CORE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES

of the professional profiles employed in the kindergartens

Skopje, 2024

CONTENT:

SUMMARY

By mid-2019 the Council of the European Union published the *Recommendation on High-Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Systems*[1] which considers the 11 principles of the *European social justice pillars* which stipulate that "all children shall have the right to an accessible and high-quality early childhood education and care"[2]. This is in accordance with the *Unite Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child,* as well as with the *United Nations Sustainable Development goal 4.2.* which envision that until 2030 "all boys and girls shall have access to high-quality early childhood education and care, facilitating early childhood development and learning[3]", as a foundation for formal education and lifelong learning.

Numerous European documents highlight **the key role of early childhood education and care in promoting early learning for all children, their wellbeing, and development**[4]. This is considered to be the most effective investment of all phases of education, especially for disadvantaged children. However, research studies do show that not all early childhood education and care programs will achieve these goals, but rather only the high-quality ones[5].

The basic **characteristics of the high-quality early childhood education programs and services** are: high level of accessibility, accessibility, and inclusivity; design based on the premise that education and care are inseparable; family partnerships are based on trust and mutual respect; childhood that is intrinsically valuable, children are supported and appreciated; development, learning, and the choice of activities focus of the children and their interest to learn which enables them to learn how to be empathic and tolerant towards diversity; development of language competences of children from different cultural backgrounds that can enhance their opportunities for education and successful integration in the community[6].

These complex and dynamic characteristics of high-quality early childhood education programs and services require dedicated and responsible work with children, families, and communities on the part of all professional profiles in the early childhood education and care system. Hence, this begs a lot of questions: What should practitioners know, understand, and do every day in early childhood education and care facilities? Does their initial education sufficiently prepare them for such a complex, dynamic, and responsible job? What king of core knowledge and skills can

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[1] Official Journal of the EU (2019): *Council Recommendation on High-Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Systems* (C189/02), Official Journal of the European Union, 05 June 2019.

[2] General Secretariat of the Council (2017): *The European Pillar of Social Rights* (13129/17), Council of the European Union, Brussels 20 October 2017.

[3] United Nations (2018): *Education for sustainable development in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*(A/RES/72/222),The General Assembly United Nations, 25 January 2018.

[4] Dumcius, R., et all (2014). Study on the effective use of early childhood education and care in preventing early school leaving - Final Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, doi: 10.2766/81384; Official Journal of the EU (2013): *Council Recommendation* on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States (C378/01), Official Journal of the European Union, of 9 December 2013; OECD (2018), *Education at a Glance 2018: OECD Indicators*, Paris: OECD Publishing. doi.org/10.1787/19991487; Vandenbroecka, M., et all (2018). Benefits of early childhood education and care and the conditions for obtaining them, Report of the European Expert Network on Economics of Education. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, doi: 10.2766/007676.

[5] Melhuish, E., et all (2015). *A review of research on the effects of Early Childhood Education and Care upon child development*. CARE project, Curriculum Quality Analysis and Impact Review of European Early Childhood Education and Care - ECEC.

[6] Official Journal of the EU (2019): Council Recommendation on High-Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Systems (C189/02), Official Journal of the European Union, 05 June 2019.

prepare them to fully consider and understand the wellbeing of children, their educational and developmental needs, the relevant social developments, gender equality, and provide them with a comprehensive understanding of the rights of children and their families? Does this knowledge enable practitioners in kindergartens acquire competences/authorities to meet the individual needs of the children with respect to development and the different socioeconomic backgrounds? Are the practitioners and all other professionals working in early childhood education and care facilities, in a position to acquire and develop the required competences?

In this context, **all professional profiles in the early childhood education and care system represent an important component in creating high-quality programs, and their professional competences are essential to attaining the high level of quality** of early childhood services. Ther is consensus among researchers and policy creators that the quality of early childhood learning, and development services depends on well educated, experienced, and competent staff. However, in addition to the regulations related to the competence profiles, other investments are also needed to support the implementation of the individual competences. These refer to supporting practitioners, and future practitioners, fostering a systemic approach to early childhood education and care and leadership policy creation, staff, time for collective reflection, training, career counseling and other support resources. The quality of professional profiles cannot be just the sum of the competences of individuals. Although the term "competence" usually refers to the qualities of a particular individual, in fact the quality of staff is determined by the interaction between individually competent people within what we call a "competent system". Among the highlighted aspects of the systemic conditions that enable competence development, are the supporting working conditions, including professional leadership, which creates possibilities to observe, reflect, plan, teamwork, and cooperate with parents.

In this regard, this document follows the transformation perspective that goes beyond the individual level, and systemically approaches professional competences of the professional profiles in kindergartens. Having in mind that in our country this is done in facilities for children that can be organized as kindergartens and/or early childhood development centers, this document presents the core professional competences of the professional profiles employed in kindergartens, except caregivers having in mind that they were prepared in the past period[7]. This implies the fact that the directors work together with the teachers, caregivers, professional workers, and professional coworkers, parents, and the broader community towards achieving the inclusive vision of ambitious, yet achievable outcomes for all. This perspective focuses on the development of a learning community focused on learning performance and development of each and every child, and at the same time every teacher, caregiver, professional worker and professional coworker sets up a professional and a cultural environment wherein every individual is appreciated and understood and receives support for the highest expectations and possibilities for development of their individual potential. This approach involving a professional and cultural environment can be sustainable if the directors and the teachers and professional workers themselves are part of this concept where every individual will monitor and understand themselves and will provide an appropriate structure and the necessary resources to foster a culture of continuous advancement and building of joint capacities.

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[7] Creating competencies for kindergarten teachers British Embassy funded project, implemented by UNICEF Office –Skopje and Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, 2018.

The core competences of the professional profiles in kindergartens aim at providing effectiveness, professional and cultural environment centered around the achievements of the children, as well as the performance of all employees. This approach strives to make employment in a kindergarten an attractive option for more qualified staff that will have opportunities for continuous professional development and an adequate career.

1. BASIC TERMINOLOGY

Kindergarten employee profile – shall contain information regarding the occupation title in Macedonian (according to the Occupations Standards Classification) and English (according to Systems of Early Education, Care and Professionalization in Europe - SEEPRO), the professional education qualification requirements according to EQF, MRK and ISCED with information about the business sector.

European Qualifications Framework (ERK/EQF) -European Qualifications Framework) represents a common reference framework connecting the qualification systems in different countries and is an instrument for mutual recognition and understanding of the qualifications. *Framework level* is a series of consecutive steps of learning with respect to a series of general outputs, structures according of a set of descriptors.

Macedonian Qualifications Framework (MRK/MQF) - is a mandatory national standard determining the acquisition and utilization of qualifications in our country and an instrument for the establishment of a system of qualifications acquired in the country, which provides the basis for clarity, access, advancement, acquisition, and quality of the qualifications.

International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) is a statistical framework for organizing education information established by UNESCO. The instrument is suitable for comparison, compiling and presenting international education statistics.

Qualification – is a formal result from the process of assessment and verification, acquired when a responsible institution confirms that an individual has achieved the learning results in accordance with established standards. *Qualification descriptions* are measurable indicators of the learnings results regarding the acquired knowledge, skills, and competencies.

Competencies – are a complex aggregate of acquired knowledge and skills, i.e., demonstrated ability to use the knowledge and skills in a learning or working environment. *Competence areas* – are defined in several key areas of knowledge and skills that represent a common basis for developing competencies of a particular profile in order to improve the quality of the work.

Curriculum (primary/secondary/tertiary education) – is an aggregate of education components, based on learning outcomes, recognized for awarding a particular qualification.

Formal learning – is an activity provided by an educational institution or a training facility, implemented in accordance with particular approved curriculums in order to improve knowledge, skills, and competencies, reflected by an appropriate document issued by the institution.

Nonformal learning – are organized learning activities in order to improve knowledge, skills, and competencies for personal, societal, and professional purposes, which usually leads to obtaining certificates necessary for professional and career development.

Informal learning – is any learning that is neither forma education nor nonformal learning, a kind of independent learning or learning from experience. Informa learning is an expanded phenomenon of learning involving learning through participating and where knowledge is created.

Lifelong learning – is an activity of formal, nonformal, and informal learning during the entire life in order to improve knowledge, skills, and competences for personal, professional, and societal purposes.

Learning outcomes – are statements about what the participant knows, understands, and is able to do as a result of the formal, nonformal, or informal learning process. The learning outcomes are defined in terms of knowledge, skills, and competencies (autonomy and responsibility).

Professional values – Principles intentionally embraced by the profession because that positively influence the overall development of the community/have a positive impact on the children and the families.

Professional development – continuous education and training implemented in order to increase knowledge and strengthen skills and abilities of the professionals working in the kindergartens so that they acquire the competences that will continuously improve their everyday work. Professional development depends on the initial education, the abilities, the needs, and the desire to actively follow and participate in all available forms.

2. International experiences about professional competences and qualifications for professional profiles employed in kindergartens

Both within academic circles, as well as in international policy documents there is a broad consensus that the quality of professional profiles represents a strong predictor of the level of outcomes of child development and learning. Therefore, research recommends that **staff in the early childhood education and care system should be qualified at the level of a university diploma** (ISCED 5), and the international policy documents stipulate that **at least 60% of the employees** should be trained at this level[8].

The latest international analyses show that the early childhood education and care system employs many different types of people, with different titles and different qualifications. This research[9] show that the systems differ from country to country in many aspects: management; type of employees; qualifications of the practitioners and their initial training; in service training methods; policy and reforms; organizational and management models. Although some countries have **national requirements regarding formal competencies for the profession and the initial professional preparation**, other countries have formal requirements for competences for the profession, but not for the professional training (or vice versa), and a third set of countries do not have any competences. Usually, such international analyses introduce basic general terms that facilitate systematization and enable comparability. The objective is to recognize good practices and provide guidance that will serve as a basis for the development of competences for improving the quality of the professional profiles employed in the early childhood education and care system.

In the early childhood education and care system, the term "**practitioner**" refers to the **staff that has daily and direct contact with children, whose responsibilities include education and/or care**. Usually, these are individual professionals that lead a group of children in their kindergarten classroom and work directly with the children and their parents. Practitioners of this type, in the context of our country, are **a teacher** (works with children from 3 to 6 years of age) and **a caregiver** (works with children from 6 months to 3 years of age). In addition, in many countries, teams of several people share the responsibility for a group of children instead of having just one professional responsible for the entire group of children, as is typically the case in primary schools. Some countries have established the same minimum requirements for qualification for all staff, others have different profiles for different job positions and require different qualifications for different positions[10].

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[8] *Key Data on Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe* (2019). European Commission – EACEA - Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. doi:10.2797/894279

[9] Oberhuemer, P., Schreyer, I. (2017). *Professionals in Early Childhood Education and Care Systems*: *European Profiles and Perspectives*. Opladen and Farmington Hills, MI: Barbara Budrich.

[10] When a team is working with a group of children in the early childhood education and care system, then at least one person in the team must have a higher level of qualifications than the others working with the that group of children. This person is considered to be the primary practitioner, and the others are considered to be his/her assistants. If the requirement is that all team members should have the same qualification, then all will be considered to be primary practitioners, in spite of any other higher professional evaluations or assessment they might have in a specific country.

