



Ministry of
Education, Science
and Innovation

NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

OF MONTENEGRO





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NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK OF MONTENEGRO



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AI	Artificial intelligence
CCT	Cross-curricular theme
ECA	Extracurricular activity
ECCE	Early childhood care and education
ECE	Early childhood education
EI	Educational institution
ICT	Information and communication technologies
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PSI	Preschool institution
SEC	Socio-emotional competence
TPD	Teachers' professional development
TVET	Technical vocational education and training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund



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FOREWORD

Dear reader,

Bearing in mind that education is the foundation of every society, our goal in the coming period is to build a high-quality, state-of-the-art and inclusive education system which, on the one hand, is fully aligned with the best European education systems and, on the other, is tailored to the national context and all the specific features it entails.

In the belief that an educated individual is a citizen of the world and a guarantee of the sustained prosperity of society as a whole, and that knowledge is a fundamental component in overcoming socio-economic inequalities, the Government of Montenegro has recognized education as one of its key priorities, confident that every investment in improving the education system represents a step towards a more successful, recognizable and prosperous Montenegro.

Having launched the largest investment cycle in the history of education infrastructure at all levels, which is currently underway, and with the support of UNICEF and the European Commission, we have also adopted a key document – the Education Reform Strategy 2025–2035. This strategy sets out our strategic direction for the next decade, with the aim of creating a safe, welcoming and stimulating school environment in which every pupil can realize their full potential and acquire a defined set of knowledge, skills and values essential for the development of our society, in line with the standards of the modern age.

By adopting the National Curriculum Framework, we are one step closer to achieving this goal. It is therefore my great pleasure to commend this document to you, as it will serve as the starting point for the forthcoming education system reform, which we are all eagerly anticipating.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the team at the Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation, as well as to the members of the Working Group, comprising representatives of relevant institutions and organizations, and to all teachers, professional associates, consultants, members of the non-governmental sector, and the wider expert community who contributed to the development of this document.

As the greater part of the work still lies ahead, I am confident that we will all engage positively in the process to come and contribute to making our education system better for all future generations. Our young people deserve nothing less.

Yours faithfully,

Prof. dr Anđela Jakšić-Stojanović, PhD

Minister of Education, Science and Innovation



I PHILOSOPHY OF THE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The National Curriculum Framework of Montenegro (hereinafter: the Framework) is grounded in universal values and the specific features of the Montenegrin educational context. It builds on positive developments rooted in its historical evolution, as well as on contemporary solutions that were proposed, implemented and validated following the comprehensive education reform conceived at the beginning of the 21st century and implemented in the subsequent period. In doing so, we have sought to ensure continuity in the development of our education system, founded on a humanistic approach based on an educational paradigm centred on the child/pupil and their learning.

Education in Montenegro is oriented towards achieving the desired learning outcomes, so that our children/pupils are prepared for the future and equipped with the competences needed to navigate, participate in and contribute to a globalized world. Through education, we aim to create conditions that enable our children/pupils to fully develop their potential, pursue their interests and, as self-fulfilled individuals, care for and contribute to their community and society.

In order to achieve the aims of education, our Curriculum Framework is designed to support the development of the character, mind and body of children/pupils. It fosters values and promotes the development of knowledge, skills and dispositions, providing an educational experience that enables our children/pupils to communicate actively and connect with others, both in physical and digital environments. In this way, they become aware that they are part of society and learn to embrace diversity by collaborating with people from different backgrounds.

The philosophy underpinning the National Curriculum reflects our core beliefs about teaching and learning:

- We believe in a **broad and holistic education**, in a strong foundation of knowledge and in education that promotes values, social and emotional well-being, and character development, so as to prepare our children/pupils effectively for the future.
- We believe that **every child both wants to learn and is capable of learning, provided that appropriate conditions are in place:**
 - a caring, safe and stimulating learning environment in which every child is valued; where positive relationships exist between teachers and children/pupils and among peers; where a culture of care and mutual respect is fostered in schools; where children/pupils learn to be empathetic and to appreciate diversity; and where they are encouraged to take responsible risks, learn from their mistakes and from one another, and express their views with confidence;
 - the child/pupil is at the centre of educational decision making, guiding curriculum design and implementation, as well as teaching practice and classroom activities – while the content and teachers remain essential, their primary role is to initiate and support effective learning;
 - teaching pace, approaches and assessment practices are developmentally appropriate;
 - technology is used effectively, alongside expertise and resources from the wider community, both to enhance teaching and learning and to enable greater personalization of learning; also, partnerships are built with experts, drawing on community resources, where relevant, to enrich learning in authentic ways;
 - learning environments are designed to support both individual and collaborative learning, where children/pupils connect new ideas and experiences with prior

knowledge, interpret and evaluate knowledge from multiple perspectives, and co-construct, assimilate and adapt new knowledge through inquiry and interaction with others; they are supported in reflecting on their own thinking and learning, which facilitates deeper understanding and the application of knowledge in different contexts;

- assessment is used to promote independent learning, rather than solely as a summative measure of attainment; it is an integral part of teaching and learning, helping pupils to become self-directed, lifelong learners who can monitor, evaluate and improve their own learning; assessment is designed to gather evidence of progress and to provide timely and targeted feedback, enabling pupils to improve their learning and teachers to refine their practice, making appropriate use of technology;
- teaching and learning are organized in such a way that children/pupils find meaning in learning, remain motivated and take responsibility for their own learning.





II FUNCTIONS OF THE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

GENERAL FUNCTION: MISSION

The Framework is a foundational system-level document that establishes a coherent and high-quality system of pre-university education in Montenegro.

Its core functions are to:

- define the shared aims, values and learning outcomes of education;
- ensure common standards of quality and equity for all preschool institutions (hereinafter: PSIs) and schools, and for all children and pupils;
- connect all levels of pre-university education into an integrated whole.

The Framework therefore serves both as a pedagogical guide and as a normative document, ensuring that the education system functions as a unified, aligned and development-oriented whole (see Figure 1). It ensures that all children and pupils, regardless of where they are educated, which PSI or school they attend, or their personal circumstances, have equal opportunities for development and for achieving the intended learning outcomes. **The curriculum encompasses the entire organized experience of the child or pupil in any institutional setting directed towards educational aims and purposes.**

The National Curriculum is only one element in the education of each child. Within the school day, each week, term and academic year, there is time and space to go beyond the specifications of the National Curriculum. It provides an overview of the core knowledge and competences around which teachers can design engaging and stimulating learning activities to foster the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills, as part of the broader school curriculum (see Glossary).



Figure 1. General functions of the Curriculum Framework

SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS

1. ESTABLISHING STANDARDS AND QUALITY IN EDUCATION

The Framework establishes common standards of quality in education and provides guidance for monitoring, developing and improving educational quality.

It offers a comprehensive map of the educational pathway, grounded in evidence-based education (see Glossary), to inform the updating of education policy, teaching practice and, accordingly, learning environments. It is the key reference document for the design of subject curricula, extracurricular activities, textbooks and teaching resources.

The Framework sets out the general aims of education, defines learning areas and subject domains, key competences, values and skills, cross-curricular themes, methods for measuring learning success, and the learning outcomes that children and pupils are expected to achieve.

These standards apply across all levels of pre-university education, including preschool (hereinafter: ECE), primary and secondary education, as well as education for children and pupils with special educational needs and general adult education. In this way, the Framework ensures a coherent and coordinated education system across the entire country.

2. A GUIDE FOR THE PLANNING AND DELIVERY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Framework serves as a reference for the development of subject curricula and early childhood education curricula, for the organization of teaching and extracurricular activities and for the implementation of pupil-centred teaching using active learning methods.

It is the foundational document for curriculum development, a guide for organization and delivery, and the basis for structuring teaching and learning processes as well as learning environments. Its role is to ensure a learning process that leads to deep learning, the acquisition of lasting and high-quality knowledge and the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, rather than mere memorization and reproduction of knowledge.

In short, the Framework:

- provides guidance for the development of subject curricula, textbooks and teaching materials and the design of extracurricular activities;
- promotes child- and pupil-centred teaching and learning;
- identifies effective teaching strategies;
- encourages the use of modern active learning approaches

3. A GUIDE FOR MONITORING, ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF PUPIL ATTAINMENT

The Framework establishes a common basis for monitoring, assessing and evaluating pupil attainment, as well as for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the curriculum itself.

It ensures that assessment is used as a means of fostering independent learning and the development of self-regulated learning, rather than solely as a final appraisal of knowledge and an indication of success or failure. It also provides guidance for monitoring and evaluating curriculum implementation (see Section XV: Monitoring and Evaluation of Curriculum Implementation).

Particular emphasis is placed on:

- continuous monitoring of pupil progress and the provision of timely and targeted feedback, fostering the development of metacognition (see Glossary), that is, pupils' ability to understand, monitor and evaluate their own learning and adjust it where necessary;
- the use of formative assessment as a support for high-quality learning and the development of independent learning skills (assessment for learning and assessment as learning; see Section XII: Monitoring and Assessment of Pupil Attainment);
- recognizing and promoting the different functions of assessment, including its informative, evaluative, instructional, developmental and innovative functions;
- continuous monitoring of the implementation of the Framework through other educational documents, materials and practice, including data collection and the planned improvement of less effective elements.

4. PROMOTING VALUES AND CULTURAL AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

The Framework promotes democratic, civic and humanistic values, respect for cultural and national identity, social cohesion and global awareness, with a particular emphasis on equity and inclusion in education.

The Framework is built upon socially endorsed civic and humanistic values, equal rights and responsibilities, respect for others, care, integrity, solidarity and social responsibility.

The Framework strongly supports the principle of equity in education, ensuring that high-quality education is equally accessible to all children and pupils, regardless of their social, cultural, economic, religious, linguistic, gender or other characteristics. It places particular emphasis on adapting the educational process to the specific needs of each child/pupil, in order to support their progress and further education, thereby contributing in the long term to reducing poverty and social exclusion.

5. SUPPORTING TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The implementation of this Framework requires high levels of professional competence among teachers and their continuous professional development, enabling the application of modern pedagogical, psychological and methodological knowledge and the delivery of equitable, high-quality education.

Within the Framework, the teacher is recognized as the key agent of the educational process, a professional who competently and responsibly implements both the spirit and the letter of the curriculum in their work with children and pupils (see Section XIII: The Indispensable Teacher: Teachers' Professional Development). The implementation of the Framework's principles requires professional autonomy, high levels of expertise and accountability, as well as a willingness to collaborate and act as agents of positive change in improving educational quality and the wellbeing of children and pupils.



III VISION

While the mission explains why the Curriculum Framework exists, its vision sets out where we aim to arrive, what the desired outcomes of pre-university education are, and which knowledge, skills and values children and pupils should develop in order to be prepared for life in a contemporary world that is dynamic and challenging in every respect. The model proposed by the Framework is built on multiple sources, including research findings, a range of effective international practices and well-established national experience, adapted to the socio-cultural, historical and economic specificities of the national context.

All elements of the curriculum, including its aims, methods, key competences, values, cross-curricular themes, assessment, learning areas, the learning environment and the role of the teacher, are derived from the vision of the Framework and serve its realization. The alignment of curriculum elements, referred to as curricular coherence (see Glossary), is both a guiding principle for curriculum design and a means of ensuring coherence, integration and balance.

In the vision of this Framework, by the end of pre-university education, a pupil will have developed the following competences:

Lifelong learning competence

The lifelong learning competence (often referred to as “learning to learn”) is the ability of an individual to manage their own learning effectively and independently, either alone or in collaboration with others. It is one of the eight key competences in the European Key Competences Framework and is essential for individuals in the 21st century. Lifelong learning emphasizes that learning takes place from early childhood through to old age and serves personal development, active citizenship, social inclusion, employability and career management. Promoting lifelong learning involves building bridges between formal education and various forms of non-formal and informal learning in order to create diverse learning opportunities.

This concept is oriented towards two main dimensions¹: personal development, including intellectual engagement, curiosity, creativity and fulfilment; and professional development, including adaptation to changes in the labour market. It encompasses:

- *Awareness of one’s own learning.* Understanding how one learns, evaluating the effectiveness of one’s learning (strengths and areas for improvement) and one’s ability to improve it; recognizing one’s own learning needs and identifying the available opportunities.
- *Managing one’s own learning.* Overcoming obstacles, organizing time and information, effective collaboration and working with others on the constructive co-creation of knowledge.
- *Broad, continuous acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes.* Lifelong learning is a process that begins at birth and continues throughout one’s lifespan. It is not limited to teaching and schooling, but encompasses all forms of learning in a variety of settings.
- *Holistic development of the individual.* The development of deeper moral, ethical and social values that shape individual behaviour.
- *All levels of education.* Lifelong learning involves linking all levels and types of education and building flexible pathways between them, including early childhood care and education (ECCE), primary and secondary education, technical and vocational education

¹ See: UNESCO (2022). Making lifelong learning a reality: A handbook <www.uil.unesco.org/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2022/06/UIL_Handbook_170x240_RZ220601_Online.pdf>

and training (TVET), higher education, adult education and non-formal education. It provides people of all ages and backgrounds with learning opportunities and activities that respond to their specific needs at different stages of their life and careers.

- *Adaptation to different situations (adaptability).* This includes the ability to navigate complex and uncertain situations, plan and manage one's career, adapt to changes in the labour market, acquire new technological skills and enhance employability.
- *Learning across all spheres and settings.* This includes learning in all spheres: at work, in the community, in digital environments or through hobbies. Preschool institutions and schools are only one part of a broad learning ecosystem, which also includes families, communities, workplaces, libraries, museums and online and distance learning platforms.
- *Diverse purposes.* Lifelong learning is grounded in human rights and is aimed at everyone. Providing lifelong learning opportunities means responding to the needs of very diverse learners, regardless of their age, gender, ethnic or religious affiliation, or national, economic or social background, including persons with disabilities, migrants, indigenous peoples and all socially vulnerable groups.

Functional literacy in reading, mathematics and science

The development of functional knowledge and skills in the areas of language and mathematical and scientific literacy is essential for effective communication, for understanding the natural and social environment and for successfully responding to challenges. These skills enable children/pupils to understand and analyse information from different fields, as well as to apply it in everyday situations. Particular importance is attached to the development of reading competences, as traditional reading literacy underpins all other forms of literacy and enables children/pupils to access information across a wide range of domains, as well as to learn effectively in all subjects. A strong level of reading literacy is a prerequisite for the development of digital literacy and confident navigation of the internet, and especially for the thoughtful use of technology to support high-quality learning.

Well-developed reading literacy includes:

- the ability of a child/pupil to use written texts, evaluate them and reflect on them;
- understanding what is written and why it has been written, the ability to read a text, interpret its meaning, recognize the author's tone and relate what has been read to one's own experience;
- the ability to extract information from a text, understand both its explicit and implicit meaning, and use it to achieve personal goals, develop knowledge and participate fully in society.

Well-developed mathematical literacy includes:

- mathematical reasoning and the use of mathematical concepts, procedures and tools to describe, explain and predict phenomena;
- the ability of a child/pupil to formulate, apply and interpret mathematics in a range of contexts;
- the ability of a child/pupil to make well-founded decisions and judgements, as required of an informed and engaged citizen.

Well-developed scientific literacy includes:

- the ability to engage with issues related to science and scientific ideas, as well as a willingness to reflect on them critically;

- the ability of a child/pupil to explain phenomena scientifically, recognize and offer explanations for natural and technological phenomena, analyse data and draw evidence-based conclusions;
- an understanding of scientific methodology, that is, how scientific knowledge is generated.

Information and media literacy

Although reading literacy and information literacy overlap, the key difference lies in their focus: reading literacy is concerned with depth of understanding of a text, whereas information literacy focuses on locating information and using it in a broader context. In information literacy, the emphasis is on managing information and navigating the vast array of available information (both digital and analogue).

Well-developed information literacy enables a child/pupil to:

- efficiently locate, select and organize the data needed to solve a problem;
- recognize when information is needed, how to obtain it, where to look for it (e.g. which sources to use), how to evaluate it (whether a source is reliable) and how to use it effectively, appropriately and ethically;
- distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information, accurate and inaccurate information, and necessary and unnecessary information.

Information literacy is more often associated with learning, science and research, whereas media literacy is more closely linked to civic participation, engagement in democratic processes and culture. In media literacy, the focus is on the message being conveyed and the channel through which it is delivered, as well as on how media (television, newspapers, the internet, social media) shape information and with what intent. Media literacy involves understanding and critically analysing media content, and teaches us to view every piece of information as a deliberate construct rather than as objective truth.

A media-literate child/pupil is therefore:

- able to access media content and use technology (smartphones, computers, platforms);
- able to critically analyse and deconstruct media messages: understanding how a message is constructed (images, music, text), being able to analyse and “break it down”; recognizing whether content is news, satire, sponsored content or propaganda; questioning who owns the media and what their interests are; and understanding how algorithms determine what is seen;
- able to evaluate what matters most, the credibility of a message, whether information is accurate and verifiable, which perspectives are included and which are deliberately omitted (this requires strong reading literacy), and how the message influences emotions, attitudes and behaviour (who created this message? what is its purpose – information, sales, propaganda, entertainment, political ideology? what stereotypes or biases are present? how does this media content influence my thinking?);
- able to create their own content (videos, posts, blogs) and understand the ethical implications of both others’ and their own media content that they publish or share;
- able to understand the relationship between images and text in media content;
- able to act ethically and demonstrate social responsibility: behaving responsibly in the media space, respecting copyright; avoiding hate speech, discrimination and the spread of disinformation; understanding privacy and data protection (their own and others’); and understanding and adhering to the principles of academic integrity, avoiding cheating in assessments, plagiarism or the misuse of others’ intellectual or artistic work.

Digital competence and digital wellbeing

Digital competence extends far beyond basic technical skills in using a computer. It includes the safe, critical, creative and responsible use of digital technologies for work, learning, including so-called digi-pedagogical competences (see Glossary) and participation in society.

In response to concerns about the negative effects of digital technology on attention, learning, memory and motivation, a new field has emerged, referred to as cyber² wellbeing or digital wellbeing (see Glossary), together with education for digital wellbeing. This focuses on safeguarding the wellbeing of children and pupils as they navigate digital environments. Digital wellbeing means maintaining control over technology, rather than allowing technology, through algorithms and notifications, to control attention and influence mood over time.

