



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



ESIPP

EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH
POSITIVE PARENTING

Developing parent education in autism in south east Europe: Introduction to the ESIPP project

David Preece

Project coordinator, University of Northampton



European
University Cyprus
LAUREATE INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITIES



University of Zagreb
Faculty of Education and
Rehabilitation Sciences



What is ESIPP?

- 3 year project running from September 2015-August 2018
- Funded by the European Commission (Erasmus+ Programme, Strategic Partnership)
- 9 funded partner organisations – universities, charities and educators from five European Countries
- Focus – parent education and training for parents of children on the autism spectrum in 3 south-east European countries where diagnosis and service provision in autism is limited and developing

ESIPP – Objectives of the partnership

- Develop an **evidence-based model** for delivering parent education in autism
- Develop a **core curriculum** and **locally appropriate training** materials
- Use these materials to **provide** parent education to Croatian, Cypriot and Macedonian families living with autism
- **Evaluate** the **effectiveness** of the materials and the **impact** of the training using quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis
- **Share the materials** with stakeholders and **make recommendations** to policy- and decision-makers across Europe

Why does parent education in autism matter?

- Positive effects of parent education:
 - Helps parents to understand their children with autism
 - Helps reduce stress in the family
 - Improves skills – supports the child's learning, as well as family functioning
 - Improves social, educational and economic outcomes for those with autism and their families
 - Can reduce need for long term dependence on external support (that may or may not be there)

Parent education – Benefits and problems

- Range of parent education models in existence
- Some based on specific approaches (e.g. TEACCH, ABA)
- Some more eclectic: e.g. NAS EarlyBird, Spectrum/Reflections (Northants)
- But...
 - Can be issues about attendance, child care, waiting times, access, distance, intrusiveness
 - Generally based on US/UK models: these may be unavailable in or inappropriate for other settings

A background image of two young children, a girl and a boy, sitting on the floor and playing with various toys. The girl is on the left, wearing a striped shirt, and the boy is on the right, wearing a dark shirt. They are both focused on their play. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter and a large, light-colored 'ESPP' watermark.

What have we done so far?

Developing the curriculum and training materials

Parent education curriculum and materials

- Approx. 12 hour education programme—*Positive Approaches to Autism*
- 6 core modules
 - Introduction to autism
 - Using structure and visual supports
 - Sensory sensitivities
 - Communication
 - Social development and interaction
 - Understanding and managing challenging behaviour
- Also extra modules on specific issues (e.g. eating, sleeping, puberty)



Parent education events



- Five sets of training events for Croatian, Cypriot and Macedonian parents 2016-2018 (c.300 in total)
- Trainings across the counties
 - e.g. Skopje, Veles, Ohrid, Bitola
- Local training teams being developed to support sustainability

Parent education events



- Parent education events have comprised
 - Core training curriculum
 - Extra modules on specific issues
 - Lectures
 - Group activities
 - Opportunities for individual consultation

A background image of two young children, a girl and a boy, sitting on the floor and playing with various toys, including a toy car and blocks. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. A large, light-colored 'ESPP' watermark is visible diagonally across the center of the image.

What have we done so far

Evaluating the project

Evaluation

- Gathering data from multiple sources to rigorously evaluate the project
 - Pre-training, post-training and follow-up questionnaires to all parents and carers attending training
 - Includes Quality of Life evaluation instrument (*CarerQoL*, Hoefman 2014)
 - Interviews with sample of parents
 - Trainer keeping reflective diaries throughout project
 - Trainer focus groups
 - Document analysis – training materials (different versions)



Evaluation (continued)

- Project Advisory Group
 - Parents, individuals with autism, professionals from Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands and United Kingdom
- External Project Auditor
- Progress, interim and final reports to and audit by European Commission and UK Erasmus+ national agency
 - Full funding dependent on successful acceptance of final report

Key findings so far (Cohorts 1 & 2)

