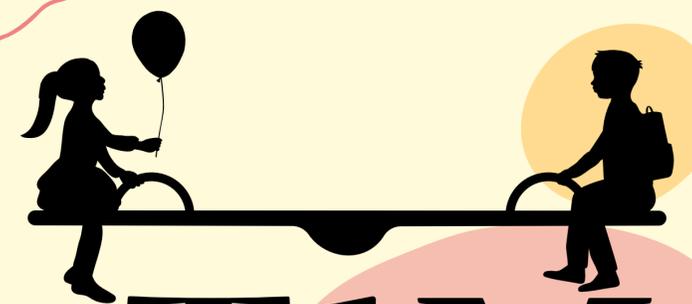


# TRANSITION IS OUR MISSION

JANUARY 2022



**TIM**

TRANSITION IS OUR MISSION

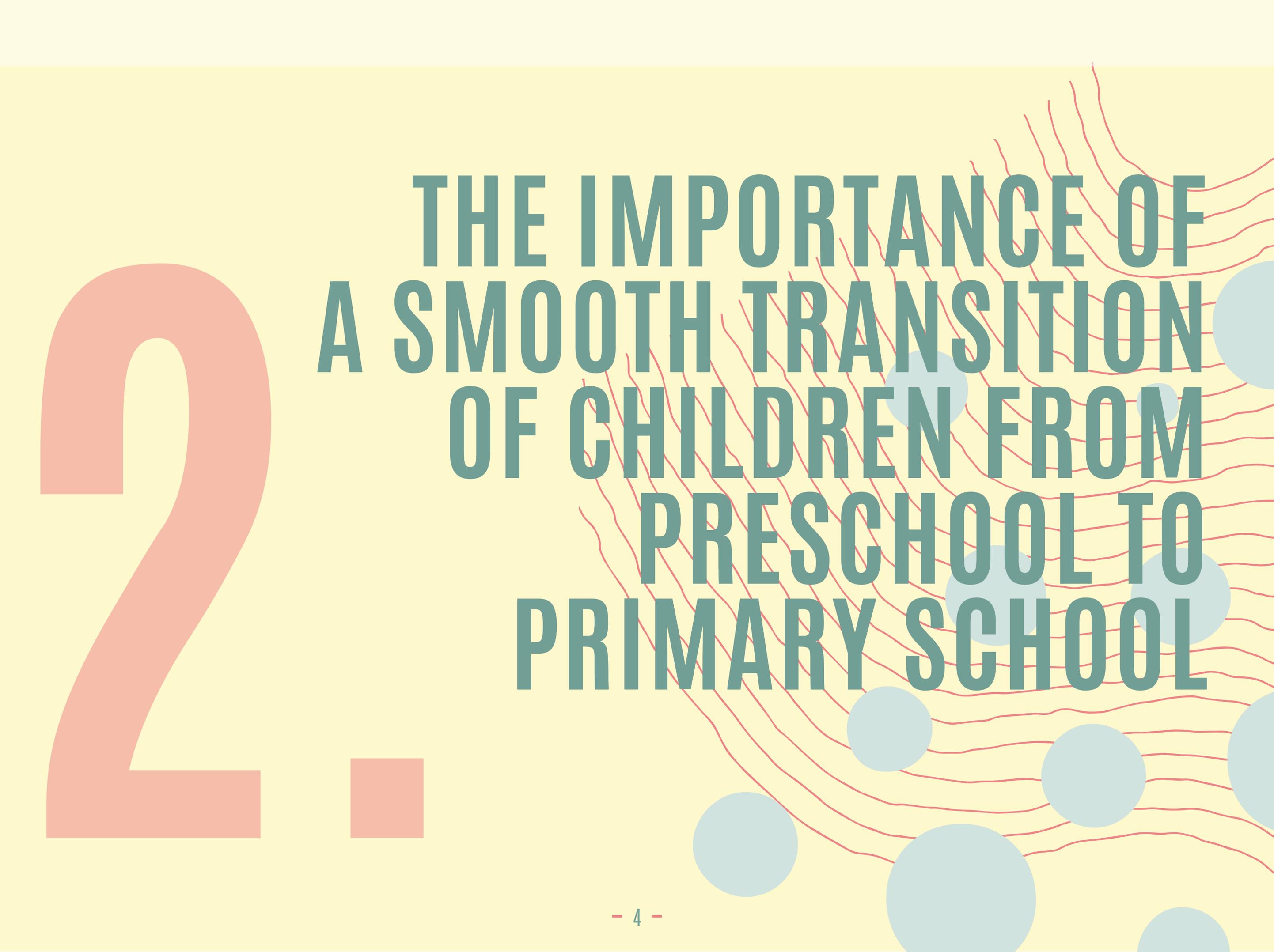




# ABOUT THE TIM PROJECT

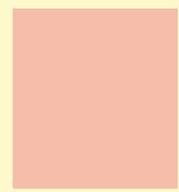
**Transition Is Our Mission (TIM)** is an international project which connects 8 partners from Slovenia, Croatia and Latvia. With the TIM initiative, we want to contribute to raising the awareness of preschool and school professionals about the importance of ensuring the smooth transition of children from preschool to school and raising their competencies in this field.

The project runs from September 2019 to June 2022 and is co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union.



# THE IMPORTANCE OF A SMOOTH TRANSITION OF CHILDREN FROM PRESCHOOL TO PRIMARY SCHOOL

2



The transitions from home environment to preschool and primary school signify important changes in children and the life of their families. Positive experiences of the transition between different educational environments can be a key factor for children's future success and development, while negative experiences can lead to long-term barriers and lower educational achievement, especially for more disadvantaged children (Dumcius, Peeters, Hayes et al., 2014)<sup>1</sup>. A more unified approach in different learning environments with the aim of ensuring continuity of children's experience can significantly improve children's learning outcomes and their socio-emotional development. Based on this, professional reflection between preschool and primary school teachers (through inter-institutional professional learning communities) and the involvement of parents in the transition process are the key factors in ensuring successful transitions (OECD, 2017)<sup>2</sup>.

**There are three aspects to consider with the aim of ensuring a soft transition: Continuity of the curriculum/teaching programmes, developmental goals, pedagogy and pedagogical approaches:**

- Children are protagonists of their learning → child-centred approaches, active learning, ...
- Reconsidering the daily routine (breaks, passive listening time, pedagogical approaches, ...)
- Classroom organisation.

**Ensuring cooperation between different contexts (partnership with families, preschool-school-other institutions cooperation):**

- Warm, welcoming, inclusive practice.
- Clear, transparent informing of parents by the preschool.
- Support at enrolment.
- Presenting the new environment to children and their parents.

**Developing a partnership approach in different learning environments (preschool and primary school) to unify their approach:**

- Investing in inter-institutional learning communities (educators, teachers, counsellors).
- Joint education of educators and teachers.
- Reflective observation of mutual practices.

---

<sup>1</sup> Dumcius, R., Peeters, J., Hayes, N. (2014). Study on the effective use of early childhood education and care in preventing early school leaving- Final Report.

<sup>2</sup> OECD (2017), Starting Strong 2017: Key OECD Indicators on Early Childhood Education and Care, Starting Strong, OECD Publishing, Paris,

# ABOUT THE RESEARCH

## THE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The research was conducted in the school year 2019/20 (before the Covid-19 pandemic) in order to share experiences and give insights into different practices of ensuring a smooth transition of children from kindergarten to school in participating countries.

### For the purpose of this research we wanted to find out:

- what the main differences of pedagogical approach in preschool and school practices are (to what extent the practice is child-centred in preschool vs. school classes),
- to what extent preschool and primary school teachers already cooperate in a professional way (joint training, observing practice with reflective discussion which followed the observation, professional learning community, etc.),
- what kind of activities for children and their parents are organised by preschool and school for ensuring a smooth transition,
- dilemmas and fears faced by preschool and school teachers, children, and their parents during the transition of a child from kindergarten to school

## RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The sample included **5 %** of preschools and primary schools from all regions of Slovenia, Croatia and Latvia, from which we include:

# 526

preschool teachers who worked with children in the last year of preschool in the school year 2018/19,

# 602

primary school teachers who worked with first-grade children in the current school year 2019/20).