A digitally competent pupil:

- can locate, filter and organize digital information, including searching the internet, evaluating the reliability of sources and storing documents, for example in cloud services or on local devices;
- can communicate using digital technologies, including email, messaging applications and social media, and can manage their digital identity;
- understands and applies netiquette (see Glossary), that is, appropriate and respectful behaviour in digital communication, helping to prevent conflict and online abuse;
- can create digital content, including written texts, blogs, images and video, with more advanced levels including basic programming skills;
- can use technology to solve practical tasks, select appropriate digital tools for specific purposes, such as project work, and continuously develop their digital skills;
- can ensure personal and device security by using strong passwords, recognizing threats such as malware, protecting privacy and identifying online risks, including phishing, cyberbullying and manipulative contacts such as grooming, and understands what happens behind the click and how to stay safe online;
- understands the importance of artificial intelligence and its responsible use;
- is aware of the impact of digital technology on physical and mental health, knows how to stay safe online and where to seek help when needed, and uses technology in ways that enhance life without harming one's own or others' wellbeing or privacy;
- understands the negative effects of excessive screen time (see Glossary) and unbalanced use of digital tools at the expense of other activities;
- is aware that technology consumes natural resources and that electronic waste contributes to environmental harm, and acts responsibly, for example, through proper disposal of devices and batteries;
- understands and respects copyright and licensing.

Responsible attitudes towards health and safety

Through pre-university education, the child/pupil develops the ability to contribute to the prevention and promotion of physical and mental health, as well as to apply safety measures. Habits are formed that support long-term physical, mental and social wellbeing. This means that the child/pupil consciously manages their habits with the aim of protecting themselves and the community, and avoiding risky behaviours. It is not merely about "avoiding illness", but about the individual's active capacity to make decisions that enable them to feel safe, healthy and fulfilled in a technologically advanced world.

² Cyber – relating to the culture of computers, information technology and virtual environments, or characteristic of them.

The development of healthy lifestyles in children/pupils is a self-regulation skill that is the ability, in a world full of temptations (fast food, screens, stress, betting shops and gambling), to choose what is beneficial in the long term for themselves and others, namely to:

- strike a balance between screen time and physical activity, limit time spent in front of screens, and consciously spend time in nature or with people “in person”;
- use technology responsibly as a tool that serves them, rather than as a factor that harms their health (e.g. sleep, eyesight, posture) or compromises their safety;
- recognize signs of stress, social media addiction, fears such as FOMO (fear of missing out) and nomophobia (no mobile phone phobia), or anxiety caused by comparing themselves with others online or with digitally altered images of themselves (despite understanding photo-editing tools and being able to identify edited images);
- know when to switch off when experiencing digital fatigue or information overload;
- understand how their actions and words affect others’ feelings (avoiding hate speech and belittling and offensive behaviour behind a hidden identity);
- practise healthy lifestyle habits (see Glossary): engage in regular physical activity, integrate movement into daily life (sport, walking, exercise, swimming, skiing) to maintain cardiovascular health and strength; maintain a healthy diet (balanced nutrient intake, hydration, avoiding processed foods); establish a sleep routine that enables physical recovery; and avoid harmful substances and the development of addictions (tobacco and other tobacco products, alcohol, drugs and psychoactive substances, gambling and betting);
- nurture positive interpersonal relationships, friendships and family ties that provide support and a sense of belonging;
- communicate in a respectful and constructive manner in order to prevent conflict and violence;
- manage stress effectively without burnout, recognize their own emotions and express them in a healthy way without harming others;
- demonstrate age-appropriate skills for responding effectively in crisis situations, in line with their circumstances.

Creative expression and aesthetic appreciation

In contemporary education, this is often referred to as **cultural awareness and expression**. It extends beyond artistic talent and encompasses broader ways of thinking and experiencing the world. Problem solving frequently requires creative thinking and the ability to connect knowledge in innovative ways. These elements are included in education to foster intuition and imagination alongside logical thinking, and to develop cultural literacy through engagement with the arts and cultures of others, thereby promoting respect for diversity. They also enhance motivation for learning, as creative processes engage the whole person and often result in deeper and more lasting learning than rote memorization. Aesthetic taste is not about following trends but about the ability to recognize and value quality, harmony and beauty across contexts. Creative expression gives children and pupils a voice, while aesthetic appreciation enables them to recognize value and meaning in the world around them.

Children and pupils with developed competence in the areas of creative expression and aesthetic appreciation:

- are able to communicate ideas, messages, experiences and emotions through a range of media;

- skilfully and creatively connect and apply knowledge from different sources and life experiences; they are able to combine familiar elements in new ways in order to solve a problem or convey a message;
- are able to express themselves artistically through music, literature, visual arts (painting, design, photography, video), drama, performance, movement or dance, in line with their age and abilities;
- use modern tools for design, video editing and the creation of digital content;
- have the freedom to explore their own ideas without fear of making mistakes, which is important for the development of identity;
- based on their knowledge of cultural heritage, art history and different styles, understand why something is valuable and can distinguish kitsch and banality from meaningful artistic expression;
- are able to critically analyse a work (film, building, book or other cultural product) and explain, with arguments, why they like it or not, rather than simply consuming and following trends;
- understand that art has power, the ability to evoke empathy and a deeper understanding of human experience, and thus to connect people regardless of where they are or their social context; they understand engaged art and the power of artistic expression in the pursuit of freedom, justice and equality;
- apply principles of harmony and aesthetics in everyday life, from organizing their own workspace (study area, classroom, school environment and its surroundings, the aesthetics of everyday life) to the way they present information.

Civic competence

Civic competence is fundamental to active participation in society. It enables children and pupils to become responsible, supportive and active members of their communities, who understand their rights and responsibilities, respect democratic values and contribute to the common good. It combines knowledge of society and institutions with the willingness to act responsibly, independently and collaboratively in addressing community challenges.

Children and pupils with developed civic competence:

- understand how systems function, including the state, institutions, the European Union and local communities;
- understand social norms, human rights, democratic principles and practices, and respect equality, justice, freedom and diversity;
- critically analyse information, including news and political messages, and recognize manipulation and discrimination;
- participate in volunteering, decision-making processes such as school councils, and community problem solving, recognizing environmental protection as a civic responsibility;
- develop a sense of belonging, responsibility for the common good and readiness for dialogue, cooperation and peaceful conflict resolution;
- engage in civic initiatives, show solidarity with vulnerable groups and act responsibly within school, communities and society.

Entrepreneurial competence

Entrepreneurial competence teaches us how to turn our ideas into action. In education, entrepreneurship is not limited to “starting a business”, but represents a way of thinking

applicable across all areas of life; it is the ability to take initiative and transform ideas into action. Entrepreneurial competence is a transferable competence related to personal development, active participation in the community and the ability to create economic, social and cultural value. A person with entrepreneurial skills uses initiative, planning, organization, creativity and available resources to solve a problem. This competence also includes ethical and sustainable thinking, responsible resource management, financial and economic literacy, as well as a readiness to learn through experience, collaborate with others and act in conditions of uncertainty.

Children and pupils with developed entrepreneurial competence:

- are able to identify and clearly define a problem or need, recognize opportunities in their environment and devise creative solutions, developing new ideas and approaches to work;
- set goals effectively, organize their time and manage projects from start to finish, adapting to change in uncertain situations;
- are prepared for failure and view it as part of the learning process, with the ability to analyse mistakes and the causes of failure without becoming discouraged, but instead continuing forward, managing risk and making decisions under conditions of uncertainty;
- are able to work in teams and lead activities, initiate and motivate others, negotiate and collaborate effectively to achieve shared goals;
- are aware that every action should have a positive impact on the community, demonstrating social responsibility while taking into account ethical and sustainable practice;
- are able to identify, obtain and use available resources efficiently, including material, digital and human resources;
- apply basic financial concepts and make responsible decisions regarding the planning and use of money;
- understand that entrepreneurial initiative can create not only economic value but also social and cultural value;
- develop ethical and sustainable thinking, taking into account the impact of their ideas and actions on the community, the market and the environment;
- use digital tools and services responsibly in learning, work, finance and communication;
- recognize basic financial and digital risks, including online fraud, data misuse, irresponsible borrowing and high-risk forms of investment;
- understand the importance of social entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial initiatives aimed at addressing community needs;
- critically evaluate financial information, offers, advertisements and digital content that influence their consumer and financial decisions.

Environmental competence and sustainable development

A responsible approach to the environment and sustainable development lies at the core of environmental competence and prepares children/pupils to understand the complex interconnections between nature, society and the economy. Environmental competence is grounded in a knowledge of natural processes and understanding them, as well as an understanding of how natural systems function and how they are interconnected. However, knowledge and understanding alone are not sufficient: appropriate attitudes and values are essential, shaped by emotions and motivating action. Environmentally responsible behaviour involves an internal shift in how we perceive the world around us and represents the practical application of knowledge and environmental awareness in everyday life and within the community. Education about sustainable development does not simply teach children/pupils to “avoid littering” or to “protect forests”, but

encourages them to think critically about how to meet the present needs without compromising the resources available to future generations. Environmental competence also includes the ability to act responsibly in the context of climate change and sustainable development, through making informed decisions, active civic participation, and the adoption of sustainable practices in everyday life.

Environmentally literate children/pupils:

- analyse the functioning of ecosystems and natural processes, including cycles of matter, food chains and biodiversity;
- examine cause-and-effect relationships between human activities (industry, transport, waste) and climate change and natural resources;
- read, interpret and critically evaluate data on pollution, energy and the state of the environment;
- demonstrate a developed sense of responsibility and respect for all living beings;
- use natural resources responsibly, resist consumerism and adopt an ethic of consumption, critically reflecting on their own needs versus wants (“Do I really need this?”);
- understand that local actions have global consequences, for example littering in rivers or the sea, and grasp the meaning of the slogan “Think globally, act locally”;
- adopt habits of waste reduction, reuse and recycling, widely known as the 3 Rs model (reduce, reuse and recycle);
- understand energy efficiency, conserve resources such as water and electricity, and advocate the use of renewable energy sources;
- are active members of their community, participating in environmental initiatives, tree planting and campaigns to protect local natural resources;
- integrate principles of sustainability into entrepreneurial thinking through the development of “green” solutions;
- assess the resilience of cities and communities to climate change and analyse the roles of local planning and citizen participation;
- compare and evaluate economic models and analyse the role of the circular and “green” economy in sustainable development;
- make decisions based on the principles of sustainable development, climate responsibility and intergenerational solidarity;
- understand that climate change is not only an environmental issue, but also a social, economic and ethical one;
- take part in activities that contribute to community climate resilience, sustainable lifestyles and a responsible approach to the future.





IV GOALS

Education is not only the most important driver of individual development, but also a key lever for advancing economic and societal progress, particularly in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, characterized by automation, robotics and industrial automation³, which is significantly reshaping the world of work as well as education. Such rapid and dynamic societal change inevitably creates the need for lifelong learning that extends far beyond formal education during one's youth and is embedded in work, community and civic life. In a knowledge-based society, education systems, employers, social organizations and public policies are aligned to enable continuous upskilling, reskilling, professional development and personal development throughout adulthood. Therefore, **the goals of the Framework are oriented both towards the developmental and educational needs of children/pupils and towards the developmental needs of society in a contemporary, dynamic and rapidly changing environment.**

For education to serve as a driver of our society's development, the objectives of the curriculum are directed towards addressing identified weaknesses and adapting successfully to new challenges:

- 1. Improving the quality and relevance of education:** Ensuring that children/pupils acquire knowledge and skills applicable to real life and the labour market. Strengthening independent learning skills in order to build a solid knowledge base and develop competences as a foundation for further education and lifelong learning. Raising the quality of pupils' knowledge so that their attainment in international assessments is above the average benchmarks of those instruments.
- 2. Developing key competences:** Focusing on the development of multiple functional literacies and competences (digital, information, media, environmental, civic, health and financial), as well as general cross-curricular competences such as critical thinking, problem solving and divergent thinking.
- 3. Fostering values:** Promoting the values of cultural and national identity, alongside socio-emotional competences, so as to develop responsible citizens who respect gender, national, racial, cultural and other forms of diversity. High-quality education cannot be achieved without the integrated development of knowledge, skills and values.
- 4. Developing confident expression of thoughts, ideas, views and feelings through various media and the arts:** Increasing the emphasis on effective oral and written expression across all subjects and areas of learning, at all stages of education, particularly in primary education as the foundation for further learning. This also includes fostering children's/pupils' creative expression through the development of creativity and divergent thinking, understood as the ability to generate multiple solutions to a single problem.
- 5. Enriching children's/pupils' education:** Developing well-rounded individuals who are morally grounded, intellectually developed, physically capable and socially responsible. Ensuring balanced intellectual, physical, socio-emotional, moral and aesthetic development, while respecting the individual characteristics of each child/pupil. To this end, educational institutions (hereinafter: EIs) provide opportunities for engagement in a range of areas, including civic participation, arts and culture, nature, physical activity and sport, as well as the development of broader life skills.
- 6. Improving the assessment system:** Strengthening formative assessment and monitoring pupils' progress against defined attainment standards. Both summative and formative assessments (see Glossary) have their roles in teaching and learning, and are not mutually

³ Computers are used to control industrial machinery and processes, with the aim of replacing human operators. While mechanization provided machines to support the physical aspects of work, automation goes further by significantly reducing the need for human sensory and cognitive capacities.

exclusive but complementary. Moving beyond academic grades and the curriculum, through monitoring and assessment (formative assessment), emphasizes a balanced education that includes the arts, music, sport and life skills, in order to support the holistic development of the child/pupil.

- 7. Enhancing the autonomy of educational institutions:** Enabling preschool institutions and schools to adapt part of the curriculum to the specific needs of their children/pupils and the local community. Autonomy also entails responsibility for creating a stimulating learning environment and developing a school culture (see Glossary), which significantly influences pupils' success and attainment.
- 8. Supporting teachers' professional development⁴:** Strengthening the development of autonomous, reflective practitioners who act as agents of change in the classroom, the institution and the local community and, most importantly, who make a positive difference in the lives of children/pupils. This requires close cooperation between universities (initial teacher education), education policymakers (teacher training programmes, licensing and career progression), professional associations and teachers themselves in designing and developing the system of teachers' professional development.
- 9. Alignment and continuity:** Linking different levels of pre-university education to ensure a coherent progression and building upon prior knowledge. At the same time, horizontal connections between different areas of learning or subject areas are necessary to support the acquisition of high-quality knowledge and skills that children/pupils can apply in life and work.
- 10. Supporting equity and inclusion:** Creating conditions that enable every child/pupil, regardless of their predispositions, personal characteristics or background, to reach their full potential and become an active citizen.

⁴ The term teacher is used here as an umbrella term covering all levels of education: early-years practitioners, class teachers, subject teachers and specialist support staff, that is, anyone who works directly with children/pupils in their development and education.





V VALUES AND KEY COMPETENCES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Globalization, negative demographic trends and technological advancement are among the key driving forces of our time and will continue to shape the future. Children and pupils must be prepared to face these challenges and to take advantage of new opportunities. In order to support them in a rapidly changing world, the Framework identifies a set of core values, key competences and skills for the 21st century (see Figure 2), which are increasingly important. These form the foundation of the holistic education that preschool institutions and schools should provide in order to better prepare children and pupils for the future.

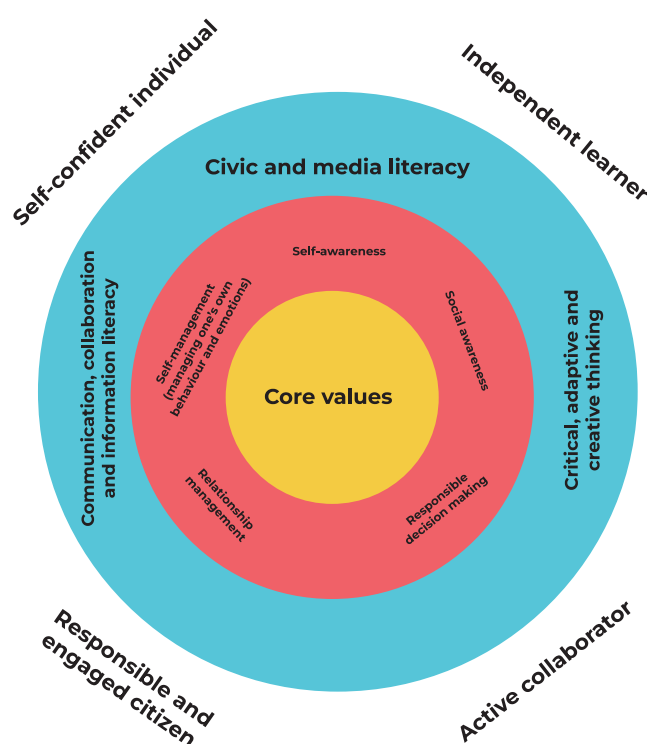


Figure 2. Framework for 21st-century competences and learning outcomes

CORE VALUES. Values education is an essential component of overall education, aimed at fostering strong values and attitudes in children/pupils through learning across different subject areas and by providing meaningful learning experiences. The goal is to develop children's/pupils' ability to identify embedded values, analyse them objectively and make sound judgements about the various issues they may encounter at different stages of development, so that they are able to take appropriate action in addressing challenges in their future lives.

Values lie at the heart of a person's character. They shape beliefs, attitudes and actions, and are therefore placed at the centre of the 21st-century competence framework (see Figure 2). Curriculum values are not innate personality traits, but skills that are systematically developed throughout the entire educational process. The core values promoted by the Framework are: **diligence, resilience and perseverance, responsibility, respect, integrity, care and harmony.**

Diligence: Defined as a fundamental personal and work-related value that implies a persistent, committed and responsible approach by children/pupils to the learning process and assigned tasks. It includes perseverance, understood as the ability not to give up when faced with a challenging task, but to invest additional effort until a solution is reached; work ethic, involving

the understanding that success and progress are achieved through sustained effort rather than innate ability alone; self-discipline, meaning the ability to plan time, set priorities and remain focused despite distractions; responsibility for quality, reflected in striving to complete tasks to the best possible standard while respecting deadlines and agreed rules; and intrinsic motivation, that is, deriving satisfaction from effort and achievement. Within the curriculum, diligence is assessed not only through final results in assessments, but also through the process, valuing the progress children/pupils make and the effort invested in achieving specific learning outcomes, which forms part of summative assessment.

Resilience and perseverance: These are key psychosocial values that enable children/pupils to cope successfully with challenges, setbacks and stress throughout learning and development. Children/pupils demonstrate resilience when they show emotional strength and persistence in the face of challenges, including a constructive attitude towards mistakes as a natural and necessary part of learning; emotional regulation, for example recognizing frustration when faced with a difficult task and channelling it into renewed effort rather than giving up; self-motivation, reflected in the belief that effort, practice and strategy can overcome current limitations, expressed in attitudes such as “I don’t know this yet, but I will learn”, and in the ability to sustain effort towards long-term goals even in the absence of immediate rewards or praise; and adaptability, meaning the ability to adjust approaches when initial strategies do not produce results. Through the curriculum, teachers support the development of resilience and perseverance by setting appropriate and optimal tasks, demanding effort while remaining achievable through sustained work.

Responsibility: Children/pupils demonstrate responsibility when they recognize their duties towards themselves, their families, the community, the nation and the wider world, and fulfil these responsibilities with commitment and care.

