

ANNEX B - TERMS OF REFERENCE

A study on financing, governance and parent perspectives on pre-primary education

1. Background and rationale

1.1. Background

Research from various disciplines (for example, medicine, economics, education) indicates that structured learning opportunities for children from an early age substantially contribute to their development and lead to subsequent resilience, better health and overall increased wellbeing in later life (Campbell et al., 2014; European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice/Eurostat, 2014; Heckman, 2012; National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2014; UNICEF, 2014). It has been shown that disparities in access to early learning often carry over into adulthood and are extremely difficult, if not impossible, to counteract (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Coleman et al., 1966). Therefore, it is essential to ensure quality early learning for all children, regardless of their family background, disability, or economic status.

For those reasons, Pre-primary Education (PPE) is highlighted in the UNICEF Strategic Plan for 2018-2021 and features also in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). It is, further, recognised in the Regional Education Agenda for the Eastern Europe and Asia Region under the result area 'every child learning early and enrolling on time' within the Regional Knowledge and Leadership Area (RKLA) 3&4.

Through its Country Programme Document (CPD) for the period 2017 to 2021 UNICEF's country office in Croatia is committed to raising pre-primary attendance for children aged 4 to 6, particularly for children at most risk from exclusion, that is, children from marginalised backgrounds and children with disabilities and special educational needs. Low pre-primary attendance primarily seems to be a matter of access. This study will serve to better understand what can be done to raise pre-primary education attendance in the country so that it can become universal in the long term.

To increase access into pre-primary education, the UNICEF office for Croatia has partnered with the Ministry of Science and Education, the Ministry for Agriculture and the Ministry for Demographics, Family, Youth and Social Policy to increase structured learning opportunities for children from age 3 onwards. The Government of Croatia is endorsing this effort, to: (1) achieve better education quality by fostering inclusion and diversity, and (2) encourage young families to contribute to population rejuvenation by increasing benefits for young families and so preventing them from migrating out of Croatia.

In line with Article 12 of the Act on education in primary and secondary schooling (Croatian Parliament, 2008/2017) in Croatia, compulsory education starts at age six. Pre-primary children attend mandatory preschool for free for 250 hours during one year before starting primary school (Croatian Parliament, 2008b). Before preschool, children can attend kindergartens, which are usually subsidised by local authorities. The type and amount of subsidy is determined by each individual local authority.

Nevertheless, data from Eurostat (Eurostat, 2018) show that with 75.1% Croatia has the lowest kindergarten attendance in the entire European Union. Available data show stark variations in pre-primary education attendance depending on locality. In the capital, Zagreb, for example, PPE attendance for 3-6 year olds is at 89 per cent, whilst in counties such as Brodsko-Posavska, the attendance is much lower and lies approximately at 20 per cent (Dobrotić & Matković 2017, see also Dobrotić, Matković, & Menger, 2018). The counties with the lowest attendance are simultaneously some of the poorest counties in the country, with a high emigration rate (Bertram & Pascal, 2016).

1.2. Literature review, context and rationale

Despite the awareness that low attendance in PPE may contribute to all sort of population and societal problems, little has been undertaken to address the issue systematically. Croatia has a legacy of decentralised pre-primary education and care, which is a common model across the European Union, but can take different governance and financing schemes (Dobrotic & Matkovic, 2017). This means that financing of early childhood education is almost exclusively responsibility of local authorities. Financing relates to infrastructural investments, the covering of running costs, investing in teacher salaries and their professional development (Dobrotic & Matkovic, 2017).

Dobrotic and Matkovic (2017) have noted that 99 per cent of all spending on early learning and care has come from local authorities. In other words, the amount and circumstances for subsidising or co-funding pre-primary services depend on the extent to which local authorities see benefits in investing in pre-primary education. With local authorities being the sole investors in pre-primary education, it is not surprising that some municipalities choose to spend very little on pre-primary education, whilst others may go over and beyond to assist families and secure free structured early learning for all.