From two sampled preschools and two primary schools in each country we also include:

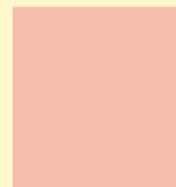
	SLOVENIA	CROATIA	LATVIA
preschool children enrolled in preschool for the last year,	<b>16</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>16</b>
first-graders	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>
parents of preschool children enrolled in preschool for the last year,	<b>16</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>
parents of first-graders.	<b>21</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>

## METHODOLOGY

- Anonymous online questionnaire for preschool teachers,
- anonymous online questionnaire for primary school teachers,
- anonymous questionnaire for parents,
- structured interviews with children and drawing activity.

4

**BRIEF  
OVERVIEW OF THE  
EDUCATIONAL  
SYSTEM**



	SLOVENIA	CROATIA	LATVIA
<b>Preschool institutions which provide education and care of children, aged 0-6</b>	<p>Non-compulsory</p> <p>Independent (public and private) preschools.</p> <p>Public preschool at school (1 organisation).</p>	<p>Non-compulsory</p> <p>Preschools, public (founded by Republic of Croatia or the local government and self-government units), religious (founded by religious communities) or private (founded by other legal entities and natural persons).</p> <p>Preschool programmes: obligatory one year before entering compulsory primary school, held as a part of the regular preschool programme or as a separate programme in preschools or schools.</p>	<p>Non-compulsory</p> <p>Public and private preschools. Special pre-primary classes at general education institutions.</p> <p>Compulsory from the age of 5, for two years before entering primary school.</p>
<b>Enrolment rate of children in ECEC institutions in the 2020/21 school year</b>	Age 1-5: 82.5 % children (93.7 % of the population aged 4-5)	Age 0-3: 21.20 % Age 3-5: 36.43 % Age 5-7: 42.37 %	Age 1-5: 86% Age 5-7: 99.9%
<b>Compulsory education age</b>	6	5	5
<b>Primary school entry age</b>	6	6	7

## SLOVENIA

## CROATIA

## LATVIA

### Number of children in preschool classrooms

2 age groups:

**1st age group:** children aged 1–3  
9–14 children (age homogenous class)  
7–10 children (heterogeneous class)

**2nd age group:** children aged 3–6  
14–19 children,  
age 3–4 (homogenous class)  
14–24 children,  
age 4–6 (heterogeneous class)  
14–21 children,  
age 3–6 (heterogeneous class)

6–12 months (max. 5)  
13–18 months (max. 8)  
19–24 months (max. 12)  
in the 3rd year of life (max. 14)  
in the 4th year of life (max. 18)  
in the 5th year of life (max. 20)  
in the 6th year of life (max. 23)  
in the 7th year of life – starting school (max. 25)

Heterogeneous classes:  
1–2 years of life (max. 10)  
1–3 years of life (max. 12)  
3–starting school (max. 20)  
4–starting school (max. 22)

The current normative regulation does not determine the number of children in the group of a pre-school educational institution. However, this does not mean that an unlimited number of children can attend a group. The institution must comply with hygiene requirements – each child under the age of three needs 2.5 m<sup>2</sup> of group space and 1.8 m<sup>2</sup> of sleeping space, while each child over the age of three needs 3.0 m<sup>2</sup> of group space and 2.0 m<sup>2</sup> of sleeping space. The possibilities of high-quality implementation of the pre-school education program must also be evaluated.

### Number of ECEC practitioners in preschool classrooms

1 preschool teacher and 1 assistant per group.

6 hours regulated time of co-working in the group each day.

3 ECEC practitioners in groups of children aged 6 months–1 year.  
2 ECEC practitioners for children of other age groups (the group is with 1 ECEC practitioner for most of the day).

An hour or more of co-working (for programmes which last 7–10 hours).

2 teachers and 1 assistant per group (usually 1 teacher and 1 assistant are in the group at the same time).

Non-regulated time of teachers co-working.

	SLOVENIA	CROATIA	LATVIA
<b>Education of ECEC practitioners in preschool classrooms</b>	<p>Preschool teachers: master's degree of preschool education or high school degree in preschool education.</p> <p>Preschool assistant teacher: preschool secondary education or any secondary education with vocational retraining in preschool education.</p>	<p>Preschool teachers: min. bachelor's degree in preschool education (professional or academic study programme).</p> <p>Other profiles can be employed as preschool teachers only for shorter periods in case there is a deficit of preschool teachers in the labour market.</p>	<p>Teacher-training programme (min. bachelor's degree required).</p>
<b>Increased postponed enrolment for a year</b>	<p>2010: 4.5 % (809 children)</p> <p>2017: 8.3 % (1,846 children)</p> <p>2018/19: 9.7 % (2,096 children)</p>	<p>2013/14: 6.11 % (2,459 children)</p> <p>2014/15: 6.58 % (2,686 children)</p> <p>2015/16: 6.75 % (2,825 children)</p> <p>2016/17: 7.77 % (3,149 children)</p> <p>2017/18: 7.76 % (3,105 children)</p> <p>2018/19: 9.00 % (3,464 children)</p> <p>2019/20: 7.18 % (2,727 children)</p>	<p>The child begins primary education in the calendar year in which they turn 7. Depending on the state of health and psychological readiness, a child may start the acquisition of basic education one year earlier in accordance with the wishes of the parents or one year later on the basis of the opinion of a family doctor. No official data on postponement of the enrolment is available in Latvia.</p>
<b>Number of professionals in first grades</b>	2	1	1

	SLOVENIA	CROATIA	LATVIA
<b>Number of hours per week when professionals in first grades co-work in the classroom</b>	<p>10 hours per week (15–23 pupils) 15 hours per week (24–28 pupils)</p> <p>If Roma children are included in the classroom: 15 hours per week (10–14 pupils) 20 hours per week (15–21 pupils)</p> <p>In a heterogenous classroom: 10 hours (12 pupils from 2 different grades) 10 hours (10 pupils from 3 or more grades)</p>	Non-applicable	Non-applicable
<b>Education of professionals in first grades</b>	<p>First teacher: Primary school teacher education</p> <p>Second teacher: master’s degree of preschool education or high school degree in preschool education or primary teacher</p>	Primary school teacher education	Primary school teacher education

5



# MAIN INSIGHTS

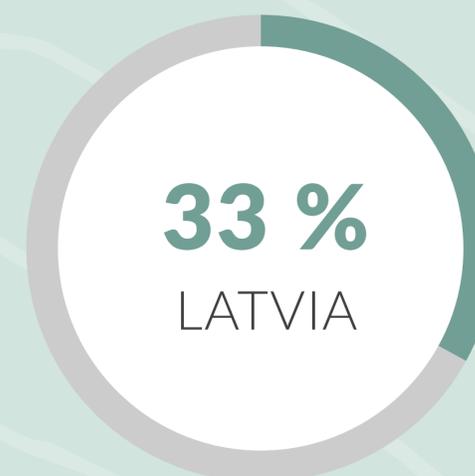
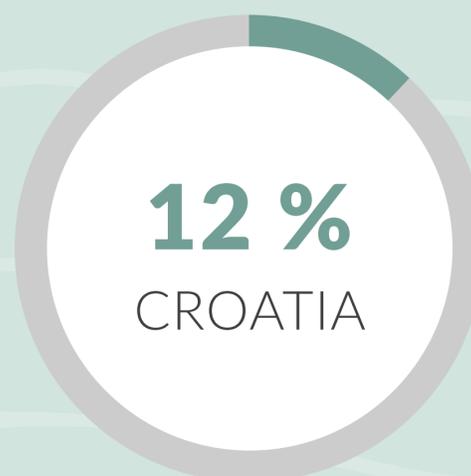
DO YOU KNOW WHAT  
PRESCHOOL AND SCHOOL  
TEACHERS HAVE TOLD US?

- I. In the past school year, less than 30% of **preschool teachers** in all three countries **observed the practice in primary school**.