Only in one third of the countries the early childhood education as care system in Europe have the requirement that **practitioners,** or caregivers **who work with groups of children up to the age of 3 years, should have a graduate degree or a higher level of qualifications**. In thirteen European countries (Bulgaria, Germany, Estonia, Greece, France, Croatia, Cyprus, Lithuania, Slovenia, Finland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Norway), the minimal qualification level is undergraduate education, and only two countries (Portugal and Iceland) require an education level of a master's degree. It is important to mention that there are countries where there is no regulation regarding the minimum qualification for caregivers (for example Great Britain, Portugal for practitioners that work with children up to the age of 1 year). In Bulgaria, any group with children younger than 3 years is called a nursery group and it has a caregiver that should be managed by two other practitioners with a list undergraduate education. Only one of them needs to be a pedagogist, and the other practitioner is a caregiver.

Three quarters of the early childhood education and care system in Europe requires the primary **practitioners working with children older than 3 years,** as well as the caregivers, to have a **degree or a higher degree in preschool or general education**. Thus, in 29 European countries the minimum requirement is a degree, and in four (France, Italy, Portugal, and Iceland) a master's degree. In eight education systems, the minimal qualification level required to work as a basic practitioner for any age group is under the level of an undergraduate degree (Czech Republic, Ireland, Latvia, Malta, Austria, Romania, Slovakia, and Scotland).

It is worth mentioning that **the staff qualifications requirements corelate to how the early education and care system is organized.** In several countries with unitary systems or where there are unitary and special setups, basic practitioners must be qualified with at least an undergraduate degree or higher. On the other hand, almost all countries with special setups have greater requirements for staff working with older children than for those working with younger children. The exception are North Macedonia and Serbia where all of the provisions have been created for a unitary setup, and the minimal level of qualification for the primary practitioners taking care of younger children is lower than that for staff working with children older than 3 years**.** Three countries (Greece, Cyprus, and Portugal) with special setups depending on the age of the children, have high requirements for the staff in both phases of the early childhood education and care system. This means high-level qualification requirements throughout the entire early childhood education and care system. Although primary practitioners usually are the main staff category in this system, in most European system they are supported in their work by **education and care assistants**. In some countries, assistants work with both younger and older children. In four countries (Greece, Italy, Liechtenstein, and Montenegro) assistants work only with younger children, while in three countries (Belgium, Luxemburg, and Slovakia) they work only with groups of older children. In most early childhood education and care systems that have assistants, the highest-level authority has not envisioned regulations for the minimal initial professional qualifications. However, 13 systems have regulations in this area. Six education systems (Germany, Estonia, Greece, Luxemburg, Scotland, and Montenegro) require post-secondary education as the minimum qualification, although in most of the cases the systems require a secondary qualification (ISCED3) in preschool or primary education. This is the case in Slovakia and Belgium (Flemish community), where the assistants work only with older children, as well as France, Slovenia, and Finland where the assistants work with both age groups. In two education systems (the Netherlands and Turkey), the minimum qualification requirements vary

depending on the age of the children[11]. On the other hand, 13 European countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Ireland, Croatia, Cyprus, Malta, Poland, Romania, Albania, Iceland, North Macedonia, and Serbia) have not envisioned assistants within the staff of the early education and care system.

The broader understanding of the category "practitioner" in this system can also include various specialists in the areas of education and care, as well as pedagogy and psychology work with groups of children, or with individual children, such as pedagogists, psychologists, speech therapists (so called **professional workers**) and other pedagogy profiles specialized in specific subject areas such as pedagogists in music education, painting, foreign languages, sports and physical culture, etc. (so called **professional coworkers**). Usually, in international analyses, the title practitioner is associated with teachers, caregivers, pedagogists, and other members of the administration staff. In addition, international qualifications most of the time do not include, under "early childhood education and care system staff" medical/healthcare staff supporting the physical development of children, such as pediatricians, physiotherapists, psychomotor therapists, nutritionists, or speech therapists, nor do they include staff responsible for the preparation of food, maintaining hygiene in the facility, and cleaning.

International experience shows that the people that can work in this system include different professional profiles and specialists, qualified the tertiary undergraduate level (ISCED 6) in specific areas such as **psychologists, pedagogists, social workers, speech therapists, special education specialists, and rehabilitators** and others (so called **professional workers**). These specialists can be employed directly in the children's facility (kindergarten), as part of the professional team, or they can provide assistance and support to the staff that works directly with the children, and these specialists can be engaged by external services or support facilities. Small facilities usually engage external professional workers, usually organized in the form of multidisciplinary teams. These teams can provide assistance to an individual child or to children in small groups in their kindergartens or in the premises of the support facility. In almost all European countries, the regulation encompasses the entire spectrum of support staff that can have different levels of professional education and different levels of engagement. Psychologists provide support in most countries, while professionals specializing in initial reading and mathematics provide their support more rarely. In more than two thirds of the European countries, other types of professionals can support the staff working in this system with children older than 2 or 3 years. In addition to speech therapists and psychologists, facilities for older children usually have access to pedagogists, social workers, or staff specializing in supporting children with special education needs. On the other hand, the facilities for small children get support from medical or healthcare professionals, such as pediatricians, psychotherapists, psychomotor therapists, nutritionists, and others that support the physical development of children.

The provision of professional aggregate services is a discretionary right of the service provider. Usually, the engagement of the necessary specialized staff is the responsibility of the director of

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[11] The Netherlands, for example, does not prescribe any minimum education requirements for assistants that work with groups of younger children, but require a 2-year course of vocational education or higher-level secondary education for assistants that work with older children. In Turkey, the assistants in the day centers should complete a one-year training course organized by the Ministry of National Education and implemented by public education centers or accredited private course providers after having completed three years of general secondary education. Assistants that work with older children in kindergartens qualify with a 4-year vocational education and training qualification at the level of ISCED 3.

the institution. The director usually does this on the basis of the needs expressed by the practitioners working with the children and the parents. Usually, the size of the institution or the number of children with additional educational needs determines the availability of professionals. Thus, the availability of such a professional service in Lithuania depends on the number of children with special education needs in the institution. An institution can employ a speech therapist if it has at least 25-30 children that require such support. Wherever it is not possible to provide professional assistance in the institution itself, the local psychological service can provide the required support. On the other hand, in Slovenia and Serbia, all public and subsidized institutions for children have internal counseling services. Kindergartens with 30 or more groups are entitled to one regular counselor, while the smaller kindergartens receive part time counseling services. Different professionals, such as psychologists, defectologists, rehabilitation specialists, social workers, and others can be employed as counselors for these services. An alternative solution is the expectation that the service providers in the early childhood education and care system to cooperate with local support agencies (in Luxemburg, Scotland, and Ireland), a central pedagogy service (in Hungary) or a center for psychological, medical, and social support (Belgium) that can offer different specialists to provide support to children that need emotional, psychological, cultural, or any other type of support to learn, which is mostly the case with the groups of older children.

In addition to the aforementioned professional services, in some environments (Croatia, Serbia, Portugal, Latvia, Liechtenstein, United Kingdom), in the groups of older children, there are also **pedagogists or teachers of various subject areas** (so called **professional coworkers**), that must be qualified at the tertiary undergraduate level (ISCED 6). For example, in Latvia the availability of professional coworkers in kindergartens depends on the financial resources of the municipalities. The "other specialists" engaged include pedagogists in music education, pedagogists in Latvian language, as well as pedagogists in physical culture. In Portugal, the category of "other specialists" includes pedagogists in the area of environment, applied arts, musical and educational sciences, and in the United Kingdom the coworkers include pedagogists in mathematics. European multicultural environments usually engage pedagogists for a specific language, which is a second language/education language to the children (for example Liechtenstein and Germany engage German language pedagogists) or they organize support to develop the primary language as an important basis for the children's cognitive development and successful education. For example, in Switzerland they can hire pedagogists for the different languages that are mother tongues of the children from different ethnic backgrounds.

The analyses of the international experience[12] show that, in European practice, usually the most important criterion for advancement to the **position head/director in the early childhood education and care system is previous working experience**[13] as a practitioner, which means that the minimal qualification requirements are the same as for the practitioners. Thus, for

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[12] *Key Data on Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe* (2019). European Commission – EACEA - Eurydice Report (pg. 110). Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. doi:10.2797/894279

[13] Previous working experience in the early childhood education and care system or in the education system is a prerequisite for the position of manager in two thirds of the European countries. However, in nine countries this minimum requirement applies only to those that manage institutions for older children (Belgium – French community, Czech Republic, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Malta, Romania, Slovakia, and Switzerland). The minimum required working experience varies between 2 years (in Greece, France, Lithuania, England, Wales, Ireland and some cantons in Bosnia and Herzegovina) and 13 years (in Cyprus).

example, in Poland, Great Britain, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Switzerland the minimum qualification requirement for a director is ISCED 3, while in Austria, Albania, Liechtenstein, as well as Italy and Malta, for institutions for children younger than 3 years, the requirement is ISCED 5. In Bulgaria, Romania, and Iceland the minimum qualification requirement for the position of head/director in this system is a master's degree, while in France, Italy, Luxembourg, and Malta this qualification applies only to directors of institutions for older children. In four countries (Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands and Sweden) the minimum qualification requirement for directors is not regulated nationally, while in Belgium (the French and the German language region), Spain, Poland, Portugal, Switzerland, and Turkey the directors of institutions for groups of children from 3 to 6 years of age can also be directors of primary schools and vice versa. Although in two thirds of the European early childhood education and care system, the requirement for the position of head of a pre-school institution is at least the same as the qualification requirements for primary practitioners, still it is noticeable that the requirements for managers of pre-school institutions for younger children is higher than the qualification requirements for primary practitioners in almost half of the European countries. In some countries, in addition to a suitable qualification and working experience, the requirements also include **specific training for managers** which can be complementary to the master's level qualifications focusing on education leadership, or comparable professional qualification (in Bulgaria and Malta) or specific management training of variable duration from 120 to 260 hours (Slovenia, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain). This specific program can either be completed before the appointment to the position or within the first/second year on the job. In some systems (Belgium – the Flemish community, Denmark, Germany, England, and Norway) such programs do exist, but nevertheless managers are not obligated to complete any specific training.

3. Qualification standards and professional profile of kindergarten staff

3.1 Kindergarten staff professional profiles qualification standards

The Macedonian Qualification Framework is an instrument for developing, recognition, and acceptance of the qualifications acquired through the learning outcomes in our country. It is an instrument that encompasses the traditional education system, the current state of education, the training and the system of qualifications, the development of society, the needs of the labor market, the needs of the individuals, the guidance of the European Qualification Network and the international regulations accepted by our country.

Table 1: Higher education level comparison between the European and the Macedonian Qualification Frameworks

EQF Level	Higher education cycle description	MQF Level	
8	3rd cycle of Doctoral studies	**VIII**	
7	2nd cycle of master's academic studies	VIIA	**VII**
	2nd cycle of Specialist studies	VIIB	
6	1st cycle of university studies 240 credits; Professional studies 240 credits	VIA	**VI**
	1st cycle of university studies 180 credits; Professional studies 180 credits	VIB	
5	Professional studies from 60 to 120 credits; Short cycles within the framework of the first cycle	VA	**V**
	Professional education related to the first cycle of studies 60 credits	VB	

The qualifications framework provides a clear overview of the manner in which the qualifications are acquired in order to satisfy the needs of the labor market and of society and to foster lifelong learning. In his document the term qualification is defined as a formal result of the evaluation and validation process. This formal result is considered to have been achieved once a competent institution certifies that an individual has achieved the learning outcome in accordance with the appropriate standards. The descriptions of qualifications are based on the learning outcomes. In that regard, qualifications are an aggregate of certified and documented learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences) in accordance with particular standards, regardless of where and how they have been acquired.