According to Dobrotic and Matkovic (2017), 108 local authorities reported spending less than 1 per cent of their annual budget on pre-primary education services, with over half of them (60) effectively spending next to nothing on PPE. It is also those localities, point out Dobrotic and Matkovic (*ibid.*), that record the least attendance in pre-primary education, not least for a lack of opportunity for children to participate in structured early learning. What is more, vulnerable children (children from Roma backgrounds, children living in poverty and children with disabilities and special needs) have practically no chance to be included in pre-primary education in those localities (cf. UNICEF, 2015).

There is consensus among policy makers and experts alike that the kind of decentralised PPE arrangement that exists in Croatia is a contributing factor to low attendance in pre-primary education in specific localities, particularly those that do not invest in it. Nevertheless, this has not turned into action on the local level, because communities are either unwilling or unable to offer structured learning for pre-primary children. This is a matter of concern, since unequal spending leads to unequal opportunities to attend pre-primary education across the country (Dobrotić et al., 2018).

Apart from financing, it is conceptually important to bear in mind that parents may have other reasons for not sending their children into early learning. Therefore, there are two separate research avenues to pursue in this study:

- (1) The financing and governance of Pre-primary Education (PPE) and
- (2) The knowledge, attitudes and perspectives of parents towards PPE.

To focus research efforts, education quality, teachers' professionalism and professional development should be addressed in the investigation avenue on governance and policy, since decisions on funding for staffing, staff salaries, and their professional development are also all made at the local level.

2. Purpose and scope of the research

2.1. Objectives and research questions

The goal of this study is to generate data for a more comprehensive insight into the barriers and bottlenecks for structured pre-primary learning in Croatia in order to understand how best to achieve an increase in access to pre-primary education in Croatia. Conceptually, the study will be oriented on understanding the links between governance, financing models, and parent perspectives.

The study is meant to answer the following questions:

1. Why are not all children in Croatia included in pre-primary education?
2. What can be done to include all children into pre-primary education?

The primary objectives of this study are:

- a) to provide a more in-depth understanding of PPE financing and governance in Croatia, specifically analysing the present kindergarten format and investigating the potential for emerging and innovative ways of financing kindergartens
- b) to understand why parents send and do not send their children to kindergarten and under what circumstances they would be more likely to send them to kindergarten
- c) to offer innovative, efficient, and affordable solutions to existing barriers and bottlenecks in financing and governance, so that universal coverage of quality PPE services can be achieved
- d) to provide recommendations for optimising the use of existing capacities of preschool institutions, particularly with regards to the needs of the most vulnerable children and their families

The secondary objectives of the study are:

- a) to offer costing scenarios that provide universal coverage in localities with low PPE attendance, paying attention to including the most vulnerable children
- b) to consider opportunities to engage private and civil sector stakeholders in early learning whilst increasing the quality of education provision.

In short, the study should provide an overview of the underlying causes of low attendance in pre-primary education and offer solutions how they could be addressed. We are looking for innovative, efficient, and affordable 'out of the box' suggestions for action, which could mean a changed role of parents, the central government, as well as the civil and private sectors in securing quality PPE.

2.2. Scope of work, coverage and time frame

According to the website of the Ministry for Administration, in March 2018, Croatia had 576 local and regional government units. This study envisions selecting between 5 to 10 different local government units to look at their financing and parent perspectives on pre-primary education in more detail. Selection criteria will include: budgeting and financing, the size of local government unit, enrolment rates into pre-primary education, localities with high rates of children living in or at risk of poverty and localities with large numbers of Roma (ie. Eastern Croatia and the mountainous regions of Croatia). We are assuming that children with special educational needs and learning disabilities are distributed proportionally across the country.