Respect: Defined as a fundamental ethical and social value that implies recognizing the dignity, rights and worth of every individual, as well as respecting shared rules and the environment. Respect is the active development of awareness of others through the following aspects: appreciation of diversity (accepting and understanding others regardless of their background, religion, gender, abilities or views, which is key to preventing discrimination and violence); empathy and active listening (the ability of a child/pupil to listen to others’ views, even when they disagree, and to understand others’ feelings and needs); self-respect (developing awareness of one’s own values and boundaries, which forms the basis for healthy relationships with others); respect for rules and authority (understanding the importance of agreed rules within a community and recognizing the expertise and roles of teachers and peers); responsibility towards the environment (a caring attitude towards the property of educational institutions, the work of other children/pupils and the natural environment around us). Through the curriculum, respect is learned not only in theory but through lived classroom practice, through the way discussions are conducted, how conflicts are resolved and how each team member’s contribution is valued: in short, through building a culture of respect.

Integrity: Children/pupils demonstrate integrity when they adhere to ethical principles and have the moral courage to stand up for what is right. Within the curriculum, integrity is defined as consistency between moral principles, words and actions. It is a value that shapes the pupil as an authentic and consistent individual who acts rightly even when no one is watching. The development of integrity through education includes: academic honesty (developing awareness of the importance of independent work, proper referencing and the unacceptability of copying or appropriating others’ ideas and work); consistency and honesty (the courage to uphold the truth and take responsibility for one’s actions); moral autonomy (the ability to make decisions based on one’s own ethical beliefs, resisting negative peer or environmental pressure); fairness (advocating equal rules for all and recognizing situations that undermine the dignity of others); trust (building relationships in which one’s word is respected and actions are grounded in shared

values). Integrity is not taught as a subject in school, but is modelled through teachers' behaviour and through clear and consistent criteria that apply to all members of the community.

Care: Children/pupils are caring when they are kind and compassionate and contribute to improving the community and the wider world. Within the curriculum, care is defined as a value that involves recognizing and respecting the needs, feelings and wellbeing of others, as well as caring for oneself and one's environment. It forms the foundation for building a safe and supportive environment, as well as for sustainable development. The development of care through education includes: empathy in action (the ability to understand another's perspective and respond appropriately on an emotional level); solidarity and support (active participation in helping others within and outside the school, through volunteering or peer mentoring); kindness and attentiveness (fostering a culture of everyday courtesy and thoughtful communication, which reduces the likelihood of conflict and isolation); environmental awareness (developing a caring attitude towards nature and sustainable development as a form of care for future generations); self-care (developing awareness of one's own physical and mental needs, recognizing personal limits and maintaining personal wellbeing). Care in the curriculum is not only a feeling, but behaviour and actions that are encouraged through teamwork and social and emotional learning.

Harmony: This is a value aimed at achieving balance, inner peace and harmonious relationships within the school community and the wider social and natural environment. Children/pupils maintain harmony when they promote social cohesion and value both unity and diversity in a multicultural society. The development of harmony through education includes: harmony with oneself (helping the child to establish a balance between thoughts, feelings and actions, leading to mental stability); social cohesion (developing skills in non-violent communication and mediation so that conflicts are resolved in ways that restore rather than damage relationships); aesthetic harmony (developing a sense of beauty and balance in art, language, nature and everyday life, contributing to overall wellbeing); environmental balance (understanding humans as part of nature and acting in ways that do not disrupt natural processes – coexistence rather than domination); multicultural harmony (actively building bridges between different cultures, beliefs and traditions in order to support peaceful and creative coexistence). Harmony, in the curriculum, is not the absence of conflict, but the ability to integrate differences into a functional whole in which everyone feels valued.

Educational institutions should make use of real-life events to strengthen the coordination of learning activities and enhance the connection between cross-curricular areas in values education, including moral education, citizenship education, safety education, education on the harmful effects of drugs and other forms of addiction, media and information literacy education, education for sustainable development, and others, in order to provide children/pupils with a well-rounded learning experience that supports their overall personal development.

It is not easy to distinguish between key competences and life skills, as these terms are often used interchangeably, sometimes also referred to as "soft skills". Life skills are defined as abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. According to the World Health Organization, they are not merely technical knowledge, but a combination of cognitive, emotional and social skills. This definition overlaps with that of key competences for the 21st century, which, in addition to socio-emotional competences, also include problem solving, critical thinking, creative thinking, entrepreneurial competences and responsibility for one's own health and the health of others. Here, socio-emotional competences will be presented, while other key competences will be addressed within cross-curricular themes, which primarily serve to support their effective development through teaching.

SOCIO-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCES (hereinafter: SEC). In the modern curriculum, SEC represent a set of skills that enable pupils to understand and manage their emotions, set goals, show empathy and build healthy relationships. They are essential for children/pupils to develop a

healthy identity, recognize and manage their emotions, develop a sense of responsibility, care and concern for others, connect with others and build positive relationships, cope with challenges, make responsible decisions and act for the benefit of themselves, others and society. Through the curriculum, the following five interrelated socio-emotional competences should be developed in pupils:

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-regulation
3. Social awareness
4. Social skills
5. Responsible decision making

Self-awareness is the ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts and values, as well as to understand how they influence behaviour. It includes recognizing one's strengths and limitations, as well as developing self-confidence and a sense of self-worth.

Self-regulation includes the ability to control emotional expression and to manage one's emotions, thoughts and actions effectively in different situations. It includes: control of impulses and stress management; self-motivation and the setting of personal and academic goals; and perseverance in overcoming obstacles.

Social awareness is the ability to take the perspective of others and empathize with them, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures. It includes the development of empathy; understanding social and ethical norms of behaviour; and recognizing sources of support in the family, school and community, as well as gratitude.

Social skills, or the management of social relationships, refer to the ability to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships with different individuals and groups. Social skills include clear communication and active listening; cooperation and teamwork; constructive conflict resolution and helping others.

Responsible decision making is the ability to make constructive choices about personal behaviour and social interactions based on ethical standards and safety. It includes analysing situations, identifying and clearly defining problems; weighing the advantages and disadvantages of different decisions or solutions; assessing the likely consequences of different choices; and selecting the option that best responds to the demands of the situation while taking into account one's own wellbeing and that of others.

Together, core values and competences will help our children/pupils to embody desired learning outcomes so that they develop the dispositions, skills and knowledge needed to embrace the opportunities and challenges of the future. They support both children/pupils and adults in becoming proactive, responsible and resilient in an unpredictable world.





Meeting Room
10:30 AM

VI PRINCIPLES

Curriculum principles are established as fundamental, value-based and operational guidelines that ensure the quality, consistency and purpose of the educational process. They are not merely a theoretical foundation, but a practical tool for decision making in the development of the curriculum framework. These principles represent the core boundaries around which high-quality and equitable education is built.

EXCELLENCE – HIGH QUALITY

This principle entails creating the conditions necessary to ensure high-quality education through clearly defined goals and learning outcomes, the application of contemporary scientific and pedagogical achievements, the encouragement of academic attainment and the development of the potential of every child/pupil. Ensuring the quality of education also implies continuous attention to the conditions in which learning and teaching take place, to teachers' professional development, and to the overall quality of learning outcomes across the education system.

Quality is the guiding principle, and all other principles serve the realization of high-quality education for our children. In other words, education cannot be of a high quality unless it is also relevant, holistic, balanced, equitable, coherent and responsive to the specific socio-cultural context (see Figure 3).

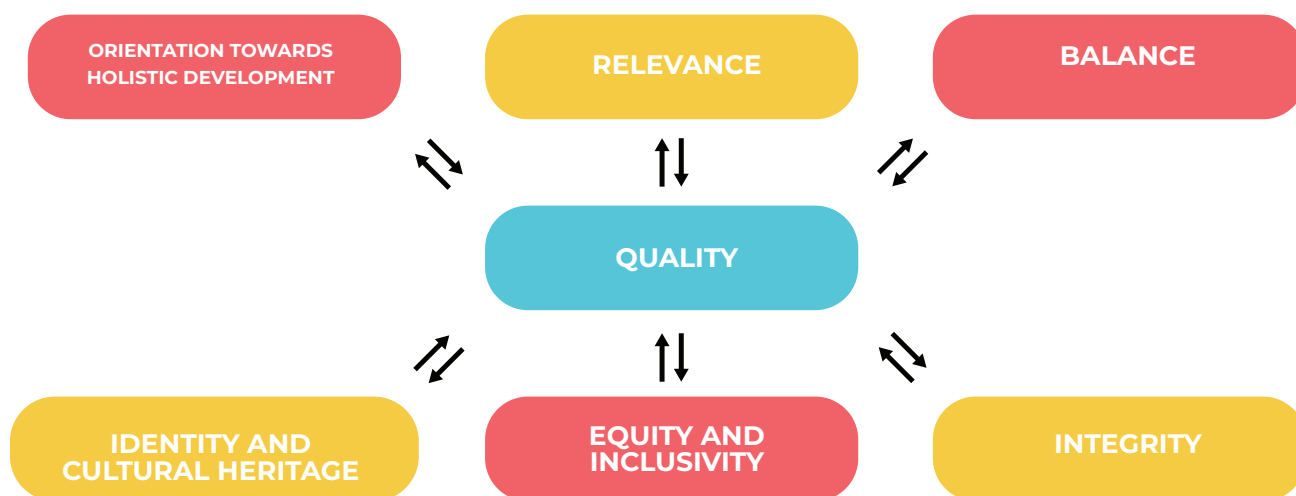


Figure 3. Curriculum principles

RELEVANCE

This implies aligning curriculum content and learning outcomes with contemporary social, economic, scientific, technological and cultural developments, as well as ensuring that the curriculum promotes the development of competences that are evidence-based and applicable in real life, and that prepare young people for further education, employment and active citizenship in the complex conditions of modern life.

COHERENCE, INTEGRATION AND FLEXIBILITY

These refer to a curriculum that ensures horizontal and vertical alignment across different levels and areas of education, consistency among curriculum elements, and the possibility of adapting the curriculum to the individual needs of children/pupils and the specific characteristics of the local context.

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

These imply ensuring access to high-quality education and equal educational opportunities for all pupils, while respecting their diversity, including linguistic, religious, national, cultural, social, gender and other differences. It is essential to provide an individualized approach for all children/pupils, with particular emphasis on those with special educational needs, as well as gifted and talented pupils.

RESPECT FOR NATIONAL IDENTITY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

The curriculum contributes to fostering the language, culture, traditions and historical heritage of Montenegro, while also recognizing the identities of other peoples and communities and their cultural traditions, in a spirit of tolerance, openness, respect and mutual cooperation.

ORIENTATION TOWARDS HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

The curriculum is oriented towards the comprehensive and well-rounded development of the child/pupil, promoting the balanced development of all aspects of personality – physical, cognitive, emotional, social, aesthetic, ethical and moral. Holistic development is supported through the combined impact of teaching, extracurricular activities, cross-curricular themes, and the development of values and competences. Extracurricular and out-of-school activities are directed towards achieving the same curriculum goals, but through different means and in different settings. Through such activities, including trips, excursions, outdoor learning, and visits to cultural and other institutions, teachers are given the opportunity to identify pupils' abilities that may not be visible in regular lessons, while also supporting and motivating them to learn and engage.

BALANCE

Within the Framework, balance is defined as the dynamic alignment of different aspects of a child's/pupil's development in order to ensure holistic education. It prevents one-sidedness and overload by focusing on the following dimensions:

- **cognitive vs socio-emotional**, achieving a balance between acquiring academic knowledge, facts, theories, formulas and procedures, and developing emotional intelligence, empathy and social skills;
- **knowledge reproduction vs higher-order thinking**, as curricula are often overloaded with factual content and focused on reproduction with understanding; while knowledge and understanding of facts, concepts, theories, laws and procedures form the foundation of quality learning, education should also promote higher-order cognitive processes such as application, analysis, evaluation and synthesis, that is, the creation of new knowledge;
- **theory vs practice**, balancing abstract content and theoretical learning with the practical application of knowledge in real-life situations;
- **work vs rest**, managing pupils' workload to achieve high outcomes while preserving mental and physical health;
- **individual needs vs standards**, balancing the achievement of prescribed national outcomes with respect for each child's/pupil's talents and interests;
- **digital vs analogue**, promoting the critical use of technology while preserving direct human interaction and physical activity.

Through the curriculum, balance is achieved through an interdisciplinary approach that connects different subjects into a meaningful whole, preventing one domain of learning from dominating at the expense of others.





VII CROSS-CURRICULAR THEMES

The primary purpose of cross-curricular themes (hereinafter: CCTs) is to integrate content from different areas of learning or subjects and to connect education with real life. Research shows that we learn when we are able to make connections. Cross-curricular learning helps children and pupils develop the habit of linking knowledge from different sources and thinking independently, rather than simply learning disconnected facts from different areas. Connecting content across subjects or learning areas helps motivate pupils to learn and work, encouraging them to form connections independently and stimulating their curiosity. When we see how facts and ideas from different subjects relate to one another, learning becomes more effective. For this reason, integrating subjects through CCTs reflects a natural approach to learning, leading to deeper understanding. The inclusion of CCTs also encourages teachers to be professionally innovative, making planning and teaching more engaging for both teachers and pupils. At the same time, cross-curricular themes contribute to the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary for personal development, active citizenship, social responsibility and lifelong learning.

The integration of cross-curricular themes into programmes has several important aims:

- to support an integrated approach to education by strengthening connections between individual subjects and learning areas;
- to enable the inclusion in the curriculum of aims and content that are inherently interdisciplinary and not confined to a single subject or discipline;
- to enhance the contribution of education to the personal and social development of children and pupils;
- to support the development of key competences for the 21st century, including critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, responsibility and problem solving;
- to empower children and pupils to act actively and responsibly in a modern, digital and globally interconnected society.

The Framework identifies the following cross-curricular themes:

1. Lifelong learning and career guidance
2. Personal and social development
3. Digital competence
4. Information and media literacy
5. Civic education
6. Entrepreneurial learning, financial literacy and social entrepreneurship
7. Cultural identity
8. Health and safety in risk situations
9. Sustainable development and climate change

Most of the competences arising from these cross-curricular themes have already been outlined in the vision of the Framework as expected learning outcomes. The realization of this vision can only be achieved through the synergetic action of subject areas and cross-curricular themes (see Figure 4). Each theme is developed through both formal teaching and extracurricular activities, in accordance with the epistemological nature of the subject or discipline and the defined thematic content.

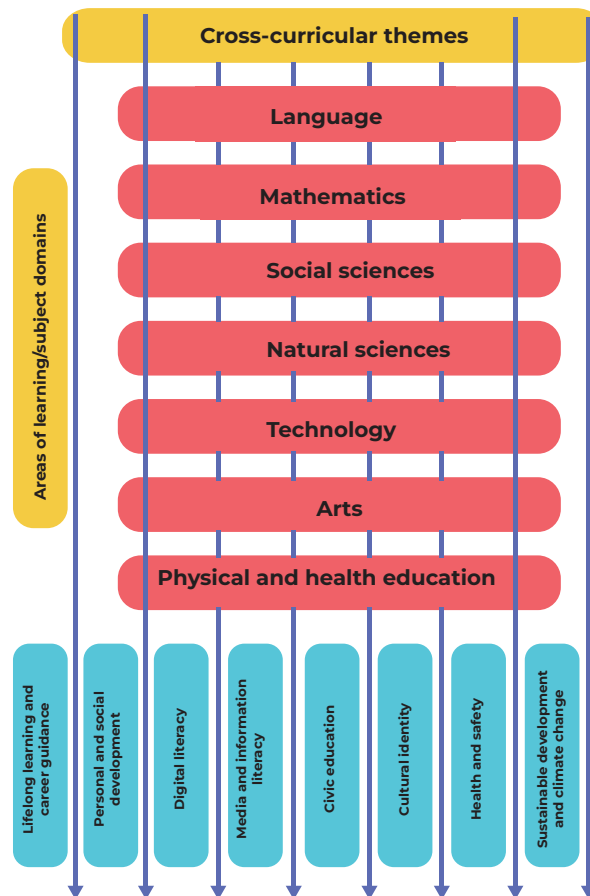


Figure 4. Curriculum: intersection of areas of learning/subject domains and CCTs

Each cross-curricular theme runs vertically through all levels of education, from early childhood education to the end of secondary education. Naturally, the focus of each theme varies according to age and level of education

Ad 1) Lifelong learning and career guidance

This theme aims to shape the personality of the child/pupil in order to prepare them for lifelong learning and well-informed career choices based on decision making grounded in information, enabling them to cope successfully with different roles and fulfil them in a changing social, life and work environment. The development of this competence enables children/pupils to:

- develop learning skills and information-processing skills;
- plan their learning time, organize the learning process and manage it;
- use different learning strategies effectively and adapt them to the nature of the content and learning objectives;
- assess their own learning success, identify learning difficulties and know how to overcome them;
- recognize the structure of what they are learning, distinguish between essential and non-essential information, and summarize and elaborate key ideas;
- understand different types of texts and choose appropriate reading strategies;
- distinguish facts from interpretations, attitudes, beliefs and opinions;
- recognize and construct arguments for a given thesis, and differentiate arguments according to their strength and relevance;
- develop communication skills, cooperation skills and decision-making skills;

- develop interests, abilities and skills for appropriate self-assessment and make decisions more easily regarding further education and career planning;
- develop the ability to set and achieve personal goals;
- develop readiness for lifelong learning, making career choices and awareness of different opportunities for further study and training;
- become familiar with different professions and occupations, labour legislation and the economic environment in their local context.

Ad 2) Personal and social development

This cross-curricular theme aims to shape children/pupils into morally developed individuals who understand socially accepted values and moral principles, adhere to them both within and outside school, do not remain indifferent when they are neglected, and, where necessary, intervene to the best of their ability. This theme focuses on the development of socio-emotional skills, self-awareness and the ability to establish and maintain quality interpersonal relationships based on cooperation, respect, mutual understanding and support. Children/pupils also learn how to make responsible decisions that have long-term consequences for themselves and others. This theme contributes to strengthening a culture of dialogue, tolerance and mutual respect among children/pupils, as well as preventing unacceptable forms of behaviour.

Through this theme, children/pupils are guided to:

- develop the ability to recognize, understand and regulate their own and others' emotions;
- develop the ability to assess themselves realistically, including their strengths and weaknesses;
- recognize values, moral norms and rules of polite behaviour;
- systematically analyse moral norms and values;
- consider and adopt generally accepted ethical principles;
- behave in accordance with these principles and evaluate their own behaviour and that of others on that basis;
- participate in developing collective (group/class/school, etc.) codes of ethics and rules of conduct and adhere to them;
- reflect on their own principles of behaviour and those of others, using skills of constructive conflict resolution and responsible decision making.

Ad 3) Digital (ICT) literacy

This cross-curricular theme aims to shape children/pupils so that they can use modern technology purposefully and navigate a rapidly changing technological environment for life, learning and work, encouraging them to remain open to innovation. Children/pupils also learn how to select and use relevant information originating from digital environments and media. The theme includes understanding how information is created, transmitted and interpreted, developing a critical attitude towards media content, and participating responsibly in the digital space. The introduction of this theme aims to support the development of competent, safe and responsible behaviour of young people in the information, digital and media environment.