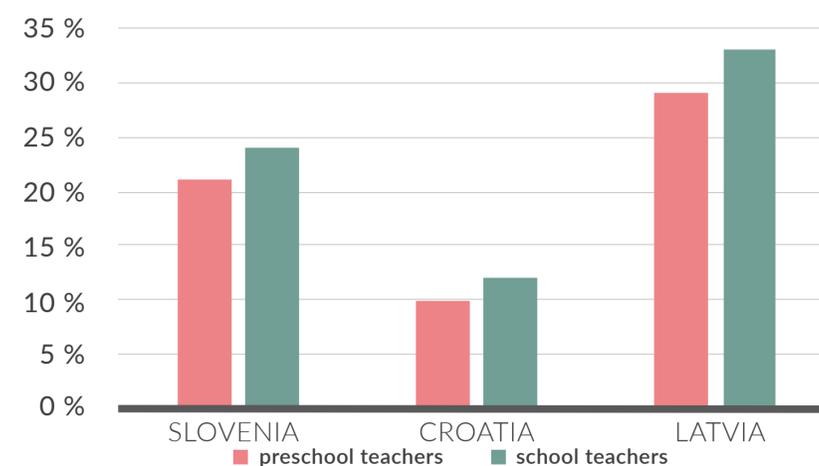


Almost half of these teachers conducted observation during the preschool classroom's visit with children to the first grade. There are just a few preschool teachers that planned a visit (without preschool children) with the aim of observing the practice in the first grade.

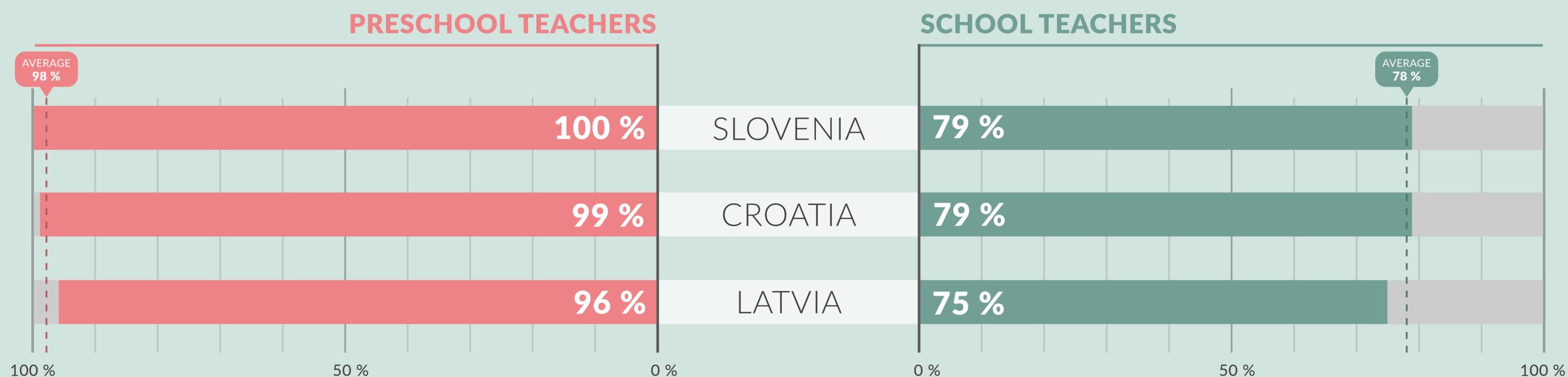
II. Only some **school teachers** in all three countries **observed practice in preschool in the past school year.**



In comparison to the results of the preschool teachers, there were slightly more school teachers in all three countries who observed the practice of their colleagues in preschool. The most often answer for not doing that was, “It was not offered/organized.”

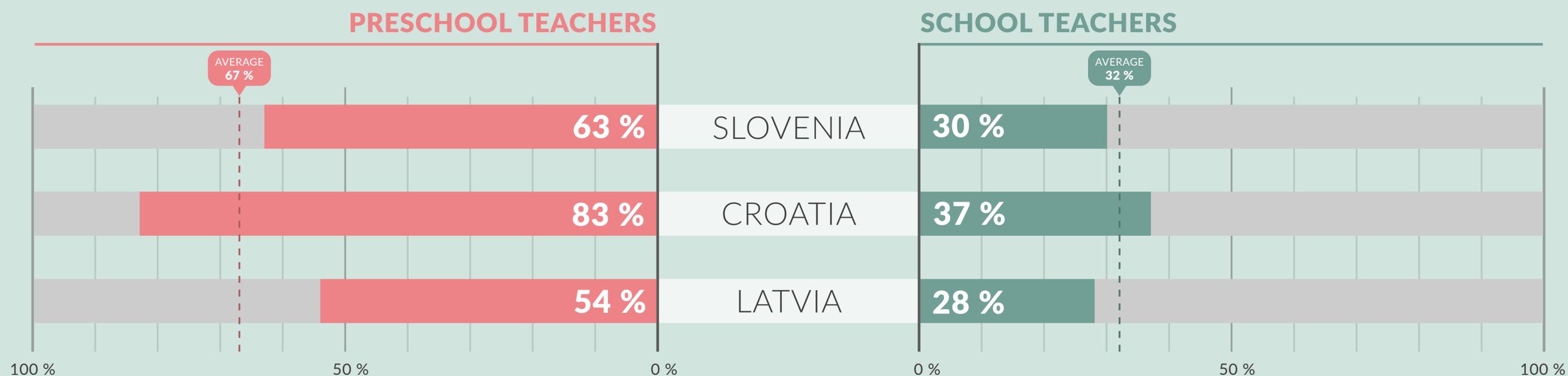


III. Almost all **preschool teachers** in all three countries **respond to children every day with a hug, holding their hands, taking them in their lap, etc., when they express any need to be comforted or at arrival/ departure**, while this practice is reported in less than 80 % of **school teachers** in all three countries.



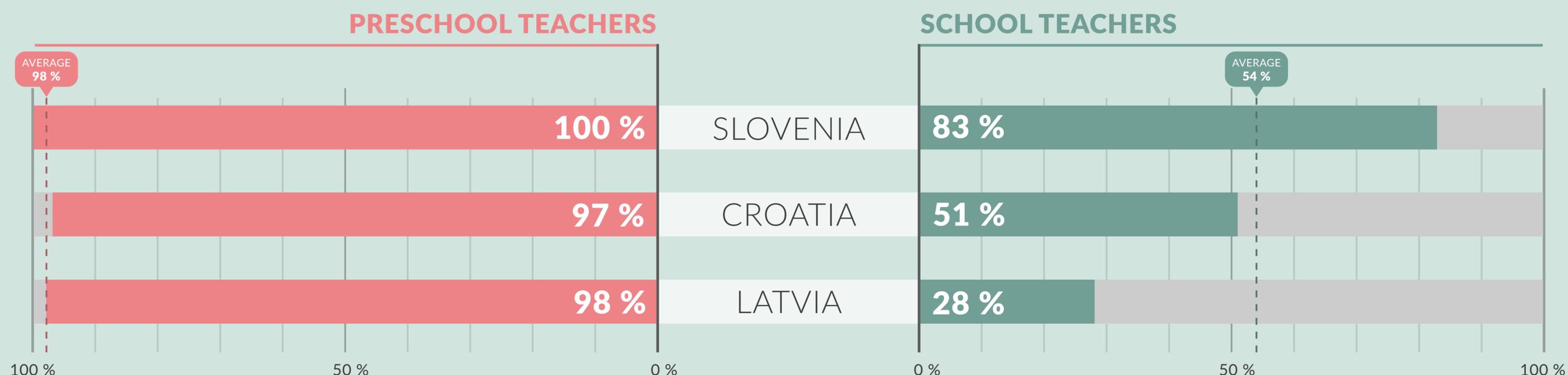
The difference between preschool and school teachers regarding this practice shows the differences in the understanding of children's needs for closeness, the comfort and safety of preschool and school teachers.

IV. There are many more **preschool teachers** in all three countries who **enable children to explore and experiment every day** vs. **school teachers**.



