

Project title: Teachers Training Programme to Support Gifted and Talented Students (GATE)
2021-1-LT01-KA220-SCH-000027713

GATE: Survey Research – Latvia

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1. Basic Report Information

- 1.1. Partner Organization: SIA “INFORMĀCIJAS SISTĒMU MENEDŽMENTA AUGSTSKOLA” (ISMA)
- 1.2. Period of research: May, 2022
- 1.3. Number of questionnaires collected from teachers: 57
- 1.4. Number of questionnaires collected from educators of gifted children: 0
- 1.5. Reporting date: 03.06.2022

2. Survey research methodology

ISMA has a long-time cooperation with different schools and representatives of school staff working with children from 6 till 19 years old, and keeps close contact with them, organizing different events, trainings, workshops and conferences. The target group of the survey were teachers who teach children of 8 – 11 years of age. Due to close contact it was possible to reach wide number of respondents and secure rather quick response to the questionnaire. Questionnaire was developed by project partners primarily in English and was translated into Latvian by professional translators. It was necessary to translate the questionnaire into state language as not all the teachers have necessary level of English to understand the question and give correct replies. Google form was developed by ISMA staff for conduction the survey, it could be found by the following link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Vsm9iLIQ9LxoXOye3wgseHxtf22mSuM0mtq8wgVc1dA/viewform?edit_requested=true.

ISMA has a database of all schools it is partnering with, including contacts of schools' principals and people, responsible for public relations in schools. Initially, informative email was sent to all the contacts in the database and school principals, asking to join the research and address the teachers belonging to target groups. Many schools expressed readiness and interest in participation in the survey and upon receiving the consent from them, the link to Google form questionnaire was sent to responsible persons in schools. Further target group teachers received the link for the survey from their principals/managers. Participation in the survey was voluntary and it was possible to make it anonymously.

Progress in the survey was checked weekly, but it was clear that the biggest part of school staff gave responses at once.

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According to information received from school principals and school teachers, the number of questionnaires distributed is about 100, but only 57 responses were received (57%). This is due to the fact that the number of teachers in schools, who work with children from 8 till 11 years of age is smaller, than the number of teachers working with schoolchildren in the older age, from 12 till 19 years of age. There are no schools in Latvia that work with only gifted children, but there are gifted children in many schools. It was not possible to distinguish teachers from those educators who work with gifted children due to the absence of gifted schools, so it was decided to address all schools working with different children in the target age group.

3. Survey research results

The first part of the questionnaire was devoted to *Background information* and had 12 questions. The results of the research are summarized in the same sequence questions were asked.

Charts and tables representing answers to each question are presented in the Annex to this document.

Background information

53 female and 4 male school teachers participated in the survey, the biggest part of respondents belong to the age group 36-50 (26 people), 25 people belong to age group 50+, 5 teachers are in the age group 26-35, and one teacher is in the age group from 18 till 25 years of age.

19 teachers are teaching Languages (Latvian or English), 5 of them teach Social sciences, 8 are involved in teaching other science, 10 respondents noted that they are primary school teachers and they teach almost all the subjects except sports. 5 teachers are teaching Technology, 1 is involved in teaching Career education, 3 are sports teachers, 5 of respondents replied that they teach Mathematics, and only one respondent teaches History to children in the target age group.

Next question referred to the experience of respondents in teaching. The results of the survey show that the biggest part of respondents (37 people) work in teaching for more than 15 years, 8 respondents have experience of teaching between 6 and 10 years, 7 of them are not that experienced yet and teach for 1-5 years, and the smallest quantity of respondents replied that their teaching experience is 11 – 15 years. So, we can conclude that people working with target age group students are quite experienced having more than 15 years of experience in teaching.

The next question was connected with school grades teachers are working with. It becomes evident from survey results that most of teachers work in different school grades, starting from the first and till grade 12. Only 41 respondents teach in the grades, where there are students in the age 8-12, our target age group.

Next question was directly connected with age range of students. According to the responses received, only 30 teachers are working constantly with age group 8 – 11 years. Other respondents work with this age group from time to time, as their major is another subject taught in other grades.

45 teachers teach exclusively at school, 12 teach not only in schools, but in other educational establishments – 2 of respondents teach in higher educational establishment (University), 5 of them teach in Training centers, others (5) have chosen the answer – other. It leads to conclusion that the

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biggest part of teachers works only in schools and have experience in working exactly with the target age group.

Teachers, who have chosen *Other* as the answer in the previous question mainly work privately (give private lessons to students of different age).