Children/pupils are guided towards:

- acquiring knowledge about how technology functions and its development trends in different spheres of life;
- understanding the impact of technological innovations on how people live and work, on their quality of life and on the environment, both today and in the past;

- understanding the interrelationships between technological, economic, social and cultural innovations;
- understanding and critically evaluating the positive and negative effects of technological development and artificial intelligence, and developing balanced views on ethical issues and appropriate applications;
- using information and communication technologies (ICT) for more effective learning and work;
- developing creativity, collaboration and initiative when implementing innovative ideas in different projects.

Ad 4) Information and media literacy

This cross-curricular theme aims to shape children/pupils into information-aware individuals who perceive and understand the rich information environment around them, are able to critically analyse information from different sources, and act in accordance with their goals and socially accepted communication ethics.

Through this theme, children/pupils are guided to:

- understand the similarities and differences between direct and mediated information;
- choose appropriate methods and channels of communication depending on the situation and need;
- identify their information needs and find relevant information;
- develop effective information search methods, including the use of different reference sources and information environments;
- develop skills of critical analysis of information, including the ability to assess accuracy, bias and manipulation, and to recognize disinformation, propaganda, fake news and hidden messages.

Ad 5) Civic education

The cross-curricular theme “Civic education” aims to shape children/pupils into active, responsible and supportive members of the local community and society who understand the principles and mechanisms underlying a democratic and just society, recognize the importance of civic activities and initiatives, understand the value of civic participation and cooperation, and see themselves as members of society acting in accordance with the cultural traditions and development trends of the country in which they live. The introduction of this theme aims to contribute to the development of democratic relations in society, socially responsible behaviour among young people, a culture of human rights, mutual respect and active participation in school, community and social life.

Through this theme, children/pupils are guided to:

- understand key social concepts such as equality, freedom, democracy, justice, and human and minority rights;
- recognize the Holocaust as a historical example of systematic violation of human rights and understand the importance of opposing antisemitism, discrimination, hatred and crimes against humanity;
- value a democratic organization of shared life, cooperation, civic initiatives, volunteering, and peaceful and non-violent conflict resolution;
- show initiative, develop personal views and express them;
- learn about their own rights and the rights of others and protect them, understanding the

responsibilities that accompany every right;

- understand the links between the public, private and non-profit sectors and how they function;
- understand their role as individuals in society and acquire skills for participation in decision-making processes;
- develop respect for diversity, interculturality, solidarity and social inclusion.

Ad 6) Entrepreneurial learning, financial literacy and social entrepreneurship

This cross-curricular theme aims to shape children/pupils into proactive, responsible, creative and socially sensitive individuals who understand the value of work, money and other resources, who can develop an entrepreneurial mindset and who are ready to turn their ideas into action in their personal, social and professional lives. Entrepreneurial learning, financial literacy and social entrepreneurship are introduced as a cross-curricular theme because they do not belong to a single subject area, but require the integration of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values from different fields so that children/pupils can understand initiative, planning, resource management, financial decision making, social responsibility and ethical action. Rather than viewing entrepreneurship solely as starting a business, this theme understands it as the ability to recognize opportunities, solve problems creatively, make responsible decisions and create economic, social and personal value.

Within this theme, children/pupils develop a responsible attitude towards money, understand basic financial concepts and learn to plan, save, assess risks and use modern forms of payment and digital financial services safely. The theme also includes developing awareness of social problems and the importance of creating sustainable solutions that contribute to community wellbeing, linking entrepreneurial action with solidarity, ethics, inclusion and sustainability. In contemporary contexts, it also includes a critical approach to the digital and financial environment, including safe behaviour online, responsible use of digital services, recognizing online and financial fraud, and a basic understanding of new financial phenomena, including cryptocurrencies and the risks associated with them.

Through this theme, children/pupils are guided to:

- understand the role of work, business and entrepreneurial initiative in society and develop a positive attitude towards participation in entrepreneurial and socially beneficial activities;
- develop ethical values, integrity and responsibility in relation to corruption, unfair practices and misuse of resources;
- develop awareness of social problems and the importance of creating sustainable solutions through the application of social entrepreneurship principles;
- understand basic financial concepts such as money, inflation, interest, taxes, bank accounts and loans;
- apply financial knowledge and skills through budgeting, managing spending, calculating costs and comparing financial products;
- develop a responsible attitude towards money, recognize the importance of saving and understand risks associated with investments and financial decisions;
- apply financial literacy in everyday life through planning and monitoring expenses, avoiding unnecessary debt and making decisions that contribute to long-term security;
- use modern payment methods, digital financial services and online shopping safely and responsibly;
- recognize basic forms of online and financial fraud, protect personal and financial data and develop a critical attitude towards the digital and financial environment;

- acquire basic knowledge of emerging financial phenomena, including cryptocurrencies and crypto markets, and develop a critical understanding of their opportunities and risks.

Ad 7) Cultural identity

The cross-curricular theme “Cultural identity” aims to shape children/pupils into culturally aware individuals who understand the role of culture in shaping patterns of thinking and behaviour and cultural change throughout history, have an understanding of cultural diversity and culturally defined ways of life, value both their own culture and cultural diversity, and act with tolerance and cooperation in relation to cultural content and characteristics.

Through this theme, children/pupils are guided to:

- perceive themselves as bearers of a particular culture who should contribute to its development, and also as mediators of culture;
- understand the importance of intercultural communication and cooperation in maintaining social sustainability;
- be tolerant and treat members of other cultures, their customs and cultural products with respect, and reject discrimination;
- study and value their own cultural heritage and characteristics, as well as the heritage of other cultures, drawing both on knowledge gained through different subjects and on personal experiences;
- understand and explore cultural diversity characteristic of both present and past societies;
- acquire knowledge of how cultures are formed (including their own national culture) and awareness of their mutually enriching influences;
- apply non-violent communication, mediation and dialogue in conflict resolution.

Ad 8) Health and safety in risky situations

The cross-curricular theme “Health and safety in risk situations” aims to shape children/pupils into mentally, emotionally, socially and physically healthy members of society who are capable of leading healthy lives, behaving safely and contributing to creating an environment that is safe for all and promotes health. Health education is based on the development of knowledge, attitudes and skills related to pupils’ health. Children/pupils are also taught the following aspects of safety: how to behave safely in crisis situations such as traffic incidents, fires, floods and other environmental hazards, and how to seek help when necessary. The theme also guides pupils to recognize potential threats, understand the causes and consequences of disasters, and prepare for different types of risk.

Through work on this theme, children/pupils are guided:

(1) In health education to:

- develop health awareness, including valuing their own health and safe behaviour;
- use their knowledge, coping skills and general social skills to ensure safety for themselves and others and to create a safe learning environment;
- understand how their own decisions and behaviour, and the consequences of these, are linked to health and safety;
- find and use reliable health information and support services;
- understand how the environment affects their health.

(2) In safety education to:

- recognize different types of crisis situations, understand their nature and how they may

arise (through human action or natural causes);

- develop resilience and preventive approaches for coping in crisis situations;
- develop attitudes and behaviours in line with safety at home, at school and in traffic;
- acquire competences for effective behaviour in crisis situations;
- develop appropriate behaviour in traffic, adopt habits of respecting traffic rules and take care of other road users;
- learn and value all rights, duties and responsibilities arising from traffic and safety rules.

Primarily, this cross-curricular theme fosters and promotes Olympic values. Physical and health education is the main context in which, through sports games and competitions, as well as through sports pedagogy, pupils learn fair play, self-discipline and respect for opponents. In a modern curriculum, these values are not incorporated solely through sports lessons; rather, they are embedded across subjects such as civic education (e.g. through learning about human rights, tolerance and interculturality), socio-emotional learning and history (through studying the ancient and modern Olympic Games as symbols of peace), as well as through visual arts and music (through creative expression of Olympic symbols and anthems), thereby contributing to moral education and promoting peace, understanding and coexistence without discrimination. In addition, Olympic values are developed through extracurricular activities, school sports clubs, tournaments and “Olympic lessons”, where theoretical concepts are translated into practical experiences of teamwork.

The core Olympic values are excellence, friendship and respect:

Excellence refers to encouraging individuals to give their best, not only in sport but also in everyday life. The focus is on effort and progress, rather than solely on winning.

Friendship involves developing mutual understanding, empathy and solidarity between people, regardless of their differences.

Respect implies respect for the rules of the game, for opponents, for oneself and for the environment. This includes the fight against doping and any form of cheating or unethical behaviour.

In addition to these three main values, a number of complementary values are often highlighted: courage, fair play, determination, inspiration, equality, self-discipline and optimism:

Courage refers to facing challenges and overcoming the fear of failure.

Fair play means honesty in sport and in life, respecting not only the letter of the rules but also their spirit.

Determination involves perseverance in overcoming obstacles, for example through the inclusion of children/pupils with developmental difficulties in line with Paralympic values.

Inspiration involves using role models, such as elite athletes, as motivation for personal development, not only as examples of top performance but of sustained, long-term commitment, above all in competing with oneself. The focus is on the process of improving one's own performance, which ultimately leads to success.

Equality refers to combating discrimination on any grounds, including gender, race or ability.

Self-discipline in the curriculum is defined as the ability of children/pupils to control their impulses and direct their energy towards achieving long-term goals. It includes consistency, such as regular practice and learning even when immediate motivation is lacking; respect for rules, understood as the internal acceptance of norms, fair play, not out of fear of punishment but from an awareness of the importance of order; delayed gratification, recognizing that high achievement in life comes through effort rather than shortcuts or privilege; and emotional self-regulation, such as managing anger or disappointment after defeat or failure.

Optimism is defined as a positive mindset towards challenges and a belief in the possibility of

progress. It includes resilience, the ability to recover after failure or injury and to continue, learning from mistakes; belief in one's potential, the conviction that through effort and work individuals can improve their abilities; hope for peace, as a broader social dimension that teaches children/pupils that a better and more just world is possible through cooperation and friendship, which is a fundamental principle of Olympism; and a focus on solutions, as optimism encourages the search for new ways to overcome obstacles rather than giving up. In contemporary curricula that integrate Olympic education, self-discipline and optimism are defined as key educational components that connect the spirit of sport with life skills. They are not viewed solely as sporting attributes, but as tools for the personal development of children/pupils.

Ad 9) Sustainable development and climate change

This cross-curricular theme aims to shape children/pupils as socially active, responsible and environmentally aware individuals who preserve and protect the environment, value sustainability, understand the causes and consequences of climate change and are prepared to find solutions to environmental and human development challenges. In contemporary curricula, climate change is positioned as a cross-curricular theme because it does not belong to a single scientific field, but requires a combination of natural, social and technical knowledge in order for pupils to understand causes, consequences and solutions, including the dimension of climate justice and social inequalities (e.g. through geography and biology, they learn about natural processes; through chemistry and physics, about the greenhouse effect; and through history and sociology, about the impact of industry and human behaviour). Rather than being the content of isolated lessons, climate becomes a "thread" that connects different subjects, making learning more relevant for the future in which children/pupils will live. This theme is implemented through teaching, extracurricular activities, school projects and cooperation with the local community, thereby fostering interdisciplinary learning, critical thinking, collaboration and the active participation of children/pupils in solving real-life problems. This theme is implemented through teaching, extracurricular activities, school projects and cooperation with the local community, thereby fostering interdisciplinary learning, critical thinking, collaboration and the active participation of children/pupils in solving real-life problems.

Through this theme, children/pupils are guided towards:

- understanding nature as an integrated system, the interconnection between people and the environment, and human dependence on natural resources;
- valuing biological and cultural diversity and environmental sustainability;
- understanding the relationships between different factors of cultural, social, economic, technological and human development, and the effects of human activities, including the principles of the circular and "green" economy;
- discussing environmental issues in their local context and at the societal and global level, developing personal environmental attitudes and proposing solutions to local environmental problems;
- analysing how their everyday decisions (e.g. energy consumption) affect the global system and evaluating energy efficiency and sustainable sources;
- taking action (sustainable development, recycling, resource conservation) through civic participation and "green" activism, which is at the core of the educational component of the curriculum;
- assuming responsibility for sustainable development, acting in an environmentally responsible manner in support of sustainability, evaluating and, where necessary, changing their own consumption choices and lifestyles, while recognizing global and local solidarity and intergenerational responsibility;

- understanding the causes and consequences of climate change at the local, regional and global levels;
- understanding climate justice, resilience and adaptation to climate change;
- recognizing the role of individuals, schools, families, communities, institutions and the economy, as well as developing sustainable lifestyles;
- critically evaluating information on climate and the environment, including identifying misinformation and manipulative messages.



VIII PRINCIPLES OF CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

The principles provide the foundation for ensuring the quality of the educational process and serve as a professional guide for teachers, specialist support staff and managers of educational institutions. They define the standards of quality in the learning process, as well as the criteria on the basis of which the quality of the work of educational institutions and teachers is evaluated and improved. The overall approach to the curriculum is characterized by: holistic education, the comprehensive and balanced development of the child/pupil (cognitive, physical, social, emotional, aesthetic and moral); a focus on the child/pupil and the learning process, where educational and learning experiences are designed in line with the needs and interests of the child/pupil; and quality assurance, primarily through high standards in teacher education and structured guidance for the curriculum and subject syllabuses.

Principles for curriculum implementation are:

1. A focus on the child/pupil and the learning process. Shifting the focus from content/programmes and the teacher to the pupil does not mean neglecting content and the teacher; on the contrary, their roles are indispensable. However, it has often occurred that content is “delivered” to pupils without them developing high-quality knowledge. Content/programmes and the teacher are essential, but the primary goal is that they reach the child/pupil and enable learning. The very logic of education, as a process organized for someone of a certain age to learn specific things, naturally implies that the characteristics of the learner and their learning must be the main reference points in teaching. If education is intended for particular individuals, then teaching must take them into account. Planning, preparation and delivery of teaching, as well as the provision of resources and an appropriate learning environment, should start from the child/pupil and stimulate and drive their learning. If teaching does not bring about change in the child/pupil, then it has not taken place, regardless of the effort invested or the methods and resources applied. The pupil-centred approach is grounded in contemporary scientific research and best international and national practice, and its key postulates are:

Learning is the result of the learner’s active construction of knowledge. This postulate follows from the scientific understanding of learning as a process in which the child/pupil constructs knowledge through their own mental activity (the constructivist nature of knowledge), and does so through asymmetrical social interaction with a more competent partner, the teacher. Because of this social nature of learning and the necessity of a more competent partner, learning is described as the construction of knowledge, that is, constructing knowledge through mediation by someone more experienced, more knowledgeable and capable of guiding the learner through the process of acquiring new knowledge.

Learning is inherently interactive. As noted above, learning is, par excellence, a social interaction that is essential for acquiring knowledge. For this reason, teaching must employ a variety of active learning methods, particularly cooperative learning, as learning is most effective through interaction with other pupils and with the support of a competent teacher (the socio-constructivist nature of knowledge).

Learning depends on pupils’ prior knowledge and experience. Teaching must combine everyday and scientific concepts, as all new learning builds on what the pupil already knows, understands and has experienced. Scientific concepts, also referred to as school or academic concepts, play an important role in promoting pupils’ cognitive development. Unlike everyday concepts, which are perceptual and sensory in nature and acquired through direct experience, scientific concepts are organized into systems of interconnected ideas across different fields, are abstract in nature and develop from one another. Through these concepts, schooling can guide

development from everyday thinking towards conceptual, hypothetical-deductive reasoning. Lev S. Vygotsky therefore described formal education as the third line of human development, alongside phylogenetic (species development) and ontogenetic (individual development).

Learning can promote development. Teaching and learning must be adapted to the developmental capacities of the child/pupil, as their ability to learn depends on their level of maturity. However, there is a dynamic, mutually supportive relationship between development and learning. Learning can stimulate development if it takes place within the learner's zone of proximal development (see Glossary), that is, what they can achieve with appropriate and timely expert support and guidance from the teacher. The significance of systematic, planned, institutional education lies precisely in the fact that learning specific content can stimulate and accelerate development, rather than waiting for biological maturation.

Learning requires a variety of methods. In teaching and learning specific content, different approaches, teaching methods and learning strategies must be combined, as a variety of approaches increases the likelihood of meeting the diverse characteristics of children/pupils. Teaching should include active, interactive and cooperative methods, as well as inquiry-based and practical forms of work (e.g. laboratory exercises and experiments), enabling children/pupils to collaborate, exchange experiences and actively participate in the process of acquiring and applying knowledge.

Learning requires time. The effectiveness of teaching and learning is measured by the quality of knowledge and the time devoted to it. The amount of time dedicated to learning is positively correlated with learning outcomes and pupil behaviour. Time spent in school, the volume of homework and time devoted to completing tasks are strong predictors of pupil attainment. In addition to the fact that more time devoted to learning leads to better results, it is crucial how that time is used and what children/pupils actually do during that time.

Learning depends on the nature of the subject being learned. Each subject or field of knowledge has its own specific content (facts and systems of concepts), its own methods (procedures, techniques, processes) and specific modes of thinking. Historians, artists and physicists think and work differently. Through each subject or field, pupils not only acquire specific knowledge, but also adopt the spirit of the discipline, its methods, ways of thinking and working, and its values. This is precisely the rationale for having a broad range of different subjects (compulsory and optional), as well as cross-curricular themes, as each contributes something unique to pupils' development.

2. Education goes “hand in hand” with upbringing. Upbringing is often neglected in relation to education. Although the way we educate also shapes upbringing, teaching should be organized in such a way as to ensure the development of children's/pupils' competences, rather than focusing predominantly on the acquisition and reproduction of facts. The ultimate goal of learning is the development of abilities, skills and attitudes that children/pupils need for an active, fulfilling, responsible and successful life.

3. High expectations and appropriate, flexible support to achieve them. The basic premise is that every child/pupil can make progress. Teachers' expectations of children/pupils have a significant impact on their attainment and can strongly support both their progress and their belief in themselves and their abilities, whatever these may be. All pupils are expected to progress as far as they can, and high expectations are set for them, while at the same time they are encouraged and provided with appropriate support according to their needs. Educational institutions recognize individual differences among children/pupils by enabling flexible pathways for achieving standards at their own pace and in their own way.

4. A supportive and safe learning environment and a positive atmosphere. Learning should take place in an organized, positive, stimulating and pleasant working environment, as pupils' emotions significantly affect the quality of attention, memory, thinking, learning and motivation to learn. A well-structured learning environment, together with the existence and observance of

order, rules and procedures, facilitates and supports learning. Teaching makes use of a range of resources and sources of knowledge, including multimedia and digital content, as well as “live resources”: educational institutions foster cooperation and partnership with families and the local community as resources for supporting learning and development.