The national framework represents clear quality criteria for acquiring the qualification at a particular level which the participant can acquire after having completed the required education

and training. Qualifications related to general education, formal vocational education and training, nonformal education and training and higher education. The framework contains a set of principles reflecting the value of the qualifications and enabling the interested beneficiaries to see whether the qualification they are interested in acquiring provides them with opportunities for further education and training of for employment or both.

Table 2: Overview of the types of knowledge, understanding, skills, and competences broken down by different education levels

Level	Knowledge and understanding	Skills	Competences
VII (seventh)	Demonstrates knowledge and understanding about the scientific field upgraded from the first cycle, applying methodologies appropriate for solving complex problems in a systemic, as well as creative manner, which provides a basis, as well as opportunities for originality in the development and/or application of genuine ideas in the context of research. Demonstrates a high level of professional competence in one or several scientific fields. Possesses knowledge from one or more subject areas which, in those particular scientific fields, are based on the most renown scientific studies in that particular scientific area, as well as an ability to connect to expanded and deeper knowledge of related professions or scientific fields.	Ability to synthesize and integrate knowledge and deal with complex issues, systemically, as well as creatively. Ability to evaluate and select scientific theories, methodologies, tools, and general skills from the subject areas and establishment of new scientific analyses and solutions. Ability to recognize personal needs for further knowledge and ability to act independently and autonomously when acquiring new knowledge and skills with the framework of society. Ability to exchange conclusions and suggestions with appropriate argumentation and rational corroboration, with both professionals and non-professionals, clearly and unequivocally.	Demonstrates significant responsibility for one's own, as well as for the jointly achieved results in leading and initiating activities. Ability to soundly evaluate, even when presented with incomplete and limited information, including personal, societal, and ethical responsibilities when applying the acquired knowledge and evaluation. Ability to take responsibility for one's own as well as the group's, with which he/she cooperates, further professional development and training.
Level	Knowledge and understanding	Skills	Competences

Level	Knowledge and understanding	Skills	Competences
VI (sixth)	Demonstrates knowledge and understanding in the scientific field of study which the participant studies and upgrades from the previous education and training, including the domain of theoretic, practical, conceptual, comparative, and critical perspectives in the scientific field in accordance with the appropriate methodology; Understanding of a certain area and knowing the current issues in reference to scientific research and in the new sources of knowledge; Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of various theories and methodologies necessary for the broader research area.	Is able to apply the knowledge and understanding in a manner that demonstrates a professional approach to the work or the profession; Demonstrates an ability to identify, analyze, and resolve problems; Ability to find and corroborate arguments within the profession or the field of study; Ability to collect, analyze, evaluate, and present information, ideas and concepts from appropriate data; Ability to evaluate theoretical and practical issues, to provide explanations for the reasons, and select an appropriate solution; Undertakes the initiative to identify the needs to acquire further knowledge and learning with a high degree of independence; Ability to deliberate and discuss information, ideas, problems, and solutions, when the decision-making criteria and the task have been clearly defined together with both the professional audience, as well as the broader public.	Takes responsibility to his/her own results and takes shares in the responsibility for the collective results; Ability to independent participation, using a professional approach, in specific scientific and interdisciplinary discussions; Makes an appropriate assessment, having in mind the personal societal, scientific, and ethical aspects;
Level	**Knowledge and understanding**	**Skills**	**Competences**
	Demonstrates knowledge and understanding in the	Applies skills based on understanding the	Possesses a higher level of personal and business

V (fifth)	field of study upgraded on the basis of the general education, supported with technical references; Possesses specialist and theoretic technical knowledge and understanding of particular basic theories from the narrower scientific and professional area; Possesses limited knowledge of the modern trends in the area where he/she works or studies, which provides support to the field of work or to the profession. There are possibilities for personal development and there is a basis for future studies in order to complete the first cycle.	theoretical principles and their application in problem solving and executing complex and specific tasks in the field of working and learning, with an adequate selection and utilization of relevant data, methods, procedures, techniques, instruments, devices, tools, and materials; Has learning skills so that he/she can undertake further studies with a certain degree of independence; Is able to deliberate and discuss with target groups from the narrower profession, or area of study, as well as with colleagues, superiors, and clients.	responsibility and valuation of his/her own work and the work of the group based on adequate criteria in the area of labor; Is able to convey knowledge to others, inform and control his/her own work and the work of the others; Takes responsibility for one's own results, but also shares in the responsibility for the activities, results, and the work of the others in the group.

3.2 Professional profiles in kindergartens

In our country **the care for and upbringing of young and preschool children is performed in public (and private) facilities for children – kindergartens and early childhood development centers**. According to the *Law on child protection*, the public institutions employ various professional profiles that provide the children with care, education, as well as other pedagogical and psychological services, social work services, and preventive healthcare services, professional services related to the rest and recreation of children, and other professional work related to the protection of children. These employees are distributed to different job positions in accordance with their professional profiles (*Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia* 146/2019, article 135):

- **Manager of the facility – category A;**
- **Professional workers – category B;**
- **Teachers – category C;**
- **Professional coworkers – category D;**
- **Caregivers/support professional staff – category E.**

The main implementers of education and care for children from birth to the age of 6 years are the caregivers and the teachers that work in cooperation with professional workers (pedagogist, psychologist, social worker, defectologist/special education specialist, and rehabilitator, speech

therapist, medical doctor, and dentist) and professional coworkers – music pedagogist, painting pedagogist, physical education pedagogist, foreign language and literature teacher, and nurse.

Table 3: International recognition of professional profiles in kindergartens in our country

Job title Job profile	Main ECEC workplace settings and age-range	Main position	Main age-range focus of IPS	Minimum qualification requirement and ECTS points MQF &EQF level ISCED level
ECEC Teacher Profile: Early Childhood Pedagogy Professional	*Kindergartens* ECEC institutions 3 years - 6 years; *Early Childhood Development Centers* ECEC institutions 3 years - 6 years	Core practitioner with group responsibility	3 years – 6 years 3 years – 6 years	Bachelor's degree, 4 years university ECTS points: 240 MQF/EQF level: 6 ISCED 2011: 7
Caregiver, Childcare Worker Nurse Profile: Social Care/Health Care Professional	*Nurseries in kindergarten;* Infant/toddler childcare in ECEC institutions 0 years - 3 years *Kindergartens* ECEC institutions 3 years - 6 years; *Early Childhood Development Centers* ECEC institutions 3 years - 6 years	Core practitioner with group responsibility Supporting the core practitioner	0 year – 3 years 3 years – 6 years	4-year night secondary vocational school ECTS points: n/a MQF/EQF level: 4 ISCED 2011: 3
Professional workers **Pedagogue; Psychologist** **Speech Therapy Teacher; Special Needs Teacher and Rehabilitator** Profile: Pre-primary and Primary Education Professional with	*Kindergartens* ECEC institutions 0 years - 6 years; *Early Childhood Development Centers* ECEC institutions 3 years - 6 years	Specialist support staff Main responsible person who works with children with speech and other problems	Broad focus (children and adults)	Bachelor's degree, 4 years university

specialist qualification **Social worker; Doctor of Medicine; Dentist** Profile: Social Care/Health Care Professional		Person who works with children with social or health problems		ECTS points: 240 MQF/EQF Level: 6 ISCED 2011: 7 ECTS points: 240 MQF/EQF Level: 6 ISCED 2011: 7
Professional co-workers **Music Teacher; Art Teacher; Sports Teacher;** *foreign languages and literature teacher* Profile: Pre-primary and Primary Education Professional with specialist qualification.	*Kindergartens* ECEC institutions 0 year - 6 years *Early Childhood Development Centers* *ECEC institutions 3 years - 6 years*	Specialist support staff Directly interacts with children two times a week, organizing activities and working towards goals in the educational area of music, art, sport, far activities	3–15 years	Bachelor's degree 4 years university ECTS points: 240 MQF/EQF: Level 6 ISCED 2011: 6
Medical Nurse Profile**:** Social/Health Care Professional		Qualified co-worker particularly in health issues	Broad focus (children and adults)	Bachelor's degree 3 years university ECTS points: 180 MQF/EQF: Level 6

Job title Job profile	Main ECEC workplace settings and age-range	Main position	Main age-range focus of IPS	Minimum qualification requirement and ECTS points MQF &EQF level ISCED level
				ISCED 2011: 6
Director/ Manager Profile: Early Childhood Pedagogy Professional or Social/Health Care Professional	*Kindergartens* ECEC institutions 0 year - 6 years; *Early Childhood Development Centers ECEC institutions 3 years - 6 years*	Specialist support staff	Broad focus	Relevant professional qualification (Social Work, Teaching, Child-care Practice) usually with bachelor's degree or equivalent ECTS points: 240 MQF/EQF Level: 6 ISCED 2011: 6

Box 1 **SEEPRO professional profile categories for core practitioners** (adapted from Oberhuemer, P., I. Schreyer, and M.J. Neuman 2010)

• *Early Childhood Pedagogy Professional* (specialist focus, 0–6/7 years)

• *Pre-primary Education Professional* (exclusive pre-primary focus 3/4–6 years)

• *Pre-primary and Primary Education Professional* (focus on pre-primary *and* primary education 3/4–10/11 years)

• *Social and Childhood Pedagogy Professional* (mainly broad focus, including ECEC, usually 0–12 years, but sometimes including adults)

• *Social Care/Health Care Professional* (sometimes early childhood focus, sometimes broad focus, including adults)

4. Professional values of the professional profiles in the kindergartens

The professional values serving as a basis for the professional profiles of the employees in the kindergartens define their personal and professional culture. They represent guidelines that obligate kindergarten employees to act, work, and behave professionally every day. The values are manifested in their everyday collaboration and communication with the other colleagues – practitioners, as well as all the other employees, the relationship with the beneficiaries of their services, as well as towards all other stakeholders in the professional environment. Professional values are acquired during education and are developed in everyday work.

Every kindergarten employee bases their work on the following professional values:

- ➢ **Professional integrity and dedication to the profession**
- ➢ **Commitment to the best interest of the professional communities**
- ➢ **Professional approach that values, respects, and embraces differences**
- ➢ **Parents are equal partners in the early learning of the children**

Every kindergarten employee is **dedicated to their profession and develops their professional integrity**. In their everyday work, every employee manifests their professional approach in cooperating with the other practitioners, parents, and the broader community. At every occasion, he/she considers personal and common learning needs and actively participates in professional development. Through personal example, he/she fosters professional integrity in the environment and contributes towards motivation and a positive working climate. Every kindergarten employee believes that, through their professional and personal integrity, high ethical values and behavior, they promote their own profession and contribute to forming a positive public perception towards their profession.