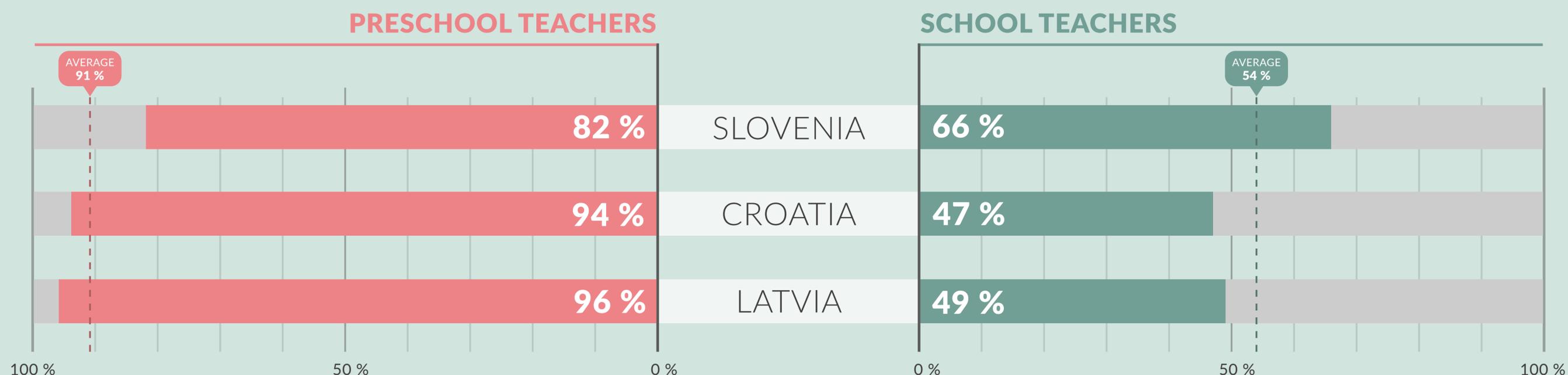
In Croatia, preschool and school teachers provide the most possibilities to explore and experiment. At the same time, the biggest difference between these two environments is also observed in the same country. With the aim of ensuring quality pedagogical practice and a smooth transition in preschool and school, it is important to provide children with many opportunities to explore and experiment in both settings.

- V. Almost all **preschool teachers** in all three countries **organize at least three activity centres, which enable individual approach, every day in their classes**, while the percentage of **school teachers** who provide that every day is lower. The smallest difference is between preschool and school teachers in Slovenia, and the biggest difference is in Latvia. In Croatia, only half of all school teachers provide this, and in Latvia, only one third.



The very low use of activity centres in Croatian and Latvian primary schools can be explained by the fact that the establishment of activity centres in the learning environment of pre-school is a recommendation of the State Guidelines of pre-school education, but in relation to the school environment, there is no such regulation. Therefore, the school classroom environment is most often arranged according to the teacher's traditional frontal teaching style.

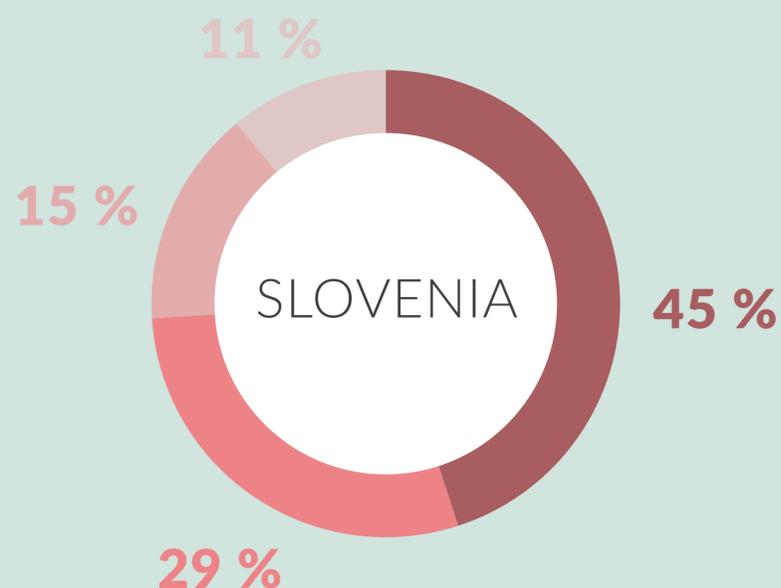
VI. Almost all **preschool teachers** provide unstructured material available for children every day while there is a smaller number of **school teachers** who provide unstructured material every day. The difference between preschool and school teachers in Slovenia is around 20 %, while the difference in Croatia and Latvia is almost 50 %.



In the case of Croatia and Latvia this result can be explained by the learning environment of school classrooms and low use of activity centres in Latvian schools in particular, as such materials are usually placed in such centres.

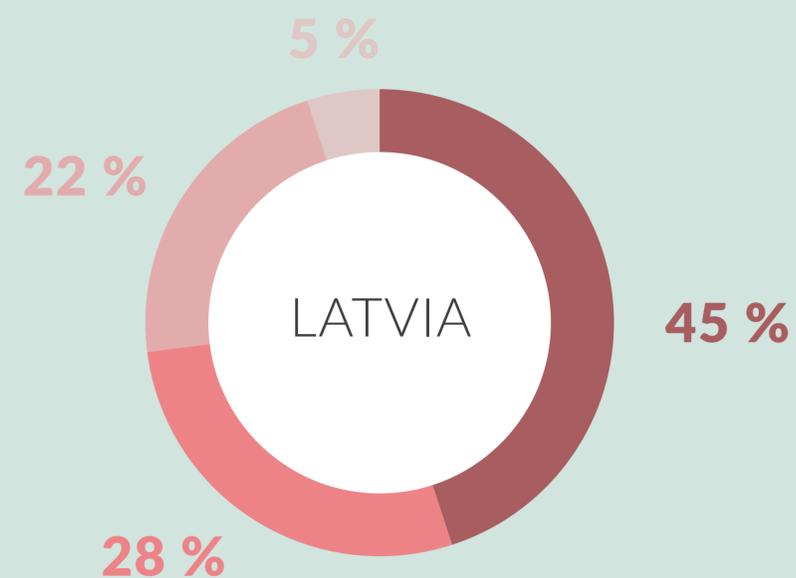
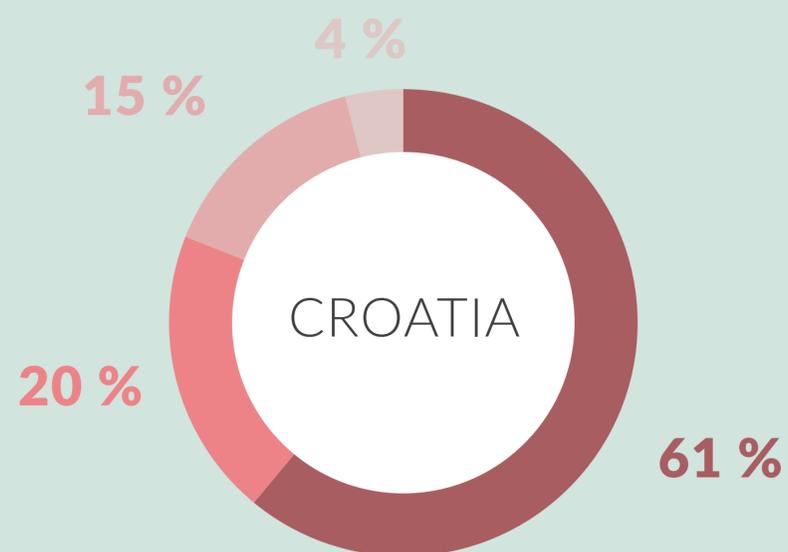
VII. The most **frequently mentioned skills (which are important for children before entering primary school)** by preschool and school teachers in Slovenia and Croatia are those concerning the emotional-personal development of children, among which independence is most often mentioned (independence in all kinds of way, such as taking care of themselves, dressing up, and feeding). The most frequently cited skills by preschool and school teachers in Latvia are those concerning cognitive development of children, among which reading skills are most often mentioned. In all three countries skills regarding physical development are least frequently mentioned, among which fine motor skills are most often cited. Only Slovenian school teachers mentioned social development of children least frequently.