The consultancy will be expected to perform the following tasks:

- Collect and analyse available data on national and local spending on PPE, focusing on understanding high and low spending localities in particular
- Provide a calculation of the annual balance of costs and benefits for expanding inclusive PPE services in selected localities of low investment (including construction and maintenance of kindergartens, employment – with special attention to inclusion of vulnerable children, and education of teachers)
- Suggest alternative costing scenarios for the expansion of PPE services (e.g. with the involvement the private or civil sector)
- Explore tax reduction options for communities wishing to expand their PPE services
- Make a visual representation that helps to better understand the ways in which decisions on financing for PPE are made on the local level
- Investigate the knowledge, attitudes and perspectives of parents on pre-primary education, paying particular attention to including parents of the most vulnerable children (children with disabilities and special educational needs, Roma children and children living in or at risk of poverty)
- Conduct interviews with local and national decision makers on pre-primary education
- Ensure that all research is in line with UNICEF's standards on research ethics

The work would ideally produce a mixed-methods study that combines costing analyses, governance models, and available data on financing with views and experiences of stakeholders in local authorities and juxtaposes them with views of parents, including those from vulnerable groups (Roma, children with disabilities, children living in poverty), as their children usually are the most excluded from PPE.

It will be important to compare and contrast areas of low and high attendance, so that parallels can be drawn and reasons for low or high attendance could be better explained. Particular attention should be paid to learning under what conditions parents from vulnerable groups would be more likely to send their children into structured early learning.

Data from parents should supplement and triangulate the data from the governance and financing section of the study with real-life experiences.

The anticipated phases of the research process are described below and in more detail in section

5.3. Detailed timeline:

1st phase: desk review, 1,000-word methodological proposal (research protocol) with Power point presentation of methodology: October 2018

2nd phase: data collection, data analysis, submission of a 1,000 words progress report: December 2018

3rd phase: writing of the draft report (15,000 words), draft recommendations, fact sheets and detailed analysis, by March 2019

4th phase: detailed analysis and finalisation of the report (ca 25,000 words): April, May, June, July, August 2019

2.3. Audience and research findings

The expected audience for this report will be practitioners, academics, local governments, relevant ministries, parliament committees, political parties, and the wider public.

The findings from this study will be used as evidence in supporting UNICEF's agenda on pre-primary education, e.g. to advocate for increased access to pre-primary education, to model good practices in ensuring access to pre-primary education, and to strengthen capacities to offer good and accessible pre-primary education.

Furthermore, the findings will be used as input for the UNICEF's country office's programming and the advancement of solutions in pre-primary education more broadly.

The findings from this study are expected to provide evidence of good practices in pre-primary education in Croatia, offer costing models, and shed light on the bottlenecks and barriers for access to quality pre-primary education. This will serve academics, practitioners, civil society organisations, and the wider public alike. The findings will paint a more comprehensive picture on pre-primary education in Croatia. This will help practitioners, academics, politicians, civil society organisations, the media and the wider public to better understand their roles in advancing access to quality pre-primary education in Croatia.

Finally, the study's findings will also inform key decision makers about the needs and challenges in pre-primary education in Croatia and offer incentives for innovative, equitable and sustainable models of financing access to quality pre-primary education.

3. Methodology

3.1. Involvement of stakeholders and external quality assurance

The consultants are required to present and discuss the research protocol and the draft research report with the UNICEF country office which can invite other stakeholders, like relevant ministries or external experts to give their input and guide the research.

It is expected that a detailed research protocol will be put together by the selected team of consultants in October of 2018 and shared with the country office. The UNICEF country office will then invite like relevant ministries and external experts for consultation. Following the consultations, the research protocol will be further adjusted and approved to go into the succeeding stages.

Equally, a similar process will be conducted for the preparation of the research report in early 2019. These steps are also presented under point 5.3 of this ToR.

3.2. Likely research design, travel, and suggested research methods

The consultancy may involve travel to different parts of Croatia. Travel arrangements including purchase of air tickets is the responsibility of the selected candidates/institutions and an estimated cost of travel should be clearly indicated in the financial proposal. Calculations of travel costs and/or accommodation costs should be based on economy class travel regardless of the length of the travel. Cost estimates should be exclusive of all taxes as UNICEF is exempted from all taxes. Travel and accommodation costs will be approved after consultations with the UNICEF country office, once a detailed research protocol is provided by the selected consultants team in October 2018.

