

D2.4 Technical Report on the Child interview study

CHILDREN'S VIEWS ON INCLUSION AT SCHOOL

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **ISOTIS consortium** aims to understand early and persistent social and educational inequalities in Europe and to provide recommendations and tools for policy and practice that can help to tackle them. In WP2, a large-scale structured interview study among parents from socioeconomically and culturally disadvantaged communities was conducted, combined with smaller scale qualitative in-depth interviews with subsamples of these parents. The qualitative in-depth Children study presented in this Technical Report is the third empirical effort carried out in WP2 in 2018-2019, involving children in pre- and primary school settings and informal after-school contexts in areas characterized by high cultural diversity and social inequality in seven European countries: the Czech Republic, England, Germany, Greece, Italy, Norway, and Poland. The study was designed to complement the quantitative survey and the qualitative study involving parents, to enable better understanding of experiences, perceptions and opinions of young children from native-born low income families, and families with ethnic minority and immigrant backgrounds regarding inclusion and well-being at school.

Coherently set within the general framework of ISOTIS, the theoretical and methodological framework that guided the conceptualization of the study design relied on a number of pillars: Children's Rights and the paradigm of the «Research *With* and *For* Children»; the Participatory Research Framework in connection to Education *Through* Democracy and the Active Citizenship Framework; Social Inclusion and Well-Being as key topics regarding children's participation.

The ISOTIS Children Study aimed at exploring children's perspectives on inclusion and well-being at school and at identifying facilitating positive elements at school within social, cultural, religious and linguistic differences, what children identified as quality indicators of school inclusiveness and their suggestions to make school more welcoming and inclusive. The study elicited children's views on inclusion and well-being at school, and beyond this, the study explored a form of education through democracy, examining how a supportive democratic learning environment can be created.

In the first part (PART A) of this report we present and discuss the theoretical and methodological frameworks and the core concept of the study (Chap. 1), the characteristics of the research participants, sampling criteria, and the overview of the national studies and the international study (Chap. 2); the research strategies and instruments, the organizational guidelines, the possible options for local adaptations, the overall multi-method approach developed by the University of Milan-Bicocca team, also examined through pilot studies in Italy and Greece, provided to partners in the form of a Manual (Chap. 3); the extensive ethical considerations, considering the young age of the research participants (3-6, 8-11 and 11-14 years old children) and the delicate topics of the study (Chap. 4); the data coding and analysis framework for the national and international studies (Chap. 5).

In the second part (PART B), the national country reports illustrate the state of the art of the study in each country (Chap. 6-12). Some studies provide already first tentative results from the data analysis, which is still on-going and will end by July 2019.

The international content analysis, based on a data set for each group of children and comparing

the results in the different target groups and countries, will refer to a) the main themes and proposals raised by children; b) the methodological and ethical challenges encountered in conducting the study; c) the implementation experience of the children's proposals; d) the impact of the research process on children, on teachers and their professional development, and on the context.

Overall, the study intends to provide new perspectives and valuable ideas to inform policy-makers, as well as a critical reflection and suggestions on methodological and ethical aspects of doing research *with* and *for children*, to enhance inclusive environments through children's active participation and to empower children in their roles as democratic citizens (e.g., Dürr, 2005; Himmelmann, 2001; Johnny, 2005; Osler, 2000; Osler & Starkey, 2006).

ISOTIS

**INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SUPPORT
TO TACKLE INEQUALITIES IN SOCIETY**



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