## PRESCHOOL



SLOVENIA		Area of development	Most frequently identified skill
45 %		Emotional-personal devel.	Independence
29%		Cognitive devel.	Speech and language skills; concentration/ attention span
15 %		Social devel.	Social maturity
11 %		Physical devel.	Fine motor skills (graphomotor skills)

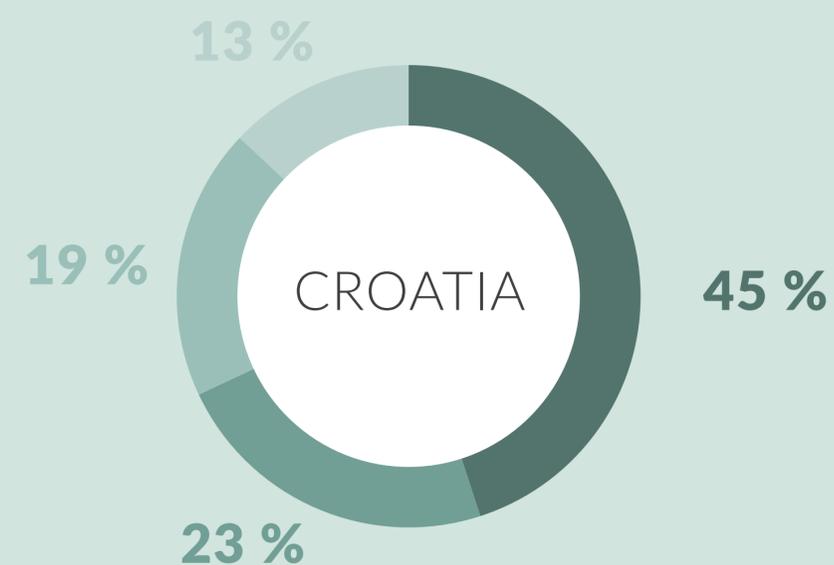
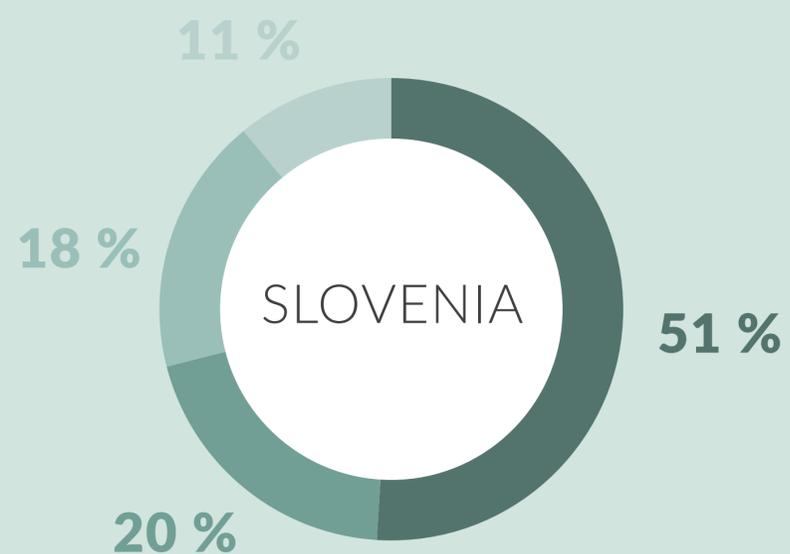
## PRESCHOOL



CROATIA		Area of development	Most frequently identified skill
61 %		Emotional-personal devel.	Independence
20 %		Social devel.	Social skills
15 %		Cognitive devel.	Concentration
4 %		Physical devel.	Graphomotor skills

LATVIA		Area of development	Most frequently identified skill
45 %		Cognitive devel.	Reading skills
28 %		Emotional- personal devel.	Independence
22 %		Social devel.	Cooperation skills
5 %		Physical devel.	Developed small finger/arm muscles for writing

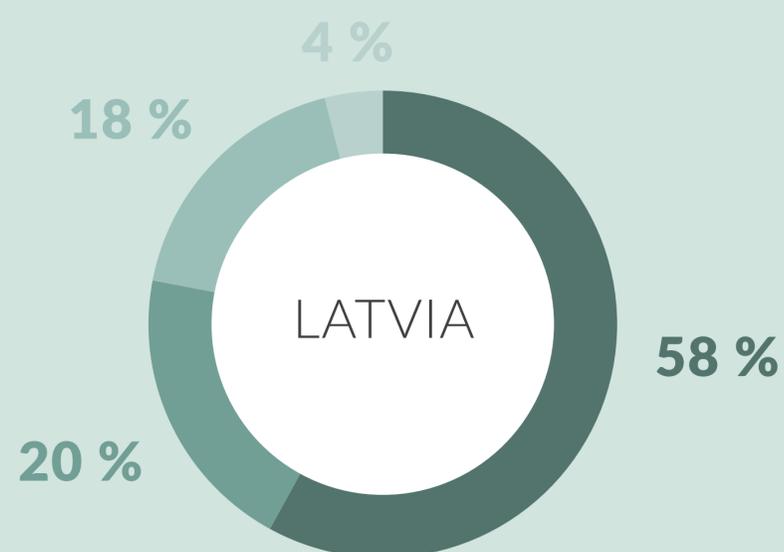
## SCHOOL



SLOVENIA		Area of development	Most frequently identified skill
51 %		Emotional-personal devel.	Independence
20 %		Physical-motor devel.	The child holds the pen correctly
18 %		Cognitive devel.	Speech and language skills
11 %		Social devel.	Social skills

CROATIA		Area of development	Most frequently identified skill
45 %		Emotional-personal devel.	Independence
23 %		Social devel.	Social skills
19 %		Cognitive devel.	Speech and language skills; pre-reading skills
13 %		Physical devel.	Fine motor skills (graphomotor skills)

## SCHOOL



LATVIA		Area of development	Most frequently identified skill
58 %		Cognitive devel.	Reading skills
20 %		Emotional- personal devel.	Independence
18 %		Social devel.	Communication skills
4 %		Physical devel.	Developed small finger muscles for writing



In Slovenia and Croatia, both groups of professionals (from preschool and school) prioritize the emotional skills as being most important to develop with children, whereas in Latvia, both profiles of professionals put down cognitive skills as the most important.

This emphasis in Latvia is directly related to the requirements of the State Guidelines of pre-school education, which determine that, among many other things, the child reads the words and

