

EURLY AID NEWSLETTER : MAY 2019

Newsletter Agora project, supported by Velux



Dear colleagues,

In this newsletter we will inform you about 2 Agora project meetings that took place:

- September 20-21, 2018 in Warsaw, Poland
- March 18- 21, 2019 in Bratislava, Slovakia.

Main goals of the project:

An innovative pilot initiative developed in 5 Central and Eastern (CEE) countries (Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria) addressed to overcome the challenges in the implementation of strategies to develop adequate Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) systems for children with disabilities.

Why “AGORA”?

- We want to create an all-embracing learning and convening space to bring together essential actors to co-produce high quality ECI services
- We want to produce practical guidance and tools to provoke a systemic change on the social welfare system by improving the legal and policy frameworks at European, national and/or regional levels
- We want to develop examples that can serve as inspiring guidelines for other countries in Europe and other groups of children with special needs or at risk of exclusion (such as children with Roma or migrant background).

Besides these 5 countries EASPD (<https://www.easpd.eu/>) and Eurlyaide are partners. EASPD is coordinator of the project.

The period after the kick-off in Sofia, September 2018, unfortunately knew delays in the work and progress due to several different factors and for all partners involved. Combined forces and efforts resulted we could continue but with “time to catch up”.



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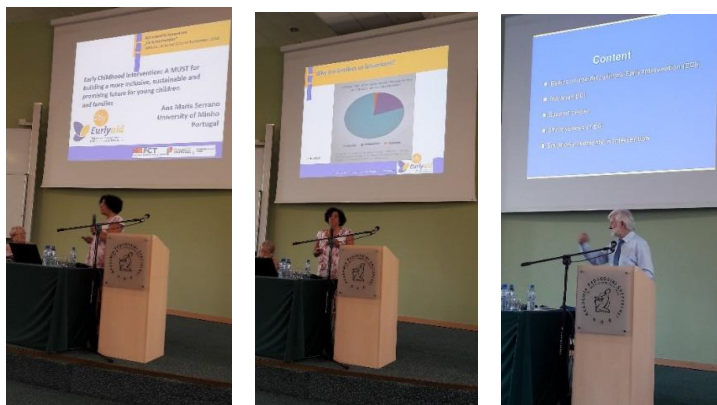
Start of the meeting in Warsaw.

During the meeting in Warsaw, beside the work that was done on the project, a combination was made and organised by our Polish partner organisation, with Maria Grzegorzewska University:

The Polish Group for Scientific Research on Intellectual Disability (IASSIDD) and The Polish Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability (PSONI) held *their XLII Scientific Symposium „Early Intervention”*



Ana Serrano, chair of Eurlyaide was requested to present at this symposium a lecture:



And as a pleasant surprise we re-encountered at the symposium, doctor Franz Peterander.

The project meeting was focussed on the progress in the project:

- The work on the country reports and the summary report moved forwards and showed interesting information that soon will be available when the project website will come online. We will inform you. All important information will be in English and national languages from the partner countries.
- Work packages 2 and 3, on the development of a toolbox and the pilot training in the partner countries, were given much time to discuss thoroughly and decide on practical plans to execute the work. The development and contents of the toolbox will be formed by the English version of the Portuguese Guide on recommended practices in ECI. The pilot trainings partners have to deliver in their countries will be supported by this Guide too and the “train the trainer” event will be at the next meeting in Bratislava delivered by Eurlaid.
- all partners will contribute with information, articles or other materials they have knowledge off, either by authors in their own country or otherwise.



A lovely and tasteful traditional meal followed after the hard work in this impressive city:



In the months that followed we had regular Skype meetings to discuss progress and practical issues and therefore all partners had overview on progress and their tasks.

The first day of the meeting in Bratislava was visited by a representative of the Velux Foundation that supports the Agora project, Mr. Madsen. It was a pleasant experience to discuss not only progress but inform the Foundation in a very direct way about all contents and our activities as well as instructions we have from the Foundation concerning financial management.

It was good to have the opportunity to share thoughts about a possible and much needed extension of the project timeframe because of the complexity and intensity of the work for, on behalf and after the pilot trainings.

Mr. Madsen left the meeting earlier than estimated by himself and expressed full confidence in the project. Not long after we received a message from the EASPD coordinator the extension for 6 months is accepted by Velux.

The last 3 days of the meeting was entirely for “train the trainer”. Each partner had brought “key” people that will be involved in the pilot trainings.

The program of the training:

- Concepts on ECI, the flow, theoretical framework and science behind it
- Neurobiological Basis for ECI; The effects of exposure to environmental impoverishment and chronic stress;
- Neurodevelopmental perspective of Developmental Disabilities
- Family centred frame work; working together as team
- Planning with families for self-efficacy: why planning is important, gather information about child and family, developing meaningful goals, routines based- and parent mediated intervention, reviewing and transition. families for self-efficacy
- Organizational aspects relevant to the development of an ECI system. The role of the Health system (some examples taken from Portugal). Eligibility Criteria for ECI
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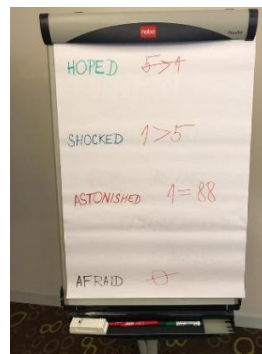
Trainers were: Marilyn Espe- Sherwindt (Eurllyaid and ANIP member), José Boavida (Eurllyaid, ANIP and SNIPI Portugal), Ana Serrano- chair Eurllyaid and Noor van Loen- treasurer Eurllyaid and parent representative.

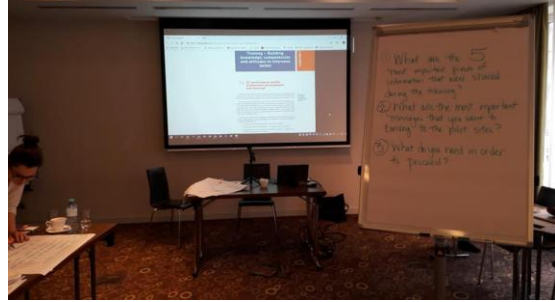
We will let the pictures speak for themselves:

Although the training lasted 2.5 days: the focus, energy and commitment was heart-warming and impressive. We wish our colleagues success and will continue to support them.









the Agora project group

During these hard working days we all together enjoyed a lovely traditional dinner organised by our hosts:



Between the training and writing this newsletter we received the following pictures:



Our colleagues in Hungary started piloting.

After the next project meeting, October 28-29 in Braşov, Romania, we will inform you again on further progress.