Every kindergarten employee knows the value of cooperation among colleagues and **dedication to the best interests of the professional communities**. All of them believe the practitioners should develop in their work, which is in the best interest of every child. The employees perceive the community where they work as an environment within which they have to seek out all possible ways and resources for personal and collegial professional progress. Every kindergarten employee perceives the environment as a professional community using systems for tracking the needs of the employees and takes every opportunity for continuous professional development. Kindergarten employees also establish cooperation with other professional communities in order to share good practices and experiences. They also use all of the capacities provided by the institution, all available platforms, funds, and other tools through which the professional community can continuously build its capacities. While working on their own professional development, as well as the professional development of the other profiles of practitioners in the kindergarten, the employees strive to be more focused on the vision of a modern education and care process in the 21st century. They strive to constantly improve life and work in the kindergarten.

A professional approach that values, respects, and embraces differences means that every kindergarten employee is aware of the existing differences and accepts, respects, and values those differences. They create conditions where differences will be an advantage, rather than a deficiency. They look at differences as opportunities for mutual upgrading. Kindergarten employees use the socioeconomic, cultural, and educational differences to enrich the

communities where everyone works towards one objective in the best interest of every child. For every kindergarten employee every child is a unique and a valuable person, and it is the employee's professional obligation to **dedicatedly work toward the best interest of the children** and to put first and foremost their development, learning, behavior, and mental health. They believe that by creating a stimulating environment, they will ensure that every child learns and develops and demonstrates their potential as much as possible. They believe in the importance of respecting conventions and other human rights documents and documents regarding the rights of children and nondiscrimination, as well as the principles of social justice and they consider that the adherence to such principles paves the way to transform kindergartens into a better place for development and learning of children.

Every kindergarten employee believes that **parents are equal partners in early childhood learning**. Therefore, all kindergarten employees build partnership relationships with the parents. Kindergarten staff perceive them as key collaborators that have their own great role in the joint efforts to ensure optimal care, nurturing, growth, development and learning for every child. They foster the partnership between kindergarten staff and parents on a daily basis, where, on one hand they build parental competences, and on the other hand the parents have open access, are able to monitor the work that is done every day, participate with their capacities, thus facilitating continuity of a stimulating ambient in the family.

5. Core professional competences of the professional profiles employed in the kindergartens

In the past few years, there have been ever more frequent discussions between the policy creators, the professional, and the scientific community about efficient strategies for education and the development of the professional profiles of education staff. Leading European institutions dealing with competences and qualifications, point out that the challenges of the modern dynamic society can be overcome only by highly qualified professionals capable of lifelong learning, reflective, and research-based approach to the education and care practice. At the same time, **it is important to provide continuous development of the practitioners in the three areas of competence**: (1) work with other people (children, colleagues, parents, and other partners); (2) application of knowledge, technology, and information, and (3) work with the environment and the surroundings (at local, regional, national, European, and, more broadly at the global level).[14]

While **working with other people** practitioners should demonstrate professionalism based on the values of social inclusion, that nurture the potential of every child. This requires the practitioners to know about child development, to be able to work with individual children, in cooperation with other professionals with different profiles.

In the area of **application of knowledge and technology**, the education and the professional development of the practitioners should ensure the strengthening of different approaches, analysis of quality, validation of knowledge, feedback, transfer of knowledge, and use of technology. Their pedagogy skills should enable them to efficiently manage the learning environment and to appropriately select the form and the content of the work. The practitioners should support the children in their quest for new knowledge using modern technologies, making it possible for them to explore information and integrate it in their personal knowledge by developing a proper relationship towards learning as a lifelong challenge.

Working with and in the environment, the practitioners should facilitate the development of a level of preparedness and responsibility of the children as European citizens by promoting mobility, cooperation, intercultural respect and understanding when identifying common values. They also should be aware of the factors that contribute to social cohesion in society, as well as the ethical dimensions of the knowledge-based society. Practitioners should work with the local community, as well as the partners, and other stakeholders in education – parents, institutions for education of teachers and pedagogists, and representative groups. Their experience and expertise should help them contribute to the development of a system for quality.

Practitioners in early childhood education and care should acquire competencies in the aforementioned areas by developing both general competences, as well as competences within the framework of the narrower professional knowledge and skills, specific for each profession or area, i.e., the so-called special competences. The generic competences include the following:

- **Knowledge of the characteristics and the development needs of children;**
- **Group management skills;**

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[14] European Commission (2005): *Common European principles for teacher competences and qualifications*. Brussel: European Commission. European Commission (2005a): *The European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning*, Brussels: European Qualifications Framework, European Commission.

- **Ability to monitor and evaluate the development and learning processes;**
- **Knowledge of contents of the current curricula and the process for preparing the curricula for early childhood education and care;**
- **Ability to do teamwork and cooperate with different target groups both within, as well as outside of the early childhood education and care institution;**
- **Ability to have a research-based relationship and a reflective approach to the practice and his/her own work;**
- **Developed sensitivity to the social and cultural dimension in education.**

All these recommendations for the development of competences of the practitioners employed in early childhood education and care are integrated, in different ways, into the education and care practice. As shown by the analysis of the national documents in this area of 15 European countries (Belgium, England, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweeden) "the different profiles and their competences within the different national context are almost impossible to compare"[15]. However, broader areas of competences have been identified, related to the preparedness of the practitioners to work with children and parents, colleagues and the broader education system and social system, as well as related to personal professional development. It has been emphasized that defining broad areas which include knowledge, skills, and values is especially useful and **it is important that the competences result from joint discussions of practitioners of various profiles with experts and policy creators**.

5. 1. Structure of the core professional competences of the professional profiles in kindergartens

The professional competences of the professional profiles in the kindergartens in our country are classified in six key areas[16]. Professional knowledge and understanding, as well as professional abilities and skills are elaborated within every subarea under the specific areas. This approach ensures precise definition of the different areas that are part of the important areas of work of the professional profiles and the other staff in the kindergartens. They aim at presenting the competences through the knowledge, understanding, abilities, and skills that the professional profiles should possess to successfully perform their professional duties and obligations. The structure of the competences and the areas and subareas, together with their content is based on an analysis of the existing legislation, national documents, as well as an analysis of the relevant scientific literature from the country and abroad, and the recommendations of the European commission. This approach provides the possibility to expand and further develop the current role and function of the professional profiles of the kindergarten employees, as well as clearly define their professional competences.

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[15] Van Laere, K., Vandenbroeck, M. & J. Peeters (2011): Competence survey, *CoRe: Competence requirements in Early Childhood Education and Care - Research documents*.

[16] The presented competence areas are a result of an analysis which, in addition to the European recommendations and experiences, also include all national documents prepared for the professional profiles (teachers, professional coworkers, educators etc.) employed in the education and care system of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Table 4: Structure of the core professional competences of the professional profiles in the kindergartens

AREAS AND SUBAREAS COMPETENCES		Category[17] - PROFESSIONAL PROFILES OF EMPLOYEES IN KINDERGARTENS				
		Category A DIRECTORS / MANAGERS	Category B PROFESSIONAL WORKERS	Category C TEACHERS[18]	Category D PROFESSIONAL COWORKERS	Category E CAREGIVERS
CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING	Subareas	Child development and learning	Work with children: Support of early learning and child development	Early learning and child development	Knowledge about early childhood education and care and early learning and development	Early care for and development of the child
ENVIRONMENT	Subareas	Professional learning communities	Healthy and safe environment for learning and development	Healthy and safe environment for learning and development	Healthy and safe environment for learning and development	Care and practice
		Sociocultural and inclusive environment	Sociocultural and inclusive environment	Stimulative environment for supporting learning and development	Sociocultural and inclusive environment	Evidence based environment
				Inclusive learning environment and approach		
ORGANIZATION AND CLIMATE	Subareas	Management and organization	Organization and climate	Kindergarten structure and organization	Stimulative learning environment	Organization and climate
		Leadership	Learning community and reflective practice	Democratic participation support climate	Organization and climate	
		Management				
EDUCATION AND CARE PROCESS	Subareas	Building relation	Support of practitioners for planning, monitoring and evaluation	Holistic approach and integrated planning	Early teaching and learning strategies	Monitoring and evaluation of the care and nurturing of the child

		Education policy	Analytical and research work	Early learning, teaching and development strategies	Planning, monitoring and evaluation	Promoting childcare and development
					Analytical and research work	
COOPERATION WITH PARENTS AND COMMUNITIES	Subareas	Partnership with parents, families and the community	Educational and counseling support of parents and the family	Family characteristics and influences	Cooperation with the family	Communication, cooperation, and partnership with parents and families
		Problem solving and building cooperation strategies	Including parents and families in kindergarten	Communication, cooperation, and inclusion of parents and family	Cooperation with the community	Cooperation with the community
			Cooperation with professional institutions and organizations	Education and counseling support to parents and families		
			Cooperation with the community	Cooperation with the community		
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	Subareas	Professional development	Personal and professional development	Personal and professional development	Personal and professional development	Ethical principles and a professional approach
		Reflective practice	Professional cooperation	Professional ethics and cooperation	Professional cooperation	Reflective practice

The professional profiles included in category B (professional workers) and D (professional coworkers) engage in teamwork and support all other participants in the early childhood education and care process. However, their primary focus is building and implementing development and preventive strategies for the learning and development of children. Having in mind their core role – building and implementing development and preventive for the learning and development of young and preschool age children – all professional workers and coworkers have significantly many **common competences**. However, these competences are not identical for the different professional workers. In dealing with the relevant situations in kindergartens, the professional workers and coworkers will use different methodological approaches from their profession, from their own respective aspects, and in accordance with the specifications of their respective qualifications.

6. CORE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES for professional profiles of kindergarten employees

Category A - **DIRECTORS**

Key areas of the core professional competences of directors/managers in kindergartens are:

1. Area: **Child development and learning**
2. Area: **Environment**
3. Area: **Organization and climate**
4. Area: **Early childhood education and care process**
5. Area: **Cooperation with the family and community**
6. Area: **Professional development**

Area: CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

Subarea: **Child development and learning**	
Knowledge and understanding	Professional abilities and skills
Understands the modern approaches applicable to early childhood development and learning	Knows how to recognize the modern approaches to early childhood development and learning
Knows and understands the basic child development theories	Knows how to apply the knowledge of the theories for early childhood development in his/her everyday work with his/her colleagues
Knows the basic development characteristics of children of different age groups (, 0-6 m, 6-18 m 18-24 m, 24-36 m etc. ...)	Recognizes the differences in child development requiring special attention during the early learning activities
Knows the national documents containing the Standards for early learning and development and Program for early learning and development	In his/her work, knows how to apply the knowledge of the national documents: Program for early learning and development and Standards for early learning and development

Area: ENVIRONMENT

Subarea: *Professional learning communities*	
Knowledge and understanding	Professional abilities and skills
Knows how to build opportunities for providing effective support to colleagues by building trust	Skillfully builds trust and effective support with his/her colleagues
Knows how to build awareness for lifelong learning	Can build awareness in the collective, about the importance of lifelong learning
Understands the usefulness of technology for sharing of visions and cooperation with colleagues	Can use the technology to share visions and cooperate with colleagues
Knows how to promote the vision and the work of the professional learning communities	Is capable of continuously promoting the work of the professional learning communities
Knows how to encourage other colleagues to participate in the work of the professional learning community	Encourages and stimulates the work and the cooperation with the professional learning community
Subarea: *Sociocultural and inclusive environment*	
Knowledge and understanding	Professional abilities and skills
Understands, appreciates, and respects the differences between the employees	Is able to understand, appreciate and respect the differences between the employees
Knows how to value and appreciate the inclusion of the other cultural groups in the work	Knows how to value and appreciate the inclusion of the other cultural groups in the work
Knows how to develop and convey powerful messages about culture, climate, and the environment	Motivates the staff by personal example of conveying powerful messages about culture, climate, and the environment