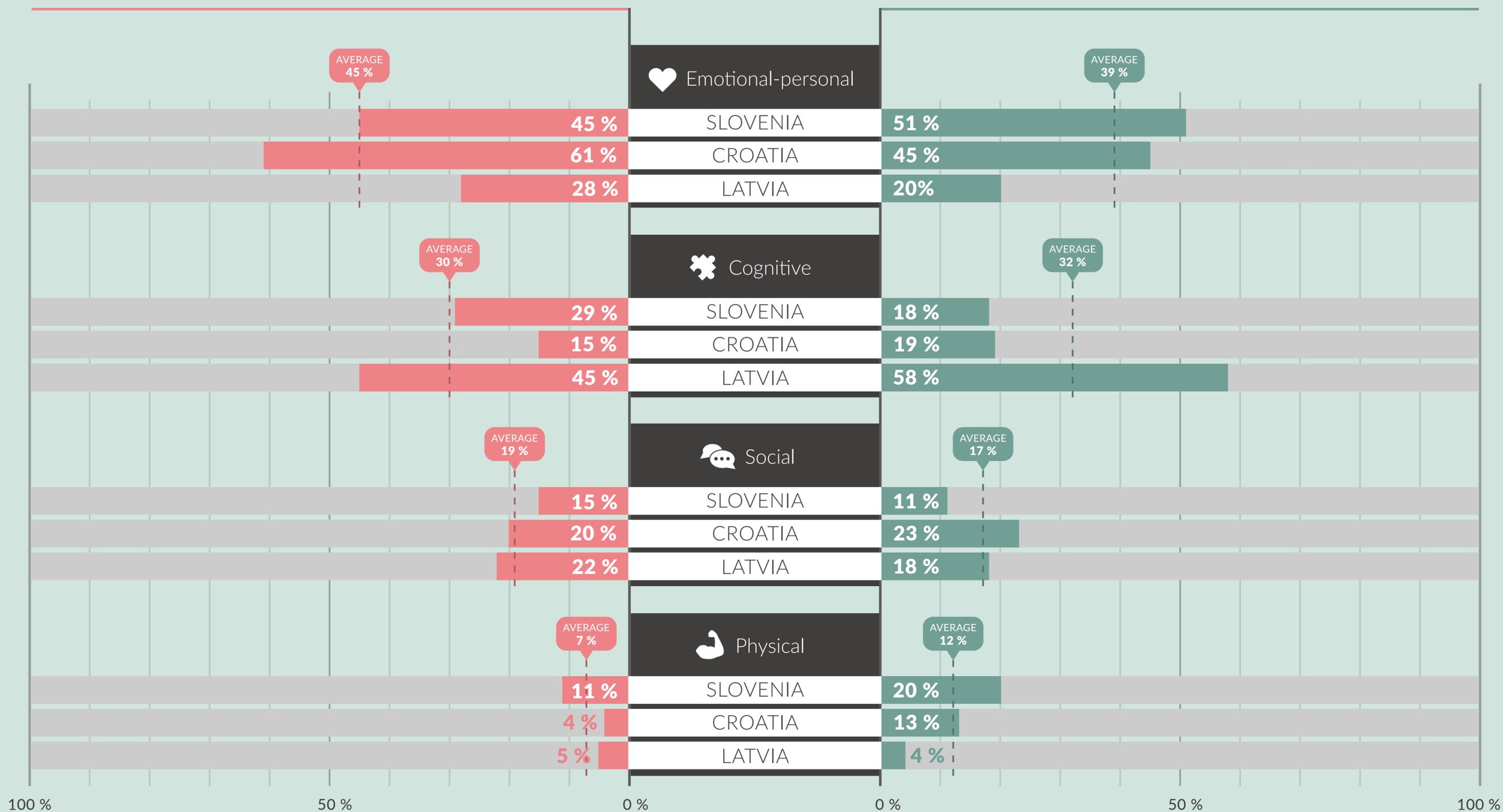
understands what they have read, and also writes the written letters at the end of pre-school education.

At this point, it is important to emphasize that children in Slovenia and Croatia enter primary school at the age of 6, while they do so at the age of 7 in Latvia.

We would also like to draw attention to the fact that children's physical development is very underestimated by many teachers, especially in Latvia.

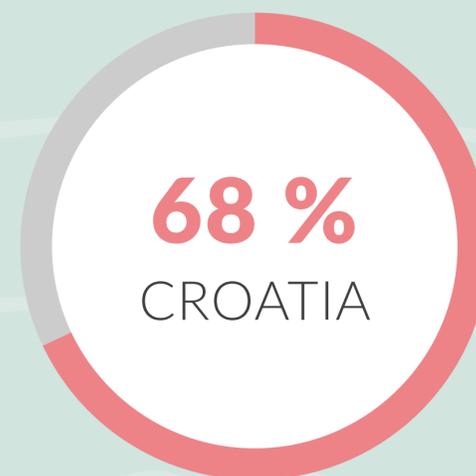
## PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

## SCHOOL TEACHERS



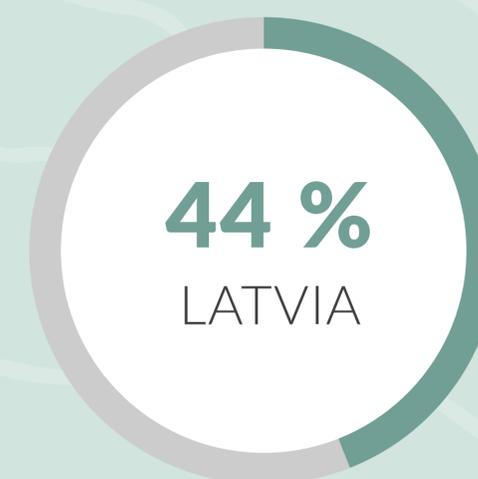


VIII. In the past school year (2018/19) approximately two-thirds of **preschool teachers organized some meetings or visits to school for the future first-graders**. The most frequently mentioned aim of such visits in all three countries was that children get familiar with the school, meet the teacher and children.



Visits like these are especially important in the case where kindergarten and school are separate institutions.

IX. Less than a half of **school teachers** in Slovenia and Latvia **organized some joint meetings, cultural, sport or other events (in a group or with individual families) exclusively for future first-graders and their parents at the school premises**. In Croatia, only 11 % of school teachers do this.

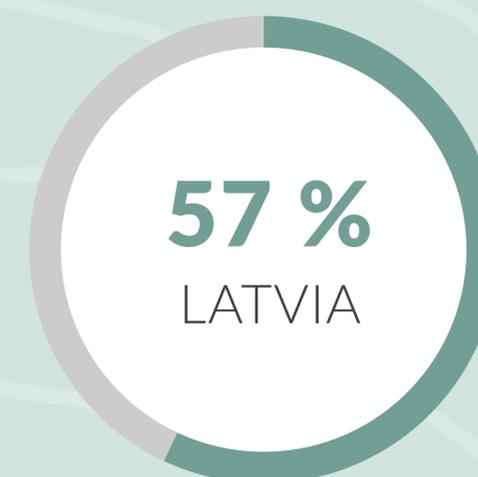
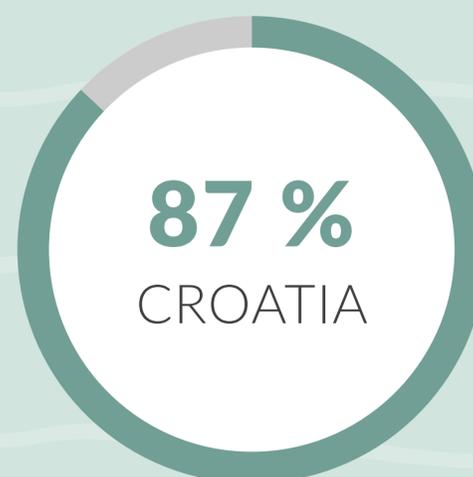


In Croatia, there is an expressed need for bigger involvement of parents in the transition. Current school visits are mostly organised only for children, which happens in the morning when the child is attending preschool and parents or other family members are at work.

X. In the past school year approximately 70 % of **school teachers** did not **cooperate with the preschool teacher of their future first-graders with the aim of exchanging information about them.**

Most frequent reasons for not cooperating are:

1. Because of the protection of personal data (SLO)
2. Because we do not want teachers to create a picture of the child based on information provided by others (LV, CRO)



The GDPR does not prevent the exchange of information on the child's development between professionals as it is in the best interests of the child. Every educational institution has rules on confidentiality, so the teachers are aware of the limits of information disclosure.

When preschool and school professionals share information about a child, it is important for them to focus on the child's

strengths and to consider the fact that this shared information presents only a certain period in the child's life, which could be influenced by different factors. Furthermore, the aim of sharing this information is to support the child's well-being and development, which should be considered especially when we detect challenges in a child's development.

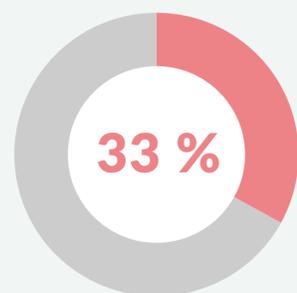


XI. **Preschool teachers** in all three countries who **experience stress in ensuring the transition of children from kindergarten to school** most often mentioned stress connected to the preparation of the child for school. In all three countries, **school teachers** cited different types of stress working with first-graders. School teachers in Slovenia and Latvia cited stress connected to behavioural characteristics of children, while Croatian school teachers cited stress related to the need for a differentiated approach (15 %).

## PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

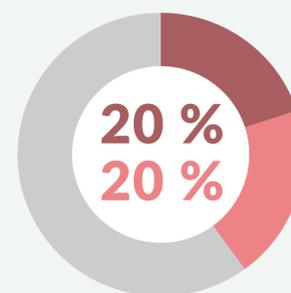
The most often cited stress ensuring the transition of children from kindergarten to school

SLOVENIA



Stress associated with fears that children will not be prepared well enough for school (33 %).