The consultants are encouraged to develop a research protocol that best addresses the purpose and scope of the intended research. The research design will follow on a literature review, which will include, but is not limited to the key readings listed at the end of this ToR.

In order to comprehensively address the research questions, and triangulate data, we suggest a mixed methods design, focusing on two main steps:

1. comparing financing and governance in 5 to 10 localities of varying sizes and with varying degrees of spending and attendance in pre-primary education.
2. In addition to that, the study will include a national perspective on governance and financing, so that recommendations on possible changes to governance and financing nationally can be made.

Following on that, research protocol is likely to include, but not limited to, the following research methods:

- Document analysis: analysis of existing regulations regarding financing, taxes and governance in pre-primary education, in order to identify windows for improvement (i.e, the involvement of the private sector, a change in regulations, new accountability mechanisms for investing in PPE), so that universal coverage to pre-primary education can be achieved.
- Budget analysis: analysis of available national and local data on spending on pre-primary education
- Identification of localities with low and high spending (low and high attendance) into PPE for case comparison
- Semi-structured in-depth, possibly iterative interviews of a number of local, county and national decision makers, civil society organisations and similar stakeholders involved in PPE
- Focus groups or interviews with parents (with particular attention to parents of children living in poverty, Roma children, and children with special educational needs)
- (Online) questionnaires for gaining parents' perspectives on financing in PPE
- Financial projections of selected communities with cost/benefit scenarios for expanding access in selected communities with low access.
- Financial projections for national decision makers focusing on cost/benefit scenarios for expanding access nation-wide

3.3. Data priorities and study participants

It is expected that this study will involve adults only (parents, stakeholders, and local decision makers). In dealings with them, it will be important to abide by UNICEF regulations on research ethics.

The focus of the study is the comparison between localities of low and high attendance of similar size, and the ways in which those localities make decisions on spending on pre-primary education. Data will be gathered not only from decision makers, but from parents and any other actors who can help in better understanding pre-primary education access in a particular locality. In addition to that, parent perspectives from the same locality will be gathered, so that a fuller picture on reasons for low or high attendance could be gained.

A second priority for data gathering is the understanding of the national perspective on pre-primary education. In other words, what regulations, policies and initiatives underlie the way in which pre-primary education attendance is prioritised or not prioritised and what can be done to advance them to achieve policies geared towards universal pre-primary attendance.

3.4. Generalisability and limitations

The aim of this study is to present research findings which will help in better understanding and advancing Croatian pre-primary education services. As mentioned under point 2.2. of this ToR and due to limitations on time, not all of the 567 local governments can be analysed for the ways in which they make decisions on pre-primary education financing.

For that reason, between 5 and 10 different localities should be selected to compare and contrast. The process of comparison and contrasting of selected cases should generate data which would be valid and reliable in the sense that the process of data collection and analysis consistent and appropriate to the research task.

On the other hand, some of the data gathered, in particular relating to governance regulations, will relate to the national level and will be generalisable for the country of Croatia.

Following on that, and this being an epistemologically pragmatic study, we expect that the main messages of the study will be rooted in triangulation and consistency of the research and analysis process.

What should be generalisable from the comparison of the case studies should be the lessons learned on governance, financing and parent perspectives. These findings do not necessarily have to be quantitative, but should feature elements that other local communities in Croatia can relate to.

4. Ethical considerations

Contractors are required to clearly identify any potential ethical issue, as well as the processes for ethical review and oversight of the research/data collection process in their proposal. UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis can be found at: <https://www.unicef.org/supply/files/ATTACHMENT IV-UNICEF Procedure for Ethical Standards.PDF> and should be consistently applied throughout the research process. The procedure contains the minimum standards and required procedures for research, evaluation and data collection and analysis undertaken or commissioned by UNICEF (including activities undertaken by individual and institutional contractors, and partners) involving human subjects or the analysis of sensitive secondary data. These standards explicitly recognise and reflect the spirit and intention of the Declaration of Helsinki (1964) and its attendant amendments, emphasising the importance of respect for and protection of human rights.

