



OUTDOOR EDUCATION 4 ALL

TOOLBOX

OUTDOOR EDUCATION FOR PUPIL WITH MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS IN KINDERGARTENS

Workshops



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INTRODUCTION


The aim of Work Package 4 (WP4) in the OUTDOOR4MI project is to develop the "OUTDOOR4MI Toolbox for ECEC Teachers" as a practical and inclusive resource for implementing Outdoor Education (OE) workshops both inside and outside the classroom. This toolbox is designed specifically for early childhood education (ECEC) teachers working with children aged 3 to 5, with a focus on the inclusion of children with mobility impairments (MI). WP4 plays a critical role in enhancing the teaching methods and strategies of ECEC teachers, ensuring that their educational approach not only embraces outdoor education but also promotes inclusivity in accordance with the "Leave No One Behind" (LNOB) principle of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The toolbox will include step-by-step instructions for various activities, such as nature immersion, motor skill development, reading, and wood lab workshops, which encourage creativity, collaboration, and experimentation in natural environments.

The development of this toolbox is closely aligned with the general objectives of the OUTDOOR4MI project, which aims to increase the implementation of OE activities, develop inclusive educational strategies, and enhance the professional skills of ECEC teachers. By creating a comprehensive resource that promotes environmental awareness and inclusion, WP4 directly supports the broader goals of the Erasmus+ priorities: high-quality ECEC, environmental education, and social inclusion. Furthermore, this work package emphasizes the involvement of family members and guardians, who will play an active role in organizing OE workshops. Through their participation, WP4 seeks to raise awareness among families and stakeholders about the critical importance of OE activities in fostering child development and inclusion.

The specific objectives of WP4 include developing the OUTDOOR4MI Toolbox, testing and transferring this resource across partner countries, and organizing national dissemination events to maximize the project's reach and impact. The toolbox will offer teachers a range of immersive and inclusive experiences that connect children with nature while integrating digital tools and interdisciplinary methodologies tailored to the developmental needs of young children, including those with MI. The WP will culminate

in the dissemination of its results through promotional video documentaries produced by ECEC teachers and multiplier events across the European Union, ensuring the wide adoption of the project's outcomes at the national and international levels.





The tangible and intangible results of WP4, such as the development of the toolbox and the awareness-raising activities through OE workshops, aim to provide long-lasting benefits to ECEC staff, children, and their families across partner countries. By fostering eco-friendly behaviours and creating inclusive learning environments, WP4 will contribute to the broader societal goals of reducing educational inequalities and promoting sustainable, inclusive education for all children.





1. Aims and context of the workshop

In this workshop, ECEC teachers create accessible areas of interest in the school ground where children can explore soil through hands-on activities guided by their intrinsic motivation. By encouraging open interaction with soil, ECEC teachers help them strengthen their connection to nature, develop an understanding of how humans are interconnected within ecosystems, and engage with STEAM concepts while exploring the properties of soil.



Soil serves as versatile medium for children's play, offering opportunities to dig, pile, and mould it—especially when mixed with water to form mud. This sensory-rich experience introduces children to basic scientific and mathematical concepts such as volume, weight, and cause-and-effect. As they experiment with soil's transformation, children engage in problem-solving, often collaborating naturally in shared projects.

The discovery of soil organisms, such as worms and insects, adds another layer of fascination, allowing children to observe living ecosystems first-hand. This fosters a sense of care and responsibility toward the environment and promotes empathy for nature as they learn about life cycles and habitats.

Mud's malleability encourages creativity, allowing children to express themselves through mark-making, sculpting, or building, while also improving fine motor skills. Exploring soil's different textures and components teaches children to sort materials like clay, sand, and organic matter, fostering critical thinking and laying the groundwork for scientific inquiry.

Through exploration and play, with inputs from ECEC teachers, children come to understand soil as living material that plays a crucial role in sustaining life on Earth. This understanding is particularly relevant today, as soil not only supports plant growth and animal nutrition but also helps maintain environmental balance. However, its health is threatened by human activities like intensive farming and urbanisation, making it vital for children to learn about its importance.

In essence, this workshop harnesses soil as a dynamic natural resource that promotes physical, cognitive, and social development while fostering environmental stewardship. The activities take place both outdoors on the school grounds and indoors in the classroom. The outdoor space should



be organised into accessible areas of interest, allowing children to form smaller, dynamic groups based on their preferences. These zones might include a digging area, a creative expression space, a toy car zone, and a mud kitchen. Additionally, a circle-time area will facilitate group gatherings and smooth transitions between indoor and outdoor activities, while a quiet area will offer children a restful space if they feel overwhelmed.

2. Workshop objectives

- **Enhance Curiosity:** Encourage children to explore soil and its properties through hands-on activities that spark their natural curiosity about the environment.
- **Promote Active Learning:** Create opportunities for children to engage in varied play experiences with soil, such as digging, piling, and transforming it, allowing them to interact with natural elements in meaningful ways.
- **Familiarise with STEAM Concepts:** Acquaint children with foundational STEAM concepts by engaging them in hands-on soil explorations.
- **Foster Environmental Awareness:** Help children recognize the vital role of soil in sustaining life, including its functions in plant growth and animal nutrition, while raising awareness of its fragility due to human activities.



3. Resources and materials needed

- **Digging area**
 - **Landscape materials:** soil, sand, and gravel; natural items; water supply (watering cans and hoses), wooden markers to define the area.
 - **Site Preparation:** tarp or canopy to protect from rain or sun.
 - At ground level: ensuring open access for wheelchairs.
 - At raised level: raised bed with appropriate height and width for wheelchair users.
 - **Materials:** measuring tapes and containers of various sizes for measurement and comparison, magnifying glasses for close exploration, sorting containers for findings.
 - **Tools:** shovels and long-handled shovels (for easier reach from a wheelchair), rakes, handheld spades, and wheelbarrow.
- **Creative expression and building area**

- **Site preparation:** accessible child-sized tables, logs or benches; storage area for materials, tarp or canopy to protect from rain or sun.
- **Materials:** mud and clay, natural and repurposed loose parts,
- **Tools:** clay modelling tools (spatula and smoothing tools, rolling pins and cutting tools, textures stamps.
- **Stimulus images/provocations:** images or objects to inspire creativity.
- **Toy car area:**
 - **Landscape materials:** soil, sand, and gravel; natural items; water supply (watering cans and hoses), wooden markers to define the area.
 - **Site Preparation:** tarp or canopy to protect from rain or sun.
 - At ground level: ensuring open access for wheelchairs.
 - At raised level: raised bed with appropriate height and width for wheelchair users.
 - **Materials:** a variety of toy vehicles, portable ramps for varied inclines, natural and loose parts that can be repurposed.
 - **Tools:** small shovels, rakes, and hand trowels for digging and shaping the soil; watering cans or spray bottles for creating mud or wet soil.
- **Mud kitchen area:**
 - **Landscape materials:** soil, sand, gravel, and water supply (watering cans and hoses).
 - **Site Preparation:** accessible child-sized tables, tarp or canopy to protect from rain or sun.
 - **Materials:** natural and repurposed loose parts.
 - **Tools:** Spoons, ladles, spatulas, and whisks; shovels and scoops; measuring cups and jugs; sieves or strainers; buckets and bowls; plates and trays.
- **Circle time area:**
 - **Site preparation:** logs or benches, tarp or canopy to protect from sun or rain.
- **Quiet area:**
 - **Landscape materials:** side area of the schoolyard.
 - **Site Preparation:** accessible entrance, tarp or canopy to protect children from rain or sun, bamboo or other barriers to reduce visual stimuli.
 - **Materials:** waterproof mats, sensory toys, picture books like silent books and informative books such as inventory (as they are suitable for children to also consult independently) related to the topic of soil, noise-cancelling headphones.
- **Other materials:** Map representing the school ground with symbols to identify various areas of interest to provide visual information on the environment and how to navigate it. Workshop agenda realised with Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC).



4. Group size

The whole class, up to 30 children, can participate together. If the space is ample, children will naturally divide into smaller, dynamic groups based on their play interests during the main part of the workshop. In more limited spaces, a maximum number of children per activity centre can be set to avoid crowding.

5. Duration

- **(10 minutes)** Outdoor circle time.
- **(10 minutes)** Guided tour of the established centres of interest.
- **(60 minutes)** Spontaneous play organised around various centres of interest.
- **(20 minutes)** Outdoor circle time.
- **(20 minute)** Indoor reading

6. Step-by-step instructions to implement the activities based on an interdisciplinary approach

(10 minutes) Outdoor circle time: Begin with a warm welcome in the circle time area. Start with a familiar ritual to facilitate a smooth transition from the classroom to the outdoor space. Present the workshop objectives, highlighting the focus on playing with soil. Engage multiple sensory channels. Use a map of the school grounds as a visual aid, featuring symbols to identify the various areas of interest, which will remain accessible throughout the workshop. Consider providing a visual agenda with AAC tools to outline the steps of the workshop, making the schedule clear to all children.





(10 minutes) Guided tour: Guide the children on a brief tour of the outdoor learning space to familiarise them with the different areas of interest they'll explore based on their own interests. As you introduce each zone, weave in simple STEAM concepts. For instance, at the digging area, ask, "What do you think we might discover beneath the soil?" At the creative area, prompt them with, "How could we use natural materials to create something new?" This approach is intended to spark their curiosity.

(60 minutes) Spontaneous play: Encourage children to freely explore the materials and activities proposed according to their preferences—some may stay in one area, while others may move around more. As they play, take time to observe and document what they do. When the moment feels right, ask open-ended questions to spark their curiosity and critical thinking. Trust in their natural desire to learn—sometimes, stepping back allows them to discover more on their own. It's important to focus on their explorations rather than pushing toward specific learning goals. Careful observation will help you understand their interests better. To ensure a smooth



transition, let them know in advance when free play time is ending. Reflect on your notes to explore ways to enhance the outdoor space, and consider involving the children in co-designing the area as a follow-up activity. This approach fosters a deeper connection to their environment and strengthens their sense of ownership over their learning experience.