Area: ORGANIZATION AND CLIMATE

Subarea: *Management and organization*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands the significance of the conveyed messages created thoughtfully and carefully and which inspire or suggest an active engagement	Carefully and skillfully conveys messages which inspire or suggest an active engagement
Knows how to get involved in a peer discussion based on experience, with a view of seeking out the most relevant practices	Is able to participate in a discussion which considers the most appropriate practices based on experience
Knows the strategies for sharing new ideas with the colleagues based on analyses from professional sources	Knows how to skillfully analyze professional sources and share new ideas with the colleagues

Subarea: *Leadership*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows how to successfully effectuate the leadership opportunities in or outside of the institution	Develops and implements strategies for effectuating the leadership opportunities in or outside of the institution
Understands the investment in the development and strengthening his/her own leadership style	Develops abilities and skills that build and strengthen his/her personal leadership style
Knows how to accept and support the leadership role of practitioners	Applies a work approach involving shared leadership with his/her colleagues
Knows the concept of building links based on constructive criticism	Recognizes constructive criticism and uses it to promote his/her own work
Understands and applies the ambiance of leadership through a shared vision and promotes initiatives based on the needs of children	Develops action strategies through a shared vision and promotes initiatives based on the needs of children
Knows how to perceive the different needs of the adults that learn while working in their area	Skillfully observes the work of his/her colleagues and identifies their professional needs

Subarea: *Management*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows how to give an example how cooperation can promote the education process	Develops abilities and skills for providing personal examples of cooperation
Expresses cooperation regarding policies and initiatives that influence the education process	Initiates and participates in the cooperation regarding policies and initiatives that influence the education process

Area: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE PROCESS

Subarea: **Building relations**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows how to seek out different opportunities while respecting the different thinking and styles of others	Skillfully and carefully listens to the different thinking and styles of other and has the ability to turn them into opportunities
Knows how to use appropriate technological methods and build networks with the stakeholders	Networks with the stakeholders through appropriate technological methods
Knows and understands the need for researching technological innovation for building relations and capacities	Builds relations and capacities through various innovation technologies
Knows how to foster an atmosphere of trust and respect among the colleagues	Trusts and respect the colleagues and fosters an atmosphere of trust and respect among the colleagues
Knows how to build consensus and peer capacities and issues related to growth, development and learning of children	Is able to build consensus and strengthen peer capacities and issues related to growth, development and learning of children

Subarea: **Educational policy**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows how to implement the mandated educational policy	Demonstrates abilities to implement the educational policy
Knows how to use the professional experience to respond positively to the mandatory / current educational policy	Skillfully and professionally uses experience to implement the mandatory / current educational policy
Knows how to hear the ideas of other stakeholders in order to evaluate the existing and the proposed education policy that impacts the children, the teachers, the classrooms, the kindergarten, the parents, and the community	Manifests the ability and skills for active listening and evaluation of the ideas and proposals from all stakeholders
Recognizes the promotion of positive changes to the existing educational policy	Initiates ideas for positive changes to the existing educational policy
Understands the importance of proposing good practices for the new educational policy	Skillfully monitors and proposes good practices for the purposes of the new educational policy
Knows the opportunities for professional interconnection with the stakeholders	Demonstrates an ability for professional networking with the stakeholders

Area: COOPERATION WITH THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

Subarea: *Partnership with parents, families, and the community*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows and understands the influence of parents, families and the community on the development and learning of the children	Knows how to establish partnership relations for the purpose of having joint influence together with the parents, the family, and the community, onto the development and the learning of the children
Understands the need for support of the parents and the families	Knows how to create conditions for the kindergarten to provide support to the parents and the families
Recognizes the importance of creating and realizing parental programs	Supports and stimulates the professional workers in the kindergarten which implement parental programs based on the actual needs of the parents and the children
Seeks out various ways and approaches to building a partnership relationship with the community	Strives to seek out all the mechanisms and opportunities for cooperation with the community
Subarea: *Resolving issues and building of strategies for cooperation*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows how to recognize issues and seeks out the most appropriate solution	Is able to look at problems as opportunities for new solutions
Understands the weight and the dynamics of maintaining the group	Has skills to maintain the group dynamics
Knows how to prepare a strategic development plan based on data and a reflective analysis	Can analyses and interpret relevant data onto which he/she will build the strategic development plan
Knows how to express a deep understanding for the cultural, educational and policy issues related to the needs of the children	Skillfully interprets the cultural, educational and policy issues related to the needs of the children
Knows how to create a strategic plan and engage various groups in order to perceive the needs of the children	Knows how to manage different groups which will perceive the needs of the children and create a strategic plan

Area: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Subarea: *Professional development*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Follows and knows all novelties related with the legislation applicable to this area	Skillfully applies in practice all novelties related with the legislation applicable to this area
Knows how to manifest the ethical practice by developing trust and credibility among the colleagues	Skillfully builds trust and credibility with the colleagues as part of the ethical practice
Actively participates in various learning opportunities outside of the everyday context in order to achieve higher professional goals	Takes advantage of various professional learning opportunities within and outside of the institution
Actively follows professional events that contribute to development and change	Participates in professional events with a view of development and change
Knows how to foster the development of colleagues and values their skills and abilities	Stimulates his/her colleagues to develop their skills and abilities
Knows how to use information communication technologies in his/her everyday work, in cooperation with the colleagues and for professional development	Skillfully uses information communication technologies in his/her everyday work, in cooperation with the colleagues and for professional development
Possesses knowledge about the ethical values and standards in his/her profession	Demonstrates awareness about compliance with the code of ethics of the early childhood education and care institution and continuously develops his/her skills to apply the ethical values and standards in his/her everyday work.
Subarea: *Reflective practice*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows how to create stimulating conditions for reflection among the colleagues and the administration	Creates conditions and stimulates the colleagues to engage in self-reflection
Knows how to provide feedback or reflect on the development, the role, and the responsibility of practitioner that leads to changes	Skillfully provides feedback to any colleague that moves towards change
Knows how to stimulate the colleagues to make their own professional decisions, by providing answers to relevant questions and stimulate self-reflection	With his/her person example, stimulates the colleagues to make their own professional decisions

7. CORE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES for professional profiles of kindergarten employees

Category B – **PROFESSIONAL WORKERS**

- Pedagogist
- Psychologist
- Social worker
- Speech therapist
- Defectologist
- Special educator and rehabilitator
- Medical doctor
- Dentist

Key areas of the core professional competences of professional workers in kindergartens are:

1. Area: **Work with children**
2. Area: **Work with teachers and caregivers**
3. Area: **Work with parents**
4. Area: **Cooperation with the community**
5. Area: **Professional development and professional cooperation**
6. Area: **Analytical and research work**
7. Area: **Organization, climate and safe environment**

7.1 COMMON COMPETENCES OF PROFESSIONAL WORKERS

Area: WORK WITH CHILDREN

Subarea: **Support of early child development and learning**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands the processes of social and emotional development of children and how they relate to the behavior and communication of children	Stimulates and develops self-confidence self-respect among children based on communication based on respect, attention and positive values, attitudes, and behaviors
Understands the challenges in communication and cooperation with children with different values and experiences	Communicates with children in a way that provides for support and trust, during individual and group work
Understands the concepts for cognitive development and learning and their relationship with instruction	Assesses the readiness of the children in different age groups, for inclusion in a collective and progress in learning
Understands the individual learning differences between the children and knows appropriate learning strategies and strategies for supporting children in the learning	Is sensible to the different education needs of the children and can identify and provide adequate support
Knows the factors that influence the learning process and the motivation of children in different age groups	Instils high personal expectations in the children, as well as a positive attitude towards learning and identifies factors that might lead to failure
Knows methods and techniques for work with children of different age and cultural groups and successfully organizes learning support	Uses various approaches to help children, in different age groups, to learn, in accordance with their needs
Knows different concepts and models for development of inclusive education	Chooses appropriate inclusion approaches for every child
Possesses knowledge regarding the preparation of stimulating means and the use of assistive technology when working with children with special education needs	Promotes the use of different stimulating means and assistive technologies by the children
Knows various concepts and models for organized support of talented children	Uses different approaches to support talented children in accordance with their specific needs

Area: WORK WITH TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS

Subarea: **Support the teachers and the caregivers with respect to planning and realization of the education process and self-evaluation**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows program documents and standards for preschool education and care	Provides professional support to practitioners in the application of the program and concept documents
Knows the individual characteristics and needs of the development periods of children of early and preschool age	Stimulates, in practitioners, high expectations with respect to the development and the performance of children of all ages
Understands how the environment stimulates and facilitates the learning of children of early and preschool age	Promotes the creation and maintenance of an open and stimulating environment which encourages exploration, learning and independence of children
Knows that the primary objective of monitoring and evaluation is to promote the achievements of children	Provides guidance to practitioners how to use the results from the monitoring and evaluation to improve the quality of the education process
Knows the ethical code related to monitoring and (self)evaluation	Applies the principles of the ethical code to the monitoring and evaluation
Knows the potentials of the different sources of knowledge	Provides professional support to the practitioners to use the different sources of knowledge
Knows the state level projects for improvement of the quality of the education process	Provides support for the implementation of project activities that improve the quality of the education process
Subarea: Support the teachers and caregivers with respect to working with children	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands the influence of social and cultural factors on education, as well as the contribution of education to social cohesion	Promotes respect for the differences and the democratic values based on respecting the personality of every child and identifying and development of the child's strengths
Knows about the importance of adaptation of the education process to the characteristics of the children	Provides support to the teachers and the caregivers regarding the individualization of the organization of the different activities
Knows the principles of good communication between children and adults as well as between children of different ages	Provides professional support to teachers and caregivers regarding the establishment of good communication between children and adults as well as between children of different ages.

Knows about possible behavioral issues of the children and how to resolve such issues	Provides support to the teachers and caregivers to deal with and resolve behavioral issues of the children

Subarea: **Support the teachers and caregivers with respect to working with parents**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows about the importance of the cooperation between teachers/caregivers and the parents	Promotes a culture of cooperation between the teachers/caregivers and the parents
Knows different methods for good quality cooperation between the teachers/caregivers and the parents	Helps the teachers and caregivers select appropriate methods and contents when cooperating with the parents.

