

Newsletter no. 1, fall 2017

Launch of the project, spring 2017

EnCompetence has had a good start. We actually got started a while before the project's officially starting date, and before we went on vacation in the summer of 2017 we had signed and submitted all formal agreements with our partners to The Research Council of Norway, we had employed a PhD student to the project (Ole Johan Sando), The PhD student had applied for and gained admission to the PhD program at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) -Department of Teacher Education-, and conducted the sampling of participating ECEC centers and co-researchers from each of the ECEC centers. In addition, we had sent our project application to the Research ethics officials (NSD).



August 2017

Our PhD fellow, Ole Johan Sando, started working on the project August 1st. Ole Johan will work full time on the project during all three years. He quickly got off, and in addition to spending a lot of time preparing and conducting data collection, he has started the courses he must complete within his PhD program.

In August, we also prepared a detailed protocol for the data collection in Phase 1, and modified and developed the assessment forms to use for evaluating the physical environment indoors and outdoors in the ECEC centers. These are based on the Canadian criteria for outdoor environment in ECEC centers, the Seven C's, but are translated, slightly adapted Norwegian conditions, and we have also developed a version for the indoor environment (which they do not have in the Canadian version).

The researcher team (Ellen Beate, Rune, Ole Johan, Randi and May Liss) had their first project meeting from August 17th to 18th. We met at QMUC campus and had two constructive days where we worked on common objectives and understandings of the project as a whole, we finalized the data collection protocol and the assessment forms, and agreed on practical arrangements for the further work.

On August 24th we arranged a meeting for the project's "Coordinating Group" (via Skype) where all the partners in the project are represented. In the meeting, all partners were informed of plans and status in the project so far.



September 2017

During September we visited all the 8 participating ECEC centers in the project. We met with the ECEC managers and the ECEC teachers who will serve as a co-researcher the project. We informed them about the project, discussed the timetable for when the ECEC center and the co-researcher will be involved in the project, reviewed all the details of how the data collection would be carried out, took pictures and videos of each center's physical environment, and conducted assessment of the physical indoor and outdoor environment of the ECEC centers. The assessment was scored by three of the researchers (Ellen Beate, Rune and Ole Johan) individually, and then adjusted through discussions and reflections between the three scorers, using photos and videos as help to set final scores.

October 2017

In October, week 41, we started the video-observation in the 8 ECEC centers, and we hope to finish the data collection in week 44. The 8 centers are distributed between Ole Johan, Rune, Randi and May Liss who are responsible for data collection in collaboration with a co-researcher in each of the ECEC centers. After obtaining informed consent from parents, we have randomly selected 80 children for observation (10 in each kindergarten).

In the beginning of October, a website for the project was also established, within QMUC's website. This website will be our communication channel about the progress of the project, and newsletters will be published 3 times a year for those who are interested in following us. Research profiles, publications etc. will also be posted on this site.

Further working plans

During late fall, when all data is collected (end of week 44), we will enter into an intensive analysis period. We have planned a comprehensive analysis process, and there are many factors to be investigated and scored. We will use the Observer XT analysis software to carry out these analyzes, and Ellen Beate, Rune and Ole Johan will primarily be responsible for all coding and categorizing of the data material. In addition, we have planned to do a literature review for the project and write a methodologic paper that describes the methods in the project in more detail.