(20 minutes) Outdoor circle time: Gather the group in the outdoor circle-time area to reflect on their experiences. Encourage the children to talk about their discoveries and insights. You might prompt them to think about how soil was used in their play or what they might have discovered while playing. Their responses could spark ideas for co-designing the space as a follow-up activity. It can also be suggested if there's anything they would like to bring indoors. Bringing meaningful items into the classroom can ease transitions and support a connection between outdoor and indoor learning environments.

(20 minutes) Indoor reading: As you transition indoors, ask children to place their outdoor treasures in a designated area. Once settled, read a picture book such as a narrative book to stimulate a connection to multiple aspects of their outdoor experiences.



7. Inclusion: how to personalise the activities to all kids including those with MI and specific age-group

To make the workshop accessible to children with MI and other disabilities, we share the following indications inspired by the principles of Universal Design discussed in the Teacher Training Module:

- **Enhance Physical Accessibility:** Ensure that all designated areas of interest within the school grounds are fully accessible, allowing every child, including those with MI, to participate. Activities typically conducted at ground level, such as digging and the toy car zones, should be made available at raised levels. Raised beds should be constructed with appropriate height and width to comfortably accommodate wheelchair users. Areas like the mud kitchen and creative expression/building stations, which are already at a raised level, should offer tables at different heights to cater to both children standing and those in wheelchairs. This variation ensures an inclusive environment where all children can engage comfortably.
- **Sensory-Safe Areas:** Provide a quiet, sensory-friendly outdoor space where children can retreat if they feel overwhelmed. This area should offer a calming environment to help prevent sensory overload and give children the opportunity to recharge before re-joining group activities.
- **Modify Tools and Materials:** Provide tools with extended handles, lightweight materials, and ergonomic grips to ensure ease of use for all children, regardless of their physical abilities.
- **Multi-Sensory Learning Materials:** Develop learning materials that engage multiple sensory channels to meet diverse learning styles. Specifically, pair auditory information with visual aids such as a visual map of the centres of interest in the school yard and a visual agenda employing Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)¹. These materials support learners with varying communication and language needs by reinforcing auditory input through visual and symbolic representations.
- **Transition Support:** Support children through transitions by giving advance notice of activity changes. Use visual agendas, rituals, and other tools to help children navigate task and environment shifts with ease, reducing anxiety and promoting a smooth flow between activities.

¹ To learn about AAC we suggest exploring the website of the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication.



8. Possible risk factors

The following are potential risks that should be considered:

- **Environmental risks:** Uneven ground may increase the risk of falls; be mindful of uncovering hazardous objects and monitor the depth of dug holes. Additionally, check for protruding nails or screws and any signs of structural weakness.
- **Distraction:** Noise or movement from nearby activities could make it difficult for children to focus during circle time.
- **Overstimulation:** Some children may feel overwhelmed by the variety of sights and sounds in the outdoor space.
- **Mouth exploration hazards:** Children exploring by mouth may eat soil or mud.
- **Physical Injuries:** Risks include cuts, scrapes, or bruises from sharp objects, or falls.
- **Emotional risks:** As children take ownership of creating something together, they take emotional risks in negotiating and dealing with failures and successes.
- **Transition Issues:** Moving from outdoor to indoor environments and from activity to activity may lead to potential distressed behaviours.

To implement a balanced approach to risk, ECEC teachers should assess potential benefits alongside the associated risks and hazards. Having outlined the benefits in Section 1, we will now discuss the necessary actions ECEC teachers should take:

- **Environmental risks:** Bring children's attention to ground irregularities. Limit the digging area. Inspect structures and equipment regularly. Ensure a first aid kit is readily available.
- **Distraction:** Propose engaging rituals, select a quiet area for circle time, and use multiple sensory channels to communicate key information.
- **Overstimulation:** Designate a quiet area and provide sensory tools to help children self-regulate.
- **Mouth exploration hazards:** Assess the quality of soil, discuss with parents this risk and how it will be handled.
- **Physical Injuries:** Offer ample space for children to use tools safely, demonstrate proper tool usage, and ensure a first aid kit is readily available.
- **Emotional risks:** Foster an environment where children feel comfortable expressing their feelings, encourage co-regulation and provide guidance during negotiations.
- **Transition Issues:** Establish routines, create visual agendas, prepare children for transitions to ease confusion.



9. Reflection questions for debriefing

To encourage children to reflect on their experiences, discoveries, and feelings, ask them the following questions during the second outdoor circle time:

- How did you use soil in your play today?
- What was your favourite part of playing with soil today?
- Was there anything new or surprising you discovered?
- Is there anything special you found or created with soil that you would like to bring indoors?

10. Tips and suggestions on how to involve families

ECEC teachers can actively engage parents and other relatives in the preparations and implementation of the workshop in several meaningful ways:

- **Organising a workshop on the benefits of outdoor play with soil:** Before the workshop, ECEC teachers can host a meeting to showcase the benefits of outdoor education. During this session, they can display ten photos of children playing with soil, including at least one featuring a child with MI. Parents will be invited to look at the photos and choose the one



that stands out to them the most. Encourage parents to consider their emotional responses to each photo, advising them to avoid choosing any image that evokes a particularly intense reaction, as this may be overwhelming. After giving them some time to decide, each parent can share their choice and explain why it resonated with them. ECEC teachers can also share their own selection and the reasons behind it. This activity encourages parents to reflect on the value of outdoor play and fosters a sense of community. After the

presentations, ECEC teachers can connect the parents' reflections to the workshop goals, helping everyone see how their input is relevant and reinforcing the importance of outdoor experiences in children's learning. During this discussion, it's essential to validate parents' feelings, including any fears or concerns they may have. Once these emotions are acknowledged, ECEC teachers can present a benefit-risk analysis, outlining the steps they will take to ensure children's safety during outdoor activities. This approach helps parents feel confident and informed about the workshop's objectives.

- **Creating collaborative activities:** To prepare the workshop, ECEC teachers can invite parents to help set up the learning environment. This could include gathering natural materials and other loose parts, preparing the space, and creating various areas of interest (for example assisting ECEC teachers in building raised beds for digging and toy car areas), as well as donating picture books to the school.
- **Organising follow up event:** After the workshop, ECEC teachers can encourage parents to participate in follow-up events where they can engage in outdoor activities with their children. This could include family days at the school, where parents and children can play together with soil in the outdoor space set up for various areas of interest.
- **Sharing Resources:** ECEC teachers can provide parents with resources or tips on how to continue outdoor learning at home. This can include simple activities with loose parts, recommended books, or local nature spots to visit. By sharing these resources, ECEC teachers empower parents to reinforce their children's connection to nature and the outdoors.

By involving parents in these ways, ECEC teachers can build a strong partnership that supports children's outdoor learning experiences, fostering a deeper understanding of the importance of nature and hands-on exploration in education.



MOTOR PATH

1. Aims and context of the workshop

"Motor Path" refers to a motor skills path or course, a specially designed space where children can practice movements and develop specific motor skills. In this type of space, a series of stations or activity zones are set up to work on various motor skills, such as balance, coordination, and strength, in a structured and engaging way.



The objective of this workshop is to provide teachers with inclusive educational activities so that they can design activities and spaces for children with and without reduced mobility to practice movements and develop specific motor skills.

In order to plan adequately, we must contextualize the activities based on some basic tips that will serve for all the activities presented in this workshop. The space for developing psychomotor activities with children aged 3 to 5 with reduced mobility should be accessible, safe, and stimulating. Below are five key

points for optimising this environment:

1. Spacious, Clear, and Safe Area: The area should be wide and free of obstacles to allow movement without risks, especially for children who use wheelchairs or assistive devices. It's essential to have cushioned or non-slip surfaces, such as rubber mats or soft flooring, to reduce the risk of falls.

2. Defined Activity Zones: Dividing the space into specific areas helps organise a variety of activities. Suggested zones include:

Stretching Zone with mats for floor-based activities.

Coordination Games Zone with accessible tables and manipulative materials.

Rhythm and Movement Zone for activities involving music and rhythm.



3. Accessible and Adapted Equipment: Materials should be accessible at the children's level, using low shelves and reachable baskets. This enables children to select and use objects independently, encouraging autonomy.

4. Stimulating and Well-Lit Environment: Lighting should be appropriate and free from strong shadows. Visual elements, such as colourful murals, alongside background music, create a welcoming and motivating environment that encourages active participation.

5. Support and Rest Area: The space should include support bars along walls and adapted seating, allowing children to hold onto or take breaks as needed. This area can also serve as a quiet place for relaxation and recovery between activities.

2. Workshop objectives

A fundamental aspect we must start with is to know, not so much the limitations of children with mobility impairments, but their possibilities.

- Progress in the knowledge and control of their body and in the acquisition of different strategies, adapting their actions to the reality of the environment in a safe way.
- Strengthen emotional control by promoting respect, reflection, responsibility, solidarity and good humour.
- To favour spontaneity, expression and creativity in all motor manifestations.
- To increase the capacity for physical action that favours the resolution of situations.
- To encourage the construction of personal identity through knowledge of the body and its productions.
- Promote activities in direct contact with nature.

3. Resources and materials needed

Ropes, chalk, metal sheets, cones, plastic bottles, toilet paper and kitchen rolls, hoops, balls, mats and whistle.

The use of materials sourced from nature is recommended. Choosing environmentally friendly school supplies, such as recycled paper, sustainable wood pencils and other school supplies that reduce the ecological footprint, including the reuse of materials.

On the other hand, using such sustainable products such as toys made from sustainable wood, organic fabrics or recycled plastics are free of harmful chemicals such as phthalates, bisphenol A (BPA), or lead, which are often found in conventional plastic items. By selecting eco-friendly materials for children, we are investing in their well-being and the future of the planet.



4. Group size

The whole class can participate together (25), although some of the activities will be carried out in small groups (5), but simultaneously. There will be times when the subgroups will not participate directly, in this case, they will have the task of encouraging their classmates, so their work will be very important and they will be integrated in the activity, even if they do not carry it out directly.

5. Duration

Workshop nº1: Physical Education for children aged 3-5, including children with mobility impairments: Precision Games (90min).

- **(15 minutes)** in the school garden/school gymnasium/park.
- **(60 minutes)** in the school garden/school gymnasium/park.
- **(15 minutes)** in the classroom.