5. Learning connected with real life (authentic learning). Within the curriculum, this represents a bridge between the classroom and the real world, shifting the focus from learning for grades to the active application of knowledge in everyday situations. The key elements of such integrated and applicable learning are: solving real-life problems, where children/pupils engage with challenges from their own environment (e.g. local pollution, budgeting, energy efficiency) alongside solving abstract textbook tasks; functional literacy and a focus on skills necessary for life, such as digital literacy, critical reading of media content, constructive communication and managing one’s behaviour and emotions; cooperation with the community, where learning also takes place through visits to institutions, conversations with professionals from different fields, volunteering, initiatives or projects that benefit the local community; and interdisciplinarity – as real-life problems are not divided into subjects, this principle encourages horizontal and vertical integration of knowledge in order to gain a broader perspective. In this way, children/pupils perceive learning as meaningful and necessary, and have a clear answer to the question, “Why am I learning this?” This connection and application of knowledge also enables better preparation for the future, through the development of competences and skills such as adaptability, responsibility and teamwork, which are key competences for the 21st-century labour market.



IX AREAS OF LEARNING/SUBJECT DOMAINS

In early childhood education institutions and schools, there is a range of programmes that help children/pupils develop their strengths and areas of interest. In early-years settings, these are referred to as fields of learning, while in schools they are organized as subjects. Under the impact of the “knowledge explosion” driven by the ICT revolution and the pressure of numerous content areas seeking to become compulsory school subjects, contemporary approaches to education are increasingly moving away from a strictly subject-based curriculum structure and introducing broader areas of education, thereby resembling the flexible approach used in organizing fields of learning in early childhood education and care in order to achieve the desired learning outcomes.

Areas of education bring together the goals and learning outcomes of related content or groups of subjects. In this way, subject fragmentation is overcome, horizontal and vertical coherence within the curriculum is strengthened, and the result is a more integrated body of knowledge for pupils. Areas of education form the basis for defining learning plans and for developing subject curricula. The goals and learning outcomes of cross-curricular themes are systematically embedded within these areas, creating a unified whole (see Figure 4).

The Foundations for the Renewal of Curricula in Montenegro (2002) identified the following areas of education:

- Language (communication in the mother tongue and foreign languages);
- Mathematics;
- Natural sciences;
- Technology (technical, technological and information technology areas);
- Social sciences (social sciences and humanities);
- Arts; and
- Physical and health education.

LANGUAGE – COMMUNICATION IN THE MOTHER TONGUE AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES

The area of language encompasses the development of children's/pupils' communicative competences in the mother tongue and in foreign languages. Its primary purpose is to enable pupils to understand, express and interpret thoughts, feelings and ideas conveyed orally and in writing in different contexts, as well as to develop the ability to connect ideas meaningfully and present arguments in a reasoned way. Language learning contributes to pupils' intellectual, emotional and social development, to the development of thinking, creativity, empathy and intercultural understanding, and equips pupils to reflect on different perspectives and value positions in an informed way. The development of language competences is a prerequisite for further education, success in all other areas and for active citizenship and lifelong learning.

Within this area, children/pupils should be enabled to:

- develop the ability to understand and express themselves in different communicative situations, both orally and in writing;
- become familiar with the structure and functions of language, and develop an awareness of language as a means of thinking, expression and identity, as well as a tool for conceptualizing experience and understanding the world;
- acquire and use grammatical and orthographical rules;
- develop reading, listening, writing and speaking skills through different text types, genres and

- media, including the independent creation of texts of varying complexity;
- cultivate a culture of communication, dialogue, argumentation and active listening, based on respect for others' reasoning, viewpoints and ethical principles;
- foster and strengthen respect for their own language and cultural heritage, as well as for other languages and their cultural expressions;
- promote the development of critical and creative thinking skills.

MATHEMATICS

The area of mathematics develops in children/pupils the ability for logical and abstract thinking, as well as problem-solving skills across a range of real-life and professional situations. Mathematical knowledge forms the basis for understanding natural phenomena and contributes to the development of precision, accuracy, systematic thinking and a responsible approach to work. This area plays a key role in the development of digital competences, understanding data and making evidence-based decisions. Mathematics contributes to the formation of rational thinking and is connected with many other scientific and practical fields, making it a foundation for lifelong learning and for a modern knowledge-based society, including an understanding of the limits and possibilities of formal reasoning.

Through this area, children/pupils should:

- develop the ability for logical and analytical thinking, reasoning, the application of algorithms and problem solving;
- understand basic mathematical concepts, structures, relationships and patterns;
- use mathematical language, symbols and expressions to describe and interpret phenomena from everyday life;
- apply acquired knowledge in real-life and interdisciplinary contexts;
- develop precision, perseverance, systematic approaches and independence in their work;
- develop a positive attitude towards learning mathematics and confidence in their own abilities.

NATURAL SCIENCES

The area of natural sciences encompasses the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable children/pupils to understand the world around them. Children/pupils explore natural phenomena, laws and processes, develop scientific ways of thinking and learn to draw conclusions based on evidence. Through this area, pupils learn how new knowledge is generated. Natural sciences contribute to the development of critical thinking, inquiry competences and digital literacy, and at the same time provide a foundation for STEM disciplines and lifelong learning.

Within this area, children/pupils should be enabled to:

- understand basic natural phenomena and the processes and laws that govern the world around us;
- develop curiosity and a scientific way of thinking through age-appropriate investigations and experiments;
- apply acquired knowledge and skills in everyday life, particularly in the areas of health, safety and environmental protection;
- develop the ability for critical thinking, questioning and drawing conclusions based on evidence;

- develop a responsible attitude towards natural resources and understand the importance of sustainable development;
- understand the interconnections between natural sciences, technology, society and the economy.

TECHNOLOGY (TECHNICAL, TECHNOLOGICAL AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AREAS)

The area of technology encompasses the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable children/pupils to understand technical and technological processes, and to use technology consciously, critically, responsibly and creatively in everyday life. The purpose of this area is to develop logical and systems thinking, the practical skills and digital competences necessary for life and work in contemporary society, as well as to encourage innovation among children/pupils. Through technical, technological and computing education, children/pupils learn how to plan, design, model and create, that is, how to move from an idea to a finished product. This area makes a strong contribution to the development of STEM competences, an entrepreneurial mindset and to equipping children/pupils to make ethical decisions about the use of technology for sustainable development.

This area should enable children/pupils to:

- understand basic technical, technological and computing concepts, processes and principles;
- develop the ability to design, plan and implement technical and digital solutions;
- apply knowledge and skills to solve practical and real-life problems;
- use digital tools, devices and programmes in a safe and ethical manner;
- develop teamwork skills, innovative thinking and an entrepreneurial approach;
- understand the impact of technology on the individual, society, the economy and the environment, and develop a responsible approach to its use.

Links with other areas:

- Mathematics and natural sciences – application of mathematical and scientific principles in technical and digital creation.
- Arts and culture – aesthetic aspects of design, modelling and the visual presentation of ideas.
- Social sciences and humanities – ethical, social and economic aspects of the use of technology.
- Languages and communication – presentation of projects, technical documentation and teamwork.
- Physical and health education – safety, ergonomics and health and safety at work.

SOCIAL SCIENCES (SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES DOMAIN)

The area of social sciences develops in children/pupils the ability to understand social phenomena, historical processes, political and economic systems, as well as interpersonal and cultural relationships. Learning in the social sciences contributes to understanding the shaping of culture across different historical periods, enables understanding of cultural and historical contexts, and supports the development of creativity. Through this area, understanding is developed of social processes, cause-and-effect relationships, continuity and change in human development, and the interconnectedness of time and place.

Through this area, children/pupils should:

- understand basic social, economic, political and cultural phenomena and processes;
- develop the ability for critical thinking and analysis of social issues;
- learn to make responsible, ethical and well-reasoned decisions and take responsibility for them;
- develop communication and social skills, including teamwork, dialogue and cooperation;
- develop awareness of civic rights and responsibilities, human rights and democratic values;
- understand the interconnection between local and global social processes and the role of the individual in society.

ARTS

The area of the arts develops in children/pupils the ability for creative expression, aesthetic appreciation and cultural reflection. The purpose of this area is for pupils, through various art forms and cultural activities, to develop creativity, imagination and critical thinking. Learning in the arts contributes to the formation of cultural identity and intercultural tolerance and respect, develops the ability to interpret and create works of art, and fosters aesthetic awareness. As it engages the whole person, not only one's cognitive but also emotional aspects and personal characteristics, this area contributes to the holistic development of the child/pupil. Learning in this area encourages the creative integration and application of acquired knowledge.

Through this area, children/pupils should:

- understand and value the cultural and historical heritage of their local and global environment;
- develop critical thinking and the ability to analyse cultural and artistic phenomena, distinguishing kitsch and banality from valuable works of art;
- develop aesthetic sensitivity and the ability to interpret works of art;
- use the arts as a means of communication, expression of ideas and collaboration;
- develop the ability for creative expression through various art forms (visual arts, music, drama, dance and digital creativity);
- nurture creativity and innovation through artistic creation.

PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

The area of physical and health education develops in children/pupils the ability to maintain and improve physical health, motor skills, psychophysical fitness and social skills. The purpose of this area is for children/pupils, through physical activity, sport and health education, to develop healthy lifestyles, self-discipline, social cooperation and responsibility for their own and others' health. This area contributes to the holistic development of the child/pupil, strengthens physical and mental resilience, and encourages active participation in society and the community. In the contemporary context, where sedentary lifestyles and static habits are increasingly prevalent, largely due to the use of technology, the importance of this area is growing. Regular physical activity also contributes to improved cognitive functioning, as well as better overall health.

Through this area, children/pupils should:

- develop basic and specific motor skills (strength, speed, endurance, flexibility, coordination);
- understand the importance of physical activity for health and quality of life and develop the habit of regular exercise;
- develop awareness of hygiene, proper nutrition and disease prevention;

- apply rules of safe and responsible behaviour in sport and physical activities;
- develop teamwork, fair play, responsibility and social skills through shared activities;
- develop the ability for self-assessment and setting personal goals in the area of physical and health development.



X EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: COMPLEMENTARITY WITH THE REGULAR TEACHING PROCESS

Many factors, such as demographic decline and the construction of new facilities, are creating opportunities for schools to operate on a single-shift basis. This mode of operation, with teaching taking place in only one shift, opens up new possibilities for implementing the vision and objectives of the curriculum. In early childhood education, which is integrated and not divided into school subjects, fields of learning are interconnected and, importantly, focused on the child and on supporting their development and learning. In schools, the division into subjects and the subject–lesson–year structure (the organization of knowledge by subjects, lessons and age groups), dating back to Comenius⁵, remains the most effective way of presenting different scientific and artistic disciplines to pupils. The challenge with this highly rational approach to schooling is the fragmentation of knowledge, organized into separate “compartments” or disciplines, which can reduce connections between areas of knowledge and make their application in the regular teaching process and beyond more difficult. With the introduction of single-shift schooling, space is created for additional support for pupils’ holistic development, their interests and especially for the development of socio-emotional competences, which are essential for life and work in contemporary conditions.

Extracurricular activities (hereinafter: ECAs) are an important component of pupils’ holistic education. Syllabuses are often overloaded and there is insufficient time within the regular teaching process to focus adequately on the development of skills, values and cross-curricular themes, which ECAs help to address. These activities expose pupils to a wide range of initiatives that broaden their perspectives and allow them to choose what they enjoy and wish to learn. ECAs support personal development, spiritual growth and aesthetic, physical, moral and artistic development. They expand the scope of learning and exploration through activities such as playing, drawing, acting, dancing, singing and public performance, which for some may even become a future career. When individuals take on responsibilities early in life, such as providing first aid or managing classroom resources (e.g. art materials), they develop the ability to function effectively in responsible situations.

Extracurricular activities are important for several reasons:

- they take place outside the classroom but complement the regular teaching process;
- participation in ECAs related to topics addressed within the regular teaching process helps clarify possible misunderstandings and strengthens theoretical understanding at a higher level;
- they improve academic attainment by encouraging learning, stimulating creative thinking and fostering interest and enthusiasm for particular subjects;
- they support the development of values, competences and essential life skills, preparing pupils for future challenges, and enhance social skills that are important for higher education, careers and life in general;
- they help pupils discover talents or develop new interests and or career aspirations;
- they provide opportunities for gaining practical experience;
- they offer a platform for personal development, helping pupils build self-confidence and self-esteem through the development of skills in specific areas;

⁵ John Amos Comenius, 1592–1670, was one of the most influential reformers of education in history, the originator of the subject–year–lesson system of schooling, and an advocate of the idea that school attendance should be compulsory for every child, regardless of the family’s financial circumstances or the child’s abilities, and that respect for children’s needs and capacities should be the most important principles in pedagogical practice.

- they teach time management and organizational skills, as well as leadership and independence, and the experiences and skills gained through these activities make pupils proactive and well-prepared for future endeavours;
- they can bring together pupils of different ages, year groups and backgrounds, enabling them to build friendships and strengthen a sense of belonging to the school and the wider community, thereby supporting equity in education;
- they contribute to a positive perception of school and learning by strengthening a sense of community and belonging, which is positively correlated with pupil attainment;
- they support improvements in physical, mental and emotional health, as many activities, such as athletics, gymnastics, yoga and indoor games, help individuals understand their role within a group and develop productivity, thereby enhancing self-esteem;
- they help reduce academic stress and provide opportunities for relaxation (supporting a balance between work and rest);
- they can channel pupils' energy in a positive direction, helping to keep them away from risks outside school, such as substance misuse, betting, gambling or criminal behaviour;
- they provide a means of monitoring and supporting pupils outside regular school hours.

Types and examples of extracurricular activities

1. Educational activities. Educational ECAs enable individuals to engage in activities through which they learn various concepts in different ways. These may include: science quizzes; competitions in writing poetry, stories or essays; mathematics Olympiads; exhibitions on relevant topics; debate competitions; design projects; robotics; coding; science fairs; chess; literary clubs; producing school newspapers; visits to museums, theatres, botanical gardens, industry, various companies and similar.

2. Social development activities. Social skills are important for the development of an individual's personality, and participation in various ECAs helps pupils to develop these. Some ECAs focused on social development include: organizing cultural events; fundraising for non-profit organizations and disadvantaged groups; scouting; youth forestry associations; marking environmental awareness days; participation in school councils; community service; student parliaments; volunteering in the community (e.g. in religious organizations, environmental initiatives, social and health campaigns, etc.).

3. Recreational activities. Recreation and enjoyment are vital components of education. Participation in enjoyable non-academic activities can help individuals discover their creative potential, explore their talents and develop their hobbies. Common recreational ECAs include: excursions; hiking; table tennis; psychological workshops; group games and similar.

4. Activities focused on physical development. Physical activities help individuals to be and remain healthy. Many activities, such as group games, develop a range of so-called "soft skills" (e.g. critical thinking and collaboration). A physically active individual is also more likely to be emotionally healthy. Examples of activities focused on physical development include: yoga; athletics; gymnastics; rowing clubs; swimming; skiing and skating; running; sports competitions.

5. Culture and values-based activities. Showcasing one's abilities is a strong stimulus for developing self-confidence. Children/pupils who may be less successful in academic activities but thrive in non-academic ones gain confidence and self-esteem through such activities. Many institutions organize festivals and cultural competitions that provide opportunities for individuals to demonstrate their skills, such as: dance competitions; drawing competitions; cultural festivals; singing competitions; traditional arts workshops; marking important anniversaries and holidays,

including school day celebrations; drama; cooking competitions.

6. Arts and crafts activities. Participation in arts and crafts activities has a significant positive impact on an individual's way of thinking. These activities help improve concentration and foster the development of new ideas, while enabling children/pupils to express themselves through art (sketching, drawing, painting, origami or handicrafts). Examples include: puppet making; poster design; portrait sketching; handicrafts; weaving and tapestry making; mural creation; pottery; flower arranging; clay modelling; album making; oil painting; basket making and collage; origami; acrylic painting; playing music (band or choir), as well as visual arts, sculpture and photography.

Many educational institutions recognize the importance of these activities, integrate them into their curriculum and require children/pupils to choose activities that interest them from a list of options. Participation in ECAs is strongly encouraged, and ECAs should be compulsory for all children/pupils. Children/pupils may also pursue their interests outside educational institutions and take part in external activities (sport, ballet, music school, drama school, etc.), but not as a substitute for school-based ECAs.

Pupils may also initiate their own activities, with the approval of the school. This allows them to pursue interests or ideas not included in existing ECAs and to broaden the range of activities within their school (e.g. a school magazine, school radio, counselling services), while also providing opportunities to develop initiative and practise entrepreneurial skills.



XI ADAPTATION OF THE CURRICULUM TO THE SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN/PUPILS

Inclusion implies that, during the planning and implementation of the educational process, the specific needs of all learners are addressed, regardless of their background, affiliation or status, abilities or other characteristics, whether they are children, pupils or adults. Inclusion is achieved through the planned adaptation of requirements, teaching and learning methods, as well as assessment approaches. The key characteristics of an inclusive curriculum are openness and flexibility.

Openness of the curriculum enables every child/pupil to be educated in accordance with their needs and interests. It is achieved in the following ways:

- by enabling educational institutions to design and organize optional subjects, clubs or specialized educational programmes and activities that respond to diverse pupil needs;
- by allowing children/pupils to choose a number of subjects (elective subjects);
- by defining a compulsory part of the subject curriculum (goals and content that are the same for all) and an open part, to be defined by educational institutions, teachers and children/pupils according to their needs;
- by defining learning outcomes while leaving space for teachers to organize teaching in ways adapted to their pupils (teacher autonomy).

Flexibility of the curriculum implies adapting learning objectives, content, methods and assessment approaches to children/pupils, their needs, interests, abilities and the specific conditions in which teaching and learning take place. Flexibility of the curriculum includes:

- individualization and differentiation of teaching, adapting the level of challenge, types of tasks and pace of work to the pupil;
- the use of a variety of teaching and learning methods and approaches;
- the use of different ways of presenting content: verbal, visual and symbolic;
- the use of different methods of assessing pupils' knowledge.

ADAPTATION OF THE CURRICULUM FOR CHILDREN/PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The category of children/pupils with special educational needs includes the following groups:

- children/pupils with developmental difficulties or disabilities resulting from organic or developmental impairments (e.g. sensory, physical, mental and intellectual impairments);
- children/pupils with developmental difficulties, which may include learning difficulties, behavioural disorders or emotional disorders, as well as social, linguistic and cultural barriers.

