-15 yrs Secondary School
- 16-19 yrs High School
- 19+ University
- It is the responsibility of the Headmaster how to organize the school.
- In some schools children will have 1 children while other not. It depends on the school.
- You are not allowed to have any sort of religious ceremonies or classes.
- A team of teachers will be responsible for a whole Year (ex: Year 4)
- Free Schools – anybody can open a school ex: School specialized on sports
- Do not have socio-economic learning in schools
- Schools need to integrate an Equality principle in the curriculum.

Croatia

- 1-6 yrs Kindergarten (day care centre), 1 teacher with every 20 children (supported by government and is cheap)
- 6-7 yrs
- 8 yrs Primary School compulsory
- Special Schools – for children with special needs.
- Education for Democracy overlapped with SEL – focus on citizenship education (similar to social studies)

Italy

- 4 months – 3yrs Day care 1 teacher with 27 children, (not compulsory, very expensive)
- 3-5 yrs Kindergarten, 2 teachers (split the day)

- *6-10 yrs Primary, teacher for different subjects, only Catholic religion taught in classes- you can choose whether to attend or not.
- *11-13 yrs Middle level
- *14-18 yrs Secondary Level, 11 teachers / 1 for each subject
- University
- * Approx. 30/32 students in each class
- No resilience or SEL curriculum. Inclusion not supported by schools
- Special teachers are designated a number of hours (6 hours per week to children with special needs).
- The Educational system in Southern Italy is worse than in Northern Italy.
- In Italy we have students deriving from North Africa (ex: MAGREB) and Chinese.
- Children with special needs are in regular schools.

Greece

- 4 months – 3yrs Day Care (majority of people opt for private day care if they can afford it. Otherwise they leave the kids at home).
- 4 yrs Kinder, 1 teacher with 15 children and support from a teacher trainee. (Optional)
- 5 yrs Kinder Kindergarten(Mandatory)
- 6-12 yrs Primary
- 13-15 yrs Junior High
- 16-18 yrs High School
- 19+ University
- 25 - Average number of students in school (depending on the area)
- Since 2001 – law for inclusive education
- Special schools are available for severe mental cases. Psychologists are present in these schools for help and support.
- Children with special needs attend regular schools whereby resource rooms are available.
- School psychologist are not available in public schools but only in private schools.
- There has been an influx of immigrants to Greece namely from the Middle East (Iraq & India)
- Teachers need more training on how to treat and deal with multiculturalism in the classroom.
- SEL – 1 hour per week in each elementary high school. The teacher teaches whatever she thinks is suitable for the classroom. (Flexible teaching – up to the teacher to decide).

Portugal

- Before 3 yrs – you must pay
- 3-6 yrs Pre-school
- 6-10 Basic Education:
 - a. First – Fourth grade (1 teacher for every discipline)
 - b. Fifth – sixth grade (1 teacher for each subject, Physical Education and extra activities ex: drama part of the curriculum)
 - c. Seventh – ninth grade
- 10-12 yrs Secondary Education
- Religion lessons are not compulsory
- If students have difficulties the school must support
- Health Education in the ninth grade – subjects are related to SEL
- Support Teachers are available in school depending on the needs of the student/s (on full time and part time basis).
- Children from Eastern Countries ex: Ukraine, Romania are well integrated in the school community and succeed at school.
- ROMA children face more difficulties in integrating in schools.