Workshop nº2: Physical Education for children aged 3-5, including children with mobility impairments: Games in motion (90min).

- **(15 minutes)** in the school garden/school gymnasium/park.
- **(60 minutes)** in the school garden/school gymnasium/park.
- **(15 minutes)** in the classroom.

Workshop nº3: Physical education for children aged 3-5, including children with mobility impairments: circuits (90min).

- **(15 minutes)** in the school garden/school gymnasium/park.
- **(60 minutes)** in the school garden/school gymnasium/park.
- **(15 minutes)** in the classroom.

6. Step-by-step instructions to implement the activities based on an interdisciplinary approach

Workshop nº1: Physical Education for children aged 3-5, including children with mobility impairments: Precision Games.



The **precision throwing games** are easily adaptable as they do not require excessive movement. In order to allow all children to participate, we will make 4 or 5 stations through which all children will pass in groups of 5 or 6 children. The number of games also depends on the size of the school playground. If you are not able to distribute the children to do the activities in small groups, remember that peer encouragement is a fundamental task, so you can take turns.

- **"Disco-golf" game.** Organisation: 3 or 4 hoops are distributed around the court and numbered. These hoops are the 'holes'. Each child has to throw the flying disc that will act as a 'ball'. They will also take with them a

record sheet (table) where they will write down the name and number of throws per 'hole'.

- **Bowling game:** Place several pikes vertically and throw them in order to knock them down. A variant is the game of skittles. In this case, it is recommended to make the bowling pins with small plastic bottles filled with area (so that they are heavy) and decorated. Creating the skittles can be a classroom activity for the children. The 'skittles' can be made out of kitchen rolls or toilet rolls. One variety can be to paint them and encourage the children to knock down the skittles in a particular colour, which reinforces another type of learning for 3-5 year olds.
- **Cone game:** Set up cones and throw hoops to insert them into the cones.
- **Target on the ground:** Draw a target with chalk on the ground and use metal plates or other small objects to throw them in order to obtain the highest possible score. If the space where the activity takes place is limited, instead of painting a circle, you can make a hopscotch. If it is not possible to paint on the ground, make a shape out of string.
- **Ring the bell:** For this game the ECEC teacher hangs a bell approximately two metres high and a basket full of small balls (like tennis balls) near it. At the signal 'Ring the bell!', each child picks up a ball and throws it at the bell to make it ring. This game can also be played in



teams of five or six children who gradually go to the basket and try to hit the bell, the winner being the one who hits the bell the most times.

Variation: We can ask the children to perform the throws proposed in these activities sitting in a chair. In this way they will have '*put themselves in the shoes*' of their classmate with MI.

These activities could be part of the psychomotor skills circuit in workshop 3 (circuits).

(15 minutes) Warm welcome and introduction to the workshop. Brief explanation of the workshop objectives. Fun warm-up exercises to get children moving and limber. Gentle stretching activities to prepare muscles for physical play. You can play lively music to increase children's motivation. Distribution of children through the different games or stations. Children with MI can perform the specific warm-up exercises for children in wheelchairs shown in this infographic².

(60 minutes) Allow 15 to 20 minutes per game and with the whistle, announce the change of game. The children will go in groups from one station to the next. As the ECEC teacher, regularly approach the groups and give them the help they need.

(15 minutes) In the classroom or sitting in the playground, we will talk about what we have done and how we have enjoyed ourselves. The teacher will take notes in order to improve the activity in future sessions.

Please note: The duration given here is an estimate. It will depend not only on the number of children and the actual time available, but also on the attention span of the 3-5 year olds, which is known to be limited at this age.

To be considered: These activities, because of their simplicity in both planning and execution, can be done in the gym, in the school playground or in a park. For more tips on how to plan an activity, we recommend reading Guidelines for ECEC Teachers (WP2³).

Workshop n°2: Physical Education for children aged 3-5, including children with mobility impairments: Games in motion.

Throwing games with movement can also be adapted. This adaptation would be to use the chair itself to cover the throws, thus balancing the difficulty of mobility in a wheelchair with the protection of the wheelchair.

² <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rgPJVPgcezxaoZRQIgpHZQ9N8jXzMy3g/view?usp=sharing>

³ https://www.outdoor4mi.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/WP2-FINAL-ENG_GUIDELINES_OUTDOOR4MI.pdf



Animals hunting. This throwing game is played as follows: Two children start by being the ‘Owl’, who have a ball to catch the rest of the class, that acts as rat (for example) by throwing the ball. The rules are easy:

- The one who has the ball in his hands can only throw or pass to his partner, cannot make any other movements.
- If they manage to hit a classmate, he or she is added to those caught in order to try to achieve the ultimate goal of the game: to catch the whole class.

This throwing game can be played either in a large group or in small groups, depending on the level of each group. It is advisable to start with small groups to ensure that they understand the rules and the internal logic of the game. When this happens, the number of children in the groups should be increased and, little by little, the two balls should be introduced into the game, which is, after all, what generates an increase in cognitive involvement and perceptive aspects, superior to other types of games.

Fox hunt: In a defined space, each child puts a piece of cloth behind his or her body, fastened to his or her trousers (as if it were a fox's tail). The game consists of taking off the tail of their partners and putting it behind them. The winner is the player who has the most clothes at the end of the game. The child in a wheelchair will carry the cloth attached to his or her means of locomotion. You can also set up areas where the cloth cannot be removed.

Attentive, attentive: Everyone moving freely around the space. ECEC ECEC teachers will indicate a specific place or object such as “the leaf of an oak tree”, “a stick”, “something brown”, “something that smells like a forest on rainy days”... that everyone should go and touch. The child with MI will probably be the last to arrive, as he/she will move more slowly than the rest of the children. To match the ‘conditions of the game’, we can ask the rest of the children to move in a particular way in order to match the skills; They can go walking, running, crawling, jumping on one leg, blindfolded, crawling like a snake ... (as the preschool teacher decides).

The hunter is here: For this the ECEC ECEC teacher will draw five or six circles on the floor of the classroom (according to the number of ‘animals’ in the ‘forest’), these circles can have the silhouette or figure of the animal also drawn on the floor. Divide the children into small groups and place them in each circle representing an animal. At the signal ‘Let's play in the forest!’ the children get out of their circles doing the movements of each animal, moving around the class in a dispersed way: some jumping like frogs, others trotting like a horse, on all fours like a dog, jumping like rabbits, flying like birds, among others. At the voice of ‘The hunter is here!’ everyone has to run home, with the same movements as before. The game can be complicated by having one child take on the role of the hunter, who has to burst in



on the ECEC teacher's signal. Depending on the type of reduced mobility it can be 'a rider on horseback', 'gliding like a fish or an eel', 'flying on the back of an eagle or a dragon', ect. or whatever he or she chooses.

(15 minutes) Warm welcome and introduction to the workshop. Brief explanation of the workshop objectives. Fun warm-up exercises to get children moving and limber. Gentle stretching activities to prepare muscles for physical play. You can play lively music to increase children's motivation. Children with MI can perform the specific warm-up exercises for children in wheelchairs shown in this infographic⁴.

(60 minutes) Allow 15 to 20 minutes per game and with the whistle, announce the change of game.

(15 minutes) In the classroom or sitting in the playground, we will talk about what we have done and how we have enjoyed ourselves. ECEC ECEC teachers will take notes so that we can improve the activity in future sessions.

Please note: The duration given here is an estimate. It will depend not only on the number of children and the actual time available, but also on the attention span of the 3-5 year olds, which we know is limited at this age.

To be considered: These activities, due to their simplicity both in planning and execution, can be done in the gymnasium, in the school playground or in a park. If the activity is done outside the school, you need to ensure that the floor allows the child in a wheelchair to move freely. For more advice on how to plan an activity, we recommend reading Guidelines for ECEC Teachers. (WP2⁵).

Workshop nº3: Physical Education with Limited Mobility: Circuits.

These special circuits are meticulously designed to stimulate the development of motor and cognitive skills in children. At this crucial stage of their physical and cognitive development, the circuits become a fundamental resource for developing coordination, balance and body awareness.

The benefits can be grouped into three blocks:

Motor development: improvement of eye-hand and eye-foot coordination; and strengthening of muscles and development of fine motor skills.

Cognitive stimulation: Development of concentration and attention; and improvement of spatial memory and problem solving.

Socialisation and communication: fostering teamwork and communication and establishing positive relationships with other children.

⁴ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rgPJVPgcezxoeZRQIgpHZQ9N8jXzMy3g/view?usp=sharing>

⁵ https://www.outdoor4mi.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/WP2-FINAL-ENG_GUIDELINES_OUTDOOR4MI.pdf



When designing circuits, as with other psychomotor activities, we must be aware of the limitations of pupils with motor disabilities, but we must focus on their possibilities.

To make psychomotor circuits for children in wheelchairs or mobility impairments, it is common to use cones for the children to avoid them by tracing a zigzag line. We can add some kind of activity to be carried out at a specific point, such as throwing a ball into a bin (basketball), hitting a small ball on the ground with a stick (golf), throwing some skittles and throwing some hoops into some cones. We can add stops where

other children who are observing until it is their turn ask simple questions such as 'what noise is the dog making', etc. Let's not forget that the activities are designed for children from 3 to 5 years old, so the questions have to be adapted to their academic level and related to nature, for example, "name one thing you love about the outdoor", "in which season you have more sun".