The following are brief explanations of the three key principles for ethical evidence generation:

- **Respect:** All evidence generating activities should ensure respect for all persons. Respect demands that individuals be treated as autonomous agents. An autonomous agent is an individual capable of deliberation about personal goals and of acting under the direction of such deliberation. To respect autonomy is to give weight to autonomous persons' values, preferences, and beliefs and to recognise their capability for self-legislation, their ability to make judgments, to state their opinions and to make choices.
- **Beneficence and Non-maleficence**
 - **Beneficence** - The principle of beneficence refers to the requirement that actions within evidence generating activities promote the well-being of individuals, communities or the society as a whole. Beneficence includes the concept of reciprocity, whereby the evidence generated is conveyed back to the participants so that they may triangulate findings, contextualise their participation and potentially gain from the knowledge disseminated.
 - **Non-maleficence** - The principle of non-maleficence, doing no harm, requires avoiding harm or injury to participants, both through acts of commission or omission.
- **Justice:** The principle of justice requires that consideration is given to who benefits and who bears the burden of the evidence generation. This requires that due reflection is given to determining the appropriateness of proposed methods of selecting participants.

The research will apply the "do no harm" principle i.e. avoiding constituting a risk to participants in the research.

5. Requirements

5.1. Key deliverables

All outputs should be submitted to the country office in British English, and gender-competent in language and presentation. The key output of the consultancy is the final report of 20,000 to 30,000 words excluding appendices. A suggested outline for both the draft and final the report will cover the following:

- Purpose and objectives of the report
- Background information, such as, but not limited to, socio-economic and demographic context, legislation, policies, governance in social policies, local level specificities
- Methodology, concepts and terminology used, assessment of methodology (including limitations)
- Key findings, conclusions, and recommendations on pre-primary education in Croatia
- Descriptions of best practices
- Possible cost-effective, equitable, and financially and institutionally sustainable scenarios for expanding early learning services in selected localities
- Appendices detailing data collection and analysis (such as types of data analysis, interview schedules, relevant transcripts, questionnaires, etc.), and other accompanying material useful for the report
- Executive summary

In addition to that, during the research process, the following will be delivered

- Research Protocol of 1,000 words with Power point presentation of methodology
- 1,000-word progress report on data collection and preliminary findings
- Fact sheets with relevant information from study for advocacy purposes
- Power point presentation containing main findings and recommendations for advocacy purposes with the decision makers and the wider community

5.2. Team qualifications

The consultants are encouraged to find best ways to utilise their resources and skills. In other words, there are no fixed requirements on the number of people working on the team and their levels of involvement. A recommendation is that the team consists of experts in the field of education policy and public finance/budgeting. It will be the responsibility of each individual team to showcase the required qualifications through CVs and publications of its members against the technical selection criteria that will be made explicit in the Request for Proposals.

The research team leader will be accountable for demonstrating that the consultancy team has the appropriate knowledge, research and analytical skills for conducting the study to a high standard and in time. The research team leader will be accountable for managing her/his team efficiently. Below are some qualifications that we recommend the research team to possess.

- Advanced degree(s) in social sciences/education
- University degree in social science, economics or finance
- Thorough understanding of issues relating to early childhood and pre-primary education, particularly financing and governance in decentralised systems
- Involvement in policy development, research and analysis related to preschool education
- Expertise in carrying out analysis of the costs of public services, their affordability, cost-effectiveness, and cost/benefit studies
- Technical competence and experience in researching and analysing pre-primary childhood education policies
- Technical competence in conducting mixed-methods studies (both interview schedules and analysis and survey design and quantitative data analysis)
- Technical competence and experience of research in public expenditures analysis and social policy
- Strong report writing and analytical skills

- Previous experience of working with UNICEF, preferably in the Eastern Europe and Asia Region would be a strong asset
- Teamwork abilities
- Excellent communication skills (both oral and written)
- Proficiency in English and Croatian

5.3. Detailed timeline

The table below displays an anticipated research schedule that may be adjusted in cooperation and agreement of the UNICEF country office in Croatia.