Area: WORK WITH PARENTS

Subarea: *Individual and group counselling and consultations with the parents*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands how family influences the cognitive, emotional, and social functioning of the children	Identifies the potential crisis situations in the family that affect children development and learning and provides proper support to the parents
Has knowledge about communicating with parents and different approaches and ways to support families	Realizes individual and group consultations for providing support to parents and informs them about the services offered by the kindergarten and the professional workers
Subarea: *Education of parents*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows the characteristics of adult learning and the methods and forms of adult education	Properly conveys their professional knowledge to the parents
Understands the need to strengthen parent competences for successful development and performance of their children	Helps the parents develop skills for stimulating a greater quality development and learning of their children
Subarea: *Involving the parents in the life and work of the kindergarten*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows different ways of cooperation with the parents and different possibilities for parent participation in the different areas and activities in the kindergarten	Motivates the parents to get involved in the activities of the kindergarten and promotes trust and understanding for building partnerships with the families in the kindergarten

Area: COOPERATION WITH THE COMMUNITY

Subarea: *Cooperation with the community*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows how to cooperate with the community and possibilities of involving the community in the life of the kindergarten	Promotes cooperation with the local community and finding different mechanisms and possibilities for cooperation
Knows the potentials of the local community that can stimulate and support the different processes in the kindergarten	Contributes to reflecting the cultural values in the community in all aspects of the work of the kindergarten
Subarea: *Cooperation with the professional institutions and organizations*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows about the business of the institutions significant for the work in the kindergarten	Identifies relevant institutions for cooperation in the different areas
Understands the importance of the cooperation with the different professional institutions and organizations in the local community and the region	Develops and uses appropriate ways for cooperation with the professional institutions based on professionalism, trust, and respect
Is informed about current programs for children implemented by the nongovernmental sector	Identifies and proposes areas for joint cooperation with associations in the community

Area: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Subarea: *Personal and professional development*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands the complexity of the work of the professional workers, as well as the rights and responsibilities related to it	Promotes its own practice by applying the acquired knowledge and through professional development
Knows the competences and the standards for professional workers and understands the value of professional development	Identifies the needs for personal and professional development using the standards and the results of the self-reflection about his/her own work
Knows effective ways and opportunities for personal and professional developments	Prepares a personal plan for professional development
Is informed about the professional associations in the local community and the region	Cooperates with the professional workers and with professional associations in or outside of the kindergarten
Knows the ethical code of the profession	Applies the ethical code of the profession

Knows how to use information and communication technologies in his/her everyday work, cooperation with colleagues, as well as for professional development.	Skillfully uses information and communication technologies in his/her everyday work, cooperation with colleagues, as well as for professional development.

Subarea: **Professional cooperation**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands the value of the professional development for all employees in the kindergarten, for the improvement of the education process	Actively promotes collegial relationships and contributes to the professional development of all types of practitioners in the kindergarten
Is informed about the professional events in education and informs the colleagues and other practitioners in the kindergarten	Motivates the practitioners to develop professionally and creates a stimulating environment where everyone learns
Knows the methods and forms of professional development	Recommends different forms of education of the professional staff in the kindergarten
Knows how to plan professional development of the teachers and of the caregivers	Plans the professional development based on the needs of the employees in the kindergarten
Knows how to create opportunities for effective support of the colleagues by building trust	Skillfully builds trust and effective support to his/her colleagues

Area: ANALYTICAL AND RESEARCH WORK

Subarea: *Analysis and assessment of the educational work*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows what kind of documentation is maintained for the educational work of the kindergarten	Contributes to the establishment of a system of regular analyses of the different issues related to education and to care in the kindergarten
Knows the documentation analysis methodology	Relates, processes, and analyses various datasets for the education work and draws conclusions from the analyses
Knows how to interpret and report the results of the analysis	Seeks to use the results of the analyses to promote the education process
Subarea: *Research of the education work*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Has a basic knowledge of the research methodology and the basics of descriptive statistics	Makes efforts to base the promotion of the educational work on research and facts

Knows different techniques for collecting information about the educational practice.	Conducts research of issues relevant to the kindergarten and uses the results in his/her own practice
Knows the methods for quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data and knows how to interpret said data	Analyses data from quantitative and qualitative research and uses statistical data processing programs
Knows the procedures for conducting action research in the education process	Conducts action research for the improvement of the education process
Knows the methodology for analysis of the documentation and how to interpret and report the results of the analysis	Relates, processes, and analyses various datasets about the education work and draws conclusions from the analyses

Area: ORGANIZATION, CLIMATE AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Subarea: *Structure and organization of the kindergarten*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows the system of preschool upbringing, education and care and understands the modern tendencies related to the organization of the work of the kindergarten	Follows the principles of preschool upbringing, education and care and proposes measures to promote the work of the kindergarten
Knows and understands the functioning of the different segments in a kindergarten	Knows how to promote the priorities of the organization in the kindergarten in order to improve its functioning
Knows the documents that regulate the work in the kindergarten	Promotes systematic operations and professional responsibility with respect to the work of the kindergarten
Subarea: *Democratic involvement enabling climate*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows how important it is to include all children and their families in preschool education and care	Promotes values of inclusive culture and practice and contributes to the inclusive climate in the kindergarten
Knows, understands, and complies with the conventions for the rights of children and antidiscrimination	Promotes values that refer to the acceptance of differences, tolerance, for and nonviolent behavior
Knows the principles for creating a positive climate and inclusive culture in the kindergarten and knows about the threats related to all types of discrimination	Encourages cooperation and positive climate in the kindergarten and develops a sense of belonging, acceptance, and mutual respect

Knows about the value of the participation of the different cultural groups in making decisions impacting the life in the kindergarten	Encourages the engagement of the different cultural groups in making decisions impacting the life in the kindergarten
Subarea: _Healthy and safe environment for learning and development_	
Knowledge and understanding	_Professional abilities and skills_
Knows and respects the policies and practices for a healthy and safe environment in the kindergarten	Promotes values and implementation of procedures related to the indoor and outdoor health and safety in the kindergarten
Knows about the possible threats to the physical and psychological safety of the children	Identifies the possible threats to the safety in the kindergarten
Recognizes the importance of routines when providing care, nourishment, physical activity and rest for the health and the development of the children	Participates the preparation of an environment that supports and develops the everyday routine for care of children as a basis for learning and development

8. CORE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES for professional profiles of kindergarten employees

Category C - TEACHERS

Key areas of the core professional competences of teachers in kindergartens are:

1. Area: **Child development and learning**
2. Area: **Environment**
3. Area: **Organization and climate**
4. Area: **Early childhood education and care process**
5. Area: **Cooperation with family and the community**
6. Area: **Professional development**

Area: CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

Subarea: Early learning and development	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows the developmental characteristics of children	Recognizes developmental traits and characteristics of early and preschool children
Knows and understands modern theories of early learning, brain development and overall development of children.	Adapts the approach to children according to the specificities in the child's development and learning.
Knows and understand theories of early learning and child development.	Selects early learning and development strategies appropriate to goals and context that lead to self-acceptance, expression, communication and acceptance of diversity.
Knows the different processes of learning and gaining experiences in children.	Applies theoretical concepts and principles in individual approaches in the process of learning and teaching children.
Understands the role of play in fostering holistic development.	Initiates and encourages play and other activities to express communication and acceptance of differences between children and children with adults.

Area: ENVIRONMENT

Subarea: heathy and safe learning and development environment	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands the importance of creating a healthy and safe environment, specially building a positive emotional climate that helps children overcome adverse experiences and meet their special learning needs.	Creates a healthy and safe environment, specially building a positive emotional climate that helps children overcome adverse experiences and meet their special learning needs.
Knows the protocols and procedures for dealing with crisis situations in kindergarten.	Recognizes potential signs of crisis situation and being able to communicate clearly and effectively in a crisis situation.
Knows the standards and methods of creating healthy and safe environment.	Uses methods and tools based on scientific evidence to create healthy and safe environment.
Understands the importance of acquiring mentally, emotionally, and physically healthy habits in children.	Uses methods and tools based on scientific evidence to encourage mentally, emotionally, and physically healthy habits in children.
Subarea: A stimulating environment to support learning and development	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*

Knows and understand how the environment affects the overall child development and learning (holistic approach).	Creates a stimulating spatial-material and social environment based on monitoring the child, his interests and needs
Understands environment (spatial-material and social) as a resource for play, learning, expression and creation.	Chooses and creates a stimulating resource for play, learning, expression, and creation.
Knows that the child is a co-creator of his own development and learning	Supports the inclusion of each child in the co-construction of the environment
Understands the importance of flexibility as an important dimension of the time environment.	Creates an environment where children have enough time to learn according to their needs, interests and abilities.
Understands the importance of creative activities for the development and learning of children.	Creates a stimulating creative environment.
Subarea: **Inclusive learning environment and approach**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands and values cultural diversity.	Applies the concepts of interculturality.
Understands inclusive education principles, practices, and laws that support the inclusion of all children regarding their disabilities or special needs.	Encourages establishing common values, beliefs, and ways of behaving and serves as a role model.
Understands the need to avoid stereotypes and prejudices.	Uses language and activities to actively avoid, discourage and cognitively reformulate stereotypes and prejudices.

Area: ORGANIZATION AND CLIMATE

Subarea: **Structure and organization of the kindergarten**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows the legal regulations in the field of early childhood education.	Acts upon the legal regulations in the field of early childhood education.
Understands the principles of planning and evaluating the curriculum of the educational group.	Plans and evaluates the curriculum of the educational group**.**
Knows the dimensions of the quality of a kindergarten.	Actively contributes to the quality of the kindergarten.
Knows the characteristics of teamwork.	Shares responsibilities, resources, and expertise to achieve the best possible outcomes.
Knows the tasks and responsibilities of kindergarten staff.	Collaborates with all staff to ensure the well-being of children, families, and the community
Subarea: **An atmosphere for supporting democratic participation**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Is familiar with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and understands its principles.	Respects children's rights and organizes work in accordance with them.

Understands teaching strategies that promote democratic participation	Organizes and environment that ensures learning that encourages children to engage actively in decision-making
Understands pedagogical approaches that promote democratic participation	Facilitates discussions, encourages critical thinking, and creates opportunities for children involvement in decision-making processes

Area: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE PROCESS

Subarea: **Holistic approach and integrated planning**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows principles of child-centered approach in early childhood education.	Applies principles of child-centered approach in everyday work.
Understands national, institutional, and educational group curriculum.	Develops educational group curriculum that promotes holistic understanding.
Recognizes that real-world knowledge and skills are interconnected.	Provides opportunities to integrate various subjects and disciplines in learning environment.
Knows different techniques of observation and uses them for planning.	Observes children and the context of what they learn in order to plan future actions.
Knows different techniques of documenting the educational process.	Uses different techniques of documenting the educational process.
Knows various research techniques for improvement of educational practice.	Uses various research techniques to improve the educational practice.
Subarea: **Strategies for early learning, teaching, and development**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understand learning strategies that match individual cognitive, social, emotional, and physical capabilities of children.	Provides opportunities and encourage children in using different learning strategies.
Knows how to differentiate teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of children in the educational group, including those with varying abilities, learning styles, and backgrounds.	Uses various teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of children in the educational group, including those with varying abilities, learning styles, and backgrounds.
Knows strategies to foster social and emotional competence of young children.	Fosters social skills, emotional regulation, empathy, and conflict resolution among young children through intentional activities and interactions.
Strategies for promoting early literacy skills, including phonemic awareness, vocabulary development and storytelling.	Creates a language-rich environments.
Is familiar with hands-on approaches to introducing basic mathematical concepts, spatial reasoning, and early science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) principles.	Creates a STEM-rich environment.