The fundamental starting point for adapting the curriculum for children/pupils with special educational needs is the child/pupil, their abilities, needs, capacities and pace of development, rather than a predefined programme. The key principles for working with these children/pupils are:

- **access to quality education:** every child/pupil has the right to attend early-years settings and school and to learn alongside other children/pupils, and educational institutions are obliged to ensure access;
- **accessibility of preschool institutions and schools:** ensuring that the environment is adapted to facilitate movement and orientation (e.g. wheelchair ramps, ensuring that classes are not located on upper floors where there is no lift), providing support (teaching assistants, specialist staff) and removing barriers to learning (assistive devices, adapted programmes, textbooks, etc.);
- **flexibility:** adapting learning objectives, content, methods and assessment approaches in the best interests of the child/pupil, so that they can achieve the defined attainment standards, with teaching organized on the basis of the child's/pupil's abilities, needs and pace of development;
- **partnership:** cooperation between educational institutions, teachers, parents and specialist staff in establishing a coordinated network of comprehensive and appropriate support for the child/pupil; and
- **monitoring and evaluation:** continuous monitoring, evaluation and adjustment of programmes for children/pupils with special educational needs. The outcomes of monitoring and evaluation provide feedback for teaching, enabling the approach to be adjusted, modified and aligned with the child's/pupil's progress.

Adapting the curriculum for children/pupils with special educational needs includes:

- defining learning standards in relation to individual and specific needs;
- defining minimum requirements in relation to the child's/pupil's functional level;
- developing an Individual Education Plan (IEP);
- evaluating and monitoring progress, most often in relation to the support plan.

ADAPTATION OF THE CURRICULUM FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED CHILDREN/PUPILS

Adaptation of the curriculum for talented and gifted children/pupils is based on their specific abilities, interests and potential, and aims to provide deeper, broader and more complex learning, as well as faster progression. In working with gifted and talented pupils, early identification and appropriate support are particularly important, both in intellectual and socio-emotional terms. In psychology, a distinction is made between talent (artistic aptitude) and giftedness (intellectual aptitude). These two forms of ability differ in nature, develop differently (talent tends to emerge early, while giftedness often becomes more evident in adolescence) and require different types of support for their development.

Adapting the curriculum for talented and gifted children/pupils includes:

- adapting content, through the extension and enrichment of learning content (additional materials, literature, sources, etc.);
- adapting requirements, in terms of the depth and complexity of content (problem-based, creative, inquiry-based and authentic tasks);
- adapting methods of work, through the use of specific teaching and learning approaches (e.g. individual research work);
- adapting the pace of progression, allowing flexibility in the rate of learning and opportunities for acceleration or early completion of programmes.





XII MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF PUPIL ATTAINMENT

FUNCTIONS OF ASSESSMENT⁶

In the traditional approach, assessment follows teaching or instruction and aims to determine how much content has been learned (most often memorized). Within this model, learning is viewed as the quantitative measurement of the amount of content that has been, as is often said, “acquired”. Such a conception assumes that learning primarily consists of memorizing relevant content. To some extent, this paradigm of assessment as the measurement, testing and verification of educational outcomes still dominates in practice, where knowledge is treated as something fixed and external to the pupil. The nature and practice of assessment in schools have not changed significantly, despite contemporary education advocating a socio-constructivist understanding of learning as the co-construction of knowledge (see Section VIII: Principles of Curriculum Implementation), which implies that assessment is an integral part of the learning process and that its primary purpose is to understand and improve pupil learning (see Section III: Vision and Section VII: Cross-Curricular Themes – Lifelong Learning and Career Guidance).

The term “assessment” aligns well with the traditional concept of education, as it serves to assign a summative grade reflecting how much a pupil has learned. However, within a contemporary, learning-oriented approach to teaching (see Section VIII: Principles of Curriculum Implementation), the concept of “evaluation” is more appropriate than mere assessment in the form of grading. In addition to assessing what has been learned (the level of current development), the aim is also to support the development of independent, self-regulated learning by evaluating the level of attainment a pupil can reach with appropriate guidance and continuous support (the level of potential development). Within this approach, assessment has a dual purpose: to evaluate the child’s/pupil’s final level of knowledge and to monitor and improve the learning process. Accordingly, three types of assessment are distinguished: assessment of learning (summative assessment), assessment for learning, and assessment as learning.

Assessment of learning is summative in nature and determines whether the pupil has met the requirements in relation to defined criteria or standards. The main focus is on the product of learning – the outcome – and assessment is understood as measurement.

Assessment for learning focuses on understanding how the pupil learns, what they can or cannot do, and how to support them in learning more effectively. Assessment is used to improve learning and help the pupil learn better and more efficiently.

Assessment as learning has metacognitive aims, enabling the pupil to become an autonomous learner, aware of what is expected of them and capable of independently monitoring, regulating, evaluating and adjusting their own learning process. Using such information, the pupil can regulate their learning in order to achieve previously set goals. This type of assessment emphasizes the active role of the pupil in their own learning and supports the development of self-regulated learning.

Table 1. Characteristics of different types of assessment

Criterion	Assessment of learning	Assessment for learning	Assessment as learning
What is it for?	Assessing a given level of attainment, determining readiness to progress to the next level of education, placement in a particular group, certification	Informing teaching decisions, immediate or long-term (e.g. how to proceed with teaching in order to achieve the intended objectives)	Self-evaluation, independent monitoring of learning, self-regulation, independent correction of mistakes
Who assesses?	Teacher	Teacher (with possible involvement of the pupil)	Pupil
Against what is it assessed?	Against other pupils (typically) or against defined standards	Against the objectives set in the curriculum and expected outcomes	Against the objectives of teaching and learning and personal goals

Source: Pešikan, A. (2020). *Učenje u obrazovnom kontekstu. Službeni glasnik, Beograd, p. 287*

⁶ Assessment in the broader sense (evaluation) encompasses all activities carried out within the school to collect data on pupils' progress in the teaching process. This includes monitoring, checking and assessing pupils' knowledge and progress on the basis of predefined assessment elements and criteria. Therefore, when the term 'assessment' is used in the Framework, it refers to all its components: monitoring, checking and assessment in the narrower sense, that is, the awarding of grades.

PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT IS OBJECTIVE-BASED. Assessment is one of the key activities of teachers and a distinctive professional skill of an effective teacher (see Annex 2: Roles of the Teacher). For this reason, these competences should be systematically and deliberately developed through initial teacher education and ongoing professional development. Assessment is an integral part of planning the teaching and learning process and should primarily be based on learning objectives. This means that the teacher must establish a clear link between learning objectives and assessment, and that the form of assessment must correspond to the level or type of learning objectives. Each assessment format (multiple choice, short answer, completion tasks, essay tasks, etc.) has its advantages and limitations, and it is necessary to select the format that best aligns with the defined objectives.

Table 2. Alignment of learning aims across different levels and assessment methods

Level of learning objective	Appropriate assessment method
Remember content (e.g. name, list, recognize, identify)	Short-answer formats, matching tasks, labelling tasks, multiple-choice questions
Understand content (e.g. interpret, give an example or illustration, classify, summarize, compare, explain, conclude or predict)	Essay tasks, problem-based tasks, concept maps, cause-and-effect diagrams, multiple-choice questions
Apply what has been learned (e.g. carry out, apply, demonstrate, use)	Problem-based tasks, performance tasks, laboratory exercises, simulations
Analyse material (e.g. differentiate, distinguish, systematize, attribute)	Case studies, projects, problem-solving tasks, debates, essay tasks, research assignments
Evaluate (e.g. check, monitor, critique, assess)	Critical reviews, critiques, case studies, comparisons, problem-based tasks
Create and produce new content (e.g. generate, formulate a hypothesis, design, plan, produce, construct, combine)	Research projects, experiments, essays, business plans, website design, set design, designing assessment methods, creating tasks, graphical representations of content, etc.

FOCUSED ON THE QUALITY RATHER THAN THE QUANTITY OF PUPILS' KNOWLEDGE. Based on the expected learning objectives, and particularly on the development of independent learning, pupils are expected to demonstrate that they can, independently or in collaboration with others, analyse, compare, connect, synthesize and evaluate data and information, draw conclusions, solve problems, create new products and propose solutions. In this context, the purpose of assessment is not primarily to determine quantity (i.e. how much information a pupil knows), but above all the quality of knowledge, what the pupil is able to do with the knowledge acquired (how they connect, apply, select and transform the information they command).

Based on various taxonomies (Bloom, Anderson & Krathwohl, Gagné, SOLO, Marzano, etc.), three levels of pupil attainment are distinguished:

Level One: **What does the pupil know and understand?** This level is evident in situations where pupils are required to recognize, recall, list or explain previously learned content, either verbatim or in their own words (with understanding). The focus is on reproduction and comprehension of content and corresponds to the first and second levels of Bloom's taxonomy: remembering and understanding. Indicators of expected thinking and types of activities at this level include:

- For knowledge reproduction: the expected type of thinking is recalling or recognizing information (facts, data) that has been learned. Types of activities include: describe, list, state, recognize, repeat, identify, name, find, complete a sequence.
- For understanding knowledge: the expected type of thinking is demonstrating understanding of the material, including transforming, reorganizing, interpreting and extrapolating. Types of activities include: translate, organize, summarize, present in another way, define, interpret, conclude, predict, explain, show (demonstrate).

Level Two: **How does the pupil apply and analyse knowledge?** This level is evident when pupils are required to do something with previously acquired knowledge: apply it in similar or new

school contexts or in real-life situations; analyse it, break it down into parts, compare according to given criteria, classify, connect or apply it; and solve problems. The focus is on the functional use of knowledge and problem solving and corresponds to the third and fourth levels of Bloom's taxonomy: application and analysis. Indicators of expected thinking and types of activities at this level include:

- For application of knowledge: the expected type of thinking is using information to solve problems. Types of activities include: generalize, solve, provide one's own example, adapt, do in a different way, recognize in an example, extend, compare, classify.
- For analysis of knowledge: the expected type of thinking is critical thinking, identifying reasons and motives, drawing conclusions based on data, and analysing the quality of conclusions. Types of activities include: differentiate, recognize across types of examples, confirm, sketch, create a diagram or table, list all possible consequences, categorize, distinguish, organize.

Level Three: **Can the pupil independently evaluate or create something new?** This level is evident in situations where pupils are required to independently evaluate and critically judge content, as well as to combine knowledge in order to create a new whole. The focus is on critical and creative thinking and independent problem solving, corresponding to the fifth and sixth levels of Bloom's taxonomy: evaluation and synthesis. Indicators of expected thinking and types of activities at this level include:

- For evaluation of knowledge: the expected type of thinking is assessing the value of ideas, presenting reasoned arguments and applying standards. Types of activities include: assess, justify, refute, debate, weigh significance, resolve ambiguity, evaluate, prioritize, judge.
- For synthesis of knowledge: the expected type of thinking is scientific and divergent thinking, creating original ideas (plans, proposals, drafts, designs, projects), and solving problems with multiple possible correct answers. Types of activities include: create, invent, elaborate, summarize, produce, present visually, imagine, modify, connect, define assumptions, identify key words (main idea, title), combine, reduce to the essential.

Each learning outcome within the subject curricula incorporates these levels in different proportions, depending on the age of the pupils and the nature of the subject.

HOLISTIC NATURE. The orientation of the curriculum towards values and key competences (see Section V: Values and Key Competences for the 21st Century) leads to significant changes in the monitoring and assessment of pupils. Values such as diligence, independence, perseverance, responsibility, and socio-emotional competences are equally important learning goals as the acquisition of knowledge, and therefore they must also be subject to monitoring and assessment in teaching. This supports the holistic development of pupils. These values and competences are most clearly manifested through pupils' attitudes towards learning and school responsibilities. They are expressed through the frequency of expected behaviours (rarely; occasionally; in every lesson), as well as through the conditions under which such behaviours occur (the pupil demonstrates expected behaviour when prompted; under supervision; independently). The role of the teacher (see Section XIII: The Indispensable Teacher) in this concept is to continuously monitor and encourage pupils towards expected behaviour – a responsible attitude towards learning and school obligations.

KNOWLEDGE IS NOT THE SAME AS ATTAINMENT. In assessment, it should be kept in mind that learning is not the same as school attainment. School attainment is what can be externally observed and measured in some way within the educational process. As a rule, pupils learn much more than is assessed (or can be assessed) in teaching. They also learn from the way the school is organized, from the relationships among all members of the school – between teachers and administration, teachers and pupils – from attitudes towards work, from the value system that prevails in the school, and from everyday life within the school. In addition, every form of

assessment sends not only educational but also highly influential formative messages. The way we treat those we assess, the choice of assessment methods, and the purpose of our assessment send important educational messages to those being assessed. If we assess fairly and support the progress of all pupils, we demonstrate our belief that all pupils, without exception, can learn and progress (see Section VIII: Principles of Curriculum Implementation), thereby encouraging them and conveying an important educational message about what constitutes attainment.

DIVERSE FORMS OF ASSESSMENT. Assessment – must include a wide range of different methods and approaches in order to encompass the planned competences (knowledge, skills, values) and to ensure that the assessment methods are appropriate for different pupils. At all levels, more complex types of tasks should be used, such as problem-based and project-based tasks adapted to the pupils' age, prior knowledge and abilities. By their nature, such tasks include: multiple functional literacies (information, digital, mathematical, scientific, etc.); the integration and application of knowledge; higher-order cognitive processes; and social skills, as they typically require cooperation or communication with others. This allows teachers to gain insight not only into pupils' cognitive functioning but also into their other skills (organization of activities, team leadership, time management, responsibility for deadlines, care for others, etc.).

ASSESSMENT PROMOTES PUPIL AUTONOMY. For pupil learning to be autonomous, before they begin learning, pupils need to know what will be assessed (the subject of assessment), how it will be assessed (the requirements to be met) and what is expected as an outcome (the criteria for a successfully completed task). Such involvement supports the development of pupil autonomy (self-regulation) and awareness that grades are not arbitrary but are the result of meeting predefined obligations and assessment criteria. In addition to teacher assessment, opportunities for self-assessment and peer assessment should be introduced, as they are important for the development of pupils' cognitive and metacognitive abilities.

ASSESSMENT IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS. Assessment must serve effective learning and be focused on the question: How do pupils learn? Therefore, assessment does not appear only at the end of the teaching/learning process but is integrated into all teaching activities:

- planning and preparation of teaching and learning situations;
- continuous monitoring of pupil progress during instruction;
- continuous collection of information, observations and data on pupils' work and attainment;
- providing feedback to pupils on their learning progress;
- evaluating the quality and effectiveness of teaching and the learning process.

Findings from a large number of studies confirm that grades increase pupil attainment. Research has shown that pupil performance is significantly better when pupils receive grades than when they are assessed on a pass/fail basis or when there are no grades. Grades tend to have a stronger effect when used as negative rather than positive reinforcement.

The key link between assessment and learning is that assessment always shapes the way learning takes place: the way we assess directly influences how and what pupils will learn. If, after lessons involving active learning and the integration of values and socio-emotional competences, pupils are given tests focused on knowledge reproduction, they will subsequently turn to memorization, and all classroom activities aimed at other processes and aspects of development will be undermined. It is important to ask:

- Does assessment provide any useful information about what a particular pupil can actually do?
- Is the chosen method of assessment the best way to determine whether pupils understand the material and can apply it? Does assessment have any negative feedback effect on learning?

- Is there alignment between what is assessed and what is expected of pupils outside school and after schooling?
- How consistent is assessment with the key competences pupils need for life and work in the 21st century?

FEEDBACK SUPPORTS THE LEARNING PROCESS. The goal of assessment is to actively support pupils in learning effectively. This means that teaching should ensure a balance between summative and formative assessment and introduce the practice of regularly providing timely and clear feedback on pupils' learning and progress. Feedback provides concrete suggestions on how pupils can more effectively use their learning potential, thereby supporting the development of self-regulated and effective learning. Feedback must be a careful and constructive form of support, as assessment always evokes different emotions and influences motivation to learn. It is important what kind of feedback is given, because feedback that highlights what has been achieved (regardless of how small it may be, e.g. "you made a great start, you began thinking about the task") is far more motivating for pupils than feedback that focuses only on unsuccessful and negative aspects of the process.

CLEAR ASSESSMENT CRITERIA. Many factors influence the objectivity of assessment, and this is a frequent topic of research. Assessment must be based on predefined and publicly established criteria. Since assessment should be inclusive and individualized, when determining a grade the teacher follows the assessment criteria but also takes into account each pupil's individual abilities, starting point and pace of progress. The teacher should ensure that pupils understand the assessment criteria.

IMPROVEMENT OF TEACHING. The information that teachers collect through assessment is used not only for evaluating and supporting pupil development but also for improving teaching practice. The innovative function of assessment lies in improving assessment methods, designing new activities and new forms of assessment, taking into account the planned goals and learning outcomes, as well as pupil characteristics.

OBJECTIVITY OF ASSESSMENT. It is important to recognize that, in essence, there is no completely "objective" assessment. No instrument, technique, type or method of assessment can ensure full objectivity. Even computer-based grading systems do not make assessment fairer or more objective, as teachers still have to decide which grade provides the most accurate and fair description of each pupil's attainment. The technical capabilities of such systems, including calculating performance to several decimal places, can mislead teachers and schools and create a false sense of trust in the accuracy and validity of assigned grades.

Assessment is always subjective because human knowledge, beliefs, judgments and decisions are an unavoidable part of any assessment process. Even the best test is only one way of conceptualizing knowledge, abilities or potential. If knowledge is complex, multifaceted, individually constructed and inseparably linked to the context in which learning takes place, it is unlikely that pupils' knowledge, skills, abilities or potential can be measured by a single instrument. To preserve the meaning and usefulness of assessment, teachers should have a strong understanding of the nature of assessment and the factors that influence it, consider ways to ensure consistency in evaluating pupils' understanding and in the information collected through assessment, and systematically gather data on pupils using a variety of methods.



XIII THE INDISPENSABLE TEACHER: TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Support for the professional development of teachers is not merely an additional component, but a fundamental objective of every modern curriculum. Without a competent teacher, the development of quality education remains only words on paper, as the teacher is the key factor in ensuring quality education. With the development of ICT and AI, it was believed that the role of the teacher would change; however, research shows that, primarily due to the nature of the learning process and its goals, the teacher (despite ICT) remains indispensable even in an online environment. For example, learning in an online environment requires a far more independent pupil than learning in a classroom. So, how is independence in learning developed? In the classroom, through live interaction with the teacher, through teacher guidance, their feedback, expectations, encouragement and through the design of meaningful and challenging learning situations appropriate for the pupil.