Description of activity	Responsible person(s)	Anticipated timeline
Research Protocol Development		
Desk review of reference material <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compilation of a list of the most important background material, documents, and reports.	Research team, UNICEF team and implementing partners	October 2018
Development of a research protocol that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A comprehensive set of information about the planned research and how it will be conducted• Detailed information on methodology with described approach, sampling strategy, data source, data analysis methods, methodology limitations, participation criteria, key limitations, instruments, etc.• Ethics considerations explained	Research team	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submission of the Research Protocol	Research team	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review and approval of Research protocol	UNICEF team, relevant ministries, and external reviewers	November 2018
Research – implementation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data/information collection and analysis by applying agreed methodology• Progress report regarding data collection and analysis	Research team	By end of January 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Debriefing meeting with the UNICEF country office to discuss the preliminary findings, conclusions and tentative recommendations.	Research team, UNICEF team	
Research – reporting		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submission of the draft report, with additional summary documents, a list of potential partners, key advocacy messages• Power point presentation containing main findings and recommendations for advocacy purposes• Key advocacy messages relevant to Croatian decision makers	Research team	January through March 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comments by UNICEF	UNICEF country office team	April 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submission of the 2nd research draft report	Research team	April 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of the research report by UNICEF and external experts	UNICEF country office and external reviewers	May 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submission of the Final Research Report• Submission of summary documents	Research team	Autumn 2019
Presentation:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of key findings to UNICEF Croatia team, major stakeholders and partners	Research team	Iterative, following the milestones in the research process (preliminary data, first draft, second draft, final draft)

5.4. Data sharing requirements

It is the responsibility of the research team to store all collected data appropriately. The UNICEF country office can require of the research consultancy team to share any data collected during the research process at any point during the consultancy.

All personal data should be accessible to team members, but no one else. The researchers need to set up secure systems (a) to ensure that other staff within their institutions cannot access their data via the shared staff drives, and (b) to ensure secure data transfer between institutions. Cloud based storage with limited sharing rights could be considered in this instance. Different personal data files need to be link-able, they need to be held separately so that they can only be linked purposely, by researchers who are authorised to do so. There is also a need to ensure that data cannot be removed from secure systems in ways that might compromise data security. Additional information on data handling will be provided by UNICEF Croatia.

6. Communication and dissemination

All materials developed will remain the copyright of UNICEF and UNICEF will be free to adapt and modify them in the future.

Communication and dissemination of the research findings will be undertaken in close collaboration with the Education Officer, Ivana Ćosić, and the Head of Communications, Gorana Banda.

UNICEF staff members, consultants, contractors and partners will follow the *UNICEF Guidance on External Academic Publishing* (January 2017) when engaging in external academic publishing, whether in print or digital form, of the final Research Report.

7. Management and supervision

The research team will work in close collaboration with, and report directly to the Education Officer, Ivana Ćosić, and in consultation with Monitoring & Evaluation Officer, Marijana Šalinović.

The research team leader(s) will lead the process during all stages and coordinate with UNICEF and other stakeholders involved. The research team leader will make sure that all research team members adequately contribute to the process and produce requested deliverables. The research team leader will be accountable that all components of the research are conducted ethically, to a high research standard, and in a timely fashion; including the development of the methodology and quality assurance during data analysis and report writing.

The research team should act with integrity and respect for all stakeholders.

All personal data should be accessible to team members, but no one else. The researchers need to set up secure systems (a) to ensure that other staff within their institutions cannot access their data via the shared staff drives, and (b) to ensure secure data transfer between institutions. Cloud-based storage with limited sharing rights could be considered in this instance. Different personal data files need to be link-able, they need to be held separately so that they can only be linked purposely, by researchers who are authorised to do so. There is also a need to ensure that data cannot be removed from secure systems in ways that might compromise data security.