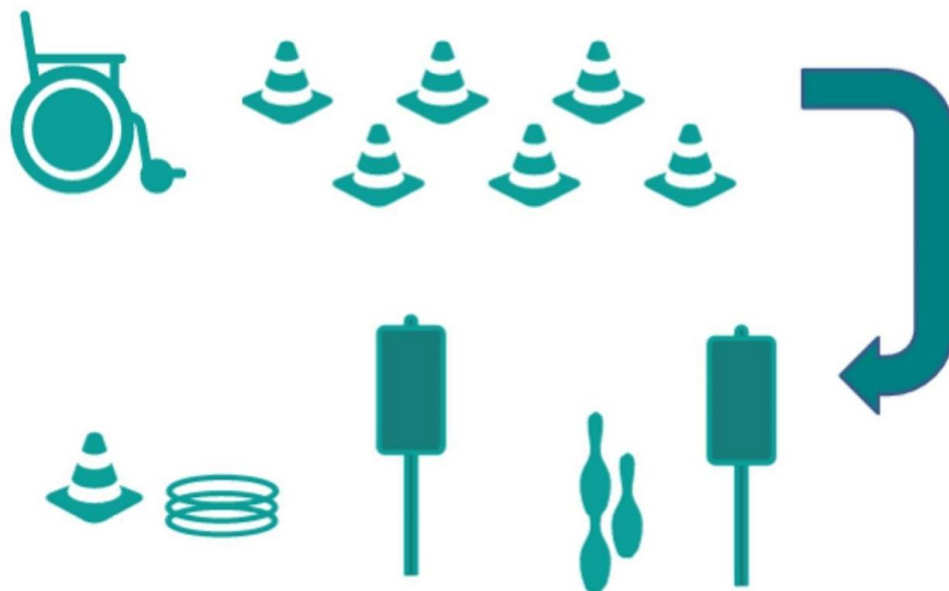


Image: Figurative representation. It is suggested that each station can have natural resources for the children to pass through. ⁶

⁶Image: own elaboration.



Children who do not have motor impairments can do the same activity, just adapt the materials to the space needed by the child in a wheelchair, especially in the area of the zigzag cones.

It can be done as 'relay races' in groups or individually. One option is that until each activity is completed, you cannot move on to the next child, or by score in each activity or time. If they touch an obstacle they will have to start again.

The circuit can be complicated by adding a ramp or, if the child has no difficulty getting in and out of the chair on their own (or can be helped), by adding a mat that they will have to crawl across (using arm strength) like a snake. Variations will depend on the child's ability. You can add left and right turns, changes of direction, a full turn pivot, an 8 or double turn, among others. We can play not only with space but also with time: against the clock, timed by teams or individually, with a maximum execution time.

(15 minutes) Warm welcome and introduction to the workshop. Brief explanation of the workshop objectives. Fun warm-up exercises to get children moving and limber. Gentle stretching activities to prepare muscles for physical play. You can play lively music to increase children's motivation. Children with MI can perform the specific warm-up exercises for children in wheelchairs shown in this infographic⁷.

(60 minutes) Children perform the circuit with the design and rules of the teacher's choice. The motor circuit or psychomotor circuit is a children's activity where an ideal space is created for children to enjoy, while developing their motor skills and psychomotor skills.

(15 minutes) In the classroom or sitting in the playground, we will talk about what we have done and how we have enjoyed it. We will pay special attention to the comments of the child with reduced mobility. The ECEC teacher will take notes in order to improve the activity in future sessions. The circuit can be done outside in a park, garden or other natural environment as long as the type of ground allows the child in a wheelchair or IM to move around normally. If it is done outside the school, the area where the children can move around should be clearly marked out. For further advice on how to plan an activity, we recommend reading Guidelines for ECEC Teachers (WP2⁸).

7. Inclusion: how to personalize the activities to all kids including those with MI and specific age-group

The ECEC teacher or preschool teacher has a very important role in the inclusion of the child with reduced mobility but the educational centre has an even greater responsibility in the

⁷ <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rgPJVPgcezxoeZRQIgpHZQ9N8jXzMy3g/view?usp=sharing>

⁸ https://www.outdoor4mi.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/WP2-FINAL-ENG_GUIDELINES_OUTDOOR4MI.pdf



adaptation of spaces. Removing uneven ground, pavements and curbs, fixing the ground so that tree roots are not an impediment or cause of accidents, having swings or slides or accessible playhouses, rubber flooring, access ramps, automatic access doors, lifts, etc. is the task of the school management.

Having an inclusive playground is not only good for designing outdoor educational activities. It has a double benefit, since on the one hand it makes it easier for children with disabilities to participate, have fun and stop feeling different from their peers and, on the other hand, it helps the rest of the pupils to become aware of the difficulties that their friends had before and of their current integration into a normalised life.

Children tend to play together by nature, but if the environment is not favourable, logically those who have more difficulties or are in danger of harming themselves are left aside. All the activities presented have been chosen because they can be carried out by children with and without mobility problems. In educational practice, all the activities we carry out must be personalised and adapted both to the group and to the characteristics of the children in it, whether or not they have mobility problems.

Many children with disabilities find it difficult to enjoy and obtain all the benefits associated with activities that require movement due to personal barriers (due to their disability, expression or attitude when they feel unable to carry out an activity), physical barriers (architectural barriers) or

social barriers (discrimination or rejection by their peers). Choosing one activity or another depends on the child's disability, but above all, on their preferences.

Finally, many families tend to overprotect their children with disabilities; teachers must convince parents that allowing them to leave their 'comfort' zone can help them to find new activities and become more autonomous.

8. Possible risk factors

The life of children with reduced mobility is a constant struggle against a society full of barriers and obstacles that they have to face on a daily basis: stairs, doors, narrow





access, uneven floors that make it difficult to move around, elements at different heights, etc. Within the educational centre, a series of measures can be taken to adapt the environment to the needs of the child.

But when we go beyond the safety provided by the educational centre, there are a series of factors to consider:

Access: Is the route accessible from bus stops, car parks reserved for people with disabilities, public car parks, public buildings and routes around the playground? Is there at least one entrance to the playground which is accessible? Is there any signage for the visually impaired in the garden or playground, indicating the distribution of play equipment or places in the garden? Is the pavement used compact, hard, regular, non-slip, allowing wheelchair access? Are there any obstacles on the route leading to the playground? Do the ramps have an inclination of less than 8%?

Street furniture: are the fountains at different heights? are the opening and closing mechanisms of the fountains easy to operate? are the litter bins close to the play areas and at a height of between 70 and 90 cm? does the design of the swings allow children to grab hold of them when swinging? Is the seat at a height that facilitates transfer from a wheelchair? Does the seat have a body attachment? If there is manipulative play equipment, is it located at a minimum height of 700 mm or does it allow for use from a wheelchair?

The best way to minimise risks is through good pre-planning.

9. Reflection questions for debriefing

Starting from the objectives we have set for this workshop; we have to ask the following questions:

- Did the child have fun doing the activities and does he/she want to repeat them another day?
- Is he/she progressing in the knowledge and control of his/her body and in the acquisition of different strategies, adapting his/her actions to the reality of the environment in a safe way?
- Is he/she consolidating emotional control? Have we seen respect, reflection, responsibility, solidarity and good humour on the part of the child during the activities? and on the part of his/her classmates?
- Do we observe expression and creativity in all motor manifestations? is he/she improving his/her skills and confidence?
- Does he/she overcome challenges and show good attitude and aptitude in the resolution of situations?





- Do these activities favour the construction of personal identity based on knowledge of the body and its productions?
- Do we observe that the child feels more attached to nature by being in direct contact with it?

10. Tips and suggestions on how to involve families

Trust between the school and the family is the key for parents to show a favourable attitude towards OE.

1. Report at all times on the activities that take place in and out of the classroom.
2. Parents are not the only ones who have doubts. If you as a ECEC teacher have any doubts about the child's abilities, call the parents and ask. Two-way communication is essential.
3. Present information in an objective way, outings outside the centre carry a risk, but the professionalism of the teaching staff and good planning reduces these risks.
4. Always keep in mind that the priority is the pupil and the focus should be on what is best for the child. ***Parents and teachers are in the same boat and must row in the same direction.***
5. Share this information (infographic)⁹ to convince parents about the benefits of OE. **The benefits are worth it!**

⁹ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_d9dAgkfcOse7KOeDotaNtVXldl6QK_b/view?usp=drive_link



READING AREA

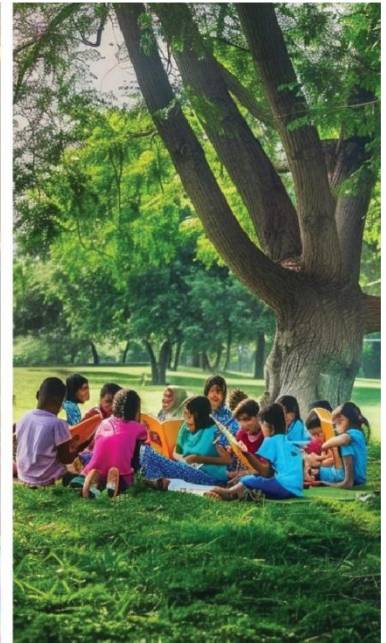
1. Aims and context of the workshop

The aim of the workshop is to create an enriching, multi-sensory storytelling experience for children in early childhood that promotes the development of language and oral communication skills, imagination, artistic and music expression and social skills. By incorporating elements of nature and soundscapes, creative art, musical improvisation, movement and role play into the storytelling process, the activity aims to develop children's vocabulary and listening skills while stimulating their creativity and appreciation of the natural world. This hands-on, experiential learning approach to reading a story provides an engaging learning context that encourages playful and meaningful engagement for all students.

The workshop, and all activities presented here, is based on a story called "Peter the photographer and his adventure in nature". It's a tale about a photographer named Peter, who loved taking pictures of city life but started to miss the peacefulness of nature. He moved to a small village surrounded by forests and lakes, where he found joy in taking pictures of nature. Peter made a photo book that inspired city people to appreciate and protect nature. Many people visited the peaceful place he loved, and Peter was happy to share the wonders of nature with others.

The workshop is designed to take place both outdoors and indoors. For outdoor activities we recommend an accessible space capable of stimulating meaningful, playful learning that enhances exploration and observation. More specifically the suggested outdoor space should be a spacious, flat area (probably the kindergarten yard/garden) with grass that preferably has a big tree to sit under the shadow, and/or other trees or flowers, so birds or insects are present. It also could take place at a nearby forest, or other natural environment that is accessible for all students (including those with movement disabilities) and is safe. It is important to ensure that children will sit under a shade, preferably under a big tree, or use a kiosk/tent instead. We recommend the use a soft mat (or cushions) for children to sit in a circle as to avoid any allergies because of the grass. If this outdoor area is near to other spaces such as a road, or a park or other buildings, this might even provide a more complex soundscape environment and encourage play, exploration, discussion and imagination.