With respect to the topic of Gifted and Talented pupils, defined as “pupils who perform – or have the ability to perform – at higher levels compared to their peers” 36 teachers consider themselves as Knowledgeable to some extent, 16 teachers just heard about the mentioned concept, 3 teachers consider they are Very knowledgeable and only 2 persons have No knowledge about Gifted and Talented pupils. These results lead to conclusion that the biggest part of teachers, working with children in the age group from 8 till 11, are familiar with the topic of gifted and Talented pupils.

With respect to “STEAM Methodology”, defined as “an educational approach to learning that uses Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking”, 27 teachers just heard about this concept, 18 of respondents are Knowledgeable to some extent, 4 consider themselves Very knowledgeable and 8 respondents stated that they have no knowledge of the concept.

STEAM Methodology for teaching to Gifted and Talented pupils on a scale from 1 to 10, 1 being “not important” and 10 being “very important”, was evaluated by teachers in the following way: 18 teachers evaluated it as being very important, 11 – gave evaluation 7, and the same number of teachers evaluated it for 8, 7 people gave the grade 9 evaluating the importance of STEAM methodology, 3 people evaluated with 6, 6 people – with 5 and 1 teacher gave grade 3. When explaining their answers, teachers mentioned the following reasons of why this methodology is important:

- It motivates pupils to be more motivated and involved into the process;
- It gives wider perspective when looking at the events or perceiving knowledge;
- Is important for every teacher;
- It helps talented pupils to develop;
- It helps to develop conceptual skills;
- It helps pupils to understand certain topic in connection with other courses they are studying;
- It helps to connect the information pupils get in schools with real life.

It is worth mentioning, that many teachers responded that they have no experience working with this methodology and cannot elaborate about their answers for previous question.

With respect to “Socio-emotional Learning”, defined as “the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals”, 35 teachers are Knowledgeable to some extent, 18 just heard about this concept, 2 of respondents have No knowledge No knowledge about the concept, and only 2 teachers are Very knowledgeable in respect to the concept.

Socio-emotional Learning (SEL) for teaching to Gifted and Talented pupils on a scale from 1 to 10, 1 being “not important” and 10 being “very important” teachers have rated in the following way: 5 – 4 teachers, 6 – 1 teacher, 7 – 5 teachers, 8 – 13 teachers, 9 – 14 teachers, 10 – the biggest number of replies – 20 teachers. When elaborating their answers, teachers mentioned the following explanations:

- SEL is an active teaching process;
- SEL knowledge is necessary for every teacher;
- SEL helps pupils understand why they study and what is the purpose of the process;

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- It makes pupils confident and easy to understand the material;
- It helps to create positive and emotionally stable atmosphere in a group of pupils;
- Some teachers try to use SEL in their classes as they want to motivate pupils to learn better from the early age;
- It gives possibility to better understand oneself and others;
- It is important to know and to use for better results.

46 teachers don't have any previous experience related to those topics – STEAM and SEL, 11 teachers have experience in working with this concepts.

Only one teacher has experience related to SEL, 1 – to STEAM, 2 teachers – both, STEAM and SEL, and 2 teachers have experience related to Gifted and Talented pupils.

3 teachers acquired this experience in seminars, 1 during the conferences, 3 during self-education, 2 through trainings and 1 in school where the teacher is working.

Teaching gifted and talented pupils

38 teachers stated that there are no Gifted or Talented pupil/s (as per the above definition) in their classes, but 19 teachers stated that there are Gifted or Talented pupil/s (as per the above definition) in their classes.

Teachers are facing the following challenges when working with Gifted and Talented pupils:

- 3 teachers mentioned that they do not have access to sufficient resources
- 1 teacher stated that have not received sufficient training
- 1 teacher stated that does not have support from another teacher/specialist
- 11 teachers answered that they need to follow the set curricula and targets
- 10 teachers consider that the main obstacle is that the class is mixed and it is difficult to balance.

32 teachers consider that their school adopts some practices for Gifted and Talented students, 25 stated that their school is not using any practices for Gifted and Talented students.

The following practices have been mentioned by teachers as adopted by their school in working with Gifted and Talented students:

- Work to prepare pupils for Olympiads and competitions.
- The school organizes several competitions and extra lessons.
- Olympiads, competitions, stories and extra tasks.
- Offering differentiated tasks, being a subject advisor to your classmates.
- During the consultation, in the clubs teachers pay more attention to these students.
- Teachers' individual approach to each talented student. Grouping has not been successful.
- Involve pupils in projects, Olympiads; give them the opportunity to lead lessons, debates.

21st Century Teacher skills

Rating of the importance of the skills presented for teaching gifted pupils, where 1 means “not important” and 10 means “very important” is presented in the table Table 1 in the Annex. The biggest part of teachers who participated in the survey, consider all the skill important and rated them with high rates – from 7 till 10. The most important skills are: Communication skills Creative thinking, Critical thinking and analysis, Decision Making, Digital Literacy, Goals and priority setting, Self-directed learning. The least

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important skills according to the opinion of participants are: Expressing empathy, Leadership, Teamwork and cooperation, Initiative and innovation, and Exploring the world of work.

Rating of self-evaluation in holding the Proposed 21st century skills listed above, where 1 means “not important” and 10 means “very important”, are shown in the Table 2 in the Annex. According to the data of self-evaluation of teachers received in the survey, the most developed skills among teachers are Communication skills, Time and resources management, Teamwork and cooperation; The least developed - Digital Literacy, Expressing empathy, Exploring the world of work. In general, teachers possess all the skills, but they are not equally developed.

26 teachers would like to participate in the GATE project and implement the training that would be developed by the project team, as well as they are interested to receive further information for participating in the project.

4. Conclusions

On the basis of results of the survey, the following conclusions could be made:

- There are no schools in Latvia that work with only gifted children, but there are gifted children in many schools. It was not possible to distinguish teachers from those educators who work with gifted children.
- There are much more female teachers in Latvian schools, the biggest part of them belong to the age group of 50+.
- Teachers are teaching different subjects in schools, but the biggest part of respondents are teaching languages.
- Experience of teachers is more than 15+ years, and there are very few teachers with smaller experience (1-5 years).
- As the survey targeted teachers who are teaching in certain grades, 41 respondents teach in the grades 1 -6, but only 30 teachers are working constantly with age group 8 – 11 years.
- Biggest part of respondents teaches only in schools.
- Teachers mainly are knowledgeable to some extent about the concept of Gifted and Talented pupils.
- STEAM methodology and SEL concepts are familiar to half of respondents and teachers do not have experience in working with this concept.
- Information about STEAM methodology and SEL concepts was received during seminars and conferences or in the process of self-education.
- The most important Proposed 21st century skills are: Communication skills Creative thinking, Critical thinking and analysis, Decision Making, Digital Literacy, Goals and priority setting, Self-directed learning. The least important skills according to the opinion of participants are: Expressing empathy, Leadership, Teamwork and cooperation, Initiative and innovation, and Exploring the world of work.
- According to the data of self-evaluation of teachers received in the survey, the most developed skills among teachers are Communication skills, Time and resources management, Teamwork and

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cooperation; The least developed - Digital Literacy, Expressing empathy, Exploring the world of work. In general, teachers possess all the skills, but they are not equally developed.

As teachers expressed interest in gaining more knowledge about the methodology and concepts that will help them in working with Gifted and Talented pupils, it is advisable to organize seminars/training for them using the results of the project.

Annex

Replies to survey questions

Q16.1

Table 1.

Rating of the importance of the skills presented for teaching gifted pupils

Proposed 21 st century skills	The Importance of teaching gifted and talented pupils this skill (rate - number of answers)
Creative thinking	1 - 0 2 - 0 3 - 2 4 - 0 5 - 1 6 - 2 7 - 5 8 - 6 9 - 26 10 - 15
Critical thinking and analysis	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 1 4 - 0 5 - 2 6 - 0

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	7 - 4 8 - 8 9 - 25 10 - 17
Decision Making	1 - 0 2 - 0 3 - 2 4 - 1 5 - 0 6 - 1 7 - 9 8 - 7 9 - 21 10 - 16
Digital Literacy	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 1 4 - 1 5 - 2 6 - 0 7 - 10 8 - 11 9 - 18 10 - 13
Expressing empathy	1 - 0 2 - 2 3 - 0 4 - 3 5 - 3 6 - 2 7 - 7 8 - 16 9 - 16 10 - 8
Exploring the world of work	1 - 0 2 - 0 3 - 1 4 - 1 5 - 6 6 - 1 7 - 9

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	8 - 14 9 - 14 10 - 11
Goals and priority setting	1 - 0 2 - 2 3 - 0 4 - 0 5 - 2 6 - 5 7 - 6 8 - 9 9 - 18 10 - 17
Communication skills	1 - 0 2 - 0 3 - 2 4 - 0 5 - 3 6 - 1 7 - 4 8 - 8 9 - 19 10 - 22
Initiative and innovation	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 1 4 - 0 5 - 3 6 - 2 7 - 6 8 - 11 9 - 21 10 - 14
Interpersonal Relationships	1 - 0 2 - 0 3 - 2 4 - 0 5 - 3 6 - 4 7 - 6 8 - 15

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	9 - 17 10 - 17
Leadership	1 - 0 2 - 2 3 - 0 4 - 1 5 - 4 6 - 5 7 - 8 8 - 14 9 - 18 10 - 7
Emotional intelligence	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 1 4 - 0 5 - 3 6 - 6 7 - 1 8 - 14 9 - 19 10 - 14
Coping with stress	1 - 0 2 - 0 3 - 2 4 - 1 5 - 2 6 - 5 7 - 6 8 - 11 9 - 15 10 - 17
Problem Solving	1 - 0 2 - 0 3 - 2 4 - 0 5 - 1 6 - 4 7 - 4 8 - 12 9 - 20

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	10 - 16
Self-perception and awareness	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 1 4 - 0 5 - 0 6 - 4 7 - 7 8 - 13 9 - 17 10 - 16
Self-directed learning	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 1 4 - 0 5 - 1 6 - 1 7 - 5 8 - 11 9 - 17 10 - 22
Time and resources management	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 1 4 - 0 5 - 2 6 - 2 7 - 5 8 - 11 9 - 21 10 - 16
Teamwork and cooperation	1 - 0 2 - 2 3 - 0 4 - 0 5 - 2 6 - 2 7 - 6 8 - 12 9 - 20 10 - 15

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Q16.2

Table 2.

Rating of self-evaluation in holding the Proposed 21st century skills

Proposed 21 st century skills	How will you rate yourself in holding this skill? (rate- number of answers)
Creative thinking	1 - 0 2 - 2 3 - 1 4 - 0 5 - 3 6 - 3 7 - 17 8 - 11 9 - 14 10 - 8
Critical thinking and analysis	1 - 0 2 - 2 3 - 1 4 - 1 5 - 0 6 - 1 7 - 14 8 - 15 9 - 15 10 - 10
Decision Making	1 - 0 2 - 2 3 - 1 4 - 0 5 - 3 6 - 5 7 - 10 8 - 15 9 - 11 10 - 13

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Digital Literacy	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 1 4 - 0 5 - 2 6 - 6 7 - 11 8 - 14 9 - 20 10 - 4
Expressing empathy	1 - 0 2 - 2 3 - 0 4 - 0 5 - 3 6 - 2 7 - 12 8 - 19 9 - 16 10 - 5
Exploring the world of work	1 - 0 2 - 0 3 - 1 4 - 0 5 - 5 6 - 11 7 - 9 8 - 14 9 - 14 10 - 4
Goals and priority setting	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 1 4 - 2 5 - 3 6 - 1 7 - 17 8 - 7 9 - 16 10 - 11
Communication skills	1 - 0

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	2 - 0 3 - 2 4 - 0 5 - 2 6 - 2 7 - 12 8 - 10 9 - 17 10 - 14
Initiative and innovation	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 1 4 - 1 5 - 6 6 - 4 7 - 11 8 - 8 9 - 18 10 - 9
Interpersonal Relationships	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 1 4 - 2 5 - 1 6 - 3 7 - 13 8 - 10 9 - 18 10 - 10
Leadership	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 1 4 - 1 5 - 4 6 - 8 7 - 10 8 - 14 9 - 13 10 - 7
Emotional intelligence	1 - 0 2 - 2

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	3 - 0 4 - 1 5 - 2 6 - 3 7 - 8 8 - 16 9 - 19 10 - 9
Coping with stress	1 - 0 2 - 2 3 - 1 4 - 0 5 - 6 6 - 9 7 - 13 8 - 9 9 - 10 10 - 9
Problem Solving	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 2 4 - 1 5 - 1 6 - 6 7 - 13 8 - 11 9 - 13 10 - 11
Self-perception and awareness	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 2 4 - 0 5 - 3 6 - 2 7 - 12 8 - 18 9 - 13 10 - 8
Self-directed learning	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 1

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	4 - 0 5 - 3 6 - 11 7 - 8 8 - 14 9 - 14 10 - 7
Time and resources management	1 - 0 2 - 1 3 - 1 4 - 0 5 - 2 6 - 2 7 - 5 8 - 11 9 - 21 10 - 16
Teamwork and cooperation	1 - 0 2 - 2 3 - 0 4 - 1 5 - 2 6 - 5 7 - 8 8 - 13 9 - 14 10 - 14