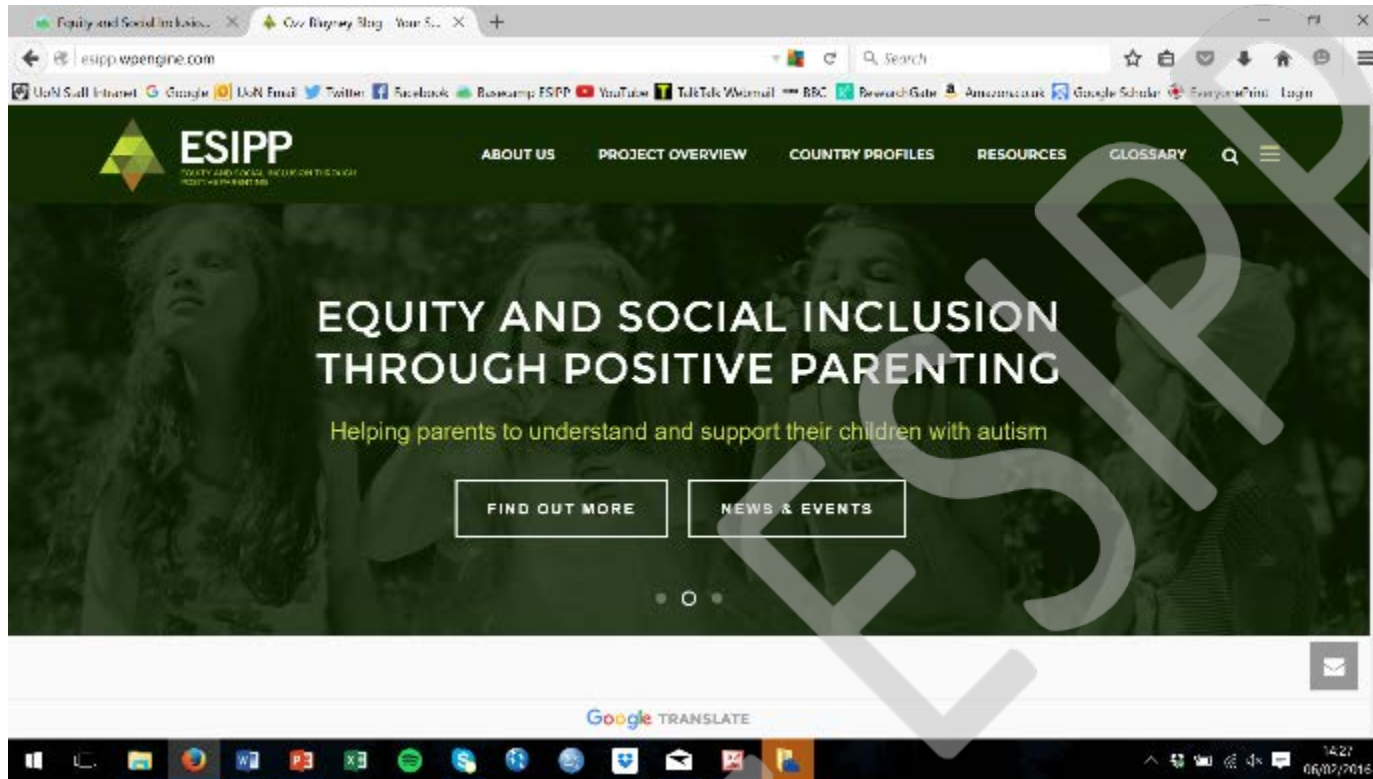
- Total parents trained in cohorts 1 and 2 = 108 (CR = 43, CY = 29, MK = 36)
- Positive impact
 - Improvement of everyday life, behaviour, communication
 - Increased understanding of autism and awareness of factors that may negatively affect child and family life
 - Improved ability to manage situations
 - Significant impact on parental happiness and ability to handle family stress
 - Opportunity to meet and interact with other parents

A background image of two young children, a girl and a boy, sitting on the floor and playing with various toys, including a toy car and blocks. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter and a large, light-colored 'ESIPP' watermark.

What have we done so far

Sharing information about ESIPP

Sharing information about ESIPP – website and social media



- Website www.esipp.eu
- Quarterly e-newsletter
 - **PLEASE SUBSCRIBE AND FOLLOW OUR PROJECT**
- Twitter and Facebook
 - @ESIPP_EUROPE 
 - ESIPP project 

Sharing information about ESIPP – conferences and TV



- Conferences in the project countries...plus UK, Ireland, Serbia, Denmark and Brazil
- TV programmes in the project countries



Sharing information about ESIPP – academic journals



Open Access, available to all

Getting people's views about ESIPP

Parent and professional conferences in:

- Zagreb (March 2017)
- Northampton (June 2017),
- Skopje (November 2017)
- Cyprus (March 2018)



Disclaimer

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.