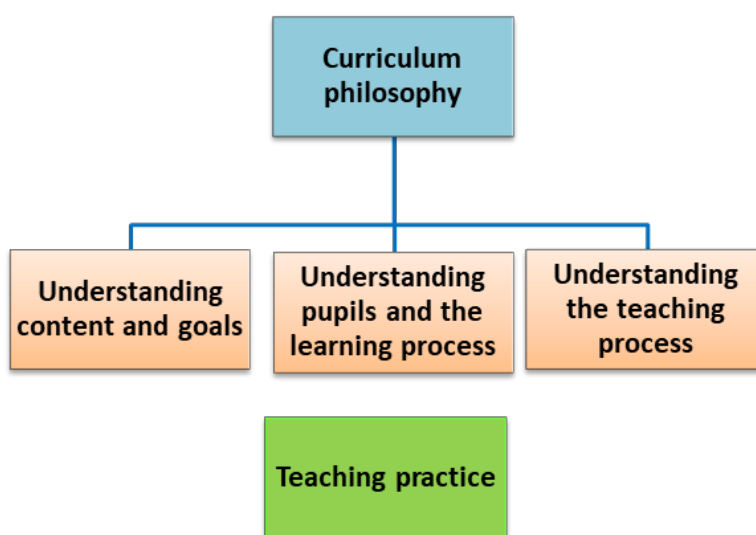


Figure 5. Modelling teaching practice through the curriculum

The implementation of the Curriculum Framework, conceived in this way, requires a professional – a competent teacher who is able in practice to realize the defined goals, mediate the planned content and foster the development of knowledge and competences of children/pupils. The teacher does not merely educate; they shape children/pupils into thoughtful, good individuals with sound beliefs, strong integrity and the courage to defend their views and ideas, as well as to stand up for others, even against themselves and their own needs and desires. In short, the teacher is the key link between the prescribed curriculum and real life in the classroom.

Teachers' professional development (hereinafter: TPD) is not merely a term for teacher education, but a way of understanding the teaching profession and its roles. It is grounded in research findings on learning, teaching and education, as well as in well-founded beliefs about teaching and learning (see Section VIII: Principles of Curriculum Implementation). These findings result in an articulated philosophy of the curriculum (see Section I: Philosophy of the Curriculum Framework), from which pedagogical practice follows. Teachers need knowledge bases that will enable them to understand subjects and goals, theories and research on pupils and learning, and theories and research on teaching (see Figure 5).

Within the curriculum, TPD is defined as a continuous process of improving competences, ensuring that the teacher remains relevant in a rapidly changing world. TPD is an integral part of the quality of the education system and, within the curriculum, is described through the following aspects:

- **Holistic and lifelong learning:** The teacher is viewed as a “lifelong learner”. Development is not reduced to a single seminar, but to continuous improvement of psychological-pedagogical, digital and subject-specific skills. In the modern era, disciplinary content is changing and expanding rapidly; research on teaching and learning is abundant and significant; insights from developmental psychology are important, as children also change in line with the times in which they are growing up. If all this knowledge, which forms the basis of the teacher’s work, is changing, then it is essential that TPD follows these changes and prepares teachers for them.
- **Reflective practice:** The curriculum encourages teachers to critically analyse their own work (self-evaluation) and to adapt their teaching methods in accordance with the needs of pupils, the nature of the content and the experience gained from working with previous generations.
- **Implementation of innovations:** The teacher is the key “translator” of the curriculum into practice. Professional development enables them to understand and appropriately apply new concepts within their subject, such as cross-curricular themes (climate change, Olympic values).
- **Collaboration and learning within a community:** Development takes place through horizontal learning – exchange of experiences with colleagues, teamwork on projects and mentoring work with younger colleagues, novice teachers or student teachers during their practicum.
- **Autonomy and responsibility:** Professional development empowers teachers to create teaching situations and materials independently and to make pedagogical decisions, thereby enhancing their professional standing.

In the modern curriculum, **the role of the teacher is changing significantly and expanding** (see Annex 1: Professional Roles of Teachers). In traditional, predominantly lecture-based teaching, the central role of the teacher is that of the main source (alongside the textbook) and transmitter of knowledge: the teacher presents knowledge that pupils are expected to acquire, assesses what has been learned and enforces discipline. In this document, we advocate for the further development of the now-dominant paradigm in education – learning-oriented teaching – and from this perspective, we view the teacher as a mediator in the process of knowledge construction, someone who creates learning activities within the zone of proximal development of the child/pupil, someone who can skilfully and engagingly use and create a learning environment adapted to children/pupils, and who also influences pupils’ attitudes towards that environment, as well as their educational attainment and overall personal development through the way they communicate with them (see Figure 6).

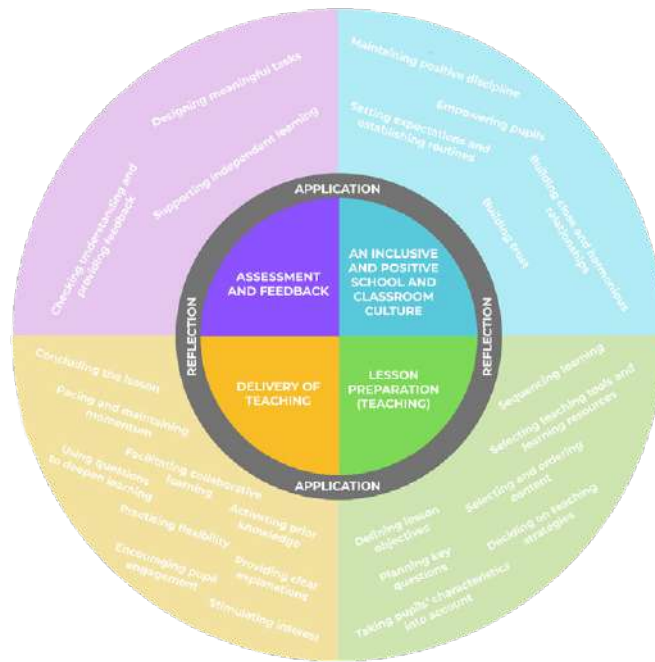


Figure 6. Professional roles of teachers

The policy of educational institutions also influences teaching policy and the creation of a learning environment at the classroom level. This means that it is not sufficient to adopt formal documents that articulate pedagogical policy and practice (such as the Framework); rather, educational policy must also elaborate how EIs will support teachers in clearly understanding what is expected of them and how EIs will provide support in implementing that policy. Factors operating at the level of EIs – such as the amount of teaching (instruction), the quality of teaching and the provision of learning opportunities – also affect the effectiveness of teaching at the classroom/group level. Therefore, how these factors are shaped is crucial and this is precisely what this Framework addresses.

How the Framework conceptualizes the roles of teachers has implications for:

- preservice teacher education and its quality, modernity, relevance for practice and effectiveness; that is, teacher training faculties must align their programmes with the expectations and philosophy of the Curriculum Framework;
- teachers' professional development programmes, in order to gradually modernize the knowledge, skills, beliefs and values of practising teachers in line with the ideas presented in the Framework;
- the system for evaluating the quality of teachers' work – if the expectations of the curriculum and education as a whole are aligned, then evaluation must assess the teacher's contribution to translating these ideas into practice and shaping future generations; this further implies that pedagogical advisors, inspectors and all those involved in teacher evaluation must develop instruments consistent with the Framework and assess teachers' work accordingly;
- the system of teachers' career progression – criteria for advancement must be aligned with both the letter and the spirit of the Curriculum Framework within the system of higher professional titles; it is important to ensure that career advancement does not necessarily remove teachers from the classroom or distance them from children/pupils (e.g. becoming advisors, inspectors or ministry staff); these high-quality, modern and reflective professionals are needed by our children and education system, and systemic measures should ensure that the best teachers continue to work directly with pupils and that this role is valued in society.

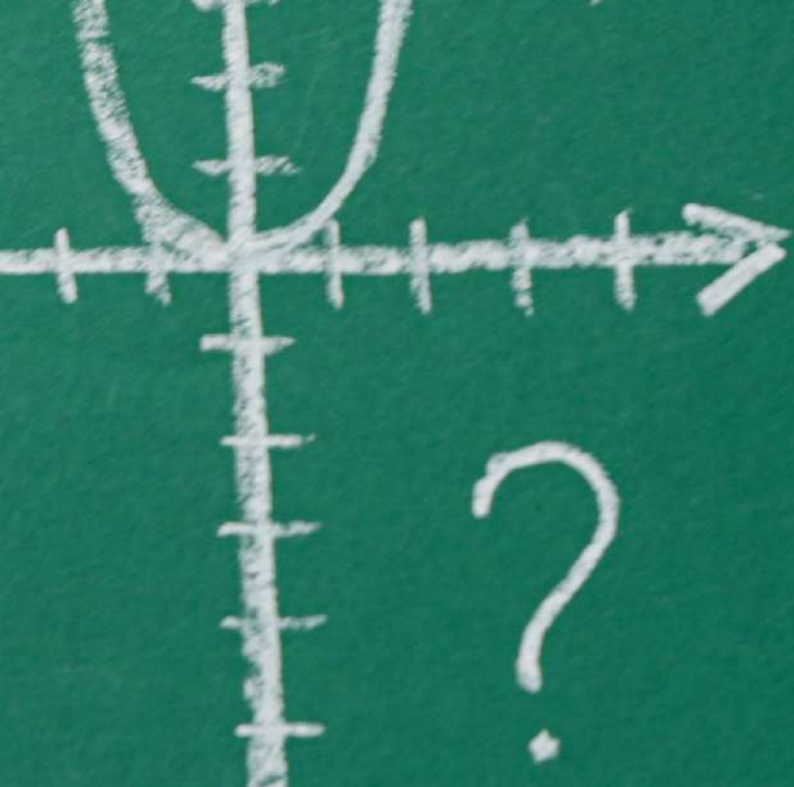


XIV IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

In emergency situations (pandemics, natural disasters, floods, earthquakes and other crisis situations), curriculum implementation requires a flexible and adaptive approach in order to ensure the continuity of the educational process and the wellbeing of children/pupils. Implementation in such circumstances is focused on key learning outcomes, while ensuring safety, support and continuity of education for all children/pupils.

Guidelines for curriculum implementation in emergency situations include:

- **Adapting learning objectives and outcomes.** In order to ensure continuity of the educational process in emergency situations, it is necessary to rationalize teaching content in advance by focusing on the key educational outcomes (core knowledge and skills).
- **Planning in accordance with real conditions and allowing flexibility in pacing.** To reflect the actual situation, teachers are given autonomy to plan flexibly and adjust the pace of implementing planned outcomes and teaching activities.
- **Delivering distance learning.** Ensure the prerequisites for distance learning – online platforms, TV or radio materials, digital resources, etc. Provide access to learning content for all children/pupils, as well as ensure that both teachers and pupils have the competences to use digital content and learning tools.
- **Individualization and inclusiveness.** Take into account the different abilities, family circumstances and learning conditions of children/pupils.
- **Adapting teaching methods.** Clearly structure shorter teaching units. Provide concise and clear instructions to children/pupils. Use practical, inquiry-based tasks that can be carried out independently or in groups.
- **Adapting monitoring and assessment.** Emphasis is placed on formative monitoring and feedback, while recognizing effort and engagement.
- **The role of the teacher.** Above all, the teacher acts as a mentor and support – not only in learning.
- **Cooperation with parents.** Collaboration with all parents is necessary, especially with the parents of younger pupils, in order to provide adequate support.
- **Care for pupils' psychosocial wellbeing.** Acknowledge the stress and emotional responses of children/pupils. Foster a sense of safety. Maintain regular communication with pupils.

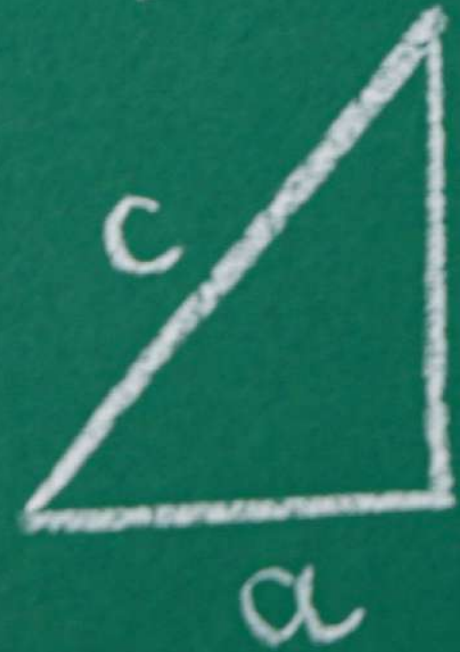


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XV MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

The European Qualifications Framework proposes a quality assurance approach based on the autonomy of educational institutions (EIs), measurable criteria (quality standards) and established procedures and processes (including internal and external evaluation). A particularly important element in this process is self-evaluation, as an indication that the institution has taken responsibility for quality and is actively managing its own development.

QUALITY ASSURANCE OBJECTIVES

In order to ensure that the quality of curriculum implementation is maintained and improved over time, it is necessary to:

- ensure that quality standards serve as the basis for determining and improving the quality of work in preschool institutions/schools and education overall;
- ensure that the development planning of preschool institutions/schools, development plans, etc. are based on identified results (the level of achievement of quality standards);
- ensure that the professional development of teachers (TPD) and of preschool institutions/schools is based on identified results (the level of achievement of quality standards);
- achieve the competence and autonomy of preschool institutions/schools to **take responsibility for quality**⁷.

QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS

The main mechanisms of quality assurance are: standardization of quality; evaluation (determination) of quality; and quality improvement (see Figure 7).

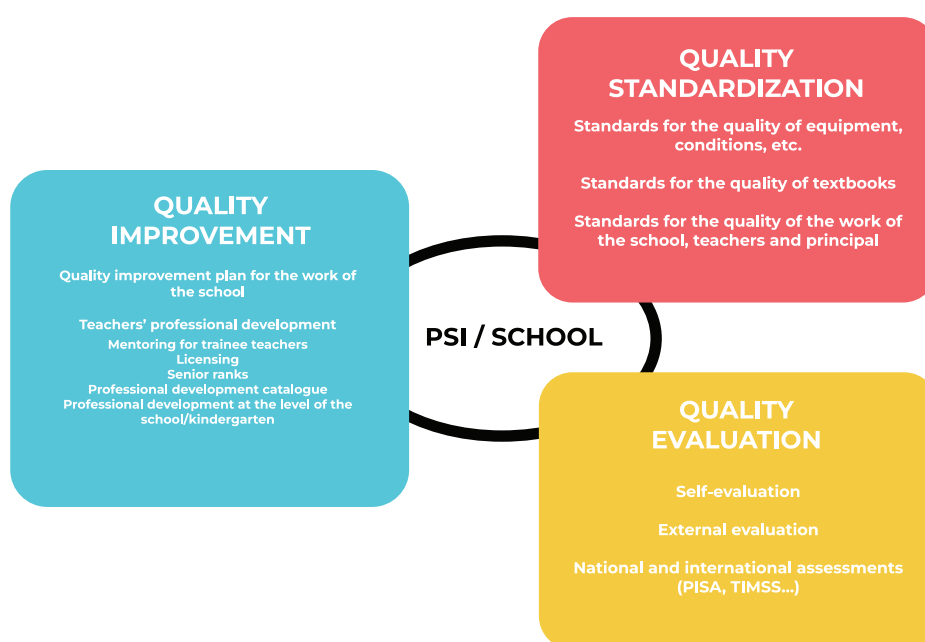


Figure 7. Mechanisms for quality assurance in curriculum implementation

⁷ The primary goal of the European model for quality assurance in the work of ECEC institutions/schools underpins all the other system measures, which are aligned with and subordinate to this goal.

A. QUALITY STANDARDIZATION

The determination (external and internal evaluation) and improvement of the quality of work of preschool institutions/schools and education are based on:

- input standards in education (standards for equipment, material resources, etc.);
- standards of educational outcomes (learning outcomes) – providing a clear insight into what children/pupils will know, be able to do and value after programme implementation;
- standards of the educational process – providing clear guidelines on what the quality work of an institution looks like across all aspects;
- standards of competences of staff, principals, teachers and others working in EIs – providing clear guidance on the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that employees in institutions should possess.

B. DETERMINING (EVALUATING) THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Determining the quality of education involves the evaluation of results (educational outcomes) and the evaluation of the quality of teaching (the educational process).

Evaluation of educational results (outcomes) is carried out through:

- internal assessment and grading of pupils' attainment within the school;
- national testing (at the end of the second cycle of primary education) and external examinations (at the end of primary education, as well as external final and vocational examinations at the end of secondary education), conducted by the Examination Centre;
- international studies (PISA – 15-year-olds; TIMSS and PIRLS – fourth grade of primary education).

External examinations provide information on pupils' attainment; national testing provides insights into the quality of the subject curriculum; and international studies enable comparison of our system with those of other countries. National testing provides reliable data on subject curricula, their suitability for pupils of a certain age and the key factors influencing pupil attainment, enabling policymakers to monitor better and improve the quality of education. International studies, such as PISA, TIMSS and PIRLS, allow the comparison of key curriculum variables and the provision of resources that lead to improved pupil attainment. They measure not only pupils' knowledge but also their ability to apply that knowledge in real-life situations, which is essential for modern society. PISA particularly emphasizes the importance of critical thinking and problem solving, while TIMSS measures a range of cognitive skills, including the selection and application of appropriate problem-solving strategies, reasoning and explanation in mathematics and science. PIRLS, on the other hand, highlights the importance of early reading literacy for later academic success. The results of international studies provide strong evidence of the capacity of an education system to achieve quality.

Evaluation of the quality of the educational process: the evaluation of the quality of the educational process is primarily formative, while also including a summative assessment of the institution's performance. This means that institutions require clear, well-justified and informative feedback on their work, enabling them to identify areas of strength (in line with the standards) and areas where they deviate from the standards, as well as the extent of such deviation. Evaluation is conducted across the following quality domains: teaching/learning; management and leadership; institutional ethos; children's/pupils' attainment; support for children/pupils. The evaluation of the quality of the educational process is carried out both internally (self-evaluation) and externally (by the competent authority).

Self-evaluation is the fundamental mechanism for ensuring the quality of the work of preschool institutions/schools and education. It is carried out continuously and provides information on the quality of the work of the preschool institution/school in relation to quality standards.

External evaluation ensures the quality of the work of the institution and of education. It is conducted continuously by supervisors from the Bureau for Education Services and the Centre for Vocational Education. External evaluation:

- provides feedback to the preschool institution/school on its work;
- provides recommendations for improving the quality of the work of the preschool institution/school in relation to standards;
- monitors the quality of the self-evaluation process;
- monitors the quality of the implementation of the institution's quality improvement plan;
- provides, in an annual summary report, information on the fulfilment of system-wide quality standards.

External evaluation is essentially a formative process and should influence the quality of the work of the preschool institution/school not only through recommendations, but also during the evaluation process itself – through advisory support, by referring to examples of good practice within the preschool institution/school or beyond it and by pointing to opportunities available to the institution for improvement, etc.

C. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

• **Planning the improvement of the quality of work of the preschool institution/school**

Quality improvement involves undertaking appropriate measures, procedures and activities aimed at eliminating identified deviations from quality standards, and is based on previously established results of self-evaluation and external evaluation. Following self-evaluation (annually) and external evaluation (continuously), the institution develops:

- a quality improvement plan for the work of the preschool institution/school, which is based on evaluation results (what problem needs to be addressed) and sets quality improvement goals (what we aim to achieve), as well as measurable outcomes (what the expected results of change look like);
- a plan for improving the quality of the institution's work, which defines the strategy for solving the identified problems (planning activities the school intends to undertake, assigning responsibilities for specific activities, setting timeframes, etc.).