UNICEF staff will review and approve the deliverables and provide relevant documents. Additional quality assurance mechanisms will be applied through the external experts' reviews of the Research ToR, the Research Protocol and the Research Draft Report. Criteria for performance are quality of process and delivered products (instruments, reports, etc.), timeliness, accuracy, initiative, responsibility, competence and communication.

8. Resourcing

The consultancy may involve travel to different parts of Croatia. Travel arrangements including purchase of air tickets is the responsibility of the selected candidates/institutions and an estimated cost of travel should be clearly indicated in the financial proposal. Calculations of travel costs and/or accommodation costs should be based on economy class travel regardless of the length of the travel. Cost estimates should be exclusive of all taxes as UNICEF is exempted from all taxes. Travel and accommodation costs will be approved after consultations with the UNICEF country office, once a detailed study protocol is provided by the selected consultants team.

Key readings:

- Bertram, T., & Pascal, C. (2016). *Early childhood policies and systems in eight countries: Findings from IEA's early childhood education study. Early Childhood Policies and Systems in Eight Countries: Findings from IEA's Early Childhood Education Study*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-39847-1>
- Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J.-C. (1977). *Reproduction in education, society and culture* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Campbell, F., Conti, G., Heckman, J. J., Moon, S. H., Pinto, R., Pungello, E., & Pan, Y. (2014). Early childhood investments substantially boost adult health. *Science*, 1478(March), 1478–1485. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1248429>
- Centre for peace studies. (2016). Map of inequality (Geometar nejednakosti). Retrieved January 15, 2018, from <http://nejednakost.cms.hr/obrazovanje/>
- Coleman, J. S., Holson, C. J., McPartland, J., Mood, A. M., Weinfeld, F. D., & York, R. L. (1966). *Equality of Educational Opportunity*. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED012275.pdf>
- Croatian Parliament. Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (in Croatian) (2008). Croatia. Retrieved from <http://www.zakon.hr/z/317/Zakon-o-odgoju-i-obrazovanju-u-osnovnoj-i-srednjoj-skoli>
- Croatian Parliament. State Pedagogic Standard for Pre-school Education (2008).
- Dobrotic, I., & Matkovic, T. (2017). *Early and pre-school education in relation to Barcelona targets and the Croatian pedagogic standard (in Croatian)*.
- Dobrotić, I., Matković, T., & Menger, V. (2018). Analysis of access, quality, capacities, and financing of early childhood education in Croatia (in Croatian). Ministry for Demographics, Family, Youth and Social Policy. Retrieved from <http://www.mdomsp.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/Publikacije/Analiza pristupačnosti, kvalitete, kapaciteta i financiranja sustava ranog i predškolskog odgoja i obrazovanja u Republici Hrvatskoj.pdf>
- European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice/Eurostat. (2014). *Key Data on Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe* (2014 Editi). Luxembourg: Publications office of the European Union. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Eurostat. (2017). Pupils aged between 4 years old and the starting age of compulsory education as percentage of the corresponding age group. Retrieved September 20, 2017, from http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_uoe_enra10&lang=en
- Heckman, J. J. (2012). The case for investing in young children. In B. Falk (Ed.), *Defending childhood* (pp. 235–241). New York: Teachers College Press.
- National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2014). Excessive Stress Disrupts the Architecture of the Developing Brain: Working Paper 3. *Working Papers*. Harvard University. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1151-2916.1918.tb17232.x>
- UNICEF. (2014). Building Better Brains: New Frontiers in Early Childhood Development, 18. Retrieved from <http://www.unicef.cn/en/index.php?m=content&c=index&a=show&catid=220&id=2189>
- UNICEF. (2015). *Poverty and well-being of preschool children in Croatia (In Croatian)*. Zagreb: UNICEF. Retrieved from http://www.unicef.hr/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Publikacija_Siromastvo_Unicef_2015_online.pdf