2. Workshop objectives

By the end of this workshop children should be able to:

Language skills:

- Use new words and phrases to describe sounds (elements of sounds) and related to city soundscape and nature soundscape
- Describe images from the natural environment using narratives
- Engage in imaginary dialogues through role-play acting the characters of the story
- Narrate the end of the story

Listening skills:

- Identify sound-sources and meanings from the environment
- Listen and comprehend the storytelling

Visual arts skills:

- Use art as a medium for storytelling
- Create art pieces by using materials from nature
- Experiment with different art materials and techniques

Musical skills:



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- Produce sounds using their voice and body percussion
- Explore the different ways to produce sounds using their voice and body
- Improvise, creating soundscapes using natural sources (rocks, wood-pieces, leaves etc.)
- Sing using expressive concepts

Social skills:

- Cooperate with peers, participating in group activities for a shared goal
- Use their bodies and senses to communicate ideas and feelings
- Make connections with the natural environment

Attitudes:

- Appreciate and respect the natural environment
- Cultivate positive attitudes about exploration and experimentation

3. Resources and materials needed

- Floor mat or cushions to sit on the floor outside in outdoors
- Cardboard frames for 'photo shooting'
- Rocks, reed tubes, seashells, leaves, flowers, wooden pieces, pinecones and any other natural material that could be used for music making and graphic designs
- Plastic bottles, paper, newspaper pages, percussion instruments for music compositions
- Camera (shooting or video recording)
- Audio recording device
- Pictures for the story
- Picture cards for the story
- Percussion musical instruments
- Art materials (water paint, brushes, nontoxic glue, Pencils, Coloured Pencils, Crayons, Safety Scissors, Drawing Paper, Washable markers)

4. Group size

Preferably, the number of children involved in this workshop could be between 18-22, considering that in each group at least two ECEC teachers will be responsible for delivering the workshop. However, for a larger group of children, more teachers will be needed. The suggestion here is to have 2 ECEC teachers for a group of about 20 children. Children will participate in open and guided activities in their own space, in pairs and in groups of 3-4. Special attention



should be paid to the number of children with disabilities (motor or otherwise) in order to include them equally in the activities. In some of these cases there will be a need for accompanying adults.

5. Duration (max 2H)

The two-hour educational pathway includes outdoor activities based on the narration of the story "Peter the photographer and his adventure in nature" and, as a continuation, classroom activities. Specifically, while outdoors and after some warm-up activities to acclimate the children to the outdoor educational environment (especially if this space is not in the familiar yard/garden of their school), the children will listen to the story narrated by the ECEC teachers, engage creatively in the storytelling and have time to playfully explore the environment, investigate their favourite natural places, collect available natural materials, take pictures and participate in role play. Indoors, the children are involved in artistic and musical creations derived from their outdoor experiences.

The children's lived, embodied experience of listening to the story and observing the natural space (eyes), listening to its sounds (ears), touching its materials (hands) and smelling its smells (senses) will enable them to work creatively in music and art making activities. The materials, photographs and audio-visual artefacts collected from the outdoor activities will facilitate and connect the indoor activities. During the workshop, the children will have the opportunity to participate in the activities individually, in pairs or small groups, and as a group in plenary.

The two-hour educational path should include:

- **(1 hour and 15 minutes)** in the school garden/or any other appropriate outdoor space (as described above)
- **(45 minutes)** in the classroom.

6. Step-by-step instructions to implement the activities based on an interdisciplinary approach (e.g. STEAM subjects)

The activities are structured to allow for both guided and free play. A trained ECEC teacher leads the children through warm-up exercises, guided group activities and encourages unstructured activities to promote the aims of this workshop:

(10 minutes) Warm welcome and introduction to the workshop:

The ECEC teacher leads the children to the chosen outdoor space (see criteria above) and they sit in a circle (on the ground, on the grass or on cushions). S/he sings a welcome song of her/his choice. She/he repeats the song 2-3 times and guides the children to find a movement to accompany the singing, allowing different types of movement or gestures to accommodate all children regardless



of ability. The ECEC teacher acts as a model, offering some examples of movement to stimulate ideas. The children are also invited to join in the singing, to hum the tune or to accompany the song with simple hand movements. After the song, the ECEC teacher encourages the children to present themselves in the circle (one at a time) with a favourite sound that they create either with their voice or with body percussion and/or with a gesture (face/body posture etc.) Following this activity, the ECEC teacher encourages the children to close their eyes and remain silent in order to identify sounds from the environment. She/he encourages them to listen very carefully and to isolate the sounds they hear. After a few seconds of silence, the ECEC teacher asks the children to describe or imitate the sounds they have heard. All answers are welcome. Using appropriate visual aids (see Appendix 1), the ECEC teacher invites the children to play a game to experience sound and silence. The children are encouraged either to fill the atmosphere with different sounds that they improvise using their voices, body percussion or instruments, or to remain silent and listen to the soundscape of the environment. The ECEC teacher encourages them to experience the difference between the two situations and to make connections between the soundscape of a city and the soundscape of a natural environment. The ECEC teacher then invites the children to listen to the story and briefly explains a set of expectations for the children to follow.

(20 minutes) The pre-school ECEC teacher narrates the story using pictures (one for each section of the story) (see Appendix II) and involves the children in engaging activities based on the story. In each section of the story, the children are encouraged to take part in the following activities:

Narration 1: *Once upon a time, in a big, bustling city, there was a photographer named Peter. Peter loved taking pictures of the city's busy streets, tall buildings, and all the colourful street lights. Every day, he wandered around, snapping photos of people hurrying to work or schools and others relaxing in cafes and paved parks...*

The ECEC teacher encourages children to make and imitate sounds of the city, describe personal experiences from the city, and to pantomime scenes of life in a big city (e.g., someone driving a car, someone selling vegetables in the market).

Narration 2: *But one day, Peter felt something strange in his heart. Even though he loved the city, he started missing something special. He missed the peace and quiet, the fresh air, and the beauty of nature. Peter remembered the times he had spent in the countryside as a child, playing in the fields and exploring the forests. He decided it was time for a new adventure!*

So, Peter packed up his camera and a few of his favourite things and set off for the countryside. After a long journey, he finally arrived in a small, charming village surrounded by green forests and



sparkling blue lakes. The air was fresh, and the only sounds were the songs of birds and the rustling of leaves...

The ECEC teacher encourages the children to produce and imitate sounds of nature (birds and other creatures, wind, trees, etc.) and also the absolute silence that can sometimes be experienced in nature, and also to describe their personal experiences of adventures in nature. He/she asks the children to name the flora and fauna that can be found in natural environments and to pantomime scenes from nature (be a tree - different types of trees, be an animal, blow like the wind). The ECEC teacher can also ask the children to make suggestions about what Peter could do in the forest to help them understand the story. Then he/she continues the story.

Narration 3: *Peter found a cute little house to live in. It had a lovely garden full of flowers and a big apple tree where birds loved to sit and sing. Peter was so happy to be surrounded by nature again.*

The next morning, Peter grabbed his camera and went out to explore. He wandered through the forest, where he saw a rabbit eating hungrily from a plant and squirrels playing in the trees. He walked along the lake, where ducks swam, and fish jumped out of the water. Everywhere he looked, there was something beautiful to capture with his camera.

Peter spent his days taking pictures of the stunning landscapes and the creatures that lived there...

The ECEC teacher asks the children to think about and describe other possible scenes of the natural landscape that Peter has seen and captured with his camera.

Narration 4: *One day, Peter had an idea. He decided to create a photo book to share the beauty of nature with the people in the big city. He carefully selected his best photos and made a book called "The Book of Nature." He sent the book to his friends and family back in the city, hoping it would inspire them to appreciate and protect the natural world.*

Peter's photo book was a huge success! People in the city were amazed by the breathtaking beauty of nature. Many of them decided to take a break from their busy lives and visit the countryside. They discovered the same joy and peace that Peter had found.

Peter was thrilled to see so many people enjoying nature. He knew he had made the right decision to move to the countryside. He continued to explore, take pictures, and share the beauty of nature with the world.

And so, Peter the photographer lived happily ever after, surrounded by the wonders of nature and the joy of sharing its beauty with others.

The end.





(10 minutes) After reading the story, the teacher asks the children open-ended questions about the plot, the main character (Peter) and the setting of the story. (e.g. What did you like about the story? What do you think about Peter's decision to move to the little house in the forest? How did Peter feel when he was in the city and how did he feel when he moved to the forest? Why did he create "The Book of Nature"? If you were Peter, would you choose to stay in the city or move to the forest? Why?)

(10 minutes) After this discussion the ECEC teacher provides the children with the picture cards (see Appendix II) from the story and asks them to retell the story in their own words, arranging the cards in the correct order of events.

(15 minutes) Exploring the natural environment:

For the next activity, the children are given some free time to work in pairs to explore the environment. The ECEC teacher encourages the children to pretend that they are photographers who want to capture the most interesting and admirable parts of the environment around them. The ECEC teacher provides the children with cardboard frames (see Appendix III) and encourages them to place them or focus on things they find interesting or like. The ECEC teacher motivates the children to explore the environment, to look closely at the plants, flowers, seeds, leaves and other natural materials present and to experiment by placing or focusing the cardboard frame on different things that they like or find interesting. Finally, the children are encouraged to choose the best place according to their preferences and use the cardboard frame to isolate it. While the children are exploring, the ECEC teacher facilitates their attempts to discover interesting places around them by observing what they are doing, supporting their efforts, supervising and interacting with them. Initiating dialogue and communication between the children and the ECEC teacher could enhance the children's task. At the same time, the ECEC teacher takes pictures with a camera of the chosen natural places where the children place or focus their cardboard frames, for documentation and further use in an indoor activity. The children are also asked to collect natural materials found in the environment, such as stones, leaves, small tree branches, etc. They are asked not to cut flowers or destroy the environment. It is suggested that small containers are provided for the children to collect safe items such as stones or leaves.



(10 minutes) Closing circle by sharing experiences and singing:

The ECEC teacher guides the children back into a circle (initial sitting position) and encourages them to talk about their explorations in the natural environment. In particular, the children are asked to talk about the unique places they have identified using their cardboard frames, and to show and talk about the natural materials they have collected. The outdoor activities end with a song about a tree, using gestures (see Appendix V).