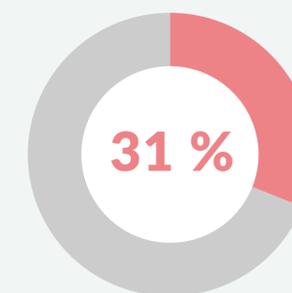
CROATIA



Stress associated with fears that children will not be prepared well enough for school (20 %).

Stress related to cooperation with parents while preparing the child for school, e.g. refusal to cooperate, unrealistic expectations, forcing the unprepared child to go to school (20%).

LATVIA

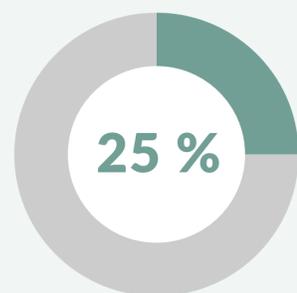


Stress associated with fears that children will not be prepared well enough for school (31 %).

## SCHOOL TEACHERS

The most often cited stress ensuring the transition of children from kindergarten to school

SLOVENIA



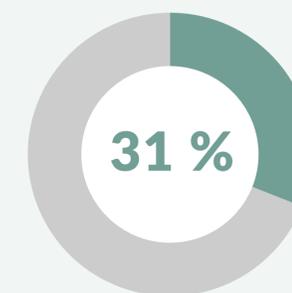
Stress connected to behavioural characteristics of children (25 %).

CROATIA



The need for a differentiated approach (15 %).

LATVIA



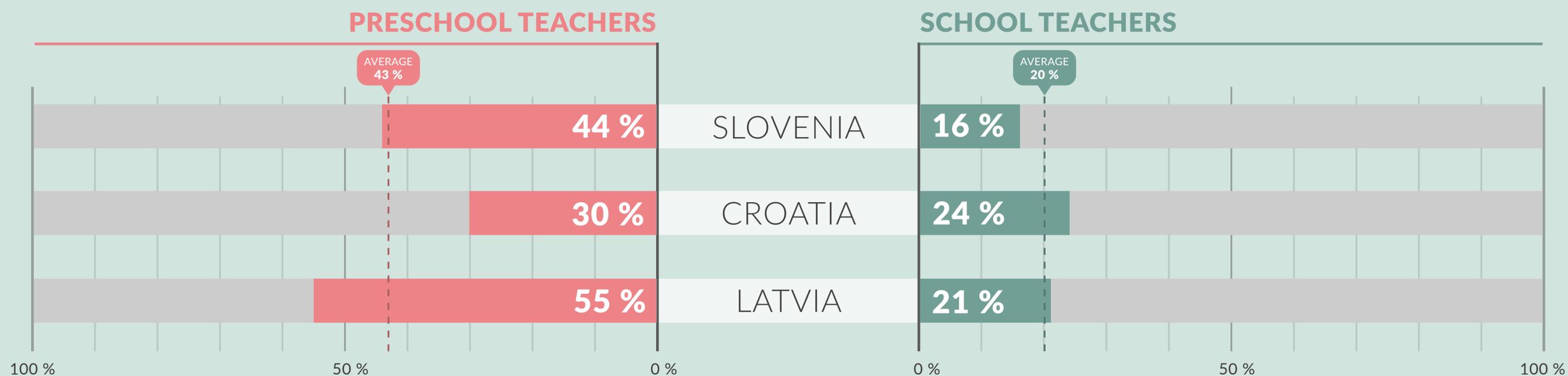
Stress connected to behavioural characteristics of children (31 %).



**The child-centred approaches support the idea that the institution should be the one preparing itself for the child. Nevertheless, the results above show that preschool teachers still find it important (and at the same time stressful) to prepare children for school.**

XII. When **preschool** and **school teachers** who experience stress in ensuring the transition of children from kindergarten were asked what kind of support is offered some of them answered that they do not get any kind of support. Regarding this, there are more preschool teachers without support than school teachers.

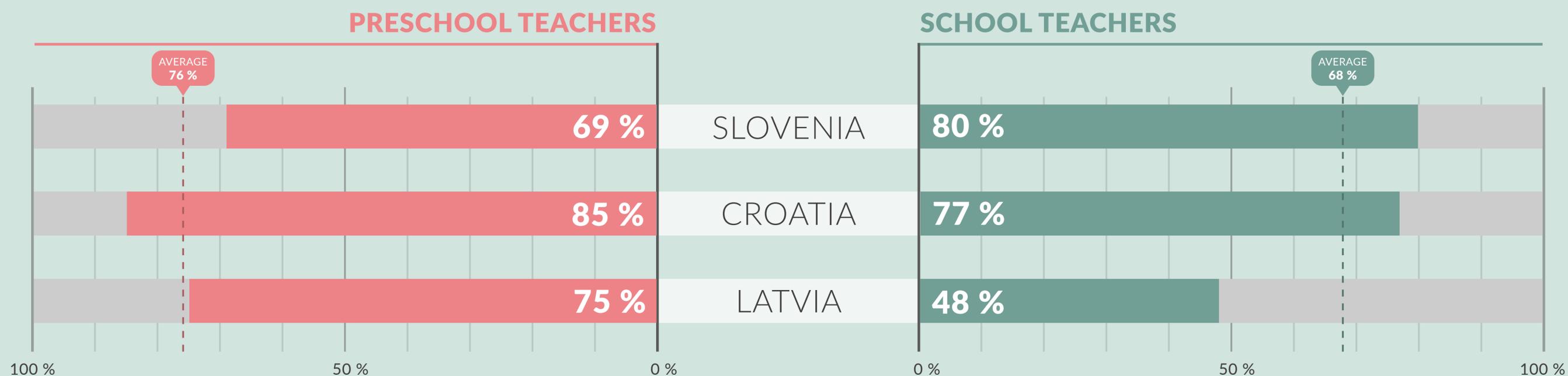
Getting no support



Preschool and school teachers in all three countries are getting support from colleagues, management and parents. Nevertheless, there is a worrisome number of professionals who do not get any support and this should be a sign for management to react.

XIII. About 70 % and more of **preschool** and **school teachers** from all three countries **would attend additional training**. Only Latvian school teachers are not as interested in that.

Interest for additional training



This is a useful information for pre-service educational institutions and in-service training providers.

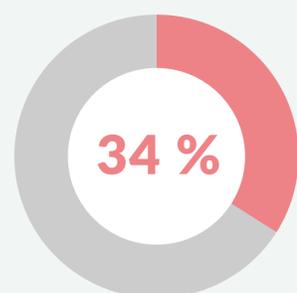
XIV. Most teachers from Slovenia and Croatia stated that a better cooperation between kindergarten and school would be the most **appropriate additional support in ensuring the smooth transition of children from kindergarten to school**. On the other hand, this kind of additional support is placed in second place by Latvian preschool and school teachers. Most Latvian preschool teachers think that a more active involvement of specialists would be the most appropriate additional support, while most school teachers believe it to be the most appropriate with a more active involvement of parents.

## PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

---

Additional support needed in ensuring the smooth transition

SLOVENIA

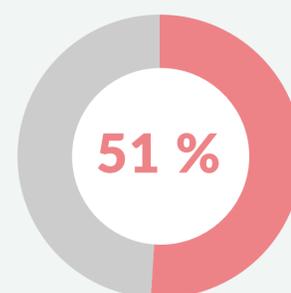


34 %

---

more cooperation with teachers/  
school (34 %)

CROATIA

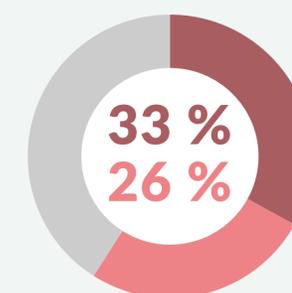


51 %

---

better cooperation with school  
(51 %)

LATVIA



33 %  
26 %

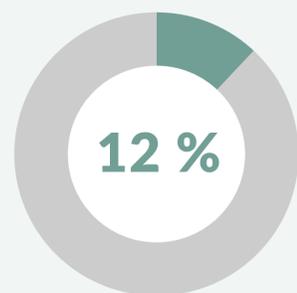
---

specialists' support (33 %)  
cooperation with school/teacher  
(26 %)

## SCHOOL TEACHERS

Additional support needed in ensuring the smooth transition

SLOVENIA



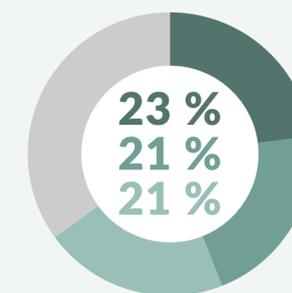
more cooperation with teachers/  
school (12 %)

CROATIA



cooperation with educators/  
kindergarten (30 %)

LATVIA



more active involvement of  
parents (23 %)

Specialist and administration  
support (21 %)

Cooperation with preschool (21 %)

Preschool and school teachers are aware that a more intensive cooperation between kindergarten and school is crucial. We should pay more attention to ensuring this to a greater extent in the future. Interinstitutional professional learning communities are a method which could ensure a regular

and continuous cooperation between preschool and school professionals.