Knows age-appropriate technology tools and how to integrate them into the learning process to enhance engagement and skill development.	Provides opportunities for using the age-appropriate technology and integrates them in the learning process

Area: COOPERATION WITH FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY

Subarea: **Family characteristics and influences**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows family characteristics (family structure, functioning, culture, value).	Create and apply quality inclusive practices in the educational process according to differences in the structure, functioning, culture and family values of different families
Understands impact of family characteristics on children's development and learning.	Adapt teaching practices according to impact of family characteristics on children's development and learning.
Understands different parenting styles.	Creates a learning environment that reflects different parenting styles and relates them to children's behavior.
Subarea: **Communication, cooperation and involvement of parents and the family**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands the importance of cooperation and the involvement of parents and families in educational practice.	Facilitates meaningful engagement and collaboration for the benefit of children.
Understands the importance of communication, with parents and families in educational practice.	Communicates effectively for conveying information clearly and building relationships with parents, families, and other stakeholders.
Knows different ways and approaches to involve parents and families in education and educational process.	Creates an inclusive and welcoming environment regarding the diversity of child/parent/family background.
Knows different approaches, strategies, forms, methods, and techniques of communication with parents and families.	Uses different approaches, strategies, forms, methods, and techniques and adapt communication styles to different audiences.
Subarea: **Educational and advisory support to parents and family**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows relevant educational policies and initiatives.	Uses the knowledge of relevant educational policies and initiatives to provide parents timely and meaningful information.
Knows relevant community services related to enhancing parental competences.	Providing parents with the information on community services related to enhancing parental competences (library, important facilities, institutions and persons, etc.).

Knows the resources that demonstrate teaching methods or involve them in interactive learning experiences they can replicate with their children.	Provides parents with access the resources that demonstrate teaching methods or involve them in interactive learning experiences they can replicate with their children.
Knows different communication approaches and techniques of counselling work with parents and families.	Applies different communication approaches and techniques of counselling work with parents and families.

Subarea: **Community Relations**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows community resources that can contribute to the quality of early childhood education.	Supports activities to strengthen social awareness and responsibility for the development and well-being of children among all stakeholders in the community.
Knows the needs of the municipality related to preschool education	Plans and organizes activities of interest to children, families and the community.

Area: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

*Subarea: **Personal and professional development***	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows and understands the need for personal and professional development.	Detects own needs for personal and professional development.
Knows of variety of forms and activities of professional development designed to enhance teachers' skills, knowledge, and effectiveness.	Detects and chooses forms and activities of professional development suitable to their needs.
Knows about educational research, evidence-based teaching practices, and trends in pedagogy to continuously improve their practice.	Critically thinks about educational research, evidence-based teaching practices, and trends in pedagogy in relation to their practice.
Knows about reflective practice.	Critically reflects on teaching practices, seek feedback, embrace a growth mindset, and engage in ongoing self-improvement.
Awareness of broader educational trends, societal changes, and global issues that may impact teaching and children's learning.	Uses various resources to find information on contemporary trends that may impact teaching and children's learning.
Subarea: **Professional ethics and cooperation**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows the universal ethical principles.	Promotes universal ethical principles.
Knows the ethical values and standards in her/his profession.	Respects the ethical values and standards of profession.
Understands the importance of collegial support, cooperation, exchange of experiences and information.	Supports colleagues and collaborate with them with the purpose of exchange of experiences and information.
Understands the importance of professional association.	She/he is a member of professional associations.

9. CORE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES for professional profiles of kindergarten employees

Category D – **PROFESSIONAL COWORKERS**

- Music pedagogist
- Painting pedagogist
- Physical education teacher
- Foreign languages and literature teacher
- Medical nurse

Key areas of the core professional competences of professional coworkers in kindergartens are:

1. Area: **Knowledge about the program area and early childhood education and care**
2. Area: **Teaching and learning**
3. Area: **Creating a stimulating learning environment**
4. Area: **Social and educational inclusion**
5. Area: **Communication and cooperation with the family and the community**
6. Area: **Analytical work and research**
7. Area: **Professional development and professional cooperation**

9.1 COMMON COMPETENCES FOR PROFESSIONAL COWORKERS

Area: KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE PROGRAM AREA AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

Subarea: **Knowledge about the program area**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows the program area which he/she teaches and knows how it relates to the other areas	Knows the basic research methods within the scientific field where the program area belongs
Knows the key terms in the program area where he/she teaches and how they relate to the terms in the other areas	Unifies the knowledge around the key terms in the program area and relates them to the others
Knows approaches for triggering the interest of the children for the program area	Skillfully triggers the interest of pre-school children for the program area
Follows the new developments with respect to the program area	Appropriately includes the new developments with respect to the program area, into the teaching
Subarea: *Knowledge about preschool education*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows the preschool curriculum and care program – Early Learning and Development Program	Focuses on the implementation of the objective of the preschool curriculum related to his/her program area
Knows the education system and the legislation, as well as the specifics for early childhood education and care	Knows the legislative and program documents for working in a kindergarten
Understands the modern tendencies in early learning and education	Follows the general principles and objectives of early childhood education and care

Area: TEACHING AND LEARNING

Subarea: *Planning and preparation of activities*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows the components for successful planning of education	Plans teaching and learning in accordance with the prescribed standards and needs of the children
Understands the importance of including the teacher and the children in the planning process and to take into account the available resources and the specifics of the kindergarten	Plans on the basis of reflecting on his/her own work and the feedback from children, the teachers, the colleagues, and the parents from the kindergarten
Knows different ways of planning the education and knows how to combine them	Knows how to prepare different plans in accordance with their purpose

Subarea: *Realization of activities*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows the program area where he/she teaches and knows how to relate it to the needs of the children and the current living trends	Relates the contents from the program area and their practical application with other content from everyday life
Knows the factors that influence the learning process and the motivation of the children in different age groups	Instils a positive attitude in the children, towards learning and has high expectations regarding the achievements of every child
Knows and understands basic strategies for early learning, teaching and development	Employs modern approaches and methods for learning and teaching, in accordance with the needs and the abilities of the children
Understands that it is important for children to be active in the process of learning and teaching	Creates and maintains a stimulating environment and encourages exploration
Knows the different approaches to learning and development which respect diversity	Uses strategies that promote acceptance and promote diversity
Understands the need for teamwork in the process of teaching and learning	Encourages joint thinking, mutual support, and the feeling of community among the children
Knows how to apply methodical approaches specific for the program area[19] in the context of early development	Adapts teaching and learning to the needs of the children and the context in the kindergarten
Knows the education technology specific to the program area	Incites curiosity in the children for the various learning approaches
Follows the latest developments in the program area	Strives to promote his/her practice towards the latest developments

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[19] The program areas where the coworkers are active include music education, fine arts, sports and physical culture, foreign languages and literature and preventive healthcare.

Subarea: *Monitoring the child's development, needs, and achievements*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows the methods for following the children's interest, their previous experiences, and the individual differences	Uses modern and diverse methods to follow the children's development aspects, needs, and abilities to perform
Knows modern methods for following the needs of the children, their abilities, and achievements, which methods include the children themselves	Applies strategies for monitoring progress which include the children themselves and creates a positive climate

Area: CREATING A STIMULATING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Subarea: *Creating a safe and stimulating learning environment*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands how the environment stimulates and enables learning	Organizes a stimulating learning environment – encourages different opinions and has a positive attitude towards mistakes etc.
Knows the potentials and the possibilities of the different learning tools	Provides for the use of various sources, materials, and tools in the learning process, including the safe use of ICT
Knows and respects the policies and practices related to the provision of a safe environment in the kindergarten	Promotes values and the application of kindergarten safety procedures
Knows different ways of handling crisis situations in the kindergarten	Uses appropriate strategies for a crisis intervention in the kindergarten
Subarea: *Creating a positive climate in the kindergarten*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows strategies for pedagogic leadership and how to create a positive climate	Encourages mutual respect and supports teamwork among the children, promoting positive values, attitudes, and behaviors
Has knowledge of communication strategies that respect cultural and gender differences that may have an impact on the climate in the group	Uses communication techniques and styles that respect cultural and gender differences that may have an impact on the climate in the group

Area: SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INCLUSION

Subarea: *Social and educational inclusion*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands social and cultural factors and how they impact education and its contribution to social cohesion	Promote values of inclusive culture and practices and contributes to an inclusive climate in the kindergarten
Knows various concepts and models for inclusive education	Uses different methods for differentiation and individualization when working with children that need additional support in education
Knows the conventions on the rights of children and on antidiscrimination	Employs strategies that promote acceptance of differences, tolerance, and nonviolent behavior
Knows various concepts and models for organized support of talented children	Uses different approaches to support talented children according to their specific needs

Area: COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION WITH THE FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY

Subarea: *Communication and cooperation with the family and the community*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands the significance of family and the local community in the life and work of the kindergarten	Promotes trust and understanding for building of partnerships with the families and the local community
Knows how to cooperate with the families and the local community, as well as the opportunities for them to participate in the life of the kindergarten	Stimulates various mechanisms for cooperation with the families and the local community and supports opportunities to reflect their culture in all aspects of work of the kindergarten
Knows how to communicate with a view of cooperating with families and the local community	Develops different and effective ways for respectful and appropriate communication with the families and the members of the community

Area: ANALYTICAL WORK AND RESEARCH

Subarea: Analysis and evaluation of the education and care-related work	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Is familiar with the documentation regarding educational work kept in a kindergarten.	Contributes to establishing a system for regular analyses of specific educational and care-related issues in the kindergarten.
Understands the methodology for analyzing documentation.	Connects, processes, and analyses various data related to educational work and draws conclusions from the analyses.
Is familiar with the methods for interpreting and reporting the results of the analysis.	Advocates for the use of analysis results to improve the educational process.
Subarea: Research in educational practices	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Has a basic understanding of research methodology and the fundamentals of descriptive statistics.	Advocates for improving educational work based on research and facts.
Is familiar with various techniques for gathering information about educational practice.	Conducts research on issues relevant to the kindergarten and utilizes the results in their own practice.
Knows methods for quantitative and qualitative data analysis and can interpret them.	Analyses data from quantitative and qualitative research and uses statistical data processing programs.
Is acquainted with the procedures for conducting action research in the educational process.	Conducts action research to improve the educational and care process.
Understands the methodology for document analysis and the methods of interpretation and reporting of analysis results.	Analyses various data related to educational work and draws conclusions from the analyses.

Area: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL COOPERATION

Subarea: Professional development	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands the complexity of the profession of a professional worker, as well as the rights and responsibilities it entails.	Utilizes the knowledge gained through professional development to enhance their own practice.
Is familiar with the competencies and standards for professional workers and understands the importance of personal professional development.	Identifies personal professional development needs using standards and results from self-reflection on their work.