Measures for improving the quality of the work of the preschool institution/school

Potential tools for improving the quality of the work of the preschool institution/school include:

- the availability of opportunities for the development of staff competences (a professional development system and professional development at the level of school or kindergarten that includes peer observations, round tables, participation in professional events, etc.);
- the availability of supporting resources, tools and documents (quality standards, manuals, guidelines, methodological frameworks, ready-made instruments and tools that can be used directly or serve as models for schools, examples of good practice, etc.);
- the availability of direct external support (the possibility of engaging experts for specific issues).

Some of these measures are developed within the school, while others are developed at the system level (measures that can be used by all preschool institutions/schools).



$$= a^2 + 2ab + b^2$$

$$E = mc^2$$

$$\cos x - \sin x$$



ANNEXES


ANNEX 1. PROFESSIONAL ROLES OF TEACHERS

- **Teaching (instructional) role:** Presents content using various instructional materials and encourages children/pupils to use these materials themselves; formulates problems, defines, demonstrates, describes, compares, concludes, interprets, repeats and summarizes what is important; leads the teaching process.
- **Partner in pedagogical communication:** Asks questions, gives verbal and non-verbal messages and responds to them, expresses opinions and encourages children/pupils to express themselves freely, provides advice in response to pupils' classroom activities and gives feedback to pupils; encourages interaction with children/pupils and exchange among pupils themselves, models discussions, structures pupils' thinking, invites children/pupils to review completed work, guides and supports independent work of children/pupils and provides assistance when a child/pupil requests it.
- **Subject expert:** This role does not only mean that the teacher is qualified in the subject they teach, but that they follow developments in their discipline and adapt and incorporate these innovations into their teaching; they serve as a model of intellectual work, behaviour and values in the given field, enabling children/pupils to work independently within that field.
- **Organizational role:** Sets lesson objectives and, based on them, designs and creates the teaching situation and children's/pupils' activities; plans content, materials, equipment, learning resources, forms and methods of work, and time allocation.
- **Motivational role:** Encompasses all teacher behaviours aimed at motivating and encouraging the child/pupil to learn and work, fostering curiosity and interest among children/pupils and developing their work habits.
- **Cognitive-diagnostic role:** Involves knowledge of developmental characteristics, i.e. understanding what can be expected intellectually from children/pupils of a certain age; accurate assessment of pupils' knowledge, their ways of thinking, working styles, preferences, etc.
- **Evaluation role:** Continuous monitoring of the work and development of children/pupils, assessment of their attainment and all types of interventions that provide feedback on the effectiveness of the learning process or on children's/pupils' behaviour and personality.
- **Management of social relationships in the class:** Monitors and regulates social relationships within the group (discipline management, fair treatment of all children/pupils in the class, especially those from marginalized groups, creating a positive and pleasant classroom climate, influencing mutual relationships, constructive conflict resolution).
- **Affective role of the teacher includes several aspects:**
 - a. Knowing children/pupils and showing interest in them: understanding the characteristics of emotional development of children/pupils of a certain age; showing interest in children/pupils and knowing them well (their family background and relevant out-of-school information); willingness to cooperate with colleagues to support a particular child/pupil;
 - b. Teacher's sensitivity to children's/pupils' reactions: sensitive observation and recognition of children's/pupils' reactions (verbal, non-verbal, vocal), empathy and accurate understanding of their emotional states, appropriate responses to emotional states and reactions, openness to children's/pupils' ideas, suggestions, needs and

requests, acceptance of diversity among children/pupils and equal treatment of all;

- c. Establishing quality relationships with children/pupils: belief that every child/pupil can progress, expectations that all will progress, availability to children/pupils beyond lessons, respect for children/pupils; children/pupils trust the teacher;
 - d. Teacher's awareness of their own emotions and their impact on children/pupils and on classroom and school climate;
 - e. Ability to create a positive and constructive socio-emotional classroom climate: using humour and other means to create a pleasant atmosphere in the classroom, working on cultivating children's/pupils' emotional responses within the class.
- **Research role:** Monitoring and researching one's own practice – continuous reflection on one's methods and their effectiveness; learning from pupils' results and improving one's work through collaboration with colleagues. Teachers' professional development is based on previously established results of self-evaluation (and external evaluation) and may include various activities: conducting model and demonstration lessons; peer observation; participation in focus groups, round tables, panel discussions and debates within and outside the school; conducting action research in the school; participation in professional networks at different levels (e.g. teacher associations); participation in national and international conferences and scientific events, etc.
 - **Supporting colleagues in teaching:** Providing assistance to other teachers in implementing new ideas in the classroom, either by demonstrating lessons or by observing lessons and providing feedback. Some studies have found that consultations with colleagues increased teachers' self-efficacy (belief in their own abilities and capacity to address challenges in teaching and learning successfully) and also encouraged teachers to improve their practice through collaboration with colleagues.
 - **Facilitating colleagues' professional learning (facilitation):** Refers to creating opportunities for professional learning and exchange among teachers. When teachers learn together, from one another, their professional learning becomes more meaningful and relevant, focused on classroom practice and aligned with their real needs.
 - **Mentor to novice teachers:** Experienced professionals serve as role models, helping new teachers to "acclimatize" to a new preschool institution/school, better navigate teaching, curriculum, procedures, practice and school policy. In some successful preschool institutions/schools, flexible working time structures are introduced, allowing effective teachers to reduce part of their direct teaching load and dedicate those hours to professional work with new colleagues.
 - **Active participant in the work of the preschool institution/school:** The teacher participates in various groups, committees and teams, such as school improvement teams, school development planning, etc.; involves children/pupils in discussing such issues, supports school initiatives, represents the preschool institution/school in the local community or in regional working groups, etc.
 - **Change catalyst:** A teacher who contributes to introducing necessary changes, supports and accelerates change within the preschool institution/school; an autonomous, reflective practitioner who is not afraid of change but actively initiates it.
 - **Lifelong learner – continuous professional development:** A successful teacher must always remain a learner. They work on continuous improvement of their practice, demonstrate lifelong learning, experiment with new teaching strategies, remain open to innovation and use what they learn to help their pupils learn better and achieve greater success.

$$\frac{a + \sqrt{a} - a}{\sqrt{a} + 1} = \frac{\sqrt{a}}{0}$$


$$\sqrt{a}$$

$$\sqrt{a}$$

GLOSSARY

FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION (4IR) OR INDUSTRY 4.0	A new revolution in human development, even greater than Gutenberg's invention of the printing press. The term conceptualizes rapid changes in technology, industry and social patterns and processes in the 21st century due to increasing interconnectedness and smart automation. The concept was popularized by Klaus Schwab, founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum, in 2015.
DIGI-PEDAGOGICALSKILLS	Both pupils and teachers must be technologically literate and competent in applying modern technologies. However, for effective teaching and learning, in addition to digital literacy, it is necessary to develop specific digi-pedagogical competences (Korhonen et al., 2021). Adequate professional training and support should be provided to teachers to increase their awareness of the complex interaction between technology, pedagogy and subject content in their disciplines (Rienties, Brouwer & Lygo-Baker, 2013). Digi-pedagogical competences of pupils refer to the ability to use digital literacy to enhance their own learning.
DIGITAL WELLBEING OR CYBER WELLNESS	Refers to the wellbeing of children/pupils as they navigate cyberspace. It involves conscious and healthy management of technology so that it serves our goals rather than becoming a source of stress or addiction. This concept includes several key areas: monitoring screen time – awareness of how many hours per day are spent on a phone or computer; setting limits – using app timers to prevent “endless scrolling”; planned breaks, methods or rules such as avoiding screen use for one hour before sleep; notification hygiene – turning off non-essential notifications to reduce attention fragmentation and cortisol (stress) levels; reducing the FOMO effect – addressing the “fear of missing out” (see FOMO effect) by developing awareness that content on social networks is often unrealistic; digital detox – periodically disconnecting completely from the digital world to restore mental energy; sleep protection – using blue light filters (night shift mode) to support melatonin production; proper posture – preventing “tech neck” (neck pain from looking down at a phone) and eye strain; intentional use – distinguishing between using technology as a tool (for work, learning, communication) and using it as a passive escape from boredom or problems.
EUROPEAN KEY COMPETENCES FRAMEWORK	The EKCF features eight competences: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Literacy 2. Multilingualism 3. Numerical, scientific and engineering skills 4. Digital and technology-based competences 5. Interpersonal skills and the ability to adopt new competences 6. Active citizenship 7. Entrepreneurship 8. Cultural awareness and expression
FOMO EFFECT	Fear of missing out, a phenomenon observed among social media users. When viewing photos and videos of others who appear to be constantly enjoying themselves, in special places and activities, individuals may feel excluded and unhappy, even though they are aware that such portrayals are often unrealistic or digitally constructed (see Digital wellbeing).
CONSTRUCTIVIST NATURE OF LEARNING	Learning is a process in which an individual constructs their own system of knowledge through social interaction.
COMPETENCE	Authority, jurisdiction or personal ability in a particular task or profession. It is a dynamic combination of knowledge, skills and values/attitudes.
CURRICULUM	A term of Latin origin referring to a course or sequence of education. It includes the syllabus, but is significantly broader. Its structure encompasses all content, processes and activities aimed at achieving educational goals and learning outcomes defined at the national and local (school) levels.
CURRICULAR ALIGNMENT	The degree to which key elements of the educational process – learning objectives, teaching and learning methods, instructional activities, assessment and outcomes – are interconnected and harmonized.
METACOGNITION	Includes knowledge about one's own learning, monitoring cognitive processes and their evaluation and regulation to improve learning effectiveness. Cognition involves solving a task, while metacognition involves understanding how the task was completed, evaluating its success and improving future learning.
NETIQUETTE	Digital etiquette, a set of rules for polite and appropriate behaviour in the digital world. The term is formed by combining the words internet and etiquette: Net (derived from internet) and etiquette (meaning rules of polite conduct). It is used to describe standards of appropriate behaviour in digital communication, whether in emails, forums or social media. Netiquette defines how to communicate online without offending others or disrupting their activities.
EVIDENCE-BASED EDUCATION	Decision making in education based on verified findings (research, studies, document analysis, etc.), including both quantitative and qualitative data (insights, practitioner reflections, experience analysis, etc.).
PISA (PROGRAMME FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ASSESSMENT)	The largest international study of education systems, conducted by the OECD since 2000, typically every three years. It assesses 15-year-olds' reading, mathematical and scientific literacy and their application in real-life situations.

PIRLS (PROGRESS IN INTERNATIONAL READING LITERACY STUDY)	An international study of reading literacy among primary school pupils.
EXCESSIVE SCREEN TIME	Chronic sensory stimulation through excessive exposure to screens (screen time) that can negatively affect brain development. Excessive time spent in front of screens (e.g. more than two to three hours of total exposure to all electronic media, including television, computers and mobile electronic devices) can affect the developing brain, which has important consequences for cognitive and motor development, learning and memory, emotional regulation and overall health.
SOCIALCONSTRUCTIVISM	A theoretical approach explaining that learning occurs through social interaction between pupils and teachers or within pupil groups.
ATTITUDES	A stable, learned predisposition to behave consistently toward the environment; a positive or negative orientation toward something or someone.
SCHOOL CULTURE	A set of shared values, beliefs, norms, customs and interpersonal relationships that define the "identity" and atmosphere of a school. It is what we sense the moment we step into the building – the way people treat one another, how conflicts are resolved and what is considered important. While school climate reflects the current mood of the environment, school culture is deeply rooted and long-lasting.
SCHOOL CURRICULUM	A comprehensive plan and framework defining what pupils learn, how, why and under what conditions learning occurs. It represents more than just a list of subjects; it encompasses the entire learning experience that the school provides.
TIMSS (TRENDS IN INTERNATIONAL MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE STUDY)	An international study monitoring pupil attainment in mathematics and science at the primary education level.
SKILL	An acquired psychomotor ability that enables conscious, quick and accurate performance of an activity, developed through repetition of previously learned knowledge.
VALUE	A relatively stable system of preferences demonstrated by an individual, group or society.
VIRTUE	An ethical concept referring to the ability of an individual to adhere to moral norms and values; a morally desirable trait.
HEALTHY LIFESTYLES	A balance between what we put into our bodies, how we use them, and how we feel mentally and within our environment. They represent a set of conscious decisions and habits that an individual practices in order to maintain and improve their physical, mental and social wellbeing. It is not merely the absence of disease, but an active effort to achieve optimal health and longevity. The main pillars of a healthy lifestyle are: proper nutrition, regular physical activity, quality sleep (ensuring sufficient hours of rest, typically 7–9 hours for adults, which is essential for body regeneration and brain function), avoidance of harmful habits (use of tobacco, alcohol and psychoactive substances), mental hygiene (managing stress, nurturing positive thinking, developing emotional intelligence and seeking support when needed) and preventive care (regular medical check-ups and personal hygiene).
KNOWLEDGE	A system of acquired facts, concepts, conclusions and generalizations that are connected into a coherent logical whole.
ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT (ZPD)	An extremely important concept in Lev Vygotsky's theory that explains how learning occurs, that is, how mental functions and learning develop through social interaction between a child and a more competent partner. The ZPD refers to the difference between what a child can do independently and what they can accomplish with appropriate support from a more competent person. It is the space in which, with adequate guidance from an adult, mental development is fostered, enabling the child to acquire new knowledge and skills, that is, to learn.





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WORKING GROUP FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK OF MONTENEGRO

Pursuant to Decision No. 27-011/25-6647/2 of 5 September 2025, the Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation established the Working Group for the Development of the National Curriculum Framework of Montenegro, comprising the following:

1. Dragan Marković, Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation, Chair
2. Svetlana Drobňjak, Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation, Deputy Chair
3. Vesna Pejović, Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation, Member
4. Marija Gošović, Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation, Member
5. Julka Ostojić, Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation, Member
6. Jasna Jovanović, Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation, Member
7. Ivana Mrvaljević, Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation, Member
8. Dragan Mijušković, Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation, Member
9. Vesna Gajević, Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation, Member
10. Marina Matijević, Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation, Member
11. Dejan Golubović, Public Institution Gymnasium "Panto Mališić", Berane, Member
12. Dušanka Popović, Faculty of Philology, Member
13. Milena Danilović, Public Institution Primary School "Radoje Čizmović", Nikšić, Member
14. Vjera Mitrović-Radošević, Centre for Vocational Education and Training, Member
15. Slavica Jovanović, Centre for Vocational Education and Training, Member
16. Miliana Dabović, Centre for Vocational Education and Training, Member
17. Anita Marić, Bureau for Education Services, Member
18. Nevena Čabrilo, Bureau for Education Services, Member
19. Aleksandra Vešović-Ivanović, Bureau for Education Services, Member
20. Zoran Lalović, Bureau for Education Services, Member
21. Anka Vučinić-Gujić, Bureau for Education Services, Member
22. Vesna Babović, Bureau for Education Services, Member
23. Adnan Hadžić, Bureau for Education Services, Member
24. Snežana Grbović, Bureau for Education Services, Member
25. Dragan Berilažić, Bureau for Education Services, Member
26. Danilo Bošković, Bureau for Education Services, Member
27. Ljiljana Ivanović, Bureau for Education Services, Member
28. Nataša Golubović, Bureau for Education Services, Member
29. Fran Vuljaj, Bureau for Education Services, Member
30. Tatjana Novović, Faculty of Philosophy, Nikšić, Member
31. Dijana Vučković, Faculty of Philosophy, Nikšić, Member
32. Saša Milić, Faculty of Philosophy, Nikšić, Member
33. Mara Šćepanović, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Member
34. Olivera Lučić, Public Institution Vocational Secondary School of Economics and Hospitality, Nikšić, Member

35. Zorica Minić, Examination Centre, Member
36. Tatjana Vujošević, Examination Centre, Member
37. Nela Dabanović, Public Institution Gymnasium "Niko Rolović", Bar, Member
38. Vesko Mihailović, Public Institution Secondary Vocational School "Spasoje Raspopović", Podgorica, Member
39. Novica Gačević, Public Institution Primary School "Štampar Makarije", Podgorica, Member
40. Sonja Dabetić, Public Institution Secondary Vocational School "Ivan Uskoković", Podgorica, Member
41. Vesna Četković, Public Institution Secondary School of Civil Engineering "Inž. Marko Radević", Podgorica, Member
42. Selma Šabotić, Public Institution Secondary Electrical Engineering School "Vaso Aligrudić", Podgorica, Member
43. Snežana Jukić, Public Institution Primary School "Milorad Musa Burzan", Podgorica, Member
44. Aleksandar Vuksanović, Public Institution Resource Centre "1 June", Podgorica, Member
45. Mirjana Knežević, Public Institution Resource Centre "1 June", Podgorica, Member
46. Ivana Kurtović, Public Institution Primary School "Mirko Srzentić", Budva, Member
47. Slavica Radević, Public Institution Primary School "Jugoslavija", Bar, Member
48. Anita Stojanović, Association of Mother Tongue Teachers, Member
49. Miloš Mrvaljević, Association of History Teachers, Member
50. Biljana Stojkanović, Association of Physics Teachers, Member
51. Dragana Radoman, English Language Teachers' Association of Montenegro (ELTAM), Member
52. Danijela Bokan, Association of Italian Language Teachers, Member
53. Jasmina Nikčević, Association of French Language Teachers, Member
54. Milica Šćepanović, Association of French Language Teachers, Member
55. Irena Pavićević, Association of Mathematics Teachers, Member
56. Sanja Ognjanović, Public Institution Gymnasium "Slobodan Škerović", Podgorica, Member
57. Biljana Krivokapić, Public Institution Primary School "Štampar Makarije", Podgorica, Member
58. Vesna Šarac, Public Institution Music School "Dara Čokorilo", Nikšić, Member
59. Krsto Vuković, Public Institution Mixed Secondary School "Danilo Kiš", Budva, Member
60. Maja Kovačević, UNICEF Observer
61. Ivana Ceković, UNICEF Observer
62. Sara Ivanović, Secretary

To ensure efficiency in its work, a Core Team of the Working Group was also established, comprising the following:

1. Dragan Marković, Ministry of Education, Science and Innovation, Chair
2. Zoran Lalović, Bureau for Education Services, Member
3. Dušanka Popović, Faculty of Philology, Member
4. Anita Marić, Bureau for Education Services, Member
5. Nevena Čabrilo, Bureau for Education Services, Member
6. Ljiljana Ivanović, Bureau for Education Services, Member
7. Tatjana Novović, Faculty of Philosophy, Nikšić, Member
8. Dijana Vučković, Faculty of Philosophy, Nikšić, Member
9. Saša Milić, Faculty of Philosophy, Nikšić, Member
10. Zorica Minić, Examination Centre, Member

11. Maja Kovačević, UNICEF Observer
12. Ivana Ceković, UNICEF Observer
13. Sara Ivanović, Secretary

At its session held on May 8th 2026 the National Council for Education issued a positive opinion on the National Curriculum Framework of Montenegro.



Ministry of
Education, Science
and Innovation