

EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION COALITION

In September, 2022, the Croatian Association on Early Childhood Intervention (CAECI) was granted the [Early Childhood Intervention Coalition project](#), benefitted from a grant under the Active Citizens Fund from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA grants, in partnership with the Reykjavik City Department of Education and Youth from Iceland and in cooperation with Krapina-Zagorje County from Croatia. This project marked the first bilateral partnership between CAECI and an ACF grant holder country. The motivation for this partnership was the possibility of exchanging positive practices of designing and building the early childhood intervention (ECI) system which CAECI continued with this project in Krapina-Zagorje County, and Iceland has already begun through their ongoing project „Better city for children “.

The Early Childhood Intervention Coalition project has two main objectives:

- strengthening the advocacy role of the civil society to create timely support for children of early and preschool age, and
- creating prerequisites for a regulatory framework for an intersectoral system of early childhood intervention (ECI).

These objectives will be realized through the following project activities:

1. sensitization of the general and professional public for the needs of families and children with developmental risks and difficulties,
2. creation of the Early Childhood Intervention Coalition (Coalition) and the Network of Kindergarten Workers (Network),
3. research on the needs of early childhood intervention stakeholders in Krapina-Zagorje County,
4. education and empowerment of the members of the Coalition and Network for advocating the needs of families of children with developmental risks and difficulties, and
5. advocacy and multiplication of project results in other cities and municipalities.

Thus far we have successfully completed the following project activities:

- a **kick-off meeting** with representatives of the partner institution where the project activities were presented, the schedule for the implementation of the activities was agreed upon, and a communication channel was established for advisory and mentoring support to CAECI in achieving project goals and activities;

Project Coordinator:



Partner:



The *Early Childhood Intervention Coalition* project benefits from a grant under the Active Citizens Fund from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, through the EEA Grants.

The content of this document is the sole responsibility of *Croatian Association on Early Childhood Intervention* and does not necessarily reflect the views of the donor countries and the Fund Manager."

- **The initial conference of the project** was held live in the hub work space of Krapina-Zagorje County with an attendance of over 80 experts, which included experts from 13 civil society organizations (CSO). The creation of Early Childhood Intervention Coalition was initiated, which consisted of 18 organizations, with 36 appointed persons who all agreed on an online participatory drafting of the Coalition Agreement;
- **The first meeting of the Coalition** was held on November 10th, 2022, at which the leader of the Coalition was appointed and the Coalition Agreement was adopted. Planned number of members of the Coalition was exceeded: 9 were planned and 17 organizations from KZC were included;
- **A joint visit of the partner** was held in November 2022, to stakeholders of early childhood intervention in Krapina-Zagorje County which included associations (Association of Educational Rehabilitators KZC and Saint Ana of KZC) and institutions (Krapinske Toplice Centre for Education and Cabinet for Early Intervention as well as Kindergarten Zvirek in Stubicke Toplice) in KZC with a total of 15 members of the Coalition and the Network participated.
- **An online public forum "Early and Preschool Education Institutions as an Important Resource in ECI"** was held for 35 early and preschool education experts at which the Network of Kindergarten Workers was established, the Agreement on the establishment of the Network was adopted and the head and deputy head of the Network were appointed; a decision was also made on cooperation between the Coalition and the Network, which was formalized by the Agreement on Cooperation between the Coalition and the Network.
- **A live round table "Civil Society Organisations as Actors of Paradigm Change in ECI in KZC"** in Krapina, which gathered 66 participants, including representatives of 13 CSOs. The needs of parents and experts were discussed and a further course of action for advocating changes in ECI was jointly recognized.
- **A total of 9 workshops** were held from February until May in 2023 to educate and empower the members of the Coalition and the Network in their joint mission to advocate the needs of children with developmental risks and disabilities as well as their families, as well as 2 separate educations only for members of the Network. Part of the workshops were held by representatives of the partner institutions.

Also, the following project results have been achieved:

- an agreed upon and accepted **Coalition Agreement** at the first meeting of the Coalition, signed during the partner's visit, presented on a press conference in KZC and published on CAECI's website.
- the Network of Kindergarten Workers was formed at the public forum and [the Agreement on Cooperation between the Coalition and the Network](#) was adopted, which was presented to the media at the thematic meeting at the press conference in KZC and published on CAECI's website.
- [five research reports](#) were prepared on the conducted research of the needs of parents of children with developmental risks and difficulties, experts of various profiles and civil society organizations, which were adopted by members of the Coalition and the Network at the thematic

Project Coordinator:



Partner:



The *Early Childhood Intervention Coalition* project benefits from a grant under the Active Citizens Fund from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, through the EEA Grants.

The content of this document is the sole responsibility of *Croatian Association on Early Childhood Intervention* and does not necessarily reflect the views of the donor countries and the Fund Manager."

meeting and an additional contribution by the students of ethnology and cultural anthropology who recorded video materials of the interview.

- [The policy brief](#) was conducted and approved by members of the Coalition and the Network. The main purpose of this document is to offer solutions for advocating the model of early intervention in childhood in Krapina - Zagorje County and thus influence decision makers.

In the continuation of the project, we plan to establish an advocacy team of the Coalition and the Network, which will go to meetings with decision makers and advocate that the recommendations stated in the policy brief document will be implemented in practice.

We are looking forward to continued cooperation and activities to come.

Project Coordinator:



Partner:



City of Reykjavik

The *Early Childhood Intervention Coalition* project benefits from a grant under the Active Citizens Fund from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, through the EEA Grants.

The content of this document is the sole responsibility of *Croatian Association on Early Childhood Intervention* and does not necessarily reflect the views of the donor countries and the Fund Manager."