Knows how to prepare a personal professional development plans, as well as methods to appropriately document the implementation of the plan	Develops a personal professional development plan and continuously records the implementation of the plan in his/her Professional portfolio
Knows effective methods and opportunities for personal and professional development.	Develops and applies reflective skills for analyzing and improving their own practice
Is informed about professional associations in the local community and region.	Collaborates with colleagues from various professional associations.
Understands and respects the lifelong learning philosophy	Applies all changes and novelties in their profession their everyday work
Knows how to use information communication technology in their daily work, collaboration with colleagues, and for professional development.	Skillfully uses information communication technology in their daily work, collaboration with colleagues, and for professional development.
Subarea: *Professional cooperation*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands the importance of professional cooperation and good relations with the colleagues for the work in the kindergarten	Actively promotes good relations with the colleagues and respects the professional ethics both with respect to the tasks, as well as the colleagues in and outside of the kindergarten
Is informed about various professional associations, social networks, and forums where he/she gets his/her information about his/her work	Participates in various professional associations, social networks, and forums in order to improve his/her work

10. CORE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES for professional profiles of kindergarten employees

Category E - **CAREGIVERS**

Key areas of the core professional competences of caregivers in kindergartens are:

1. Area: **Child development and learning**
2. Area: **Environment**
3. Area: **Organization and climate**
4. Area: **Early childhood education and care process**
5. Area: **Cooperation with the family and community**
6. Area: **Professional development**

Area: CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

Subarea: *Early childcare and development*	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands the contemporary approaches regarding the early childcare.	Knows how to recognize the contemporary early childcare approaches.
Understands and is interested in the contemporary educational theories, principles, and models regarding the early child development.	Is able to adjust his/her work to the contemporary educational theories, principles and models regarding the early child development.
Understands the individual needs of the children for care and development.	Knows how to adjust his/her work to the individual needs of the children for care and development.
Knows approaches used to overcome the state of stress and trauma in children	Applies approaches used to overcome the state of stress and trauma in children
Knows the domains of the early child development and their realization in the different contexts of care/learning and development.	Knows how to recognize the domains of the early child development in the day-to-day activities.
Knows the conventions on the right of children and antidiscrimination	Utilizes strategies that promote acceptance of differences, tolerance, and nonviolent behavior

Area: ENVIRONMENT

Subarea: **Care and practice**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows how to connect his/her practice of care for each child with the realization of the curriculum.	Is able to realize to needs for care of each child during the realization of the curriculum.
Knows how to create the personal/program for his/her work.	Knows how to create simple personal/program for his/her work.
Knows how to create practice based on needs and context and reflects the current trends in care for health.	Is able to base his/her practice to the current needs and context of care for the health.
Knows how to adapt his/her practice to the care and to the needs of each child.	Skillfully adapts his/her work to the needs of each child.
Knows how wo develop his/her own practice according to the actions of the children, helps the children understand their actions related to care	Knows how to recognize and analyze the actions of children, makes an effort to explain their actions to the children, and creates his/her own practice in accordance with the children's actions

Knows how to create and support a healthy and safe environment which is appropriate to the optimal care for each child, especially the children requiring additional support.	Skillfully creates healthy and safe environment for optimal care for each child, especially the children requiring additional support.
Develops his/her practice, knowledge, and skills using experimental strategies and develops his/her knowledge, skills, and professional behavior.	Is able to develop his/her practice, knowledge, skills, and professional behavior using experimental strategies.
Knows and understands the importance of the active inclusion of the children in his/her practice.	Skillfully includes the children in his/her work.
Knows how to formulate his/her experience in oral and written form in order to explain the development of the care to each child.	Is able to explain orally and in written the development of the care to each child.

Subarea: **Evidence based environment**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows how to analyses the situation and to solve the practical care problems.	Is able, through situation analysis, to solve practical care problems.
Knows how to talk and explore with his/her co-workers the creation of an evidence-based environment.	Skillfully talks and explores with his/her co-workers about their education and direct experience in creating evidence-based environment.
Knows how to engage in conversation and reflection with his/her co-workers that generate and practice new ideas for practice development.	Know how to reflect and engage in a conversation with his/her co-workers about new ideas for the development of the practice and creating stimulative environment.
Recognizes the possibility to create evidence-based environment for the needs of each child's individual development.	Is able to put his/her knowledge in function of creating an environment which will be based on evidence on the needs of each child's individual development.
Knows how to cooperate and is involved in the research and collecting data and creating stimulative environment, together with his/her colleagues.	Makes efforts to explore, collect data and analyses them together with his/her co-workers to create stimulative environment.

Area: ORGANIZATION AND CLIMATE

Subarea: **Kindergarten organization**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows the system of organization and functioning of the kindergarten.	Promotes systematics and responsibility in the kindergarten work.

Knows the documents which regulate the organization and operation of the kindergarten (especially day nursery).	During his/her work complies with and applies the documents that regulate the organization and operation of the kindergarten (especially day nursery).
Subarea: **Positive climate**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows how to involve actively in the partner institutions activities.	Knows how to establish cooperation with the partnership institutions.
Understands the role of promotor of good practices in the childcare.	During his/her work shows ability to promote good practices in the childcare.
Actively is involved in the review of strengths and weaknesses of the childcare practice.	Knows how to realize the strengths and weaknesses of the childcare practice.
Knows how to use various promotional strategies in order to promote the childcare in practice.	Knows how to promote the childcare in practice.
Knows how to manifest positive and constructive communication with the children and adults.	Knows how to communicate with children and adults, positively and constructively.
Knows how to create pleasant and stimulating work climate.	Skillfully knows how to create an ambient of pleasant and stimulating work climate.

Area: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE PROCESS

Subarea: **Monitoring and valuation of the childcare**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows how to use various strategies to monitor and value the approaches in childcare.	During his/her work skillfully creates various strategies for monitoring and valuation.
Knows how to monitor and evaluate his/her own work through collecting data from the children. Applies feedback to realize the effect of the work.	Uses data from the children for monitoring and valuation of his/her own work.
Knows how to develop various tools for valuation of the children's achievement according to the advisory development domains.	Develops various tools for valuation of the children's achievements.
Knows how to provide constructive feedback to the children.	Knows how to provide constructive feedback to the children.
Knows how to encourage activities for self-valuation through reflection of the children's activities.	Knows how to self-evaluate based on the children's activities and achievements.
Subarea: **Promotion of childcare and development**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Know how to use various strategies that monitor and evaluate the childcare approaches	During their work, skillfully creates various strategies for monitoring and evaluation
Knows how to monitor and evaluate his/her own work by collecting information from the children	Uses information from the children to monitor and evaluate his/her own work. Applies feedback to see the effects of the works

Knows how to develop various tools to evaluate the achievements of the children in accordance with the relevant development domains	Develops various tools to evaluate the achievements of children
Knows how to provide constructive feedback to the children.	Knows how to provide constructive feedback to the children.
Knows how to encourage activities for self-valuation through reflection of the children's activities.	Knows how to self-evaluate based on the children's activities and achievements.

Area: COOPERATION WITH THE FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY

Subarea: **Communication, cooperation and partnership with the parents and the family**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands the need for support of the parents and the families.	Knows how to create conditions for the kindergarten to provide support to the parents and the families.
Knows how to communicate and promote partnership and cooperation with the parents and the family.	Skillfully maintains effective communication and promotes partnership and cooperation with the parents and the family.
Knows to cooperate in order to exchange the good practice in the kindergarten and at home.	During the day-to-day work cooperates and exchanges good practices with the parents and the family.
Knows how to transfer the information appropriately and precisely to the parents about the childcare and provides guidelines for support at home.	Knows how to inform the children appropriately and precisely about the childcare.
Subarea: **Cooperation with the community**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Seeks out various ways and approaches to building a partnership relationship with the community.	Strives to seek out all the mechanisms and opportunities for cooperation with the community.
Knows and understands the influence of the community on child development.	Knows how to establish partnership relations with the community as a support of the children's growth and development.
Knows how to cooperate in order to develop good practices with the other caregivers.	During the day-to-day work, he/she cooperates and exchanges good practices with the other caregivers.

Area: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Subarea: **Ethical principles and professional approach**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Knows how to demonstrate professionalism and professional values in his/her day-to-day practice.	Knows how to work professionally in accordance with the professional values.
Knows how to promote the ethical and legal principles, builds his/her own integrity through sincerity and respect through his/her behavioral model.	Knows how to work according to the ethical and legal principles
Actively participates in all possibilities for continued professional development and provides support for professional learning to his/her co-workers.	Knows how to recognize the possibilities and actively participate in various forms of continued professional development.
Knows how to develop the professional approach through self-reflection, achieving the professional objectives and sharing with his/her co-workers.	Knows how to develop a personal professional approach.
Knows how to keep professional data regarding their professional approach in childcare.	Knows how to keep personal professional data
Knows how to use information and communication technology in their everyday work, cooperation with colleagues, and professional development	Skillfully uses information and communication technology in their everyday work, cooperation with colleagues, and professional development
Subarea: **Reflective practice**	
Knowledge and understanding	*Professional abilities and skills*
Understands the importance of self-reflection.	Creates conditions and practices self-reflection.
Knows how to provide reflection of his/her role in the child growth and development.	Skillfully provides feedback about his/her role in the child's growth and development.
Knows how to share his/her reflective practice with the co-workers.	With his/her example encourages the co-workers to share reflective practice among them.

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установи за деца, стручни работници, стручни соработници, воспитувачи и негуватели во системот за згрижување и воспитување на деца од предучилишна возраст, начинот на спроведување на обуките, како и формата и содржината на образецот на лиценцата за работа, Врз основа на член 182 став (5) од Законот за заштита на деца („Службен весник на Република Македонијоа бр. 23/13, 12/14, 44/14, 144/14, 10/15, 25/15, 150/15, 192/15, 27/16, 163/17, 21/18 и 198/18), Бр. 11-2594/1 од 18. Март 2019 година

93. МТСП, Правилник за стандардите и нормативите за вршење на дејноста на установите за деца, Врз основа на член 100 став (4) од Законот за заштита на деца („Службен весник на Република Македонија“ бр. 23/2013 и 12/2014

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96. МТСП, Правилник за индикаторите за вреднување на успехот на планираните активности од развојниот план на установите за згрижување и воспитување на деца од предучилишна возраст, Врз основа на член 174 став 4 од Законот за заштита на деца („Службен весник на Република Македонија“ бр. 23/13), Службен весник на РМ, бр. 87 од 17. 06. 2013

97. МТСП, Правилник за начинот на издавање, продолжување, обновување и одземање на лиценцата за работа на директори на установи за деца, стручни работници и стручни соработници, воспитувачи и негуватели во системот за згрижување и воспитување на деца од предучилишна возраст, начинот на спроведување на обуките, како и за формата и содржината на образецот на лиценцата за работа, Врз основа на член 182 став (5) од Законот за заштита на деца („Службен весник на Република Македонија“ бр. 23/13)

98. *Основни професионални компетенции и стандарди за стручни соработници* (2016) Македонски центар за граѓанско образование, Скопје.

99. *Основни професионални компетенции и стандарди за наставници* (2016) Македонски центар за граѓанско образование, Скопје

100. Организација на дневните активности на децата од предучилишна возраст во рамки на групите,

101. Правилник за формата, содржината и начинот на водење на педагошка документација и евиденција во детска градинка и центар за ран детски развој, Врз основа на член 195 став (10) од Законот за заштита на деца („Службен весник на Република Македонија“ бр. 23/13)

102. УСАИД, МЦГО, Анализа на политиките и праксата на професионалниот и кариерниот развој на наставниците во Република Македонија, Скопје, 2013

103.   УСАИД, МЦГО, Упатство за начинот и формата на менторската поддршка на наставниците-приправници и стручните соработници-приправници во основните и средните училишта, Скопје, 2016

104.   УСАИД, МЦГО, Стручен соработник од почетник до ментор, Скопје 2016

105.   УСАИД, МЦГО, Наставник од почеток до ментор, Скопје 2016