More information on professional learning communities can be found in the publication Professional Learning Communities (Brajkovic, 2014)<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup>Brajkovic, S. (2014): Professional Learning Communities. Open Academy Step by Step, Croatia.



# MAIN INSIGHTS

**WHAT ABOUT  
THE PARENTS'  
AND CHILDREN'S  
PERSPECTIVE?**

I. **Parents, who participated in the research, expressed certain dilemmas regarding the transition of their child from preschool to school.** The table below shows the most common ones:

Dilemmas regarding transition, which were raised by the parents of preschool children, refer to:

### **SLOVENIA**

---

- children's readiness/matureness for entering school,
- ability to concentrate,
- following instructions and sitting still

### **CROATIA**

---

- the child's adjustment to the new environment
- the child's ability to sit still in class,
- the child's ability to accept work responsibilities,
- ability of the child to meet the learning objectives

### **LATVIA**

---

- A child's readiness for school (personal, psycho-emotional and cognitive development of child),
- very practical issues, such as bringing the child to/from school, financial issues, etc.
- parents' ability to provide the necessary support for the child

“ Having in mind the age of my daughter, I am questioning whether she is mature enough to enter school or whether this transition is too fast for her and there is too much responsibility required from her.”

*Parent from Slovenia*

“ Will he be able to deal with school? Will he fit in? Will he meet the learning outcomes?”

*Parent from Croatia*

“ In pre-school my child feels at home, free, but at school there is a completely different order, there is a certain time, long work at the table, there is no free atmosphere, such as friendly morning circles and rest corners.”

*Parent from Latvia*



Evidence shows that transition programmes that provide relevant information to parents on the process help build parents' self-efficacy in managing the experience of a smooth transition. Therefore, ECEC staff and primary school teachers should share with parents and children the reason and the purpose of the transition activities, explain the difficulties

children may experience during the process, and provide practical information and advice (Hirst et al., 2011). At the same time, the professionals should be aware of the importance of self-reflection of their transitional practice, which should focus on each individual child and their developmental characteristics.

- II. In all 3 countries, answers of preschool children's parents indicate that they were provided with some kind of support by the **kindergarten**. However, **they expressed the need for some additional assistance**. The table below shows the most common examples.

Types of additional support which parents of preschool children expressed to need from preschool teachers:

### SLOVENIA

---

- to receive more information from the preschool's counsellor,
- to have the opportunity to visit the school,
- more attention to be put on developing pre-literacy skills

### CROATIA

---

- organizing one or more visits to the school and school playground

### LATVIA

---

- more communication, dialogue between parents and educators,
- more information about the upcoming changes, adaptation

“ I would appreciate an individual conversation with my child’s preschool teacher or a parent meeting on the topic of entering school. ”

*Parent from Slovenia*

“ In cooperation with the school and school staff, the preschool should enable children to visit the school before the beginning of the school year and get acquainted with the work in the school, gradually, through play and workshops. ”

*Parent from Croatia*

“ Preschool, in my opinion, is already successfully coping with this task. Perhaps, in addition, it would be good to meet in preschool with school teachers who have seen our children’s activities and lessons and could give parents their feedback. ”

*Parent from Latvia*



The majority of expressed expectations regarding additional support refers to the need for more communication and dialogue, which should be initiated by the preschool, respectively by their professionals.

III. In all 3 countries, the answers by parents of preschool children indicate that they were provided with some kind of support by the **primary school**. However, **they expressed the need for some additional assistance**. The table below shows the most common examples.

Types of additional support which parents of preschool children expressed to need from primary school teachers:

### SLOVENIA

---

- Cooperation of preschool and primary school (preschool children visit school at the end of the school year; children's meeting with their future teacher).
- Conference for the parents of the future first-graders.

### CROATIA

---

- Organizing school visits one or more times during the pedagogical year.
- Organizing a suitable educational and entertainment program for children in the year before starting school.

### LATVIA

---

- Organizing preschool children visits to school (like "One day in school" for preschool children in the year before starting school, when children visit the school and participate in lessons).
- Organizing more informative events for future first-graders and their parents.



**All suggestions from parents for additional support from school that would be appreciated and valued by parents are linked to closer school-preschool cooperation and cannot be implemented without it.**

IV. In all 3 countries, children who are in their last year of **preschool mainly perceive preschool activities** as play, exploration and facilitated activities, while their **expectations about school** life mainly refer to learning.

Preschool children perception of preschool

### SLOVENIA

---

- Free play, exploration, facilitated activities, daily routine

### CROATIA

---

- Free play, exploration, facilitated activities

### LATVIA

---

- Facilitated activities, free play, exploration

Most frequent expectations of preschool children for school

### SLOVENIA

---

- Children predict they will write, calculate, do homework, learn, and have lessons in school.

### CROATIA

---

- Children predict they will do activities from the work plan, such as learning various subjects, reading, writing, and homework.

### LATVIA

---

- Children predict they will learn, read, write, and calculate.

“ I love to be outside. And I like to dance.  
We will have homework in school.  
We will have workbooks and we will  
learn numbers. ”

*A child from Slovenia*

“ In preschool I play ... In school I'll do  
important tasks and draw. ”

*A child from Croatia*

“ I won't do anything at school, just  
study! ”

*A child from Latvia*



! Preschool children recognize differences in preschool and school environment and teachers' approach. This statement can be supported with the results above (point 3-6), which refer to comforting children, enabling them to research and experiment, organisation of the learning process in activity centres, and providing unstructured materials. All these elements should be taken into consideration when working on increasing the pedagogical continuity.

## V. Some preschool children from all three countries expressed certain **fears regarding the transition to primary school.**

Most frequent fears of preschool children regarding the transition to primary school

### SLOVENIA

- Bad grades, fear of extensive writing, fears of imaginary characters (wolves).

### CROATIA

- Failure, conflicts, school obligations.

### LATVIA

- Bad grades, failures, conflicts with other children.

“I’m afraid I will have to write a lot.”

*A child from Slovenia*

“I’m afraid I won’t know anything.”

*A child from Croatia*

“I’m afraid that I will have bad grades.”

*A child from Latvia*

There were some fears expressed by the children which should not be ignored. It is firstly important to detect those fears and act so that we can overcome them (if children express their fear of not having enough knowledge for school, we should plan to get them more familiar with the new environment/school

process; if children express their fear of writing a lot in school, we should firstly consider if the fear is justified and reflect if the practices in preschool and primary school environment could be more unified).

# INSTEAD OF THE CONCLUSION

The data of this research will serve as the basis for the development of a quality and pilot module for transition training. This pilot training will be conducted in all three countries in the school year 2021/22 jointly for preschool and school teachers. After revision, an innovative module for ensuring a smooth transition will be freely available for all interested.

Based on the pilot training we will also publish a handbook for preschool and school teachers about the importance and the strategies for ensuring a smooth transition. This publication will also include other important data of the research presented in this brochure.

**Follow us and don't miss any of our TIM results!**



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



## Partner organisations:

### Slovenia:

Research Institute)  
Preschool and Primary school:  
– Stari trg pri Ložu

(Educational



### Croatia:

Primary school  
Preschool



### Latvia:

Primary school:  
Preschool:

