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# **PREDYS: “Supporting children at risk of dyslexia in the transition period from pre- primary to primary school”**

/2019-1-ES01-KA201-065691/

## **LTTA 1 - Training**

## **PREDYS Tool Kit – From Theory to Practice**

### **online**

28.05.2021 – 02.07.2021

**Elaborated by Asociacia Dyslexia - Bulgaria**

## **The Aim of the Training:**

Main goals of this training event are participants to better understand dyslexia, its reasons, demonstrations and difficulties it causes; to be able to recognise early symptoms and to identify children at risk of dyslexia at pre-school age using simple assessment tools; to be able to implement some strategies for supporting children to their transition from pre-primary to primary school; to improve communication and collaboration between teachers, SEN staff and families.

## **Programme of the Training**

### **Session 1 /28.05.2021/**

**Topic:** What is dyslexia and how to recognise its symptoms at pre-school and early school age (BULGARIA)

- a. Historical overview
- b. Definitions
- c. Causes (Heredity and Genetic; Neurological; Cognitive)
- d. Symptoms at pre-school age
- e. Symptoms at early school age
- f. Assessment

### **Session 2 /04.06.2021/**

**Topic:** Prerequisites for developing good reading/writing skills (BULGARIA)

- a. Perceptions
- b. Memory
- c. Attention
- d. Spatial orientation
- e. Sequencing
- f. Difficulties caused by deficits in any of the mentioned above skills

### **Session 3 /11.06.2021/**

**Topic:** How to prepare children for the process of literacy acquisition (LATVIA)

- a. Psychological readiness
- b. Cognitive processes
- c. Speech development
- d. Gross and Fine motor skills
- e. Social and organisational skills
- f. Formation of the interest to reading and learning
- g. Assessment of school-readiness (PreDys Check List)

## **Session 4 /18.06.2021/**

**Topic 1:** How teachers can support children at risk of dyslexia (SPAIN)

- a. Positive and tolerant atmosphere;
- b. Easy access to the curriculum;
- c. Taking into account the different learning styles of the students;
- d. Using different organisational forms of work;
- e. Teaching organisational skills;
- f. Positive feedback.

**Topic 2:** The role of specialists (SEN staff) and how they can help teachers (PORTUGAL)

- a. SEN teachers
- b. School psychologist
- c. Speech therapist
- d. Strategies for establishing good communication with teachers, team work

## **Session 5 /25.06.2021/**

**Topic:** Communication with families, the role of the family, strategies, support groups (GREECE)

- a. Why the good communication with families is important?
- b. Help parents to learn more about dyslexia and learning difficulties
- c. How parents could help the child?
- d. Support groups

## **Session 6 /02.07.2021/**

**Topic 1:** Assistive technologies and online platforms for sharing experience, exchanging materials, useful links and resources (TURKEY)

**Topic 2:** Sharing experience – teachers and SEN staff who participate in the training to present briefly (5-10 min presentation) something from their experience (it can be materials they have developed, or short video of an exercise, etc.)

## **Participants**

- According to the Proposal:
  - At least 3 participants per country (18 participants altogether)
  - Pre-school teachers
  - Primary School teachers
  - SEN teachers
  - Speech Therapists
  - School Psychologists/Pedagogical Counsellors

- In reality:
  - 32 participants altogether (Spain – 3; Portugal – 3; Latvia – 3; Greece – 4; Turkey – 5; Bulgaria – 14)

This number of participants was a result of the fact that we provided the training online, because of the COVID-19 situation and restrictions and were able to invite more teachers and specialists to take part.

## **Organisation of the Training**

The LTTA 1 Programme was discussed during the national coordinators' online meeting and agreed by all partners. Topics were distributed between partners, so each partner prepared and led one of the sessions (Bulgaria led two). Each session was with duration of minimum 2 hours. As it was agreed that it would be difficult to organize a 12-14 hours training in 2 or 3 consecutive days (the time difference between partner countries made it even more difficult) partners decided to organize the training in 6 sessions, held in 6 consecutive weeks (Friday afternoon), starting at the end of May (28<sup>th</sup> May) and finishing at the very beginning of July (2<sup>nd</sup> July).

The training sessions were organized in Zoom, link to the session was sent prior the session to all participants.

All sessions were recorded, records are available in YouTube. Links to them are published on the project website, project FB page, partners' websites.

Problems:

- Before the end of the first session the speaker's internet connection was broken before the end of the session. So this session was completed next Friday, at the beginning of the second session.

## **Participants Feedback**

In order to collect participants' feedback an online questionnaire was created and it was filled by 29 out of 32 participants. The aim of this questionnaire was to collect participants' opinions, suggestions and recommendations regarding different aspects of the training activity. Results are presented in the graphs below.

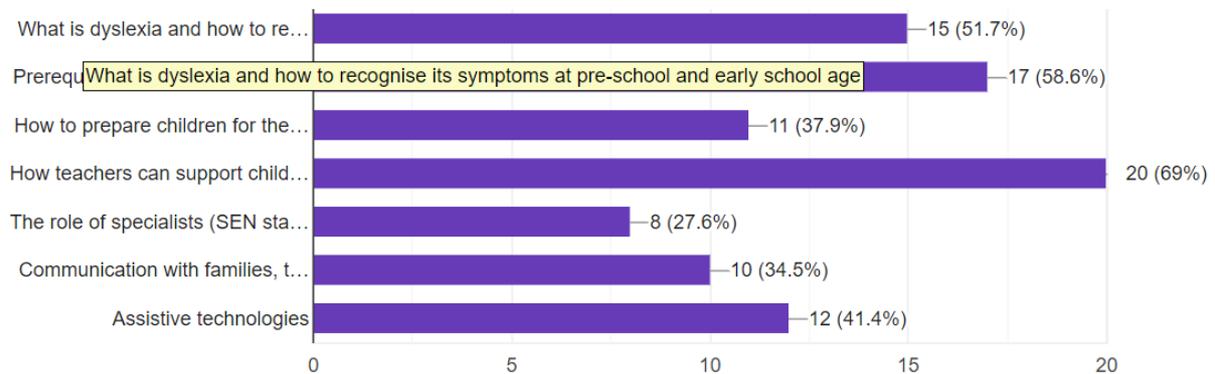
## 1/ What was your motivation to participate in the Training?

- I am working with children with dyslexia, I need more information
- The motivation was to learn more practical solutions to identify and help students at risk of dyslexia
- I have students with dyslexia and I want to learn more about it
- To learn how the partners help children facing learning difficulties in their countries
- I'm part of the coordinator's team and I had to do a speech!! I'm a teacher and I'm really interested in dyslexia also.
- To learn more about working with children with dyslexia.
- My motivation for participating in the training is to gain experience and learn good practices for working with children with dyslexia.
- To learn about the studies on special learning disabilities in different countries and to gain new information
- To learn new practices and help my 5th graders with easy transition from primary to middle school.
- Dyslexia is a very interesting topic for me and it is something that you need to know if you are a teacher in order to help your students.
- I have been working for many years with children with language disorders, which have implications in the context of reading and writing. My work has been as a Psychologist, from 1993 to the present date, in Guidance Psychology Services in school communities; as when I was hired as a Psychology Professor, in secondary education with 3rd cycle, between 1982 and 1993. In the context of psychological consultancy, in the space of psychological assessment of a child/adolescent, as in the space of teaching a didactic-psychological content, always I became interested and worried about the way the child captures what is transmitted to him, whether at the level of orality or in the context, even, of reading and writing. In this sense, I have always developed an interest in the way the child/teenager uses the communication code that has been transmitted to him since he was a child, when he learns the mother tongue, and mentally organizes the sounds/phonemes and then, later, transforms them into graphemes/letters, syllables, words.
- I believe that education is not simply an obligatory process for every child - it is a mission, because through it we, the teachers, ensure that the next generation is prepared for the challenges of life. So I think that the knowledge about how to

approach every single child, especially the ones with learning difficulties, is really important. That is why I decided to participate in this training.

- I'm a teacher and it is great to detect dyslexia in early ages
- experience and exchange of views and practices on dyslexia at European level
- I am a primary teacher and I will want to help to children with dyslexia.
- To learn new things and exchange experiences.
- I am primary school teacher, work with 7-10 y/o children, some of them are with difficulties. Looking for new ideas how to help them
- To acquire new knowledge, techniques and practices regarding the work with children with learning difficulties. To see what specific methods and techniques can be used to motivate the desire to read and write during the learning process.
- To update my educational data and desire to learn
- I wanted to know more about dyslexia.
- Gaining new information about learning disabilities and learning about what our other stakeholders are doing
- I have students with dyslexia
- I am a speech therapist and I need to enrich my knowledge regarding dyslexia and early identification.
- As a SEN Teacher I could say that I and my colleagues find it difficult to communicate properly with the families – very often parents can't accept and admit the fact that their child have difficulties; they are not ready to look for help and are very likely to blame teachers and educational system
- To learn more about this subject and to apply knowledge with my students.
- I work with children with difficulties for many years. I wanted to learn more about how colleagues in other countries work
- To know better on how to support children who has reading difficulties

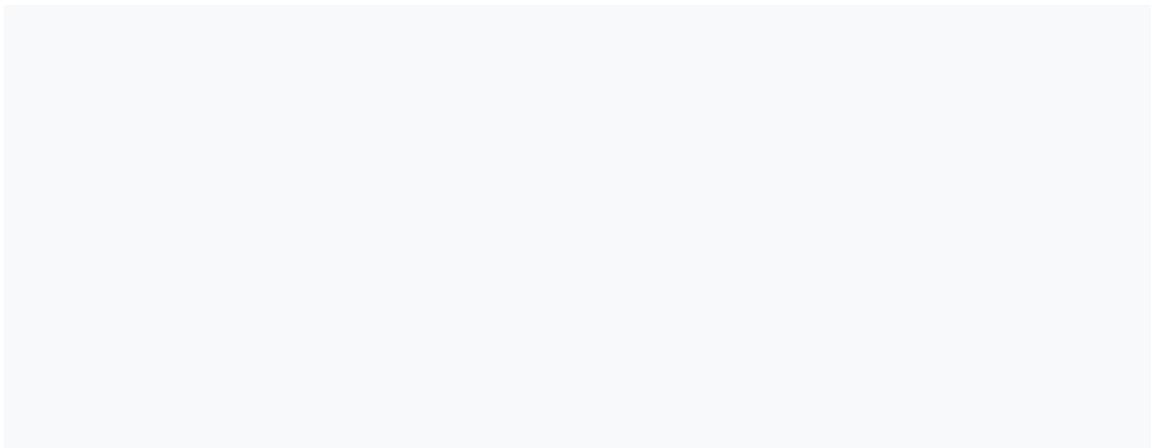
## 2/ In which of the topics you were interested most? – More than one answer was allowed



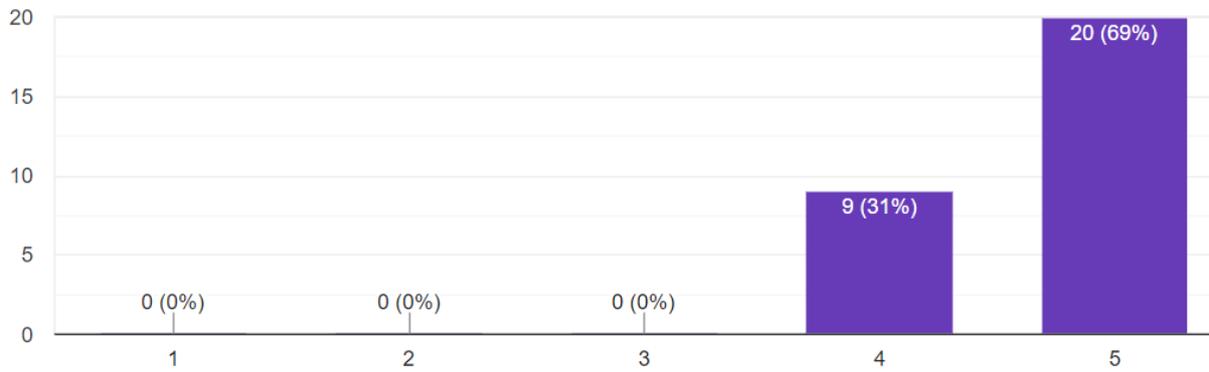
## 3/ What are your feelings, observations, opinion on the content of the training?

- current, assertive, helpful
- It opened the theme widely
- I believe that the organization, structure and content of all presentations were at a very good level, based on scientific knowledge
- It was very interesting and useful
- All presentations were stunning, the presenters did their best to produce best results. Admittedly, it was fulfilling and beneficial for the participants.
- All the content was really interesting.
- Good selection of "lecturers" who participated in the training. They shared their experience. Good examples from their practice were selected that can be borrowed from the participants.
- It was helpful and sufficient
- The whole training was very useful for me. I learned things that will help me in school.
- It enabled me to gain new knowledge by learning the methods used by the participants in their classes. I think it is a useful tutorial.
- It was very well presented, interesting and thoughtful.
- It seemed to me a very complete training because dyslexia was treated in all its areas.

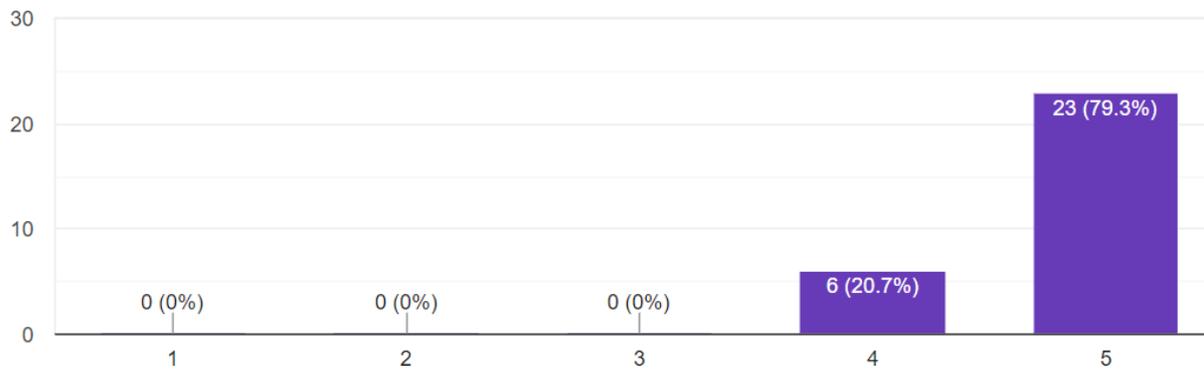
- In my opinion, the content of the training was really useful and the way it was presented was easy to understand.
- It was interesting because you not only spoke about dyslexia but also about literacy acquisition
- One could get a very good idea about the methods and techniques that teachers use in other countries to cope with dyslexia and so improve his own methods. Very interesting and helpful.
- It was very useful.
- It was interesting, news was shared and I learned a lot.
- Very satisfied, learnt a lot
- Excellent organization and very useful information with a practical focus.
- I think that videos and visuals are more efficient in applications and their scientific competence is satisfactory.
- It was very interesting and informative. I got new ideas.
- The training was well organized and instructive. Also, participants always presented very well-crafted content.
- One of the most successful, productive and qualitative training I have ever attended.
- It was very fruitful training
- It was very interesting and useful to my practices.
- Was very interesting and useful for my work
- All my questions were answered and I have experienced with very important implementations in my proficiency



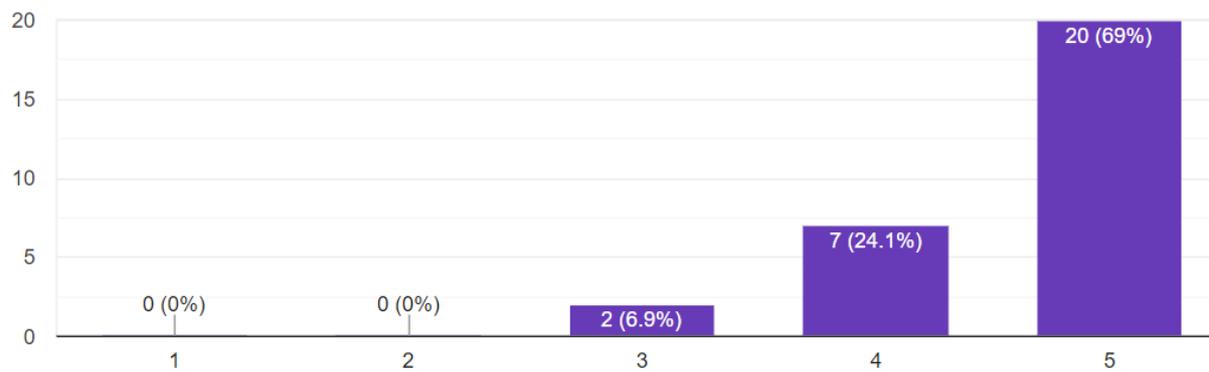
#### 4/ Have your expectations for the training been answered?



#### 5/ How would you rate the structure of the training?



#### 6/ How would you rate the quality of the presentations?



## 7/ What of the new-gained knowledge you intend to apply in your work?

- as much as possible
- It was interesting to hear the views of other countries on this issue. I enjoyed and attracted the technology using for improving the problem,
- I think they are quite helpful and interesting
- The resources
- Both parents and children at risk of dyslexia should be supported sufficiently from school in order to increase their academic performance.
- New ways to individualise children knowledge
- I do not currently work with children with such problems, but I can use picture cards and other exercises in my future work if I need to.
- New technics that will make me able to help my students. Interaction with the students' family
- Interactive reading techniques and games.
- I learned about the diagnosis and education processes of children with learning difficulties at an early age. I can use shared online applications in my classroom.
- Assistive technologies and methods for developing writing and reading skills with my students in middle school.
- In my work I will try to apply all those prerequisites to develop good reading and writing skills to try to prevent students from experiencing difficulties as much as possible.
- In the sense of the posed question, I must emphasize that throughout my professional career I have been mobilized to understand language or communication disorders, whether in the space of dyslexia or a verbal problem, in terms of its hypothesis of enunciation and resolution. For this reason, whatever may happen in my operational work, for the sake of a training exercise on the topics I mentioned above, must always be considered excellent.
- Prerequisites for developing good reading/writing skills and Communication with families are the topics that I found most relevant, so I intend to apply the knowledge that I gained from them in my work.
- Developing good writing and reading skills
- The use of new technologies and software in the class

- To be able to help students with reading and writing difficulties,
- I learnt about dyslexia, how to recognise it; now I will be able to see the symptoms and to talk to parents. I will apply the Check list and worksheets
- In my practice I will use some of the presented applications - wordwall, liveworksheets, Padlet
- I believe that I need to practice more actively in the pre-literacy and literacy processes, and that field studies should be added to the evaluation processes.
- Different types of tasks.
- I will frequently use applications about what to do in risk groups and individuals with learning difficulties, especially in early childhood, as well as online applications.
- Assistive technologies
- Approaches for improving the phonological perceptions and phonological awareness
- Communication in different and effective way with parents
- I intend to apply the strategies and methodologies taught in the training.
- some criteria for early identification; games and exercises suggested by presenters
- Mostly assistive technology

### **8/ Do you have any additional questions and/or recommendations?**

- I would like to find tests that can reveal a problem of dyslexia for primary school children
- I would also like to be trained about other significant learning difficulties. Thanks a lot for the training.
- No!! Everything was perfect!!
- No, I have no references. Thanks for the useful information and advice we received from the training.
- Thank you for the efficient work and sharing process.
- Would it be possible to think of training that helps teachers make smooth transition of children with dyslexia from primary to secondary school? Thank you, it was a pleasure.

- The questions that I can enunciate are already present in the answers I produced, which always have to do with the understanding of formal or informal communication, whether in terms of the acquisition, at a mental level, of an operational, sound or graphic construct, or , then, in the enunciation and resolution of a problem, whether verbal or numerical, with the semantic references it may have.
- No, I just want to thank you for the chance to participate in this training.
- Everything was wonderful and very useful.
- I want to participate in other trainings
- How to combine the work of a first grade teacher with 3 or 4 children with learning difficulties and 17 more? What would you recommend from your experience?
- I would be very happy if an addendum could be made on the sharing of study materials. I am very happy to see great work, thank you very much
- No, everything was great. Thank you for the opportunity to participate.
- Thank you for everything!
- Thank you for organizing this event on such a high level! Very inspirational!
- It was great. Thanks.

## Conclusions

- All teachers and specialists who took part in the Training evaluated it very positive;
- All participants find the training very useful, well-structured and practically oriented;
- 69% of the participants answered that the training has completely matched their expectations; the rest (31%) said their expectations were answered at high degree;
- Most of the participants (69%) evaluated the quality of the presentations as “Excellent”, 24,1% - as “Very Good”, and the rest (6,9%) as “Good”.
- All participants have found in the training sessions something (approaches, materials, applications) they intent to implement in their work;
- There are many who express a wish to take part in other trainings in the field.