

## 4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The “Pre-Study on Violence Prevention in the Educational Institution ‘Kindergarten’ – Present Approaches and Development Possibilities“ aimed at researching peer conflict resolution skills and present approaches to peace education, to sustainable primary violence prevention, its frameworks, structures and development possibilities in kindergartens and similar educational establishments in Germany, Belgium, Norway, Sweden, Poland and Italy. Intermediary groups were kindergarten teachers, parents, those responsible for educational policy and provision and practitioners.

### *Procedure and Results*

a) First of all, there was a comparison of the participating countries: Each country wrote a country report in which general conditions of early childhood education was described. Important results of this comparison were: The basic conditions for early childhood education are different in each country. Responses to protect children from specified forms of violence and selective violence prevention measures prevail the systematic, continuous, and sustainable promotion of universal, development-oriented violence prevention based on Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In the kindergarten curricula or frameworks of all surveyed countries, except Norway (Manifesto against Bullying 2002; 2005) and Sweden (Law against discrimination in schools 2006), universal violence prevention is not sufficiently reflected and addressed. Peace Education based on Art. 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child is not sufficiently reflected and addressed in most of the surveyed countries. As a result from Norwegian elaborations on pre-educational structure in the last years rights of children to violence prevention and peace education are both well reflected in present regulations. In Sweden the curriculum mentions a lot of important values of peace education. There are no evaluated curricula for kindergartens. Legislation and regulations of all surveyed countries are not sufficiently reflecting nor addressing PE & VP relevant aspects in recruitment and education of teachers. Teachers are not qualified enough concerning violence prevention or peace education. Definitions of basic teacher skills/competencies necessary for implementation of primary violence prevention and peace education as well as evaluated teacher profiles allowing to assess such key competencies, skills and knowledge are missing. There are no elaborated concepts on how to integrate parents into early childhood education. Study results verify lack of holistic, meaning systematic, continuous, and sustainable approaches to PE & VP targeting simultaneously all important stakeholders (teachers, children, parents, institution and community) on kindergarten level. Some concepts exist to promote the development of children

like strengthening children's resilience (e.g. Rönna & Fröhlich-Gildhoff 2008) or life skill concept (e.g. Lösel et al. 2006; Beelmann et al. 2004). The analysis of SERKi approved these estimations: Except for Norway and Sweden kindergartens barely had concepts for violence prevention and/or peace education, these topics did not seem to be relevant for processes of quality management in the institutions.

b) The interviews with early childhood teachers revealed a high willingness to learn more about violence prevention and peace education and a high engagement to invest more time into these topics in their every day work. Violence is a primary subject in the institutions. But standardised definitions about violence prevention and peace education do not exist. Although violence and its prevention are important topics in the institutions the term "violence" is challenging biases, attitudes and concepts of educational staff and parents on kindergarten level. "Violent behaviour" is seen as part of the development of children in this age group. There are no strategies; coping with violence is still an individual act, focussed on the present situation. There is no systematic reflection of the teachers about conflictive situations and they do not reflect them together with the children. There are no programmes of violence prevention in the institutions. In all countries except Norway and Sweden, peace education is more an intuitive way of acting than a systematic program.

c) In three countries, children showed more destructive than constructive behaviour (verbally and physically). Only in Sweden, children showed a little more constructive than destructive behaviour and sometimes used de-escalation-strategies. After a conflict, children reacted in general explicitly in a less destructive way – as far as could be observed. In half of the situations observed, the educators intervened, mostly unrequested, and they determined the outcome of the conflict.

The theoretical basis of the process model of conflicts and their possible solutions described in chapter 3.5.2 was verified and may be used as a guideline for a strategy of intervention, e.g. to find out the adequate moment of intervention. It turned out to be more difficult to identify positive social interaction. For this, instruments must be revised, improved and evaluated to be applicable in trainings. Prototype of instrument developed for evaluation of positive social interaction within the study by Norwegian project partner will be tested in planned follow-up activities.

d) Up to the end of the pre-study, parents were not systematically involved in violence prevention/peace education. Usable concepts to work with parents exist: how to get in contact with them, offers of the kindergarten for certain groups of parents, like parents with a migration background, or parent educa-

tion. It is aging that those concepts, which consider the work with children and parents at the same time are the most effective ones (Rönnau & Fröhlich-Gildhoff 2008).

### *Consequences*

A showcase program has to be developed which considers several levels:

Teachers: Teachers have to be trained in violence prevention and peace education. They have to work on their attitude concerning these subjects. Educators/teachers need to learn how to communicate in the institution to create a form of peace education, which is consistent in every day work, and how to deal systematically with conflictive situations. Therefore, they need tools.

Children: I – Children also need to learn how to communicate in a non-violent way with each other and with adults and how to deal systematically with conflictive situations.  
II – Therefore, children have to be trained systematically in life skills, methods of conflict solving etc.  
III – Children have to acquire a basic knowledge of acting democratically and the institutions have to offer them regular opportunities to do so, e.g. a parliament of children.

Parents: I – Parents need information about violence prevention and peace education.  
II – There have to be courses for parents about non-violent education. Parents have to be strengthened in their form of education.  
III – Parents have to be involved in the every day work of the kindergarten.  
IV – There have to be possibilities for parents to be coached individually. The institution has to intervene when families are not able to solve their problems and children have to be protected from violence or abuse.

Institution: The kindergartens have to develop a concept for peace education and violence prevention. For this work, they need assistance from the supporting organisation.

Key competencies of teachers (teacher profiles) allowing to sustainably implement and assess violence prevention and peace education in compulsory education need to be defined and evaluated.

To assure provision of education meeting rights of the children stated in Art. 19 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child legislation and regulations on national levels need further monitoring and elaborations.