(45 minutes) Extending the outdoor activities in the indoor space of the classroom

The ECEC teacher gathers the children in a circle and initiates a discussion about the outdoor experience and the storytelling. She/he presents the audio recording of the soundscape of the natural environment from the first outdoor activity and the pictures of the children exploring the environment using their cardboard frames. After a short discussion, the teacher explains to the children that they can choose to work in the two creative stations in the classroom: a) in the art station and b) in the music station.

In the art station, the children will create nature-inspired artwork using traditional art materials, natural elements and their own creativity. Although this is an indoor workshop, it encourages children to continue to connect with the natural world and express themselves artistically, even indoors. Children are encouraged to work with leaves, twigs, pinecones and flowers to create collages, nature prints and unique paintings. Activities such as leaf rubbing, painting with earth tones and using leaves, sticks or other natural objects as brushes or stamps will help children to explore the colours, shapes and textures found in nature. The artwork produced can be exhibited or bound together to create their own 'book of nature' (see Appendix IV).



At the music station, the children are encouraged to experiment and create sounds of nature using the natural materials collected from the outdoor activity (e.g., rocks, wooden sticks, leaves), their voice/body percussion, recycled materials (e.g., plastic bottles, paper, cans, etc.) and small percussion instruments (maracas, egg shakers, rain sticks, frame drums). The ECEC teacher explains to the children that they are going to create a musical composition called "Listen to Nature" to represent the soundscape of the natural environment. She/he motivates the children to think about all the things that happen in nature (e.g. rain, wind, birds, animals, silence) and to experiment with the resources provided and try to link these sounds to their musical creations.

7. Inclusion: how to personalize the activities to all kids including those with MI and specific age-group

The range of activities suggested for this workshop are designed to be inclusive for all children, including those with movement impairments. More specifically:

- During the welcome warm-up activity, we suggest allowing children to choose how they want to participate, either using body movements, gestures, sounds or percussion instruments, depending on their individual needs.
- During the story telling, children who find it difficult to make sounds could use pantomime and vice versa. Again, there is flexibility in the way children can engage in this interactive activity.
- For the Exploring Nature activity, we suggest that children with visual impairments are offered tactile options such as touching and feeling the texture of natural materials (e.g. rocks, leaves) and also focus on listening to the sounds of nature and describing what is present. For children with mobility impairments who are unable to move, we also suggest bringing the natural material to them or having partners to help them explore.
- For the closing circle activity, children with language difficulties should be provided with paper and pencil to draw their experiences.

8. Possible risk factors

There are no potential risk factors.

9. Reflection questions for debriefing





- What do you think of Peter's decision to leave the city and live in this little house in the woods? Do you agree with him? Why?
- Can you name some sounds you hear in a city and some sounds you hear in the forest?
- How did you feel when you explored the environment with your cardboard frames?
- If you were asked to change the story, what would you suggest?
- How do you think we could use the nature book and the music compositions you made?

10. Tips and suggestions on how to involve families

- Consider inviting parents to help make the outdoor space chosen for the workshop accessible and suitable in terms of health and safety. Depending on the area, this may involve removing dangerous objects, fencing off the area or moving materials and organising the space before the workshop.
- Consider inviting parents to participate in the outdoor activities of the workshop and to actively engage with their children, especially in the activity focused on exploring the environment.
- Consider sending a summary of the outdoor activities to parents, encouraging them to ask questions and discuss their children's experiences, thereby extending learning at home.
- Invite parents to join the indoor activities and work with their children to create the music composition or nature-inspired artwork.





Appendices

Appendix I: Cards

Soundscape of a City



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Soundscape of a Natural Environment





Appendix II : Story Cards

Picture 1 / Narration 1



Once upon a time, in a big, bustling city, there was a photographer named Peter. Peter loved taking pictures of the city's busy streets, tall buildings, and all the colourful street lights. Every day, he wandered around, snapping photos of people hurrying to work or schools and others relaxing in cafes and paved parks...



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Picture 2 / Narration 2



But one day, Peter felt something strange in his heart. Even though he loved the city, he started missing something special. He missed the peace and quiet, the fresh air, and the beauty of nature. Peter remembered the times he had spent in the countryside as a child, playing in the fields and exploring the forests. He decided it was time for a new adventure!

So, Peter packed up his camera and a few of his favourite things and set off for the countryside. After a long journey, he finally arrived in a small, charming village surrounded by green forests and sparkling blue lakes. The air was fresh, and the only sounds were the songs of birds and the rustling of leaves...





Picture 3 / Narration 3



Peter found a cute little house to live in. It had a lovely garden full of flowers and a big apple tree where birds loved to sit and sing. Peter was so happy to be surrounded by nature again.

The next morning, Peter grabbed his camera and went out to explore. He wandered through the forest, where he saw a rabbit eating hungrily from a plant and squirrels playing in the trees. He walked along the lake, where ducks swam, and fish jumped out of the water. Everywhere he looked, there was something beautiful to capture with his camera.

Peter spent his days taking pictures of the stunning landscapes and the creatures that lived there...



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Picture 4 / Narration 4



One day, Peter had an idea. He decided to create a photo book to share the beauty of nature with the people in the big city. He carefully selected his best photos and made a book called "The Book of Nature." He sent the book to his friends and family back in the city, hoping it would inspire them to appreciate and protect the natural world.

Peter's photo book was a huge success! People in the city were amazed by the breathtaking beauty of nature. Many of them decided to take a break from their busy lives and visit the countryside. They discovered the same joy and peace that Peter had found.

Peter was thrilled to see so many people enjoying nature. He knew he had made the right decision to move to the countryside. He continued to explore, take pictures, and share the beauty of nature with the world.

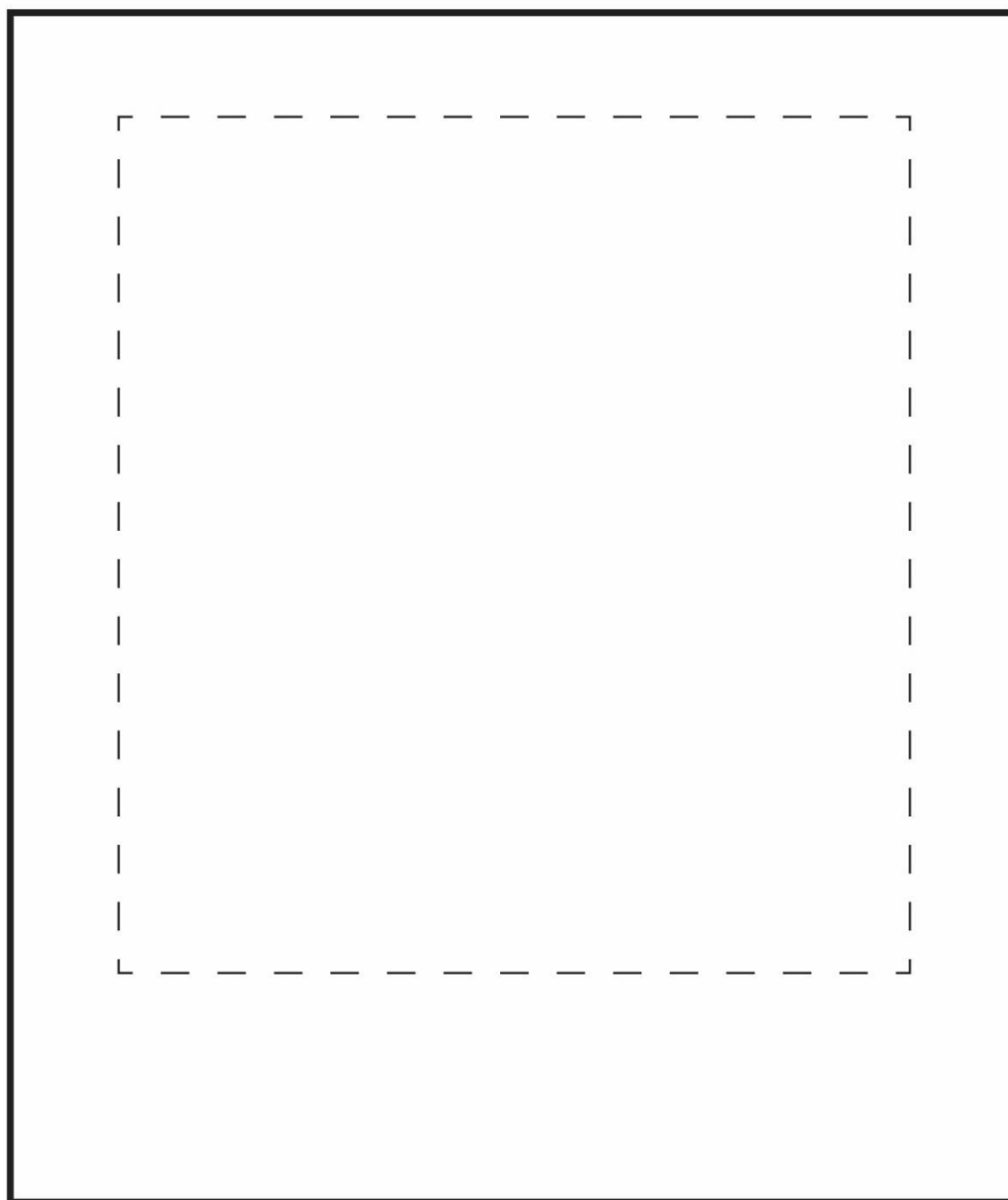
And so, Peter the photographer lived happily ever after, surrounded by the wonders of nature and the joy of sharing its beauty with others. The end.





Appendix III : Cardboard frames

Print on coloured or white cardboard and cut along the dashed line.







Appendix IV : Art Station Activities Examples







Appendix V : Suggested song for the outdoor closing activity

Growing slow a big strong three

Music Soili Perkiö
lyrics Hannele Huovi,
translation Soili Perkiö

Am G

Growing slow a big strong three, growing slow a tree. It

Am G D

bends and pro-TECTS you and me, you and me.

Am Am/G

Uu - uu - uu - uu - uu

F G

Aa - aa - aa - aa - aa



Image Source and and Original Illustrations :

Freepik

StockCake



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Kitchenature

1. Aims and context of the workshop

The main goal of the “Kitchenature” workshop is to create a space for imagination and creativity. In this case, children are invited to build and create something they experience at home every day: a meal (which doesn’t necessarily have to be edible). Unlike the typical kitchen that all children have available at home, children are invited to create outdoors, using the resources available in nature. From plants and their fruits, to water and heat, all the elements needed to create a “dish”, whether edible or not, are provided by nature. As such, this activity not only fosters engagement with nature and an understanding of the various services it provides, but also allows the development of various social and emotional skills, the creation of an individual and cultural identity, while offering a sensory experience for the child.

With the current day-to-day hurry, the quality time children spend with their families is often limited to mealtimes. Therefore, this activity aims to recreate that moment of sharing between family members, and bring it into the school environment. In this way, the goal is for children to develop interpersonal relationships with their peers as well as with nature and the surrounding environment.

The proposed workshop is divided into three parts, each of which being essential for the acquisition and development of different skills. Through the proposed activities, children will have the opportunity to discover the resources available in a forest, mix everything... and create something new. The first part of the workshop is based on exploring the surrounding environment, the second part focuses on cooking and building a cultural identity, and the third part emphasises free play and the development of children’s creativity and imagination.

The order of the activities is only a suggestion. Therefore, the third part can be implemented first, in order to allow children to adapt and learn on how to behave outdoors.

2. Workshop objectives

Kitchenature aims to achieve the following objectives:



- Progress in the knowledge of different cycles in nature, such as: seasons and their reflection on the changes in different elements of the forest (trees and their flowers and fruits, animal behaviour, and others);
- Understand the seasonality of the different resources that come from the forest;
- Promote activities in direct contact with nature;
- Encourage the adoption of sustainable and environmentally respectful attitudes;
- Allow children to develop essential social skills, such as patience and respect for others, which in this case can also be reflected in respect for the timing of natural processes. It also encourages cooperation, teamwork, and the acquisition of management and problem-solving skills;
- Encourage the development of personal and cultural identity, through the knowledge of the resources available in their natural environments, and practices in their local region;
- Allow the development of children's imagination and creativity;
- Development of fine and gross motor skills in children.

3. Resources and materials needed

For this activity, the resources and materials needed are: reusable baskets/bags for collecting materials, an empty book (if possible, made by the children, using only natural materials), a wooden pen (if possible, also made by the children), adhesive tape, journals, species' identification cards, and cooking materials (depending on the recipe follow).

4. Group size

For this workshop, the whole class can participate together. However, for some activities the group will be divided into subgroups. Despite that, all children will carry an important and participative role in the different activities of this workshop.

5. Duration

This workshop, Kitchenature, will be divided into three activities. Each activity will have a maximum duration of 2 hours.

Part I: Collecting nature (120 minutes)

- **(15 minutes)** in a natural area: introduction to the activity
- **(45 minutes)** in a natural area: activity development
- **(45 minutes)** in a natural area or in the classroom: activity development

- **(15 minutes)** in a natural area or in the classroom: close-up of the activity

Part II: Cooking with forest resources (100 minutes)

- **(15 minutes)** in the school: brief review of part I of the activity
- **(45 minutes)** in the school or in equipped natural area (forest or park)
- **(20 minutes)** in the school or in equipped natural area (forest or park)
- **(20 minutes)** in the classroom: close-up of the activity

Part III: Exploring creativity (115 minutes)

- **(15 minutes)** in the school: brief review of part I and II of the activity
- **(20 minutes)** in a natural area: activity development
- **(60 minutes)** in a natural area: free play
- **(20 minutes)** in the classroom: close-up of the activity

6. Step-by-step instructions to implement the activities based on an interdisciplinary approach (e.g. STEAM subjects)

The suggested activities can be carried out independently or as a continuum, and are therefore divided into three parts.

All the activities can be repeated throughout the year, and it is recommended to conduct the workshop during each season.

Part I: Collecting nature

This activity involves recognising the outdoor environment and collecting natural materials. Nature, like all living organisms, has its own life cycle, and this activity focuses on helping children develop an understanding of the changes that occur in the forest throughout the year. As such, children should not only play in the natural environment and enjoy all the available resources but also understand them. This activity focuses on the collection and analysis of fruits and leaves found in the forest. These depend not only on the time of the year but also on the location where the activity is carried out. Therefore, it is recommended that ECEC teachers conduct a prior analysis of the site, using digital tools to interpret the environment if needed. The Pl@ntNet app helps citizens identify different plant species by taking photos of various plant components: bark, fruit, leaf, and/or flower. This prior analysis is also crucial to verify the accessibility of the activity's location, for all children.

For more information on how to use digital tools and the benefits of using, it is recommended for ECEC teachers to read the WP3 document, which can be found [here](#)





ECEC teachers should accompany children on a sensory visit to a natural area, where they will have the opportunity to collect the necessary natural elements for the second part of this activity - Cooking with Forest Resources. Therefore, ECEC teachers should conduct prior research on which components of each species are edible, and which elements have potential toxic risk. In addition to the element needed for the second part of the activity, the group should collect and photograph other components (such as bark) to create a collective herbarium for future reference.

For each plant, ECEC teachers should gather the child's opinion regarding their sensory experience (texture, shape, colour, smell), as well as any other relevant and meaningful characteristics for recording. These records are essential for future sharing with parents and families.

Materials needed: access to the Pl@ntNet app, a basket or reusable bag for collecting materials, newspapers, tape, paper and a pen.

(15 minutes) ECEC teachers should welcome the group to the new activity location and provide a brief introduction and explanation of the workshop. If this has not been done previously in the classroom, a co-construction session for rules should be conducted during this phase of the activity. This way, children have the opportunity to explore the space freely while respecting the physical boundaries explained by the ECEC teacher and accepted by the group. It is crucial that children participate in the creation of the rules, in order to understand and more likely, respect them. These boundaries should be in place solely to ensure greater safety for the group, without reducing the children's autonomy and engagement with the outdoor environment.

(45 minutes) The visit to the chosen location takes place. The route should be pre-selected, opting for open areas with good visibility of the children, avoiding roads or sidewalks to ensure safety and minimise risks. During this phase of the activity, the children, along with the ECEC teacher, should observe different species and collect elements such as leaves, fruits, and flowers, whenever possible. These elements may not all be



available simultaneously and can be collected during a follow-up visit to the site. In the case of tree bark, a photo will be more suitable. Children should store the collected elements individually in their baskets or reusable bags. It's crucial to highlight the sustainability of the activity, reminding the

group not to take more than what's strictly necessary. The ECEC teacher should encourage children to reflect on the colour, texture, smell, and other characteristics they find meaningful.

(45 minutes) At this stage, children should be in a forest area equipped with tables, or, if that is not



possible, the activity can be done indoors in the classroom. The group should begin creating their book titled "My Forest," which will include a herbarium. For each species, they will note - with the help of the ECEC teachers - the scientific name, common name, location and date of collection. For the fruit and bark, they should draw it themselves, or add the photos taken previously (in both cases, the ECEC teacher can use digital tools for assistance). Along with

these results, the ECEC teacher should help them make a brief note about their sensory experience (e.g., colour: brown, texture: rough, smell: autumn, etc.). The main goal is to focus on the VARK methodology, where children learn through different channels and approaches: visual, aural, reading/write and kinesthetic.

How to do a herbarium: Individually, children should place the different elements inside a newspaper to dry the leaves and flowers collected from the trees. These should be stored in a dry place and pressed until ready for use. The ECEC teacher, together with the children, should evaluate the moisture content of each element, and if necessary, replace the newspaper sheet. This is a long process, and the time of completion depends on when the material is completely dry. Each newspaper should be properly labelled with the name of the child who collected the items. Additionally to this brief description, it is recommended for ECEC teachers to search for a more detailed explanation.

(15 minutes) During this phase, a brief conclusion of the activity and the knowledge acquired is made. It's essential that the ECEC teacher asks the child about their physical and emotional experience. It is fundamental to establish a space for sharing, where children feel safe and free from any pressure to communicate. Moreover, children must feel encouraged to express themselves, only when comfortable and ready.

This activity should be conducted as a continuation of the previous one to ensure the intended knowledge acquisition. However, it can be carried out separately.

In this session, children will have the opportunity to “cook” with the elements collected earlier, allowing them to understand the origin of food and the role of the forest, attributing additional value beyond recreation. The choice of the recipe should be based on the customs of the local area or region where the activity is conducted, allowing children to develop a sense of cultural identity. To learn more on the importance of OE for the development of individual and cultural identity, please consult the WP2 that can be found [here](#).

The difficulty level should also be considered, so the ECEC teacher must ensure that the chosen recipe aligns with the group’s abilities, without compromising the experience and final results. The results can and should be shared with the families.

Materials needed: These will vary depending on the chosen recipe. However, the activity must take place in a well-equipped area with access to water and preferably outdoors.

(15 minutes) ECEC teachers should welcome the group to the new activity space and provide a brief introduction and explanation of the workshop. If this has not been done previously in the classroom, a co-construction session for setting rules should take place during this phase. This gives the children the chance to engage with the proposed activity while adhering to the boundaries explained by the ECEC teacher and accepted by the group. It is crucial that children participate in the creation of the rules, in order to understand and more likely, respect them. These rules should focus solely on ensuring safety without reducing the children’s autonomy and engagement.

(45 minutes) The children should be divided into small groups, allowing everyone to participate in the activity. The ECEC teacher should explain the steps of the recipe to the whole group and then move between subgroups to assist with tasks. If the recipe requires measurements, handling sharp tools, or the use of a (toy) stove or oven, these steps should always be done under the ECEC teacher’s supervision, and in cases of evident danger, with direct assistance. ECEC teachers should prepare an infographic for children on how to follow the recipe. For that, ECEC teachers can rely on digital tools, search engines like Google and the creation of images through artificial intelligence.

Any steps that do not pose risks should be completed by the children, promoting autonomy, confidence, and responsibility.



(15 minutes) While the food is on the toy stove, children should add the printed recipe (prepared by the ECEC teacher) to their “My Forest” book. This recipe should be attached to the species whose elements were used in the cooking process, completing the previously developed herbarium.



(20 minutes) In this phase, a brief conclusion of the activity and the knowledge acquired is made. It's important for the ECEC teacher to ask the children about their physical and emotional experience.

Children should connect the seasonality of the ingredients with the tradition associated with the chosen recipe, followed by a sensory experience of the “dish”. Notes on the children’s preferences and opinions about the “food” should be added to their recipe books.

The prepared “food” should be shared with parents and families.

Part III: Exploring creativity

The following part of the proposed workshop is optional; however, its completion offers enhanced knowledge assimilation, benefiting the children. In

this activity, children are invited to revisit the same location where Part I of the workshop took place and analyse and understand the changes in the environment. Since the forest undergoes changes throughout the year, examining the differences based on the season or weather conditions provides valuable learning experiences.

In case ECEC teachers choose to do this activity before the Part I and Part II of the workshop, it allows an opportunity for children to explore the outdoor world, getting used to being outside before the remaining activities.

Children are encouraged to evaluate which trees are bearing fruit and to imagine possible recipes they could create with them. This activity focuses on free play, which has proven to be highly beneficial for children. Here, they have the opportunity to unleash their creativity and imagination, crafting their own “recipes” (which don’t need to be edible, just fun).

(15 minutes) ECEC teachers should welcome the group to the new activity location and provide a brief introduction and explanation of the workshop. If this has not been done previously in the classroom, a co-construction session for setting rules should take place during the activity. This



allows the children to freely explore the space while adhering to the physical boundaries set by the ECEC teacher. These boundaries should focus on ensuring the group's safety without limiting the children's autonomy and engagement with the outdoor environment.

(20 minutes) In this phase of the activity, children take a short walk through the chosen location, preferably the same as in Part I of the workshop. The children are invited to interpret their surroundings and collect new natural elements that complement the characterisation of previously studied species. It is crucial to emphasise the sustainability of the activity, reminding the group not to take more than what is strictly necessary.

(60 minutes) Unlike Parts I and II of the workshop, this activity focuses on promoting free play. The children are invited to explore natural resources and create their own "recipes." During the activity, ECEC teachers should take photographs of all the new recipes that are created. The

recipes, along with the outcomes of this free play, can be added to the final book, "My Forest," which will later be given to the parents.

(20 minutes) If new elements need to be added to the herbarium, they should be properly stored and dried. During this final phase, a brief conclusion of the activity and the knowledge gained is conducted. It is essential for the ECEC teacher to ask the children about their physical and emotional experiences. The results of the activity should be added to the book being developed, with the species used for the children's new "recipe" properly documented.

7. Inclusion: how to personalise the activities to all kids including those with MI and specific age-group

All the presented activities can be carried out by children with or without mobility impairments. However, depending on the group and the specific needs of the children, it is necessary to customise and adapt the activity (for example, placing a greater focus on the sensory experience).

The choice of the location for the activity, as mentioned earlier, can vary based on the needs of the group. For children with reduced mobility, it is essential to ensure proper access to outdoor areas.



Regarding arts and crafts and food preparation, the assigned tasks can be adapted based on the group's abilities. ECEC teachers can also encourage cooperation and teamwork. It is crucial to ensure that different materials are accessible at various heights, allowing participation from children with and without motor limitations, including those using wheelchairs.

To ensure an inclusive activity for all, children from migrant backgrounds can be invited to share some of their local recipes and traditions. ECEC teachers can even implement a new activity dedicated to cooking based on their culture.

8. Possible risk factors

As mentioned before, pre-planning the activity is crucial to minimise potential risks. ECEC teachers must always carry a first-aid kit during the activity.

In order to guarantee all children's safety, ECEC teachers must evaluate the following risk factors:

1. **Weather conditions:** It is important to monitor the weather forecast for the day of the activity. This way, any adversities can be addressed, alternative locations can be chosen, or if necessary, the activity can be rescheduled.
2. **Accessibility:** Ensuring accessibility for all children, including those with reduced mobility, is essential. The focus should be on each child's capabilities. The activity (trail + practical tasks) must be planned to ensure full participation by everyone.
ECEC teachers should be aware of any changes in the natural environment that might occur, anticipating potential obstacles.
3. **Materials used:** Some materials used during the activity may pose risks to the children. Therefore, it is necessary to teach, supervise, and assist the children in using these materials responsibly. After assessing the potential risks, materials that are deemed more dangerous than beneficial, should be demonstrated and handled only by the ECEC teacher.
4. **Possible toxicity of natural elements:** Since the activity takes place outdoors and involves the use of natural elements, it is important to verify the toxicity of the various resources. ECEC teachers must conduct a thorough research before implementing the workshop, guaranteeing safe activities across all three parts. This is especially important in Part III, where free play is involved. Although the children are not expected to actually cook and try the natural resources, since it is only imaginative cooking, they may interact with toxic or dangerous materials while exploring. ECEC teachers must clearly communicate the potential risks of these elements.
5. **Overstimulation:** Some children may feel overwhelmed by the various stimuli present during the activities. This may be especially true for children who are not frequently exposed to the outdoors. ECEC teachers need to be attentive to the behaviour and emotions of the children,

providing a safe space for them to retreat if needed and helping them develop self-regulation strategies.

9. Reflection questions for debriefing

At the end of the proposed activities, as well as in between the three parts of the workshop, it is important to conduct a sharing circle with the children. In this circle, the children will be asked about their experience during the outdoor activity, the emotions they felt, and the knowledge they acquired. Everyone should have the right to express themselves, while also respecting the turn of others. However, no child should be forced to share if they are not comfortable, ensuring they feel safe and respected.

The following questions can serve as a guide to start the sharing circle:

1. From your individual perspective, what was your favourite part of the activity?
2. What new things did you learn?
3. Did you have fun doing the activity?
4. What did you create that was new?
5. Did the activity help you discover something new about yourself? Did it help you feel more like yourself?
6. Did the activity allow you to discover or learn something new about your region? Did it help you feel closer to the place you come from?
7. Do you feel closer to nature?

These questions encourage children to reflect on their experience, fostering emotional awareness, personal growth, and a deeper connection with both their cultural background and the natural environment.

10. Tips and suggestions on how to involve families

To promote confidence in the implementation of outdoor education activities among parents, ECEC teachers should involve families in the process.

This involvement can occur during the preparation, implementation, and follow-up of the activities.

- **In the Preparation of the Activity:** Parents can be consulted about local customs and traditions associated with different natural elements. Understanding each child's family environment and cultural practices allows a greater involvement from children in their own cultural heritage. This also helps the ECEC teacher guide the activity in a way that fosters cultural identity development. Additionally, engaging families in the process helps build their connection to the activity, ensuring their support in its implementation.

- **In preparing the location:** Part II of the activity requires a toy kitchen and cooking equipment. The workshop can and should be conducted outdoors. For this to happen, families can contribute by building a wooden outdoor kitchen or support house for the children. If it is not feasible to construct functional equipment outdoors, a wooden kitchen can be built for Part III. This kitchen would be symbolic, used during the children's free-play dynamics, and not necessarily functional.
- **During implementation:** To ensure the well-being of all children, it is essential that they are properly equipped for outdoor activities. ECEC teachers should communicate with parents in advance about the upcoming activity, ensuring their cooperation in selecting appropriate clothing, footwear, and preparation for the outdoor experience.
- **After the activity:** To share the results of the implemented activities with parents, children should take home their "My Forest" book. This book includes descriptions of the activity, the herbarium, recipes from Parts I and II, and each child's personal experiences, combining all the results from the workshop. After Part II, children should also offer their parents the "food" they prepared using the fruits or leaves from the forest, which will allow a further strengthening of the connection between families and the activity

CONCLUSION

Work Package 4 of the OUTDOOR4MI project represents a key component in the overall mission to enhance early childhood education by promoting outdoor education (OE) and fostering inclusion, particularly for children with mobility impairments (MI). The development and dissemination of the OUTDOOR4MI Toolbox for ECEC Teachers mark a significant step toward achieving the project's general and specific objectives. By offering a structured, practical resource, the toolbox empowers teachers to incorporate OE activities that are both immersive and inclusive, supporting child development in a holistic manner. These activities not only foster creativity, collaboration, and environmental awareness among children but also align with the broader goals of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to ensure no child is left behind.

The successful implementation of WP4 also underscores the importance of engaging families and stakeholders in the educational process. By involving family members in the organization of OE workshops and producing promotional video documentaries, the work package raises awareness about the value of outdoor education and its role in

fostering the physical, emotional, and cognitive development of children. This engagement helps create a supportive ecosystem for children, where both educational professionals and families recognize and contribute to the inclusive and environmental aspects of education. Furthermore, by disseminating the results of the project through national multiplier events and video content, WP4 ensures that its outcomes are accessible to a broad audience, promoting widespread adoption of its methods and materials across the EU.

The tangible and intangible results of WP4, including the OUTDOOR4MI Toolbox and the awareness raised through workshops and promotional activities, will have a lasting impact on ECEC teachers, children, and families. The toolbox's accessibility in multiple languages, including English, Italian, Spanish, Greek, Portuguese, Romanian, and Hungarian, ensures that it can be effectively used across diverse educational contexts. By integrating OE strategies into daily teaching practices, ECEC teachers can provide children with enriching experiences that promote learning through direct engagement with nature. Moreover, the focus on inclusion ensures that children with MI are provided with the same opportunities for growth and development as their peers, reducing inequalities and fostering a more inclusive educational environment.

In conclusion, WP4 not only contributes to the successful achievement of the OUTDOOR4MI project's objectives but also plays a crucial role in advancing the broader goals of high-quality, inclusive early childhood education within the Erasmus+ framework. The work package has laid the foundation for a more inclusive and environmentally conscious approach to education, providing



ECEC teachers with the tools they need to nurture future generations in a way that promotes both personal development and social responsibility. As the project progresses to its final stages, the continued dissemination of WP4's results through workshops, events, and digital platforms will ensure its long-term impact and relevance, creating lasting change in early childhood education across Europe.

